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# WHAT IS ICP REGISTRATION?

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# What is ICP registration

## 1. What is ICP?

**ICP** stands for “**Internet Content Provider**”, which means the enterprises or individual persons providing Internet information services.

**ICP registration** is a regulatory requirement. It allows a website to legally operate in China.

The ICP registration number must be prominently displayed on the homepage of a website.



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京公网安备 11040102700068号

建议您使用Chrome、Firefox、Edge、IE10及以上版本和360等主流浏览器浏览本网站

This is an ICP registration number

For ICP registration search, please visit the [ICP Filing Management System](#) of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China.

## 2. Who needs ICP registration?

- ◆ If the website is hosted on a **server deployed in mainland China**, you must complete ICP registration and obtain an ICP number. Otherwise, the access to the website will be blocked.
- ◆ If the website is hosted on a server outside of mainland China, such as Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and other countries and regions, an ICP filing is not required.
- **Enterprises applying for ICP registration must have a business entity registered in mainland China.**

## 3. Types of ICP registration

There are two categories of ICP registration, namely ICP Filing and ICP License.

- All internet content providers are required to carry out ICP filing. In addition, an ICP License is required if you provide commercial internet information services.

### 1) ICP Filing

- ◆ for **non-commercial** internet information services.
- ◆ can only be used for informational purposes and not for generating revenue.
- ◆ ICP filing is **mandatory for all websites**. Internet service providers must submit ICP filing applications on behalf of website operators.

## 2) ICP (Commercial) License

- ♦ for **commercial** internet information services, such as making online sales, advertising, conducting business activities that involve payments through websites, or providing a platform for others to generate revenue.
- ♦ Before applying for an ICP license, you must first obtain an ICP filing number.

### Please note:

Enterprises applying for ICP licenses **must** meet the following requirements:

- ♦ a registered capital of at least **one million RMB**
- ♦ paying social insurance for at least three employees
- ♦ with skilled staff corresponding to the business activities
- ♦ foreign capital in joint ventures must not exceed 49 percent

## 4. Public Security Bureau Filing

In addition to an ICP Registration, China's Ministry of Public Security requires the enterprises to comply with another filing process, which is called Public Security Bureau Filing. As of 2016, all websites that have obtained an ICP filing number must submit a Public Security Bureau Filing within 30 days after the websites become available online to the public. You should submit a filing application on the [Public Security Network Filing Platform](#).

This is a Public Security Bureau Filing number



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## 5. Laws and Regulations

### ♦ **Measures for the Administration of Internet Information Services**

**Article 4** The People's Republic of China mandates an ICP filing system for non-commercial Internet information services and an ICP licensing system for commercial Internet information services. Anyone who has not applied for an ICP filing or obtained a commercial ICP license for the website is prohibited from providing Internet information services.

### ♦ **Registration Administration Measures for Non-Commercial Internet Information Services**

**Article 5** Anyone providing non-commercial Internet information services in the People's Republic of China shall carry out filing procedures in accordance with the law. Anyone who has not carried out filing procedures is prohibited from operating a non-commercial Internet information service in the People's Republic of China.

### ♦ **Computer Information Network and Internet Security, Protection and Management Regulations**

**Article 12** Connecting network units, entry point units, and corporations that use computer information networks and the Internet and other organizations should, within 30 days of the opening of network connection, carry out the proper registration procedures with a unit designated by the Public Security organization of the provincial, autonomous region, or municipality directly under the Central Government peoples' government.

# Compliance Advice

## How should overseas companies comply with ICP registration requirements?

We recommend that you choose a proper strategy according to your company's business plan and budget.

- 1) Websites hosted on servers outside of mainland China do not require ICP registration. You can avoid the whole registration procedure. However, the disadvantages are:
  - ◆ Slow loading speed in mainland China.
  - ◆ There's a possibility that the websites may not be accessible in mainland China.
  - ◆ Restricted SEO performance.
- 2) Register a business entity in China and carry out ICP registration.
  - ◆ Must obtain a business license.
  - ◆ Websites with ICP filing numbers can display only non-commercial information.
  - ◆ ICP licenses are required if the websites provide commercial information services.
- 3) Collaborate with a Chinese agency and let the agency carry out ICP registration.
  - ◆ The Chinese agency, as the registration body, is legally responsible for the websites.
  - ◆ ICP licenses are required if the websites provide commercial information services.
  - ◆ The scope of business of the Chinese agency should be in accordance with the content of the websites.
  - ◆ The agency is responsible for the sales, tax declaration, etc.