



DARIUS A. HATOK
PR, Sales & Media
SK-NIC



GROWING RESPONSIBILITY

Today, the digital economy is an integral part of the functioning of companies, public institutions and households. Every day, new websites, services and digital platforms are created that change the way we work, do business and communicate.

However, with increasing digitalization, the question of its environmental impact naturally grows. Although technologies often bring more efficient solutions, they also consume energy and create their own carbon footprint.

One interesting way to respond to this challenge is to connect the digital world with specific activities in the country. This model was chosen by the .sk domain registry, SK-NIC. The company decided to plant a tree for every .sk domain registration. What was originally a symbolic commitment gradually became a project with measurable results – over a hundred thousand new trees were added to Slovak forests.

FROM IDEA TO TREE

The idea was born in 2023 on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the .sk domain. SK-NIC decided to create a commitment with a longer life than the anniversary itself. Each new .sk domain registration was to be transformed into one planted tree. This is not a classic one-off environmental campaign separated from the company's main activity. The trees are directly linked to the activity that is the essence of the functioning of the national domain administrator – the growth of the Slovak digital space.

So far, the trees have been planted in the Carpathian Mountains and the Čierny Váh river basin in this project, increasing gradually, by tens of

thousands each year, and by the end of 2025 there were already 162,000. The numbers show that even a seemingly simple principle can, with sufficient perseverance, grow into a project with a significant scope.



For every new .sk domain registration, we plant one tree.

ESG THAT CAN BE SEEN TODAY

It is increasingly important for companies not only to talk about responsibility, but also to be able to show concrete results. ESG has become part of strategic decision-making, stakeholder relations and investor expectations.

ESG initiatives do not have to be complicated. Their strength can lie in a simple mechanism that the customer can understand in a single sentence. "For every new .sk domain registration, we plant one tree", is an example of an activity in which the link between business and positive impact is easily communicated.

An important factor is long-term sustainability. A tree is not a short-term marketing

campaign. Its value is created gradually. It grows over years and decades, and its contribution cannot be measured within just one accounting period.

For companies, this represents an interesting parallel with entrepreneurship. Investments in people, technology and innovation also need time to deliver results. A company that wants to exist in the long term should also present itself with longer-term ESG projects.

FROM DECLARATION TO CONCRETE RESULT

One of the biggest challenges of current ESG is the risk that responsibility will become only a communication topic. However, the public and partners are increasingly sensitive to the difference between declared values and real activities.

Planting trees has one big advantage in this regard: the result is physical and tangible. In the case of this project, moreover, it was not limited to financial support. The company's employees also participated in the planting itself every year.

This detail is very important from the point of view of corporate culture. An employee who participates in a specific ESG activity does not experience social responsibility only as an internal message. He or she gets the opportunity to be directly involved in the result.

RESPONSIBILITY AS PART OF A BUSINESS MODEL

For the business environment, the story of .sk trees may be interesting for another reason. It shows that social responsibility should be based on the real functioning of the company and at the same time create measurable value for society. The strongest projects often arise precisely when a social or environmental goal is naturally connected to what the company does every day.



Responsibility does not have to be about one grand gesture.

For technology companies, this may include, for example, supporting digital education, energy efficiency of data centers, developing local communities, or helping to increase digital accessibility. For manufacturing companies, the circular economy or more efficient use of materials may be a natural topic. For financial institutions, financial literacy or supporting the business environment.

ONE TREE, THEN 162,000

At the beginning of the project, there was a simple commitment – one .sk registration, one tree. On its own, such a step seems inconspicuous. However, on the scale of the entire Slovak Internet, it takes on a completely different meaning.

By the end of 2025, 162,000 trees had been planted, and more will be added in 2026. Although the project has not yet reached its symbolic goal of having the number of growing trees equal the number of registered domains, which are almost 500,000, it is on track.

And this is perhaps the most interesting idea of the entire project. Responsibility does not have to be about one grand gesture. It can be the result of thousands of small decisions that are repeated every day. One domain. One tree. And then another.

A similar principle often appears in business. Small innovations, regular investments, and consistent decisions may not bring an immediate effect. However, if they last long enough, they can change an entire industry.

And this is how we need to think about responsibility. Not as a task to be completed, but as a process to be continued. Because digital Slovakia doesn't have to grow only on screens. It can also grow in the country that surrounds it.