

gTLD applicants clarify intentions; Google launches domain registry

Applicants for generic strings have clarified their intended use of the top-level domains (TLDs) that they seek to operate. This came a day after the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) revealed that some stalled applications can proceed to delegation if the applicant blocks certain second-level domains while further assessment is carried out. In other gTLD-related news, Google has launched its online domain registry, Charleston Road Registry.

Earlier this year the Governmental Advisory Committee had argued that, for strings consisting of generic terms, “exclusive registry access should serve a public interest goal”, and identified 186 strings of concern. In August ICANN contacted the applicants to enquire whether they planned to operate the TLDs as exclusive-access registries, and in October it published the responses received. Eight applicants answered in the affirmative for 10 strings; ICANN will now perform further analysis with regard to these strings, as well as for three applicants which did not respond.

Applicants for 138 applications indicated that they do not intend to operate the TLDs as exclusive-access

registries. In addition, applicants for 35 applications have performed a U-turn, noting that they no longer intend to operate them on an exclusive-access basis. For example, Amazon has stated that a number of its applications will now be open, including ‘.app’ and ‘.book’.

Google also indicated that its application for ‘.blog’ will now be open, and has officially launched its online registry at charlestonroadregistry.com. The site tells users: “how you develop your piece of this online real estate is up to you”. However, Google has some ideas of how its gTLDs will be used: it foresees spaces for lawyers, law practices and verified legal professionals (‘.esq’), while ‘.eat’ will be directed at “food lovers, restaurateurs and chefs” and ‘.meme’ will house “viral phenomena, from ideas to images to videos”.

Elsewhere, ICANN had proposed a three-tiered response to the possible name space collisions between applied-for gTLD strings and non-delegated TLDs, as well as the possibility of collisions arising from the use of X.509 digital certificates.

In October the ICANN

Board New gTLD Programme Committee approved an updated proposal. Jeff Moss and John L. Crain summarised the fourfold plan on the ICANN blog. The first step will be to “document on a per TLD basis those collisions that have been identified in studies of the ‘Day In The Life of the Internet’ (DITL) data and to place each of the secondary-level domain (SLD) strings identified to have had collisions on a reserved or blocked list for that specific TLD. These strings will not be allowed to be registered or to resolve until such a time as the effects of the specific collision are known and appropriate

mitigation strategies are developed and implemented”. The second step will be to “develop a process by which affected parties may report and request the blocking of a SLD that causes demonstrable harm as a consequence of a name collision”, while the third will be “to develop a framework to identify the probability and severity of harm to better assess the consequences of name collisions”. The last step will be to “target an outreach campaign at potentially affected parties”.

Following the proposals, ‘.home’ and ‘.corp’ remain in the ‘indefinitely refused delegation’ category, but other applicants can proceed to delegation before receiving their SLD collision occurrence assessment report if they block all SLDs that appear in the DITL dataset while the assessment is conducted.

Charleston Road Registry

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Welcome to Charleston Road Registry, Google's domain registry. We're really excited about the domains we'll soon be able to offer. The Internet has always been flat and horizontal about self-expression, and the dawn of this era of hundreds of new domains marks one of the most unpredictable moments in the history of a highly unpredictable medium.

EDU has always meant education, GOV governments, ORG non-profits. Today's new domains are infinitely more open-ended. There will be new forms for creativity, for business, for explorers, comedians and professionals. What will .HOW mean? .EAT? .SOFF? We have our ideas, but how you develop your piece of this online real estate is up to you. Whether you're a dad or a traveler, a developer or a movie maker, a Japanese speaker or a four-pawed, fur-walk, happily, is what you make of it.

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Google's Domains

Google is planning on being the registry for these new top-level domains.

.ALL	.ADE	.BOOK
.DAD	.DIP	.EAT
.ESQ	.FLY	.FOO
.HERE	.HOW	.MOM
.MEME	.MOV	.NOM
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English

Google's registry outlines its online expansion plans