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Jothan Frakes: Well, hello and good morning. My name is Jothan Frakes and I'm the executive director of the Domain Name Association. I'm joined this morning by a few people here in Kobe Japan to talk about some commercial interest in the domain name industry. There's quite a lot going on this week with respect to things surrounding security and stability, resilience of the internet. And of course, quite a lot of policy discussions happening. And one of the things we often loose site of is the fact that this is - that there are businesses that are operating in a commercial space that are working and supporting a lot of the lights that are blinking on the routers here.

And I'm here today to talk a little bit about some of the exciting commercial activities that are in existence - some of the innovation and opportunities and benefits of domain names because we lose sight of that. We're fueled by a lot of commercial companies and they're all working very hard to serve in various stable and reliable ways. So, I'd like to talk a little bit about some of the activities that we have going on.

First, let me take the opportunity to explain myself and the Domain Name Association what it is that we do. So, my name is Jothan Frakes. I have the privilege of serving as the fourth -- third or fourth -- Executive Director of the Domain Name Association. It was established in 2013 -- 2014. Largely I think the catalyst was the new talk of domains but it was really an important thing to form a trait group to, you know, essentially be a voice -- a neutral voice -- but a positive voice for commercial activities in the domain name space. And over the course of time -- over the last five years -- the Domain Name Association has published many studies, many reports - it has participated in a variety of both ICANN and non-ICANN events where we're promoting and discussing the commercial benefits and value and opportunities that exist within the domain space.

When someone calls or contacts or is looking for information about domain names, it's important to have a resource like the Domain Name Association so that people can get a - kind of a neutral and positive voice about the domain space. And so, we're delighted to serve in that capacity. And we

have among ourselves -- in our membership -- quite a number of very robust players in the market including Microsoft, Google, Amazon, GoDaddy, (Donuts), Afilias, (Newstar), Web.com, (Gandhi) - let me keep going - Uniregistry, (Mind and Machines). And then I can continue on with a large number of these.

But in addition to this, what's really important to note is that ccTLDs these are also numbers. So, we have Nominet who operate .UK and a number of other TLDs - (unintelligible) who are very vibrant and active players in this space who operate the (unintelligible) - .NZTE New Zealand; .PH, the Philippines. We also have participation from .AT and CIRA from Canada. So, we have a robust involvement from the ccTLD community as well.

We are a group of people working together to, you know, promote the commercial opportunities in the domain name space but help also put together things that demonstrate the health and overall activities to combat abuse and bad activities as well. We've done activities called the Healthy Domains Initiatives for example, where we go through and document and work and develop best practices and recommendations for voluntary efforts to help demonstrate what our businesses, what our companies, what the registries and what the registrars in this space are doing. It's ongoing and proactive activity to help curb abuses - because that means, you know, less bad things means more good things. And as far as good things go, we also promote innovation through a variety of activities.

The domain spaces seem more and more experimentation because of the robust nature of DNS, there's quite a lot of opportunity space still in existence and we're starting to see registries expanding into some of the opportunities that may exist in blotching naming systems, in geo location tags, use of DNS for a variety of internet of things - communications and state storage.

So, there's quite a lot of really, really robust activity that's still in play within the domain name space. And we sometimes lose sight of that in the midst of all the policy discussions that occur here at ICANN. So, I was very delighted to - that the GNSO gave me the privilege to have an opportunity to do this session.

So, I'm joined today by a few people here in the room which is quite impressive given the hour of the day. And some of the other very high interest topics that are going on. If I could go around the room and let folks introduce themselves, it would be greatly appreciated. In fact, let's start with our local friend on - from JPRS.

(Tushando):   Good morning. (Tushando) from Japan, resistors services, JPRS. JPRS is - the core business is .JPCC (unintelligible) manager. We're doing registrar (unintelligible), second largest in Japan. And also running (unintelligible) GTLD and support several (unintelligible) as a registry service provider. Also, we're (unintelligible) operator with wide project. Thank you.

Jothan Frakes: Welcome and good morning. Also, another member of the Domain Name Association is with us here today.

Roland LaPlante: Hi, I'm Roland LaPlante. I'm the chief marketing officer at Afilias. Afilias has been in the domain business since 2001 when we launched out info. We serve as - mostly in the registry space. We are a registry operator running info (Mob)y pro and about 16/17 TLDs. We're also a registry service provider - doing the technology to support registry operators. And we do that for .org and a hundred - a bunch of dot brands. Some dot cities; some dot generics and so forth. And we've been a long term and very proud member of the Domain Name Association.

Jothan Frakes: Thank you.

(Griffin Barnett):   And good morning. My Name is (Griffin Barnett). I'm actually an observer I guess you can say of the DNA. But we - I'm an IT attorney based in Washington, D.C., a member of the IPC - but we do work not only with brand owners generally but also with dot brand registries as well.

Jothan Frakes: Well welcome - welcome to all of you and thank you for joining us today. And we - among the members of the Domain Name Association are proud to count - while we remain (unintelligible) as members and we do have a lot of law firms that participate - and I'm proud to say that Microsoft and Google and Amazon and some of our participants have a nexus with the brand registry group and work very heavily in promoting dot brands - as well as we have many of the registry service providers that provide services to dot brands. So, we enjoy a great relationship with a variety of the different industry associations.

So, I'm glad that you are all here this morning. And as others come in, we'll introduce them as needed. So, I do not have a presentation. Rather this is an opportunity to discuss some of the opportunities - some of the trends in the domain space and some of the commercial activities that we're starting to see. As well as an opportunity to highlight some of the activities like the Healthy Domains Initiative. And a new initiative that the Domain Name Association is pushing very heavily into the market place which is called Domain Connect. And I'll talk about these just a little bit. And then we also want to highlight universal acceptance and the activities in and around universal acceptance and what that means to emerging regions and regions that are very well supported.

So first off, I noticed that we have one remote participant -- (John McCormick) -- who is a respected friend and long-term follower of the industry and a technical person who follows trends and domain name registries and follows them very closely. (John), you are - we're delighted you're joining us today. Thank you.

Okay, well I'd first like to start off discussing the Domain Name Association. I think I talked about it at a very high level. But a day and a life of this

Executive Director as I work in the privilege of serving in this role is to field a lot of questions -- a variety of questions -- whether they come from people in the space of the private sector, the investment sector - often it's - it could be an attorney - it could be a press. There's a variety of different people who contact me and ask me questions about the domain name industry. Often with a misunderstanding or bias that they arrive about something - some specific tactical need that they're doing.

And in every conversation I've had the opportunity to help inform them; to help and educate them a little bit about our industry because it's a complex and nuance but thriving industry that we live in. Domain name often is misunderstand as being, you know, not - I think the domain names are often in the plumbing. They're not highlighted and raised and elevated in the way they're really are - except for when we give out web sites and email addresses, we're actually talking about domain names. And domain names are very powerful utilities that actually operate the whole internet. And I have a philosophy and something that I live by. I described it - domain names in fact are the actual internet. For a consumer, for any kind of commercial user, and educational user - user of any type - if they're talking about or email addresses or domain names, they are talking about the internet. And so, I think it's a fair thing to say that domain names, in fact, are the internet.

Now, domain names have been a growing business since they were first introduced. And a thriving area of use has grown around them. And what we try to do as - at the Domain Name Association is help to highlight areas where there are new opportunities that are developing. We try to connect people with the right resources. And we try to also ensure that, you know, there's an accurate and correct picture of what's going on. And sometimes help people understand some of the opportunities that they could take advantage of in domains.

One of the things that we do also is work very carefully and thoughtfully with a variety of different stakeholders. And one initiative that we've worked on is called the Healthy Domains Initiatives. A group of experts met yesterday here in Kobe to discuss some of the things that we as an industry can be doing to help really identify things that can be done as proactive measures - these are unfortunately going to be voluntary - but there are measures of a variety of ways that registries and registrars can work together to help curb some of the abuses and some of the activities that may not be as positive where domain names are used.

And what we will try to do with that is make recommendations along the way. There's a lot of evolution right now with respect to some of the European and other international laws regarding privacy that are affecting the display of Whois and as those things start to stabilize, I think we'll have a lot of opportunity to do be doing more. But we've taken a lot of opportunities to develop and document things that can be used as baseline recommendations for how someone can work proactively to curb abuses.

There's a lot of proactive activity being done in a commercial interest to reduce bad actions by registries, by registrars that are commercially motivated because in some cases, the registries are starting to see that service providers might be blocking their streams or doing things that are disruptive to their customers and potentially can impact the overall satisfaction operation of their registries. So, we're seeing people very actively creating products and innovating to monitor and watch for bad actions and help elevate those and address them proactively.

One of those is - I have Roland LaPlante here from Afilias - a service called ZoneHawk which is used - was created largely - I don't want to put words in your mouth but ICANN within the registry agreements has specification where they're asking registries to identify how they are addressing abuse and responding to abuse reports. And ZoneHawk -- I think -- is designed to help create substance to reports and demonstrate some of the activities. And a service like this is fantastic because it helps reduce the bad actor potent in the - in TLDs that are seeking to grow. And as that growth occurs, sometimes there is occasionally some bad activity. And it's important as a registry to be monitoring these things and watching for them and a lot of registries are doing this to help ensure that the use is stable and solid and healthy.

Another thing that's happening inside the registries and registrars - it's very note ready - and I called attention to it very early on in this discussion - was an initiative that is called Domain Connect. Domainconnect.org is the URL for this. And one of the things that this initiative does - it was initially - I'll give you a background on it. It was initially started by Arnold Blinn at GoDaddy and then it's been gradually more and more released into the public. And now it's a public standard essentially that is pursuing IETF track and is available in (unintelligible) for people to publish or create templates. But it's a very simple concept that works very powerfully to help drive domain name registrations, reduce costs and encourage renewals.

What it does is a fundamental way - and the reason the Domain Name Association really supports this is that it really does create a fantastic and organic use of domain names and it simplifies the setup and signup process for adding materials onto it such as hosting or email or certificates.

At domainconnect.org one can find out more, but essentially this templating system automates the complexities of the DNS configuration. So, for anyone who has configured or setup - maybe G-Suite might be an example of this. A lot of different providers that are making services available that include a domain name are requiring some form of a proof of ownership or some verification model.

And so, what a system like domainconnect does is it automates and - it automates an authentication letter. It takes and also automates through scripting and configuration templates that authentication of ownership. So, it might configure a DNS entry that indicates the ownership of a domain name.

And it can go and also configure the (unintelligible) record configuration for something using G-Suite as an example. So that the domain owner can simply go into a registrar's control panel, say that they would like to add their custom domain to an existing G-Suite, click a couple of buttons and then have all of the complex DNS configurations established.

Now, DNS configuration for someone like myself or many of us in this room who might be more familiar with the technology and the way that DNS is configured, this is something that we understand and even still then sometimes may not go through these steps. There's a disconnect in the timing so you have to step away. Essentially if you think about, you know, could my mom do this? You have to apply that type of a lens to it. And in a lot of cases the configuration of DNS can be intimidating and complex above the aptitude of most. So, you either have an analysis paralysis - sort of no action taken because of that fear of pressing the wrong button in the airplane cockpit. And that can either lead to a very expensive and time costly support call where one of the service provider or the registrar are walking that customer through a process of configuring the DNS or the person just simply does nothing and then at the year mark, when they come back after that domain name was purchased and have to make a decision about renewing the domain name, they just simply don't.

And there are some metrics to support the overall impact of an activated domain name and the renewal rates on that activated domain name that are much, much, much, much higher than for those that are not. And in fact, you go from almost a 50% renewal rate up to in the high 90s, like a 98% - 97%, 98% renewal rate on domain names.

So as a registry, it's fantastic because you have an adoption at an organic level where people are using domain names in the way that is natural, organic and that's very positive for a registry. But ultimately the renewal is something that is a very, very great thing to have a positive impact on.

So the registries are very supportive of this and are starting to communicate out to their registrar channels about, you know, the benefits of adopting this. For a registrar, or a service provider, the ability to reduce the costs on domain name support is a very, very beneficial thing because you know, the margins on domain names themselves are really not substantial. Most of the time the margin is there from, you know, anything that you add on like hosting or email or certificates, sometimes privacy, sometimes other things. That is where the revenue is driven to the bottom line of a registrar.

And that lets them put people into those customer support seats, educated people with more revenue. And so the ability to reduce the number of calls that come in for those folks to help walk people through complex technical situations is really advantageous.

Finally, for consumers, it's a great benefit because you have the ability to, you know, click configure things. And so no longer does a registrant have the

experience of what do I do? Instead they have, I see what to do, I click a button and I've got what I want. And so these are all very positive things. So the DNA is working very heavily to communicate and advocate adoption of this particular standard called Domain Connect. That's one of the initiatives of growth and innovation of the Domain Name Association. So I'm delighted to talk about that because it's something that there's really no bad news around.

This week we had the opportunity to hear a lot of updates from within ICANN about universal acceptance. And some of the amazing things that have happened since the inception of the group supporting universal acceptance. There's quite a few email providers, Microsoft, Google, and many others that are now supporting native language email, which is one of the hardest things to configure because you're working with not just your system but the interoperability of your system with other systems that'll be between your customer with a natural language domain name and the recipient email receiver.

And to have systems – major widely-used systems such as those at Microsoft and Google as well as the other providers, we see a lot of opportunity for uptake in what's called EAI. We're also watching a lot of growth and interest in internationalized domain names. And this is fantastic because it allows people to communicate in their native language.

Some of the other things that the universal acceptance group are doing is to help recognition of domain names, in forms, in linkability, in social media, the domain names being recognized, if you type a Twitter – if you tweet and you include a domain name, the ability for Twitter's system to recognize that what was typed is a domain name, the ability for forms to accept email addresses that are – might be from new domains or might be from internationalized domain names, that's an important thing for those companies to be able to have those customers so that those customers don't leave that system or, you know, don't become a customer.

And so by raising awareness of some of the things that these companies can do, some small mild updates, they're able to help companies realize better profit potential from being able to serve a wider number of users. And it's understandable, some of the activities in and around universal acceptance, are very challenging. Many of them are Y2K issues without a Y2K.

A lot of forms, a lot of systems were designed with simple character sets, native character sets that are not necessarily internationalized. And so there are a lot of systems sometimes that need to get upgraded or updated in order to accommodate a variety of new top level domains or even ccTLDs in some cases.

If there are fields that may have old logic, I've actually found some libraries and updated them as I am a developer, a recovering developer, as I go and find libraries, sometimes I will find regular expressions that basically say Com, Net or Org, and everything else isn't a domain name. And that's a fairly

easy one to fix but it's necessary to look through. There are quite a lot of systems that have very old logic.

And it makes sense for decades, the top level domain system was very flat and static and there weren't that many new domains so the addition of them – it may have appeared to be static, even though it wasn't, and with the addition of a thundering herd of new extensions and the diversity of ccTLDs and their approaches to how they structure their name systems as well as IDNs, it's been very beneficial for people to have an opportunity to see that these can be included into systems and should be accepted as domain names because they are domain names even though they're not following that Com, Net, Org model.

Finally, one of the things that I find myself frequently answering questions about is the activities – the commercial activities in and around the system.

((Crosstalk))

(Matushi):   Oh no. Oh. Thank you. Apparently there is an Open Data Initiative called currently that it conflicts with this. So the – so we lost one attendee here. The thing I'd like to highlight is that the activities in and around the universal acceptance have been greatly enhanced by staff at ICANN and by the hard work of the secretariat and very, very smart people within the UASG who are working in a dedicated fashion to help reduce some of the challenges and improve systems.

And there are some dedicated staff at ICANN who actually will field technical support questions and will follow up with universal acceptance issues, you know, such as linkability or forms. Someone can report an issue, create a trouble ticket at UASG.tech and there are staff at ICANN in the support team that will not only receive those but they'll actually research them and go and where they can contact – they'll hunt for the person who might be able to effect a change and improve that system that may need that updating.

That's really, really amazing thing that ICANN's taken and resourcing because that's one of the biggest challenges that registries and registrars face as businesses is that someone taking and registering a domain name needing it to work in specific cases and having some form of software that may or may not work ICANN going the extra mile to actually provide that support service and facilitate those remedies is really, really big benefit. And we're really grateful as an industry to see that type of support from ICANN.

I'd like to just highlight that we are in a growth trend in the domain space, that if one follows some of the domain industry reports and some of the statistic systems that are out there, we're seeing a lot of growth trends but some shifts in that types of growth. And a lot of the growth comes from awareness when folks are aware, are made aware or understand that that are options and opportunities to register domain names especially that they have options

other than Com, Net and Org, whether they're ccTLDs or are some of the new extensions, that they have opportunities with that.

My association has a website called Domains – what is it, inthewild.domains, and we highlight a variety of different uses of domains, sometimes it's award-winning design that the creative firm uses domain name – we might see – we receive photographs all the time of domain names being used in billboards and signs and on trucks.

And one of the things that's really exciting is to see these domains actually used in the wild whether they're at the Barcelona meeting of ICANN, the previous meeting to this one. It was very interesting to walk around the streets of Barcelona and see just how frequently that dotCat for Catalonia – or Catalon language was used inside of Barcelona. You would see dotES and you would see dotCat used widely and interchangeably at a variety of different high profile places. You'd see them in shop windows; you'd see them on billboards and on trucks, in television advertisements.

So it was very exciting to see that wherever you go you notice more and more organic adoption of domains and they're not just the domains of 1994, they're the domains of today. And so that's fantastic to see that type of activity.

I wanted to take and have an opportunity to do some questions and answers while we're here in the room. And there is also I think we have a participant online to see if there are any questions there. John, do you have any questions remotely? I see a question in the room and I want to include an answer there. John, I'll watch for your question and then I'll – but in the room. Please.

Griffin Barnett: Thanks, Jothan. It's Griffin Barnett again. The question that I had is going back to some of the HDI stuff. Obviously you kind of touched a little bit on some of the impacts to anti-abuse efforts and related efforts and how those efforts have been impacted by recent changes to privacy laws and obviously, you know, developments within ICANN to address that including the temporary specification and EPDP and all that sort of stuff that's been going.

And I guess my question is, what has DNA been doing either under the HDI or perhaps in some other format to come up with potential best practices, both for registries and registrar members in connection with disclosure of registration data since we're sort in a stage right now where we have – we still have the temp spec obviously which dictates sort of the baseline, if you will, for reasonable access.

But there's been a lot of discussion in the community obviously about, you know, what does that actually mean and what we're seeing in terms of folks from the sort of Whois user side is a lot of discrepancies in terms of how various parties are kind of implementing that requirement. So I'd like to hear

perhaps some of what DNA might be doing to perhaps come up with sort of a bridging set of criteria if you will, to kind of meet that standard.

Jothan Frakes: Yes, sure, Graham. Oh excuse me, Griffin, sorry, right. The – yes so that puts me on my back heels a little bit, but I do have a decent answer, right? So we're all waiting for – and watching for and participating in the evolution of systems that both meet the compliance requirements that are on the one hand there for contractual relationships with the regulator, for lack of a better term, but registries and registrars have contracts with ICANN. And so ICANN places certain requirements upon them. So you have that on the one hand.

And on the other hand, you have laws that regulate or stipulate what data can be presented. And the challenge is there's a significant amount of conflict between those two things. And a lot of the consequences, financial consequence that a registrar might face or registry, I suspect, but focusing on the registrar, that a registrar can face a very significant financial damage.

And very frequently there is quite a lot of interest in having access to data that may have been masked or redacted in order to comply with the laws out of concern for ensuring you're complying with law. And there are systems being developed currently to help create solutions to some of the visibility of some of the redacted information.

It's very challenging because it's not an attribute of domain registration to determine if somebody is an individual or a company. And that's one of the parsing factors. So the industry is looking at can we capture or track if somebody is an individual versus a company. And maybe that can positively affect things.

We're closely watching the RDAP development and some of the TSG and of course the output of this EPDP process that has occurred here within ICANN. That whole process, monitoring it at a very, very high pace, has unfortunately really, really absorbed a lot of the time and resources for otherwise proactive legal and technical resources at registrars and registries because they're closely watching the systems.

You know, the access is understood why there is a need for the access, but when faced with a consequence so significant in financial terms registrars are, you know, kind of have to carry that exposure. And so they do what they can to protect against that exposure.

So the – many of them have redacted – heavily redacted the out that they show rather than go through and try to determine you know, is this a user or is this a company? Are they located in a geography that has the restrictions that are required? And it's a very reactive stance but it also ensures that there is a reduction in risk from displaying the information where somebody did not want that information displayed and there's law that would govern that, that puts those registrars or other entities into exposure positions.

What are we doing right now as an industry? Well we're active in the process of looking at the impact of these very rapidly set policies. We as an industry, for example, are participating in things like technical operational discussions between registries and registrars. It's a very complex and intricate system that exists around registries and registrars. The provisioning systems and making changes to these can be very, very – there are consequences that trickle out into the systems.

So for example, it was necessary to make quick revisions to the transfer process because Whois information would no longer be possible to validate so we look at ways to ensure there is integrity to the transfer process so that a bad actor can't somehow tease the system or trick it and steal someone's domain name.

And still have the fluidity where customers have choice and can pick the registrar that they would like to work with and can move to and from those registrars. And there's a variety of other things that cascade out further into the long tail of the impacts of all of these systems. So I would say that we're working proactively on impacts to reduce the friction of impact, to a lot of the changes that have been required.

With respect to how we're going to present data or what those levels of access are going to be, I know there's been quite a lot of conversations here about, you know, who can access this and how they can access this and restoring some of the areas of information fields that are redacted currently through systems like RDAP and, you know, what can be restored. So, I mean, it's a great question, it's a real – unfortunately there's not great answers to it because there's a lot of evolution going on within the policy system.

And there's a lot of, you know, again a caution in breaking law while still a desire to provide compliance. And in most cases the systems that where there's situations such as a UDRP or other situations of abuse, there are often clear cut cases that help untangle some of these issues so there is – there are systems – though imperfect that can help at least in the situations of distress where there's a need to do things.

It's not perfect for every situation but it's as perfect as it can be under the current circumstances. And we're all working actually pretty proactively to try to reduce the frictions and challenges.

One of the areas that – to talk about, you know, Whois access is that there are some businesses that have, you know, built around the assumption that there's free and freely-available data around registrant information. And in many cases the business is kind of on hold until, you know, some of these systems are put forth.

And a lot of these businesses provide very important helpful data services to help identify you know, pools of abuse or follow or monitor trends. And so it's

recognized that these are businesses that are doing good things and in some cases working in collaborations security researchers, for example, to help law enforcement or to be watch dogs and, you know, it's recognized that these systems will want some kind of access but there's also that financial consequence.

I had, just to close out the topic, I had the privilege of speaking on a panel at M3AAWG, which is Mail, Messaging and Mobile Anti Abuse Working Group. And it was a fantastic panel that had you know, many people from the industry. I think it's a – don't talk about Whois there. But there was an audience, a very large audience of people who are security researchers, people who are working to combat spam, malware.

And, you know, I just did a show of hands in the room, I asked, you know, how many of you are here, I got 100% of the hands, then I said, how many of you who are here want your Whois access to be the same as it was, you know, two years ago before this European privacy law came into effect? 100% of the hands went up in the room. And then I said, okay, how many of you want to break the law? And no hands came up in the room.

And then I said, how many of you would indemnify me from breaking the law, and those consequences, in order to have that Whois access that you had two years ago? And I a saw zero hands come up in the room. So, you know, to not want to accept some of that risk is one of the challenges that we find in the systems of – as we move forward.

But there are quite a lot of people working on this. And, you know, I think it's a fantastic question. I may have given you the podcast version of an answer versus the bullet points, but I mean, it's a complex answer is required there because it's a very nuanced type of a situation. I hope that answered your question.

Griffin Barnett: Yes, I appreciate that. I guess the only thing I would say, and I'm happy to move on but GDPR itself does include a basis for disclosure of data, and obviously there is a balancing test involved. And so, you know, we understand that as you kind of alluded to, there is sort of a case by case nature to some of this. But I think kind of what we're looking for perhaps is just – and, you know, there's a word that's come up in the context of GDPR compliance generally as well and liability issues which we certainly appreciate, is, you know, a level of predictability.

And so, you know, we're obviously not looking for people to put themselves in a untenable risk position by, you know, kind of forcing them to give disclosure when it may not be warranted. But I think what we're really getting at is trying to come up with, again, sort of best practices or, you know, criteria, if you will, that will give the Whois user community some level of predictability in terms of how that balancing test might be done across different registrars as you mentioned sort of being the frontline, if you will, potentially registries as well.

And so that's kind of what we're driving at. I think it may be something that – and I certainly recognize that a lot of the time, energy and resources are kind of being put into the internal ICANN process looking at some of these issues, but maybe something for DNA to consider in terms of trying to come up perhaps with a set of those kinds of best practices that it might socialize.

And, you know, from the Whois user community obviously, I mean, I come from the IP community, but you know, we work, as you kind of alluded to, cyber security folks and a number of others who are kind of on that side of the equation, you know, we would love to, you know, continue the conversation and see if we can't get to perhaps some of those types of best practices so that there is a great predictability. Not just for us but I think really it would help the contracted parties as well because I think, you know, again it all goes back to the idea of predictability.

Jothan Frakes: Yes, thank you. And you know, those are very well known things. And they're not ignored. But there's an order that a lot of that has to be layered, you know, compliance with law, then compliance with ICANN. And then, you know, what else can be done in addition to that? We do have within the Domain Name Association, I should say, is a voluntary organization that people chose – they make – they elect to help fund and participate in through membership to be members.

And the members are probably not so much the ones in the problem space, however, each individual member is going to be making their own decisions about what they do or don't do based off of their own, you know, internal policies and businesses. And, you know, while we can make any kind of recommendations and we do work together to come up with recommendations on this, you know, everything that is done is voluntary.

So the efforts in and around Health Domain Initiative, we got very, very far with it; we got to Phase 1, where we documented a significant amount of recommendations or voluntary initiatives that could be taken that many members, you know, implement some of many or all of them which was up to and including trusted notifiers for certain types of segments of activity.

You know, there's a lot of activity in the space of registries and registrars where we're working very hard, very actively to do this. But we are hamstrung by the process right now and the resourcing that had been dedicated to those proactive efforts in the HDI, for example, are very distracted by all of the focus on ensuring that stable, competent and effective policies come out of the current rapid processes that are coming. So but I appreciate you raising that issue.

And the needs and wants and interests of the IPC and other sectors are well known and we don't ignore them. But sometimes it has to be factored in among many other things. Thank you for the question.

I see a comment from John, "Usage is important. Some of the categories of non-usage like paper, click parking, holding pages, sale pages, have deletion rates of up to 80% or so in a lot of the gTLD services you've run." Oh, thank you, John, that's a good data point.

So is that – so where we see organic adopting in things where Domain Connect or other types of services that promote organic use, that seems to be a place where we see less of those same statistics, where we see higher renewal rates and low deletion rates.

But there are – there are many in gTLD in general whether it's legacy or new TLD, you know, people do park domains whether they're using it for, you know, put it for later use or I've seen also where folks will set up paper click on domain names that are used elsewhere in order to mask sometimes some really cool innovation and technology or administrative pages that might be up on a administration sub domain, they'll park the core domain just to mask – to kind of hide in the crowd on new innovations and things like that.

Complete light of day activity, and, you know, there's a variety of cool commercial activity that's going on. I mentioned at the start of this, and I'll talk just briefly on this and then we may call the session to an end, the innovation potential of domain names is very high. We recognize mail and web as being very significant areas where domain names are used. But there are people innovating in the use of text records and DNS SEC provides a lot of layers of security and authenticity to the communications between services.

There are location tags in DNS that can actually identify longitude, latitude, altitude, and a variety of other records that can identify the services that are available on a system. So as people begin to experiment with these systems they're using things like dynamic update and text records to maintain or manage the state on – I guess we could we say a smart device might be something like a sensor for whether a door opens or closes.

But sometimes those types of devices are not smart in that they don't hold a little web server that you can poll them on what their current status is, they will just identify an electrical change of state. And so people are exploring, you know, like a door sensor or window sensor, temperature sensor that these different devices could communicate through dynamic updates using DNS to update their state using text records or other types of DNS records.

And then let the distributed system of DNS that's very robust and resilient be a place that somebody could poll the status of these rather than have the individual devices contain those statuses.

Longitude and latitude, geo-fencing, geo-caching, different types of activities in and around physical presence and location are being explored and there's a lot of really cool innovation in that space. One of our members, dotLux is a part of Minds+Machines, launched and have tied in and are working very close with the Theorem name space and other crypto-currency and

blockchain systems where, you know, if you look at an IPv6 address those are very complicated and long and hard to remember.

So domain names with Quad-A records are used to be shortcuts for IPv6 addresses. In a similar long complex string is a wallet, a token, or contract address inside of various blockchain systems, they're long hashed strings.

And instead of potentially, you know, pushing currency to the wrong wallet by a typo of a small address, you could instead identify an address with a shortcut as being a domain and that helps people to ensure that payment systems go to the right places, that tokens or wallets or contracts are more accessible by human beings. And then that the natural systems that are flowing underneath them can operate.

So there's a variety of innovation and activity going on within the domain name space. We're looking all the time at what are some things that we can do to help foster new business and there's quite a lot of exciting activity going on inside of the Domain Name Association around this. So I definitely wanted to have the opportunity to share that.

Okay, are there any other questions in the room? No? One more, okay, thank you. That's cool. That's cool.

Griffin Barnett: Thanks, Jothan. Griffin Barnet again. I was – there have been some presentations earlier in the week about DAAR, DAAR, the reporting tool concerning abuse – DNS abuse issues. What is DNA – how is DNA looking at DAAR, reacting to DAAR, do you guys have thoughts on it? I know I heard from I believe it was the Registries that they have some concerns with, you know, how that information is put together and sort of what it really means. And, yes I just – I guess I just wanted to see kind of what – if DNA had sort of its own thoughts on that tool and whether it might, you know, how it can be best leveraged or improved to represent something meaningful that the community can actually take on board with respect to anti abuse efforts.

Jothan Frakes: Yes I don't have a great answer because I have – I have to research it more. I mean, it's been called to my radar a few times. I know that, you know, any type of abuse reporting can sometimes be – it's interesting, sometimes there is an abuse of abuse and so, you know, a lot of things that the members have abuse departments that are incredibly competent, active, proactive that want to ensure that there's a minimum of a bad action, you know, so these – but these companies want to focus on providing really exception service for domain names.

That's really what they want to focus on. And abuse issues of whatever flavor or variety are never a simple tick the box next to "done." They're complex, they're complicated. Sometimes they're inappropriate, sometimes they're very clear. Sometimes one person's perspective on what abuse is doesn't match another person's perspective on abuse.

So what we've tried to do in the Health Domains Initiative as part of, you know, helping address this is come up with I'm – groups that are trusted notifiers or specific areas where there are expertise, and people doing background work and research and floating then to abuse departments some substance where they can demonstrate, you know, clear cases.

With respect to the DAAR, it's been suggested that I review this. Most of the DAAR sessions have unfortunately collided with sessions that I've had to host or lead so I'll be reviewing these and formulating but I don't really have a better answer other than we have a lot of very proactive efforts towards curbing abuse and helping to reduce the grief factor that many of us – not just for our own commercial interests but we really respect the other communities that are here assembling and their needs and interests. We don't ignore them. Yes.

Griffin Barnett: Thanks. No, I appreciate the answer and yes, it was really just more to hopefully put that issue on your radar if it wasn't already but it sounds like it is now at least.

Jothan Frakes: Yes, there's quite a lot flowing from this week here in Kobe besides just the TSG and the RDAP evolutions, there's a variety of discussions, there's discussions around the next round and, you know, the subsequent rounds kind of discussions. We're watching Rights Protection Mechanisms, we're watching a variety of different things as they evolve. And they are many and so we're watching those closely.

And I will say that we have a diverse group of members and so, you know, a registry's view on something is going to be different than a registrar view's on this, and ccTLDs also have a perspective. The DNA is composed not just of registries, registrars, ccTLDs, gTLDs, we also have participants that are, you know, domain – escrow service and law firms and companies that provide graphic design and development and outsourcing.

One of our members is a representative association of legal pharmacies that provide legal online pharmacy services. You know what's interesting is they've actually elevated to our attention where, you know, some of the proactive efforts inside of trusted notifier systems can sometimes be needing a little elegance because they're, you know, quite broad axes that are looking at very high level things and sometimes you know, it's necessary to use a broad axe to clear the forest, but in some cases that broad axe swinging too much can hit the villagers.

And so the – they're working to proactively create more elegance so that these solutions are best addressed at the lowest level. So that – I mean, registries and registrars, if there's takedowns or things like this, can be fantastic and very effective, but it's like taking down the whole power grid to shut off somebody's front porch light if it bothers you. So there's a need to be surgical and elegant and appropriate.

And that's one of those things that takes a lot of time and, you know, an abuse department person is probably fielding a variety of other roles in their job and so, you know, they want to make sure that they're competently doing something but these are complex and thorny issues sometimes that are not simple cut and dry.

So we're always looking at ways to increase the elegance in solutions and find where we can do things at the lowest possible level with the most positive effect. Yes. So thank you for that question. We should trade cards so that we can be in touch and continue these types of discussions.

Would you have any questions here in the room from our local participant from Japan?

(Matushi):   Not so specific, but – oh one thing in Japan, yes, honestly speaking, the IDN is not popular but the – from the what this week happened is it's a kind of introducing IDN all over the world is very important thing with the (unintelligible) well accepted by the industry people. But what happens here in Japan is not like that. So how do you think that you stay safe like that in Japan that find is there any findings or – I'm really appreciate the sharing that.

Jothan Frakes: So how would IDN become more widely used here in Japan? Or why do you think that it is not or…

((Crosstalk))

(Matushi):   Why in Japan is not so well accepted?

Jothan Frakes: Well, the name space within dotJP is very, very well run. It was one of the very first TLDs to be launched. And you have to think in terms of user behavior. There's a psychology of once someone is used to how something works they become set in how they do that. And so there's a need to spend almost as much time to unlearn something as there is to learn something.

It's almost a consequence of the innovation and technology that happens here in Japan. Some of the sophistication and elegance and advanced type of technology adoption that happens here in Japan versus other places in the world that the adoption I think of the name system predating the availability of IDN, it's unfortunately turned into a consequence I think with respect to being able to support hiragana katakana and some of the languages and character sets that are presented here.

There is adoption and registration of Japanese strings, I think dotCom is available in Japanese, there is a variety of TLDs, I think there's an IDN TLD for the ccTLD for Japan. But I don't know what the adoption levels are. Am I wrong?

(Matushi): So (unintelligible) the IDN ccTLD of Japan, there's not yet so that's the very much symbolistic things toward Japan's adoption is low.

Jothan Frakes: And one of the things that people look at, they say UASG so Universal Acceptance Steering Group, there is a loud voice inside of that group that is talking about awareness being a challenge, that the – just because the ability to register something in IDN, just because I could register a domain name in entirely Japanese characters, doesn't mean that I know that I can do it as a customer. The technology is there, but people may not be aware that they even have this as an option.

And so, you know, in some of the markets where we're seeing higher adoption of IDN, there's active campaigns that are promoting and educating and helping people understand that that's available. And so that could be also a factor. But I think my first point about there is such a great adoption of – and long-standing use of the dotJP name system as it existed before IDN came that, you know, one must unlearn a habit before they can learn a new habit.

And what are the commercial – there are commercial consequences and people need to factor in commercial benefits to doing such things. So it might be a nice to have versus a need to have for the companies that have done this. That's a really good question. And it doesn't just manifest in this manner here in Japan.

There – one interesting place, the next big I think gathering for ICANN is going to be in Bangkok in Thailand. And there was a big, big, big push by the Thai government to promote the – they have Thai language ccTLD, and there was a massive promotion to encourage the use and registration of Thai language domain names. And so that's the type of activity that helps. But in this case they had the ability to promote and do this so it was an opportunity to demonstrate that.

But activities like that, you know, are probably very challenging to do and you want to, again, look at the commercial benefit of them. But the DNA likes to foster and help when these types of activities are going so we can be a resource to people in addition to the UASG to talk about, you know, what are some commercial activities that might help grow that adoption? What are some reports or data that can support these kinds of things if you're choosing to do that as a business? Yes. Thank you for the question.

(Matushi): Thank you very much for your views and yes, I really appreciate it. I found that Dr. (Kami Mura) who is an academic in…

((Crosstalk))

(Keis Kay): …jump in. My name is (Keis Kay). I am looking for – I have been conducting a study over ccTLDs and TLDs and more recently new gTLDs as well from a statistical point of view. I can relate so I may not be following what you have

talked about but I have a simple question. If anyone in Japan is not much interested in IDN domain names, why not let someone else outside Japan implement and promote the idea?

So I see many IDNs are preferred by Indians or Chinese speaking population or Russian Cyrillic users. I have been using the Internet over more than 20 some years, so I have a stereotypic view over what the Internet should be. So IDN is somewhat still foreign to me. But I have such a view but someone else may not. So if existing customers and providers are not so much positive about having IDN in place, why not let others do? Does that make sense?

Jothan Frakes: I think it did. And I have no prescription, especially as someone who's not from the local market and doesn't have as strong a sophistication and background in the language as in – as you may. Some have argued that IDN is a solution in search of a problem. And it's – in witnessing where in some markets that there is adoption and use of domains, it's often where there is a significant population that can be served, there's a demographic that is underserved or there is a need for a solution.

There's a belief, it may be correct or incorrect, that there are still quite a lot of people who have not adopted the technology or benefits of the Internet. There's a belief that the ability to not have to do so in English characters or in ASCII is going to benefit those people who have yet to adopt, that may not even speak or recognize English characters or ASCII, that only speak in their own native tongue.

And there's a belief also that, you know, this IDN technology can just become the new normal at some point in the future where it can work ubiquitously alongside of the systems. And that's part of what the UASG is doing to help that utopian future arrive.

Now, is the assumption that there's a giant population of people who have an interest in potentially adopting and speaking in their own language and not paying attention to English?

You know, one case that was presented to me that sounded inspiring was one of you know, someone who – this will be a little out there but someone who is transgender in a Arabic speaking country and only knew Arabic and was communicating in Arabic, but was able to leverage the ability to communicate with someone in another part of the world using the Internet in their own native language through translation systems and found you know, support and people who were, you know, who had similar experiences, challenges and life experiences that, you know, could help that person through their struggles or offer inspiration and hope.

And so would that person have found those resources without the ability to communicate only in their native tongue? You know, this is an edge case and it's one of those inspirational stories but, you know, how many stories like that are out there? You know, would somebody from a region where maybe the

Internet is only just reaching them who don't speak any English, in Japan, would they benefit from being able to communicate and visit websites and resources that are purely in Japanese? I don't know the answer to that.

But I wonder if the assumptions that are based, you know, that these technology developments are based upon seek to reach those people and help to connect those who are unconnected and do so in a way that's more familiar and recognized. So that's the belief, that is the hope that these technologies can be there.

And as I mentioned to (Matushi), the market in Japan is very technically forward, and so, you know, it could be a consequence of being so technically-forward that the ASCII-based systems are so well implemented and so well distributed that maybe the assumptions about that – those underserved or unserved regions it's possible those assumptions are not correct here in Japan, but maybe they are. I don't prescribe this because I'm not an expert here. But the belief is in general that it is a technology that can help people and that's the hope and that's a lot of the premise behind it.

(Keis Kay): Yes, thank you. I totally completely agree with you and there should be some underserved population or users, segment of users, who may be does it more from the internationalized or Japanese – Japan-ized domain names or other services. But the problem is the current consumers and the current providers do not see the value as it should be.

So but if you look at the rest of the world there are many people who are very much keen on promoting IDNs from ICANN officers down to content providers and ISPs. So I wonder if they coming to Japan and promote and exploit the opportunity of IDN in place of us ourselves. So this is not a technical problem; it's like a business issue.

There may be some policy or competition concern as well. But if JPRS JPNIC and whole Internet community in Japan, do not see the value – the true value, then I expect a third party come into play. So I – but first of all I completely agree with you on the value that IDN may have. So I hope, yes, more people look at IDNs in Japan too. Thank you.

Jothan Frakes: Yes, and you may consider participating in the Universal Acceptance Steering Group. They're looking for experts in different markets to help ensure that there's a sophistication that, you know, it's not people from out of a country that are coming into a local market and saying how it should be or not – or doing things that may not be elegant or accurate for local markets because there are – especially in the case of languages, a lot of considerations, a lot of nuanced considerations.

And, you know, I agree, I think it's going to be a commercial motivation that ultimately drives this. We see adoption of IPv6 is, you know, very much falling into the category of, you know, what is the driver to implement and make

changes or to adapt and do things with systems? Scarcity that doesn't exist in the dotJP name system is not there to motivate in a similar way.

So what are some of the things that could motivate someone or be – so that a consumer or user or registrant would be attracted to registering and using an IDN in Japanese? I am not the person to tell you what that would be. I think that someone from here in Japan or at least somebody with sophistication on the culture and the people here and their decision making processes what would motivate them would be the more appropriate person especially when educated with a long background in the domain system such as yourself. Yes, very much appreciate that question.

Well if there are no other questions, there is an Open Data Initiative session going on that some have suggested is taking quite a lot of our audience. And I really appreciate the participation that we have here in the room. It's nice to have the opportunity to have these discussions.

As the Domain Name Association, we're constantly looking at ways to highlight commercial benefits, talk about the changes and updates in the system. We're working very heavily to ensure that there are healthy avenues of communication to collaborate on voluntary systems, to help curb abuse such as the Healthy Domains Initiative. We participate in a robust manner in the Universal Acceptance Steering Group to help motivate, drive and evolve those processes and support, you know, universal acceptance of domain names.

And we're working on innovation systems such as the Domainconnect.org that I mentioned earlier in the session. So we have quite a lot of activity. Those are some of the bigger ones, we have many, many other smaller nuanced activities that we're doing to help promote growth, innovation and give voice and education about domain names to be a centralized resource and a voice for the domain name industry.

So I really appreciate the participation from everyone here in the room. Thank you very much for attending this session especially at such an early time of day. And with that I would like to call this session to a close. And I thank you all very much for your participation. And, John, thank you for participating remotely. Thank you all and a have a very good morning today.

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