
SINGAPORE - Universal Acceptance
Monday, February 9, 2015 – 17:00 to 18:15
ICANN – Singapore, Singapore

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: If you could please take your seats.

CYRUS NAMAZI: Welcome everyone. Let's go ahead and begin.

My name is Cyrus Namazi. I'm a part of ICANN's Global Domains Division. Welcome to the session on Universal Acceptance.

I'm told, over to my left, we're dealing with some minor technical issues, so apologies for that. They should have it resolved quickly.

Today we wanted to get a discussion going on the topic of universal acceptance, which as you know, has been around for a long time – a very complex issue in the domain name space. I think everyone in this room probably knows it better than me and has lived with it in some shape or form for many years. It's not really related to new gTLDs alone, although with the additional new TLDs into the root, I think the magnitude of the issue has expanded and has been brought to the surface even more.

Before we begin, I asked Akram Atallah, who is the President of our Global Domain Division and my boss to also say a few words before he

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actually has to dash off to another meeting. Let me hand it off to Akram, and then we'll in earnest begin the session. Thanks very much.

AKRAM ATALLAH:

Thank you, Cyrus. I think that we all agree that the universal acceptance is actually becoming more and more important, that we really do need to put our hands together and address this issue. We, I think all agree that this is not something that ICANN staff can do on their own, but also that even ICANN staff and the ICANN community cannot solve on their own either. I think that this is going to take a lot of effort, a lot of outreach, and a lot of work to move the needle on the issue.

But unlike previous times when I actually have seen efforts on universal acceptance, I think I'm encouraged to see this team that's sitting in front of you and the energy that they have to address this issue. I think that it's energy that I hope will translate into energy across the room and across the entire ICANN family and that we will put our hands together and go get what needs to be done taken care of.

We, as ICANN staff, have been working on this for a long time, but in a, I would say, unsatisfactory level and in a very intermittent way. Now I think we have the focus and we have the resources put in place to address this issue from our end, and I hope that we can join you and get together and make the effort that is needed to move the needle on this issue.

I think you see here on this panel a lot of different motivated parties. Their enthusiasm is actually contagious, and I hope that you will jump and join the group not just as observers of their progress, but actually as



contributors to their progress. If we do that all together, I think we will make a difference.

I'm looking forward to the next update in Buenos Aires where I think we will see a lot more actionable items and a framework that's put together. I think that we've talked yesterday that if we do our work quickly, we could actually impact or have a plan in place before our budget for next fiscal year is done where we can actually allocate the necessary resources to extend the work into next year and make a difference.

Thank you very much for attending, and I really urge you to participate, not stay on the sidelines, but do your bit. This is a bit of evangelism that needs to be done. I think we have the right people and we have the right reach to make that happen.

Thank you very much for attending and look forward to your contributions. Thank you.

CYRUS NAMAZI:

Thank you very much, Akram. I guess to paraphrase it differently, it really does take a village to move the needle on the whole issue of universal acceptance.

As I mentioned before, this is not really an issue that's related to new gTLDs or IDN, TLDs, or even ccTLDs. It's been around for a long time. The scope of it and the magnitude of it is just felt a lot more now that there is more TLDs going into the root.



So with the idea of how can we mobilize more masses, more troops, and get more education and awareness out there to essentially get a ramped-up effort going on to address the issue, I hosted a group of volunteers from the community in our Washington DC office a few weeks ago with the idea of how we can actually get together, put our energies, our minds, our thoughts together to come up with a plan of action. To essentially, get the word out there, identify all the right pieces that need to be in place for this effort to take place.

As you are well aware, this is something that goes far beyond the ICANN community in its scope, reach, and effect. This group of people came together from places as far away as Hong Kong. Edmon Chung flew in from Hong Kong for which I'm very grateful. Edmon always has a lot of great ideas. And really spent a whole day in the room. We rolled up our sleeves. We had people remotely also dialing in from other places and came up with an idea, a blueprint of a plan.

Essentially, scoped out three teams of volunteers each one of which was tasked with a particular set of responsibilities. One team was responsible for defining the scope of the issue. We have a team that actually came together to address the marketing and communications aspects of it. And then there's another team that has been looking at it – and this is just the past two, three weeks what you'll see – to discuss what the structure of this organization, this team – I'm trying to not use the word working group because we over use it – what structure it should take in terms of its efficiency and its ability to actually invite all of you, and then more, and absorb the energy and the more resources, and put them into the right direction.



Without any further ado, each one of these individuals that are sitting on my left are responsible for one of these pieces and structures that I just told you about. It goes without saying that what you'll see is actually the culmination of a lot of hard work from many more individuals than the small group that you see up here for which I'm very thankful.

I'm going to hand this off to Brent who is going to kick this off. If you could please introduce yourself and take it from here. Thank you.

BRENT LONDON:

Thank you, Cyrus. I'm Brent London. I work on universal acceptance issues at Google. My job is to work with Google products to make sure that they properly handle internationalized domain names, new gTLDs, and internationalized e-mail addresses.

When this group gathered in Washington DC to discuss the problem, I worked with the group to identify what the top issues are that are preventing us from moving forward. I'm going to talk about the high priority issues here.

The basic problem is that these new types of domains and e-mail addresses just break stuff. You try to use an internationalized domain name, a long new gTLD, or even a short new gTLD, or certainly an internationalized e-mail address, and you're likely going to run into problems.

What we're doing is we're going around asking developers, "Make your products work." We're asking for universal acceptance.



It turns out it's not quite so simple as saying, "Here's some examples. Just make this work properly."

There are a few approaches that one could consider as a developer when trying to solve this problem. One of them is you could read the RFCs. There's a large number of RFCs. It's pretty dense reading. It's pretty thorough, but it's not a very practical way to encourage the entire Internet community to universally adopt these new strings.

I think the slide is not working particularly well here. Yeah, we're having universal acceptance problems with these. It's fuzzing out on the punch line of the slide. Looking good.

So the RFCs are not a very efficient way to solve the problem.

Another option is to talk to developers and say, "Well, use the existing libraries." So the very top third of the screen shows what a java implementation might look like.

It turns out that this only works for some strings. So an internationalized e-mail address would be validated incorrectly if you try to use the built-in java library. In this particular example, if you were to go with java, you also would get an incorrect validation if you used a fake top-level domain such as [inaudible] is not a TLD.

It's not clear that we want to be recommending that everybody just go out and use existing libraries because they themselves are not universally accepting.

Another common solution that people, anybody who's written code before will be familiar with, is to search for the answer online. Many



times people end up at sites like stack overflow, which are full of really detailed answers that address these types of problems. So if you're searching for how to validate an e-mail address, you'll get some pretty concrete results here. The problem is there's a lot of them. There's 490 pages worth of results if you search for validate e-mail address.

They're very platform specific. They don't take into account the holistic problem that a developer is trying to solve. It's more like, "Here's how you validate an e-mail address in PHP."

So once we get down to the level of looking at stack overflow answers, though, we're almost missing the scope of the problem a little bit. It's very, very granular, and it doesn't necessarily let people solve this, tackle this entire problem of universal acceptance.

We've established that stack overflow is designed to answer really specific questions. It's not designed to say, "All right. Start accepting all domain names and all e-mail addresses."

We need to take a step back and refocus what it is we're actually talking about here. We're saying, "What is universal acceptance?"

There's a lot of different groups of people that are involved when it comes to trying to embrace this problem and come to a solution. Just to send an e-mail address from one person to another, you'd find yourself in a situation where an operating system, mail servers, routers, mail service providers, security software, all need to work properly with an internationalized e-mail address.



For mail clients, one user might be using three different mail clients on three different platforms. It's hard to package that all together in a way that makes sense to everybody who needs to fix this problem.

What we've been working on with the DNA is a repository. A single stop place where someone who knows nothing about this problem other than that it needs to be solved can come to find plain English, plain prose explanations for what the problems are and how to solve them. So rather than a PHP explanation for how to validate an e-mail address, some words split on the "@" symbol, validate the domain names using these steps, validate the local part of the e-mail address using these steps, and something that explains things in context.

In addition, code samples. So if you were trying to validate an e-mail address, here's how you might go about doing it without presuming to know exactly what the end user's implementation is.

Another thing that is useful here is case studies. One project that we already have up on this repository, that Kurt will talk about in a moment, is the Horde project, which is an open-source groupware system that fully supports internationalized e-mail. There's a whole study on there talking about what was actually involved from the display layer all the way down the stack in getting that to work properly.

There's a rough outline of what this looks like with some basic content available at ua.thedna.org. This is a starting point. We need a lot more content. We need a lot more community involvement to make this work properly.



But we want to have a single source of truth that people can go to to get answers to these questions and understand the problem before they jump in to solve it.

KURT PRITZ:

Thanks, Brent. Good job. My name is Kurt Pritz. I'm with the Domain Association. It's our members that answer the phone when registrants call and say their newly purchased domain names don't work or their e-mail addresses don't work. It's very important that they not only give their callers and complainers the short-term answer, but a prognostication of when universal acceptance is going to be achieved.

I'm going to talk about communications and outreach, and I would argue with some of my colleagues at the table and they would argue back, but I would say that communicating this issue effectively in a way that provides results is as daunting or more daunting a problem than resolving the technical aspects of it. It's very complex.

I'm going to describe that to you, my impression about it. It's really a call because, like Cyrus said, some of us met, but we realized this communications task is really global and we need a global effort of the right level of expertise to resolve it, a combination of expertise of technical know-how and ability to reach out. If you think about the ICANN community, there's a pretty good mapping there.

When we sat down and talked about this briefly for a day, we talked about classical communications and crafting a message, and then figuring out how to distribute it taking into account the values of the receivers of the message, the audience and matching that all. I'm going

to talk for a few minutes about why for universal acceptance this communications problem is particularly vexing.

First, we're not trying to achieve one result. We're trying to achieve three results. We're trying to provide awareness about the number of top-level domain name extensions, and then get an understanding of this problem, and then once there's understanding, also provide the call to action or the incentive, so people actually act. In one package, trying to meet these three objectives, and then those three objectives, multiply those through the thousands and thousands of applications that have been written, the online services that exist, and the number of systems. It's big.

As Brent said, for example, just sending a single e-mail requires engaging an entire support community. You can read it here: operating systems, e-mail server software, routers, security providers, ISP mail clients, mail clients on your laptop, your hand-held device, your phone, or your Surface.

Then once you have a solution such as Brent was talking about, the universal acceptance repository, once it's there, how do you get people to come? How do you get people to look at it? Then once they look at it, how do you get them to trust it?

If you think about the different axes of this communications problem, another aspect of it is each one of our target audiences has different interests.

Businesses are motivated by minimizing expense or maximizing revenue. Different firms or different people have different abilities to

innovate or want to innovate. Some are looking for new opportunities, some are looking not to change, some rely heavily on a reputation for technical sophistication.

There's some in our audience that have different approaches to IT. Some outsource it all. Some like to do it in-house. There's different aspects, and different values associated with customer service and how it's valued. There's cultural aspects also.

If you think about crafting a message, you have to craft a set of messages for each one of these values or each one of these different interests and match the message to the receiver of the message.

Then, two, our target audiences receive messages in different ways. Some rely on social media. Some like me, don't. Some rely on the newspaper, like me.

There's individual corporate contacts, so in some instances, my CEO knows your CEO and that's a very effective way to communicate.

There's formal public relations efforts that could be undertaken. Trade associations exist for disseminating information. There's industry events and the like.

It's a three-body problem. There's an axis for the multiple purposes of the message. How people receive the message, what their motivations are, and what their own situation is. There are several road blocks to solving this communications problem.



Who owns the problem? There's a lot of saluting where people point in different directions about who owns it, whether it's business owners themselves, their vendors, hosting companies, cloud service providers.

What's the incentive to fix it? What's the immediate incentive? Some think it's expensive, but even if it's not, it's still an expense and the return on investment isn't necessarily apparent to all. There's unclear ownership of the problem.

I would characterize the problem a little bit as the same issue with regard to new TLD awareness and the new TLD program. The DNA just did an awareness study. You should all look at it on our website. But the awareness about the existence of these new opportunities is still substantially low, and so if you don't know about the new TLD opportunities, you certainly don't know about universal acceptance issues.

We want to craft a set of messages and devise the channels. I'm just going to touch on a couple of points here, but then make a call to those here and those playing at home about joining together in order to do that.

What's the message? The message is this combination of urgent, but the need to keep it simple, and let's not make too big a deal out of this, because all the TLD operators are in the business of selling domain names, and we don't want to say things don't work or they need to be fixed. This is a natural progression of introduction of a new program and new opportunities.



I got to make a Venn diagram for the first time since eighth grade. But finding that intersection of urgent, simple, and not a cause for alarm is difficult.

Then it has to be crafted by those that understand the audience. They have to understand how the message is going to be understood, and they have to understand the channel in which to convey it. That's why we want to form this team of the right industry people, whether they're ISPs, or people who work for browsers. You can read the different list there of entities, but it's a lot longer than that.

Certainly, we need people that know how to mobilize distribution channels, how to mobilize social media. One of my ideas is ICANN. If you think about ALAC of all things. ALAC has their RALOs, and their ALSes below them. If we multiplied the message through them and charged every At-Large person with placing one news story about this or making one contact about it, and then multiply that the other way through the entire ICANN community, I think social media can be a powerful tool for us.

A lot of us work for companies with public relations departments that want to place stories with the right tone. Those of us that work for large companies have corporate contacts where they can make peer-to-peer relationships work. I don't know what hackathons are, but that's been suggested as a place to do this.

We had a conversation. One of the people working with us is from Apple and she offered to convene a meeting of PR executives in



northern California to discuss this issue. So there's some opportunities there.

What's the communication effort? It's developing the messaging, and then delivering the message. We need those kind of people that are excited and can be dedicated for a while to help us. In the midst of all those cheesy graphics, there's a link at the bottom that will be shared through ICANN with the rest of you to contact the owners of the list, then volunteer to join this effort. Thank you.

CHRISTIAN DAWSON:

Kurt, the URL I that's at the bottom there, if you didn't catch it because that was pretty quick, it's going to be at the end of my slides as well. I appreciate that.

My name is Christian Dawson. I am with a group called the Internet Infrastructure Coalition. We attempt to provide a singular voice for the companies that sit above the telco layer and below the content layer, the companies that make up the fabric of the Internet. One of the things that they send me to ICANN to do is participate in the ISPCP where we can represent our non-contracted members who don't normally participate in the ICANN process.

Whether we are talking about cloud, infrastructure providers, hosting providers or ISPs, those are the people that I work with on an ongoing basis, so this issue is very important to me. I'm very excited to be moving forward to help figure out what to do next which is what we're going to talk about here.



Well, we had a whole bunch of smart people convene this workshop, and we came up with all these really smart ideas, but then we needed to figure out how we carry on those ideas as a next step. We couldn't do it all in a one-day workshop – surprise, surprise. So we need to build a group.

So we spent a lot of time coming up with what kind of group we needed to build. We came up with the idea of putting together a Universal Acceptance Steering Group.

Like you said, it's not a working group. A working group is traditionally associated with a policy group, and this is not policy. This is advocacy. Additionally, generally working groups have a very set mission for a very specific amount of time. They solve the problem and move on.

What we see with this issue is that it's something that's going to require a lot of work over a lot of time. It's something that's not going to be solved in even a couple of years. We're talking about people needing to update their systems over a long period of time. We want to make sure that we create a structure that facilitates that.

Steering group. And we have a nice little acronym (UASG) which I believe we made sure was not taken. I know that ICANN likes its acronyms. UASG is our new one.

We put together a letter to the ICANN community, and we're going to be disseminating that letter later today. We're looking to the community here, who's also interested in this subject and may want to be involved in this process to come join us in moving forward these efforts, be a part of the formation of this group, so we can take these



ideas and whatever ideas you have forward to try and start solving these problems.

What we are presenting to you today is our ideas on which we want to found this group. It is not a formal charter. The charter is going to come after the formation of the group, which is going to come after we, hopefully, get the community buy-in to start the group today.

Think of these as what we're looking to the community to say, "Yes. We like these ideas. Move forward with them. Let's start this group. Let's get going."

Then we'll start the charter, maybe based on some of these ideals once we get going.

The first of these three ideals:

1. "The ICANN community should support the creation of a Steering Group to guide the identification of topline issues and propose solutions as well as the creation and dissemination of best practices and general outreach information about universal acceptance. As this is a project that will take years to make progress on, the Steering Group would be a standing group whose membership may fluctuate over the years. ICANN should be prepared for the Steering Group to drive action over the course of the next ten years, though group leadership terms and structure should be re-evaluated every two years.
2. ICANN staff should be the key coordinator in a formalized community effort on universal acceptance and provide

resources to the community in order to address this important issue.

3. A call from general membership to the Steering Group will be announced at the ICANN Universal Acceptance meeting at ICANN 52 in Singapore (where we are now), pending community acceptance of our proposals. In short order following this meeting calls for Steering Group chairs or co-chairs will then be made. The leadership chosen will be tasked to drive a further process to invite volunteers to join the group.”

Here, we talk about what we’re looking for the community to provide when we are trying to address this issue. Most of the work, the ideas is going to come from us.

“The UASG should be made up of ICANN community members as well as non-ICANN community experts. The UASG will provide guidance to the ICANN team as well as work alongside the ICANN team throughout the project. Active participation as volunteers is expected from the community.

The UASG will aim to include participation as a multi-stakeholder group. The UASG and the UA initiative is envisioned to be an advocacy group rather than a policy oriented group. As a result, weighted representation is not expected and participation from various stakeholder groups are expected to change over time and depending on the activities and priorities appropriate at various stages of the project.”

Now let’s talk about what we envision as being the role of the ICANN staff.

“The ICANN staff role is that of coordinator, catalyst, and supporter and manager of the work streams. They are there to project manage and publish outcomes, and to provide budget to support the initiative. They should also act as secretariat for the UA initiative. Though travel support to meetings should not be required for Steering Group members, future research and outreach efforts may require financial support.”

We envision a situation where since universal acceptance is a multifaceted issue and the work of the UASG will be required to be broken into work streams, we think that we need to break it into at least high priority issues and communications, though as we form the group, we can have discussions about potential other work streams that may be helpful in achieving our goals.

Let’s talk about next steps. On 1:30 PM this Thursday, right before the public forum, we’re going to be outside of Padang for a half an hour to talk about next steps and organizing. That’s basically prep work for a kick off call that we’re going to be doing on Wednesday, February 18th at 11:00 AM. That’s assuming that our conversation as a group once we open things up to questions goes well and we have community buy-in for our ideas, then we’ll move forward with the kick off call at 11:00 AM.

There is a discussion list. Like Kurt said before me, you can sign up for the discussion list at the URL below. Thank you.

CYRUS NAMAZI:

Thank you, Christian. Thank you, Brent and Kurt as well.

If I were to summarize what we heard, a substantial part of this effort, this undertaking, has to do with increased awareness, better communication, and the outreach really well beyond the ICANN community. It's really a global effort.

I would totally echo what Christian was saying. This is a multi-year effort. It's probably going to take some time before we can see a substantial movement of the needle on this. But the sooner we begin and the more of us that participate, obviously, it's better.

We heard from Brent on the scope on the issue, we heard from Kurt on our proposed communications and marketing plans, and then Christian capped that with a proposed structure for some type of organization to wrap around this effort to actually be as inclusive as it can be. It really needs all of us to be in there.

I would totally agree with the definition of the role for ICANN here, which is really that of the coordinator, convener, educator, facilitator. In fact, I dragged Akram here to say a few words at the beginning even though he was double booked just to make sure that it's obvious to all of you how important this is for all of ICANN the organization and of course ICANN as the community. I'm going to be involved in this effort as well and do what I can to make sure that the part of it that ICANN is charged with is taken care of.

In the interest of making this more inclusive and getting the community to participate in it, we're fortunate to have Ram Mohan here sitting with us at the table as well. Probably Ram does not need much of an introduction here. He's a member of the board of ICANN. He's also a



member of the SSAC and has an extensive and in-depth knowledge of the issue. He's been involved in it for a very long time.

I'm going to hand the microphone off to Ram who can then facilitate the next round of, hopefully, a discussion among all of us. Ram?

RAM MOHAN:

Thanks, Cyrus. I really don't have a great deal more to say other than share just a couple of anecdotes.

In 2001, the company I work for, Afilias, started up a brand new TLD. It was the new TLD at that time (.INFO) and promptly fell a fowl of most systems that existed at that time all the way from acceptance of e-mails to web-based forms that didn't work.

A few years later, ICANN came out with an IDN test bed, and in that IDN test bed was for the first time top-level domains that were in the IDN and Punycode format, but that could also be visible on screens in your local language. We discovered that browsers and other platforms were having trouble.

Sometime after that in the IETF, internationalization of e-mail, the work on that area moved to a very good spot. At Afilias, we ended up implementing what was in those RFCs as an actual working example of code, and we found that even though systems that we had worked with could accept and send out internationalized e-mails for the most part once they reached the outside of our boundaries of our systems, they often just disappeared. They got dropped somewhere along the way.



So clearly, the problem of universal acceptance is, as Cyrus and Akram had said and others here have said, it's a problem that has been around for a long time. Recognition of the scope and complexity of the problem is not new either.

What is new or relatively new, however, is the enhanced focus, the increased energy, the cross-industry engagement as well as the participation of the community. I think that the coalescing that is happening, that is new, that is exciting. There's a new energy about the advocacy that is needed to be done, because everybody recognizes that this is not a problem that can be solved in the space of a year or two. In fact, if you look at the letter that Christian had shown that is thinking about this in terms of a timeline and scope that this might be a ten-year scope in terms from where we are to a point where we can say we are at mainstream and we now have overnight acceptance of all of these TLDs and the technologies associated with this expansion.

There are a couple of other things that I also wanted to say. Inside of the ICANN Board there has been an understanding and acceptance that this is a significant issue and this is an issue that requires dedication and focus. Staff has been working quite diligently in that area, but the discussions that I've been a part of in the ICANN board, they've all been very positive. There's been very little resistance to working in this area, which is I think a good thing for our community.

I should also note that in the SSAC (the Security and Stability Advisory Committee), of which I'm a member, has for quite a while now had a focus on universal acceptance issues and has put out at least one or two



reports that target problems that occur as a result of lack of universal acceptance.

So with all of that background and the good news that ICANN is already committing to putting its energy, its resources in the coordination of the work in this area, I'd like to open the microphone for feedback from our community.

EDMON CHUNG:

Thank you. This is Edmun Chung. As Cyrus mentioned, I was part of the group that discussed this a couple of weeks ago as well.

Of course, I have been trying to push this issue for quite some time. I have to share with you how even though I've been involved in the last couple weeks, I'm very excited about what's happening here. I hope people would join me in supporting this initiative.

A few things just to add to it. One of which is in terms of going forward, I think the community has really already signed off this on a bottom-up basis referring back to the JIG report (the Joint IDN Working Group) that pointed towards this direction. In fact, what is being presented is pretty much aligned directly with that report, so it's been signed off by both the GNSO and the ccNSO. This is very encouraging.

The other part, Christian presented a few highlights of the letter that was being talked about. I don't know where people can see the letter, but I encourage people to take a look at that. There is a couple items that I think I wanted to highlight as well from there that wasn't fully covered.



One of which is that this is an issue of importance not only just for registries. This is an issue of importance that has relevance to consumer trust in the DNS, because if things fail, people lose trust in the DNS overall. I think that's a very important element.

The other element I think is important, which is also part of the letter that we drafted, is that IDNs is a big part of this, International Domain Names. I understand the whole expansion of the TLD spaces is very important, but IDNs, I think Brent mentioned as well, IDNs and the IDN e-mail part of it is a big part of this project.

Also a core piece that brings together the entire community, our friends here – [Andre] from Russia, from Korea, from China have been waiting in the wings for this to happen, so that we can come and participate and really drive this as a global effort.

To recap, this is a consumer trust in the DNS thing, so this is a community wide thing, and IDNs is a fundamental piece of this project, which really brings the community together. I'm hoping that people behind me will continue to support this so that we can really kick off this working team. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you, Edmon.

TONY HARRIS: Yes. My name is Tony Harris. Amongst the several jobs that I usually am involved in, I work for the Argentina Internet Association. For example,



my day job is setting up Internet exchanges, assembly them, and also we network as a region with everything that has to do with connectivity.

I have been tasked by, let's say, the Latin American ISP community to be on board with this. We consider this a priority issue because all complaints are going to land up on our call centers.

The other problem we have is educating ISPs all over Latin America to the fact that there are new gTLDs because they've been so accustomed to .com, .net, and .org that this is something out of the blue. It catches them by surprise if they get a complaint. For example, the social inclusion community in Argentina got very enthusiastic about .social, so they started registering .social domain names, e-mail addresses, and everything. They don't work.

I was speaking at a conference in Cordova in November and they came up to me and said, "Well, .social isn't working."

This is important. This is not minor stuff or something we can look away from. It has to work. Otherwise, the Internet is not one Internet with one operating structure.

Getting to some of the things that was said as to where we should look, I think we have two directions we have to look. We have to look forward and backward. Forward would be going to the educational community and saying, "Whatever you're teaching in universities, teach this, so from today onwards, developers will be using it."

You can go to all the cell phone companies and cell phone manufacturers who have clubs of developers – I've sat in one of their

sessions with 700 young developers lapping up the new tools that we're throwing at them – they develop apps looking for success obviously, but there are thousands of these young developers all over the world and you can get to them very easily through the people who congregate them and give them the tools.

So looking forward, there's a lot you can do at least so that when people start developing new apps, platforms or whatever, they know they have to take this into account. They would not leave out .com, for example, in anything they do. Well, they shouldn't leave out any others.

The other way you have to go is work backwards on everything that you have in place and get that straightened out, which is a big job. But it certainly deserves to be done. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thanks, Tony.

JOHN LEVINE:

Hi. I'm John Levine. I'm here with the IETF. I have a lot of sympathy for the issues here. If you look at some of the FRCs for internationalized e-mail, some of them have my fingerprints on them. But I'm also a Senior Technical Advisor for the Messaging Anti-Abuse Working Group, which I think the majority of you are members.

In a classic example of the left and right hand apparently not talking to each other, I'm working with a guy from Google on best practices for IDNs not to resolve because of the security issues. While you've done a



pretty good job on avoiding homograph issues in TLDs and second-level domains, there's all sorts of other issues.

From what I'm seeing, MAAWG members, who are some of the biggest ISPs in the world, are perfectly sympathetic to the IDN concerns, but they're also really sympathetic to their users getting phished and other kinds of fraud. If you have complaints about, gee, my mail got lost, it's a much less expensive complaint than, gee, somebody just stole my credentials in my bank account.

With all this cheerleading here, I'm wondering what are you guys doing to integrate the security issues so that when people make their systems better, they don't simultaneously make them worse?

RAM MOHAN: Someone wants to take it?

CHRISTIAN DAWSON: A couple of different things. I wanted to say that I completely agree. MAAWG is on our list of action items as far as the things that we are gearing up to try and focus on. In fact, I'm going to be there next week.

JOHN LEVINE: So am I. We should probably talk.

CHRISTIAN DAWSON: Fantastic. 18-hour time difference, we'll have a lot of fun.

We are going to start doing some outreach, but the thing is this was a workshop. This is going to become the group. I think the answer is we have a bunch of lists right now. We have a bunch of lists that need to be brought to action, and one of the actions will be to start those coordination processes and absolutely, MAAWG will be part of that and probably a number of other aligned organizations.

KURT PRITZ:

It's not just MAAWG. It's everybody who writes e-mail software. They got to EAlify their stuff. But in the process of doing that, they also need to make sure they put in reasonable anti-phishing issues or people are going to say, "This is too dangerous to use."

CHRISTIAN DAWSON:

Completely agree.

RAM MOHAN:

That's I think part of why this is not a simple thing. You were talking about cheerleading. I think it's far more about understanding. First, getting a catalog of the problem set, because I don't think even that is fully there, and until we get there, it's hard to say here are possible solutions.

CHRISTIAN DAWSON:

Okay. Let's find each other after the meeting.



UNKNOWN SPEAKER: This is [inaudible]. I come from Beijing. In the first round new gTLD the application, there are many Chinese [IDN] TLDs. However, at present, Chinese local mobile browsers do not support this new Chinese IDN well. When users type IDNs with their cell phone, mostly these browsers jump to the search engine. There's not a good [inaudible] in respect of user experience as well as Chinese popularization.

We've been communicating with Chinese mobile browser companies and trying to persuade them to solve this issue. We would like to know whether ICANN has such plan to move forward to the popularization of IDN in mobile devices such as communicating with local mobile browser companies in China as well as in other non-English speaking countries. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you for that. Cyrus, why don't I pass that to you?

But before I do that, one of the things that I would suggest is for you, sir as well as others, to join in this initiative, because we need these voices and not only just in the public forum here, but in steering where these things have to go.

Cyrus, do you want to answer the specific question about ICANN?

CYRUS NAMAZI: Sure. In fact, I was going to say the same thing. I'm totally sympathetic to the issue. In fact, that's why we're all here to identify these issues and a course of action. I'd like to echo what Ram was saying. Please come join us so we can understand the problem better.



In fact, we have, I think, most of the big browser companies already as a part of this forming group, so that can actually work. Then we can extend that into the reach of I think there's browser companies in China as well, and then we'll have the resources to do that. The commitment from our side is there, so please join us is the bottom line.

RAM MOHAN:

I also wanted to be a little bit more specific. If you look at what, at least, the workshop participants have so far said, they're saying the action you're asking for from ICANN is not necessarily in ICANN's remit or is something that ICANN alone should be doing. ICANN can help broadcast a message or distribute a message, but the actual work of convincing the browser manufactures and mobile phone folks etc., it's too large a job and too significant an issue for only ICANN to be doing it. It's one among many rather than "the" place. At least, that's what we've talked about so far.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

Thank you. We are very eager to participate and do this together. Thank you.

BRET FAUCETT:

Hi. It's Bret Faucett from Uniregistry. It seems to me that we're only going to get universal acceptance by fixing one bad implementation at a time. To that end, I wonder if you've thought about – or maybe there already is – a clearing house for us to report bad implementations when we find them.



Just two weeks ago, I was trying to send one of my colleagues a video from the iTunes store about Anthony Bourdain in Singapore. I tried to put in the new TLD address and it invalidated the sale. This is Apple, right? They're losing a sale. It would have been great at that moment to be able to tell somebody. How do we help people take that next step?

KURT PRITZ:

Yes. That's a question that we all deal with. Where do we send this and when?

At least in the Domain Name Association, when we constructed this first version of our repository, we wanted a button that said, "Report your problems here." We paused over that button, because having such a button also carries with it an obligation to act in some way.

I think one of our first undertakings here will be to determine how do we create that place to report problems, so not only the problems are listed there, but somebody's charged in acting with some way and expectations are managed how it's handled.

It's exactly what we need, we just have to manage it carefully so that when it's created it meets people's expectations. It's within the remit of our consideration and it's why it's not part of the repository that we've constructed so far because we want to do that undertaking seriously and charge the right people.



ANDREW SULLIVAN:

Hi. My name is Andrew Sullivan, and I work for a company called Dyn. I've been around the DNS world for a while. I, along with Ram, experienced the wonders of turning on .info back in the day.

I have two things to say. The first is I'm happy that people are talking about a long time for this. The fact of the matter is on the Internet, it's your network, your rules, and lots of people are going to refuse stuff, and we just have to predict that that's going to be true despite the fact that we wouldn't like it. I, of course, would prefer that people use the actual DNS to validate these things, because of course, that is the authoritative source for this data, so you could look it up there, and gee, wouldn't that be nice?

But I would also say that ICANN has a certain pile of money that has accrued as a result of the activities of the expansion of the root zone. It occurs to me that there are all of these developers out there who have little projects that have little validation libraries and so on. What people are asking them to do is work. That is, you want them to do work so that your business model works.

I would like to suggest that ICANN could take some of that pile of money that it has and fund developers for this. I know that when IDNA2008 happened, one of the ccTLDs – I think it was DENIC, but I won't swear it – funded one of the developers to develop [lib IDN2], which is used by all kinds of people.

Well, somebody had to pay for that, and this is an opportunity to say, "We think this is important and we are responsible stewards of this



thing, so we're going to put our money where our mouth is." I would really encourage that.

RAM MOHAN: Thanks, Andrew.

SATISH BABU: Hi. My name is Satish Babu. I'm from India. I also am a part of the IDN Working Group of ALAC. I have two comments. The first is that from the ALAC side, we completely support this initiative, and we'll be very happy to participate and help in this initiative.

The second point that I would like to make is that the specific case of a lot of Asia-Pacific, South Asia as well as several other parts of the region, there would be a need for significant amounts of outreach effort.

In India, we have a problem of having, of course, many languages, but the fact is that the mobile devices are the devices that most of our population is going to use to connect.

The current situation is that the different manufacturers do not have a common standard on what they should be supporting vis-à-vis Unicode. On some mobiles, we can read Unicode; on others, we cannot read. That's a very basic thing, and when you start thinking about building on top of that with things like e-mail support and internationalized e-mail support, we do not know what is the basic guarantee, the minimum guarantee, that these devices offer.

I'm not sure whether the government should be addressing it or the industry or ICANN in conjunction with all these actors, but unless we have some minimum guarantee of what is supported, it will be very hard to visualize how this is going to take off in countries like India.

Thank you very much.

RAM MOHAN:

I'm sorry, Mr. Babu. We were trying to figure out if, at least, from here we can have an answer. I guess the way I would paraphrase your question is mobile devices in India are displaying Unicode in a non-uniform manner, and you're recommending that by some means the mobile devices in India ought to be subject to some minimum standard of uniform display. Is that correct?

BRENT LONDON:

I think the answer to your question is that the standard for these devices to be using is Unicode, and if they are trying to use some sort of encoding otherwise. With IDNA2008, for example, they're going to have a bad time. It's somewhat incumbent upon these manufacturers to support that, and I'm not sure that it's within the scope of this group to get mobile phone manufacturers to support certain codings though.

SATISH BABU:

If I may have a quick follow up. The problem is not Unicode support per se, but the fact that there is no common minimum support that's guaranteed across all devices. [inaudible]



I don't know whether the government is supposed to make standards on this, I'm not sure, or the industry will have some self-regulating, self-imposed standards on this.

RAM MOHAN: The way I look at that is that common minimum guarantee is Unicode. That's kind of what if you are a responsible manufacturer or a responsible participant, that's what you're supposed to do. If you're doing it wrong, then you're just messing it up. I don't know how a government regulation is going to necessarily fix it.

SATISH BABU: The problem is that we have around 15 scripts. Some scripts are supported, others are not supported. So if a device should be used in the whole country, we have a problem.

MAXIM ALZOBA: Maxim Alzoba, FAITID. Could you consider creating some log or universal acceptance ICANN certified like months, days of the year that because a situation where vendors show off saying that we are certified and you are not, could be on our side. Thanks.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you. So a badge kind of a program. Thank you. Please join the group.

CHRIS DYLAN:

Hello. I'm Chris Dylan from University College London, and I'm a member of the Chinese Generation Panel. I've got a comment and a question. The comment is very brief, and it's just really on behalf of so many people to welcome the formation of this steering group. It's fantastic. I'm really keen to get my hands dirty, and also quite keen to break things down into digestible chunks.

One of the things is that there are companies who have already made a lot of progress with internationalization. Google certainly comes to mind. I believe they've got IDN e-mail working.

One of the issues though is for people like me who are slightly masochistic. We want to actually experience the problems. It's actually getting hold of the test accounts so that we can actually experience what's working, what isn't working, what are the issues?

I don't know whether I'm the only one in the room with this sort of need, but I think testing is a very important part of this. I would really welcome opportunities to break things. Thank you very much.

BRENT LONDON:

I completely agree with that. We recognized that when we were working on problems internally, and we developed a solution that's open source and published on GitHub that you can use to test IDN e-mail specifically, not fully internationalized e-mail yet. But IDN e-mail as well as internationalized domain names, you can plug a URL into your application, see what the response is, and see whether it works properly. It works with IDNs as well as new gTLDs. We'll have that listed on the repository once that's fully up and running.



UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Many, many thanks. GitHub, ey? I'll get going. Thank you very much.

RAM MOHAN: We'll do the same thing as well from Afiliat with our IDN e-mail piece.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Hi. My name is [inaudible] and I'm working for .ir. I just want to say something about the Arabic Script community, since it's been a while that we are working for that, and also I'm the member of the Arabic Generation Panel that [inaudible] we've just done our work with the LGR table just yesterday.

There are two issues. I think that one of them is very important for the Arabic script, because it's among the limited number of scripts that is right to left instead of the left to right. I think that one of them is a usability, and it's very hard format that in the left to right context, we are using the right to left script, and it's very important. Take a great note to that.

Also, one of the problems that we have for the Arabic LGR, Arabic TF-AIDN was reach out and find people that actually speaks in a small number of languages in the communities, because it's very hard like small languages.

I really encourage people for the small community on languages that speak some kind of specific languages using Arabic script to come up and help us to get a better Arabic Script Working Group and Arabic script usage of the Internet.



RAM MOHAN: Thank you.

BRENT LONDON: As Ram has mentioned before, I would very strongly encourage you to join the group. The problem that you're describing is especially pronounced for internationalized e-mail addresses where you have this "@" symbol separating a local part of a domain name, and if you're not sure which side's which, you can run into lots of problems. We would greatly appreciate that kind of guidance.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Yes. A couple of years ago, I had a discussion with Andrew that we need to formalize some kind of the IRI taskforce at the IETF to deal with this right to left. It's not comes to the domain itself because if you're going to the IRI, then it's going to be jump around. [inaudible] I think that's very important to tackle that issue. Thank you.

ANDRE KOLESNIKOV: Hello. I'm Andre Kolesnikov, .rf .ru.

First of all, I'd like to thank Google to keep this work. For many years, Google is always on the panel. Actually, this is an application we are always checking what's new with IDN, because five years ago, it was a big issue, a big deal, and nothing was working. Today, we have a support of major social networks, Google, search engines, all except e-mail because there is a left part of the e-mail which has not resolved



yet. The community is not accepting the common ground for what to do with the left part because the right part was already working at least for Chinese and Cyrillic] script.

Second, it's very good that there's a forming groups around the initiatives about the IDN universal acceptance like DNA and also [ANIP] TLD. We do a lot of conversation about it. We have case studies, and there's European research on IDN support.

There are many activities, but still, I'll sing the same song. I believe that ICANN is in charge. ICANN must be the coordinator for all these activities because this is ICANN's product. The IDN, TLDs is ICANN's product. I believe the major contribution and coordination must be going from the ICANN side including all the communities and all the initiatives around, but it must be under the supervision of the ICANN. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you very much for your input. I'll provide my point of view. I don't know if this should be under the supervision of ICANN. I think it should be under the coordination of ICANN because they have the resources and the ability to do stuff, but it should be under the supervision of the community.

ANDRE KOLESNIKOV:

Russian's always miss with the coordination and supervision.



RAM MOHAN: In that case then, we're aligned. That's what we're calling for the steering group to be formed and for ICANN to have a specific role of convening and coordinating.

CYRUS NAMAZI: In fact, I think ICANN is under supervision of this group actually. That's the way it's shaping up.

But you're absolutely right. This is why at the beginning I highlighted and I even had Akram here to re-emphasize and highlight that we are committed to this. This is a very important undertaking both for me personally as well as for ICANN the organization. Thank you for your input.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: There are two questions from the remote participation room. The first question is from remote participant Andre [inaudible]. He says, "IDNs work well in Twitter. IDNs do not, though, work in Sina Weibo. Is Sina involved in this universal acceptance initiative?"

RAM MOHAN: If you know someone from there, please have them join.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: The second question is from Rishi from CentralNIC. "Following on from Andre [inaudible] question, does the steering group consider it important to bring major industry players on board with this initiative

given the new push around this issue due to the gTLD project? Having such participation will likely be seen and taken on board to a greater degree by those smaller participants in lesser developed countries. The hope is that this would create a model whereby input, clarity of thought, and [unanimous] decision would push organizations to prioritize changes in their systems to aid universal acceptance. Thank you.”

CHRISTIAN DAWSON:

If you take a look at the letter that is going to be distributed today, you’ll see that representatives from many major corporations that drive a lot of the content on the Internet are represented – Google, Microsoft, and Apple. As you go down the list, you’ll see that the stakeholders that are already to the table today make up an important group that is a small piece of the puzzle.

Yes, we are going to be doing the right kind of outreach to the right types of organizations. Some of the right players are already here today, some of the right ones are, hopefully, on their way after this call for community engagement. I think that if we don’t get the right players on the bus right at the beginning, we’re going to go out and search them out.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Christian. I also wanted to add and just clarify we’re not the steering group. We’re just a bunch of folks, volunteers who think this is important, and we’re bringing this to you and saying, “Here are some thoughts from us.”



When you come together and you join, then we create the steering group. For the remote participant, please join in and be part of the steering group. Any other questions?

As it so happens, we're almost precisely at the closing point of this session. On the screen, you will see the next steps for us. We're looking to meet face-to-face 1:00 to 1:30 PM Singapore time this Thursday, February the 12th, and also hold the first kick off call on the 18th of February. There's an e-mail list that we strongly encourage that you sign up for.

The letter that Christian was talking about, we'll have that put out as well in a public way.

What's needed more than anything else at this point is input from you, from everybody who's there to provide feedback on the ideas that have been generated so far and to provide some guidance and drive on your experiences what has already worked for you, whether some of the ideas that have been generated are good or completely crazy. All of that is really what we need to convert this from an idea to something real.

With that, I'll pass this back on to you, Cyrus, and we'll close the session.

CYRUS NAMAZI:

Thank you, Ram. Thank all of you for being up here and really having invested a lot of your time and energy this so-called initial steering committee of it a lot of thought, effort, and energy went into it.

I was very pleased. I was very impressed, to be honest, to hear of the ideas and thoughts, the things that Andrew Sullivan mentioned or the



potential rough road ahead that John Levine was talking about. These are all the exact types of things that we're looking for.

I'd like to just reiterate, please come sign up. Join us. ICANN is definitely behind this. We're going to drive this. This is going to be a very long-term effort, but it really takes the whole community and beyond to make it successful.

So with that, we're going to close this session. I thank all of you for being here and for your participation. Thank you very much.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

Ladies and gentlemen. If you could please assist us by exiting the room promptly. This room now has to be turned around for a program tomorrow morning. Thank you very much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

