



## Internet content provider

The company has been issued an ICP license. The ICP certification is issued for internet content, such as domain names, apps, and IP addresses.

The types of ICP certification you can request will depend on your Chinese company's ICP license.

The certification process is for public internet content only. If the content is for a company's internal use and not accessible to the public, then certification is not required. If a domain name is used to access the company's information online, it may need ICP certification, even if it is only a login screen.

There are different types of ICP depending on whether you are just publishing content, trading online or in a data centre.

Here are examples of the different certification types;

Business internet content (this covers most content, with some exceptions below).

Business online trading (this covers most products/services, with some exceptions below)

A summary of areas that need additional ICP agreement

- Electronic bulletins
- Medicine/drugs
- Medical
- Broadcasting: TV, Radio, etc
- News
- Videos
- Banking, stock trading, auctions, payment, etc.
- Electronic data interchange (EDI) telecommunications, data centres, call centres

This is just a summary of the date this paper was published.

The Chinese ICP website can be found at;

<http://beian.miit.gov.cn>

This website is only in Chinese. It can be viewed in Chrome with the translate option enabled. Only a Chinese business can apply for an ICP license.

In the main, the Chinese authorities monitor internet content based on

- Domain names published on Chinese IP addresses
- Public internet ports: 80, 8080, 443

*A port number identifies a specific process to which an Internet or other network message is to be forwarded when it arrives at a server. The default port for a domain name is 80.*

To that end, you can test your internet content in mainland China on a different port before opening the public port. This is what we call port mapping. Many internet services in China, including Access to China, offer this service through the firewall.

Once you open the public Ports, you will need an ICP certification.

The certification is based on the domain name, APP, and Chinese IP address.

Once the certification has been issued, you must add the certification number to the footer of the internet content. The ICP information should have an active link to the Chinese government ICP website, e.g.

[苏ICP备10037052号-2](#)

The main number is your company's ICP number. The end number is for each domain your Chinese company uses.

You only need one ICP certification for the primary domain if using subdomains. Alibaba and Tencent operate their B2B and B2C websites and social media using multiple subdomains.

If there is a problem with the internet content, the Chinese authorities will close the IP address. Therefore, hosting a shared IP address in China is not recommended. To prevent your business's internet presence from being closed due to another company's ICP issue, consider sharing an IP address.

When adding a domain to your Chinese company profile for the first time, it is best to notify the ICP authorities first. They usually respond, "Let us know when the public ports are open, and we will review." Building up trust with the ICP authorities over time helps greatly.

ICP certification authorities, in addition to the points above, will confirm that your domain name does not conflict with any registered brand names. If it is, you must use a different domain in China—another good reason to register your company brand in China at the outset.

Another check the authorities will make is to ensure that your internet content complies with the terms of your company's setup. For example, if you include building materials in

your online content, the company's terms must state "Building Material." If not, the Chinese authorities will ask for it to be removed or request a change to the company's trading terms.

### Do you need a Chinese ICP certificate?

If you need an ICP certificate, you must create a Chinese company, apply for an ICP license, and request an ICP certification for each website you publish.

Alternatively, an agreement can be reached with a Chinese company that holds an ICP licence, allowing them to use their ICP certification.

The issue with this approach is that the Chinese company with the ICP license is legally responsible for any internet content you publish within China.

Online trading inside mainland China requires a Chinese payment system, local sales tax, company returns and company tax. If you use a third-party company in China for your ICP certificate, they must be responsible for these tasks.

ICP Certification Options	ICP	ICP Trading	Chinese Business
	Required?	Required?	Required?
<b>Platforms</b>			
International search engines (a)	No	No	No
Chinese search engine (b)	No	No	No
International retail e-Malls (c)	No	No	No
Chinese International Retail e-Malls (d)	No	No	No
Chinese Local Retail e-Malls (e)	No	No	Yes *
Chinese business platforms (f)	No	No	No
International media channels (g)	No	No	No
Chinese media channels (h)	No	No	Yes
International Social Media (i)	No	No	No
Chinese social media (j)	No	No	Yes **
International Internet of Things (k)	No	No	No
Chinese Internet of Things (l)	yes	yes	yes
<b>SaaS</b>			
International public network (m)	No	No	No
Chinese enclosed network (n)	No	No	No
	Yes ***	Yes ***	Yes ***
Chinese white Label (o)	(Customer)	(Customer)	(Customer)
Chinese public (p)	yes	Yes	Yes
A split service between Chinese and	Yes	Yes / No ****	Yes

international SaaS (q)

#### Your internet presence

International (r)	No	No	No
Inside mainland China (s)	Yes	Yes / No ****	Yes

#### Notes:

\* If you use a Chinese e-Mall service in mainland China, you will need a Chinese business. The Chinese e-mail providers circumvent this issue by allowing overseas customers to use their services in Hong Kong, which then displays overseas products in search results within China. TMall calls these products “trading without borders.”

Chinese social media accounts can often be created outside China, such as a WeChat account. However, an overseas account has limitations inside mainland China. If you wish to create a business social media account in mainland China, you will need a Chinese business.

\*\*\* Running software for a Chinese business within China will require the Chinese customer to obtain ICP certification.

\*\*\*\* Only required if your software is trading online.

#### Chinese ICP monitoring

The internet in mainland China is monitored for inappropriate use.

Your internet content is monitored in China regardless of where it is published or on which platform/service. Content monitoring is prioritised based on its use in mainland China and worldwide. Internet content with only a few visitors will not usually attract attention.

If you have an ICP license, in addition to ongoing reviews, all your internet content will be reviewed each time new domains / IP addresses are added to your license.

The rules and regulations are updated regularly to reflect changes in Internet use and new services. Most of the updates protect internet users from poor or misleading internet practices.

To that end, internet content published in mainland China is subject to review by local and national monitoring. This review includes, but is not exclusive to;

- Publishing misinformed information. e.g., reporting an earthquake that has not occurred.
- Reporting false information
- Online gaming, which includes gambling
- Pornographic material
- Incorrect use / missing ICP certification.
- National security issues. (The same as the rest of the world)
- Internet security issues.

- Inappropriate political comments

While many overseas commentators believe Chinese internet monitoring is suppressive, most controls are in place to protect internet users. Many political comments are allowed, such as green issues and local corruption.

Content on overseas websites will be reviewed periodically, and if it is not appropriate for the Chinese internet, the IP address will be blocked.

If an overseas platform allows the Chinese authorities to “take down” inappropriate content for the Chinese internet, then the platform could remain accessible in China. However, most international platforms do not allow Chinese authorities to request the removal of international content from the Chinese internet. Therefore, inappropriate content means that access to overseas platforms in China is blocked.

Overseas companies that oppose this censorship have developed platform services in China, allowing Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent to dominate the Chinese internet.