UNDERSTANDING THE APPLICANT GUIDEBOOK
for New Top-Level Domains

Cairo
2 November 2008

Agenda

- Guidebook overview
- Supporting and explanatory materials
- Guidebook Module detail
- Probable timelines
What was published

- The Applicant Guidebook (RFP)
- Supporting memoranda intended to annotate the Guidebook and describe the reasoning and Guidebook development process
- Other supporting information
- User friendly comment fora
- Background material containing key messages

Key Themes

- New gTLDs will promote competition and choice, IDNs will offer many potential new opportunities and benefits
- Principles of conservatism: technical and fiscal
- Emphasis on registrant protection
- The decision to launch new gTLD rounds followed a detailed and lengthy consultation process with all constituencies of the global Internet community.
- A public comment period for revision of the RFP will allow for detailed review and input to be made by the Internet community
Aspects of the Process: Uncomplicated & Robust

▪ Uncomplicated process in most cases:
  – 6-step inquiry
  – Objective criteria

▪ Robust process when it needs to be:
  – Provide a path for addressing objections on specific limited grounds to proposed TLDs
  – Resolve situations where there are multiple applications for the same (or very similar) TLDs

New gTLD Evaluation Process

Application Period Module 1
Initial Evaluation Module 2
Extended Evaluation Module 2
Objections and Dispute Resolution Module 3
String Contention Module 4
Transition to Delegation Module 5
Applicant Guidebook Organisation

- Module 1 – Overview
- Module 2 – Evaluation procedures
- Module 3 – Dispute resolution procedures
- Module 4 – String contention procedures
- Module 5 – Delegation processes (including base registry agreement)
- Module 6 – Terms & conditions

Explanatory memoranda

- Resolving String Contention – a complete lifecycle
- Cost Considerations of the New gTLD Program
- Proposed Process for Geographic Name Applications
- Update to DNS Stability Paper – additional Technical Criteria Requirements, including IDNs
- Protection of Rights of Others in New gTLDs
- Morality and Public Order Objection Considerations in New gTLDs
- Summary of Changes to Base Agreement
Related Resources and Materials

- Summary: GNSO Policy Recommendations
- Cross Reference: Applicant Guidebook to GNSO Policy Recommendations
- ICANN Similarity Assessment pre-production algorithm: http://80.124.160.66/icann-algorithm/
- Anticipated timeline
Draft Applicant Guidebook Structure

Module 1: Introduction to New gTLD Application Process
- Evaluations Questions and Criteria
- Explanatory Memoranda + Other Resources

Module 2: Evaluation Procedures
- Spec 1: Consensus and Temporary Policies
- Spec 2: Data Escrow Requirements
- Spec 3: Monthly Reporting Format

Module 3: Dispute Resolution Procedures
- Spec 4: Registration Data Publication
- Spec 5: Second Level Reserved Names
- Spec 6: Registry Performance Specs

Module 4: String Contention Procedures
- Spec 7: Rights Protection Mechanisms Requirements

Module 5: Transition to Delegation

Module 6: Application Terms & Conditions

Resources Available – New gTLD webpage

- Explanatory Memoranda
  - Cost Considerations
  - Original DNS Stability Paper Feb 2008
  - Update on DNS Stability Criteria
  - Geographical Names Process
  - Summary Changes to Base Agreement
  - Resolving String Contention
  - Morality and Public Order

- Other Resources Available New gTLD Page
  - Evaluation Process Flow
  - Summary DNSO Policy
  - Anticipated Timeline
  - Letter Dr. Twomey to GAC and CC Operators Notice Draft Guidebook
  - Letter Dr. Twomey to GAC – Geographical Names
  - Link to Algorithm Pre-Production
  - Link to Process Evaluation

Openness Change Innovation
Guidebook – Online Resources

- From the front page, link to the comments section:
- or link to the New gTLD Program Page:
- Where there is a link to an interactive process flow:

Guidebook: Preliminary Considerations for Applicants

- Any established organisation, institution or corporation in good standing may apply for a new gTLD (not individuals).
- Applicants will choose designation as an open or community-based TLD.
- The evaluation processing fee, based on a cost recovery model, is: $185,000. There may be other fees paid directly to outside providers.
- IDNs (probably) available.
Module 1 – Introduction and Overview

- Application life cycle – summary of processing stages
- Description of application types:
  - Open
  - Community-based
- Documents required from all applicants
- Requirements specific to IDN applicants
- Processing fee information
Module 1 – Introduction and Overview

- Applications initially assessed in rounds
  - Guidebook pertains to initial round
  - Information included on follow-up rounds
- Fees calculated on a cost recovery basis
  - Processing fee: US$185,000 is estimated sum of evaluation, development and risk costs
  - Additional fees paid directly to outside panels and providers if necessary

Module 2 – Evaluation Procedures

- String reviews
  - DNS stability
  - String confusion
  - Geographic names
- Applicant reviews
  - Technical capability
  - Financial capability
  - Registry services offered
Module 2 – Evaluation Procedures

- String reviews
  - DNS stability
  - String confusion
  - Geographic names

- Applicant reviews
  - Technical capability
  - Financial capability
  - Registry services offered

Module 2 – Specific Criteria / Procedures

- Avoidance of strings causing technical instability
- Avoidance of confusingly similar TLD strings
- Applicant demonstration of technical capabilities
- Applicant demonstration of financial capabilities
- Registry services evaluation
Demonstration of technical & financial capability

- 20 technical / operational questions, each scored and covering an area of technical competence
- 11 financial questions, 7 scored criteria
- Principles and focus upon:
  - DNS security & stability
  - registrant protection
  - conservatism (technical and fiscal)
  - flexible criteria to accommodate different models
  - requirement for some protection of rights mechanism

Module 3 – Dispute Resolution Procedures

This module includes:
- four grounds for objection
- standing requirements for each of the grounds
- procedures for filing objections and responses
- procedures for adjudication proceedings
- dispute resolution principles (standards)
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Module 4 – String Contention

- Contention arises when there are identical or very, very similar string applications
- There is a methodology for identifying “contention sets”
- In certain cases a comparative evaluation occurs to resolve the contention
- Parties are encouraged to resolve the contention themselves
- A memorandum describing alternatives for a last-resort resolution method is posted for comment
Module 4 – String Contention

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- In certain cases a comparative evaluation occurs to resolve the contention
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Module 5 – Transition to Delegation

- Registry Agreement
  - Base agreement
  - Seven associated specifications
- Pre-delegation requirements
  - Technical tests
  - Continuity requirements for protection of registrants
- Leads to delegation by IANA
Module 5 – Transition to Delegation

- Registry Agreement
  - Base agreement
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- Pre-delegation requirements
  - Technical tests
  - Continuity requirements for protection of registrants
- Leads to delegation by IANA

GNSO Recommendations & Draft Applicant Guidebook Cross Reference

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**Timeline Assumptions**

- There will be another version of the draft Guidebook published for comment before the final version is published.
- The Board will approve the final Guidebook.
- There will be a four-month communications period between publication of the final Guidebook and the acceptance of applications to ensure adequate communications.

**Anticipated Timeline**

New Generic Top-Level Domains

- 32nd ICANN Meeting (Paris)
- 33rd ICANN Meeting (Cairo)
- 34th ICANN Meeting (Mexico City)
- 35th ICANN Meeting

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Updated October 2009
THANK YOU