



Quarterly Report of the usTLD Stakeholder Council – Q4 2016

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Overview

In Q4 2016, the usTLD Stakeholder Council deliberated on the Privacy Services Proposal and the Premium Domain Names Proposal submitted to the Council by Neustar. Neustar, with the Council, hosted the .US Stakeholder Town Hall to be held in October.

Regarding the Privacy Services Proposal, much discussion centered around access by law enforcement to WHOIS data. Neustar, after incorporating recommendations from the Council, submitted a revised proposal to the Council for its consideration. Ultimately, the Council voted to recommend that Neustar solicit public comments on the Proposal.

Previously, Neustar presented to the Council a proposal for the launch of premium domain names, including one and two-character domains. This plan would make available to the public at a premium price certain high-value, highly visible, premium .US domains, some of which are currently reserved. The release of such attention-getting domains will raise awareness of the .US domain and will help to make .US more competitive with other leading TLDs. Ultimately, the Council voted to recommend that Neustar solicit comments on the Premium Domain Names plan.

Council Recommendations

The usTLD Stakeholder Council recommended that Neustar solicit comments on the Privacy Services Plan and the Premium Domain Names Plan.

Other Informal Input Provided

The usTLD Stakeholder Council did not provide any other informal input to Neustar or the Department of Commerce during Q3 2016.

Membership Update

No membership changes were made to the usTLD Stakeholder Council during Q3 2016.

Summary of Public Comments

Neustar opened public comment periods for its Privacy Services Plan and Premium Domain Name Plan. The public comment periods are to remain open until at least January 16, 2017.

Summary of Topics under Council Consideration

Privacy and Proxy

Neustar presented a final version of its Privacy Services Plan to the Council, after incorporating ideas and input from the Council, and solicited public comment.

Premium Domain Names

Neustar presented a final version, incorporating comments from the Council, of its Premium Domain Name Policy Proposal, to the Council for its consideration and solicited public comment.

Town Hall

The Council held its 2016 Annual Town Hall on October 26, 2016. The purpose of this public forum is to share information and statistics about the .US namespace; provide an update of the actions of the Stakeholder Council; and gather feedback from attendees on the future of .US. Neustar provided a presentation on the “State of Domain and .US” as well as the policy proposals currently being reviewed by the Stakeholder Council: a plan for allowing registrars to offer privacy services for .US to their customers; a plan for the release of premium names including one and two character domains; and a discussion for offering internationalized domain names (IDN) within .US. The presentations were followed by a lively question and answer discussion. The Town Hall has approximately 35 attendees from the US as well as international sites.

Blogs and Media

Neustar published “.US Hosts its Annual Town Hall Meeting” in Circle ID on October 13, 2016 and “Neustar to be Acquired by Private Investment Group Led by Golden Gate Capital” in Circle ID on December 15, 2016.

Summary of Meetings

October 2016 Meeting:

The meeting held on October 3, 2016 was a postponement of the regularly scheduled August meeting and, accordingly, was summarized in the Q3 2016 report.

November 16, 2016 Meeting:

The .US Stakeholder Council held its monthly meeting on November, 16, 2016. To open the meeting, Neustar presented information regarding the October Town Hall. Neustar confirmed that there were 36 participants external to Neustar. During the Town Hall, the attendees responded to three polls and asked twenty nine questions during the event. According to the Town Hall survey responses, interests related to business was the primary reason given by attendees for their participation in the event. Participants also responded that they felt overall satisfaction with the event. After discussing the Town Hall, the Council members deliberated on whether or not to establish a public comment period for the Privacy Service Plan and Premium Domains policy proposals. The Council decided that the Secretariat should circulate its .US Privacy Service Plan and .US Premium Domain Name Proposal to the Council members for

final comments and if no further comments were submitted, the Secretariat should post both policies for public comment. Moreover, regarding the .US Premium Domain Name Proposal, the Council asked that the Secretariat clarify the scope of the Council's consideration. The Council decided that the Secretariat should revise the policy to include an introduction that addresses the scope of consideration, and circulate this new version for Council comments before posting for public comment.

Following the Council meeting, Neustar changed the Privacy Plan and the Premium Domain Name Proposal to include specific language as to the scope of the Council's consideration and recirculated the items to the Council for final comments. Members of the Council representing law enforcement submitted comments with regard to the Privacy Plan. Neustar incorporated those comments and resent the document with the additions to the Council. Neustar gave the Council additional time to comment on the changes. No comments were received. Neustar posted the plans to its website with a request for public comments to be submitted.

December 2016 Meeting:

The .US Stakeholder Council met for the final time in 2016 on December 16. Becky Burr opened the meeting by discussing the announcement that Neustar will be acquired by a private investment group and stated that the sale will not affect Neustar's commitment to its role as the registry operator for .US. Neustar remains committed to fulfilling the privilege of being the .US TLD Administrator with the same excellence as has been delivered in the past.

The Council then reviewed and approved as final a work plan for 2016. The Council will move from a once-a-month meeting schedule to a 6 week meeting interval to allow for more work and review time between sessions. The meeting day will move from Wednesdays to Thursdays. The first half of the year will be dedicated to moving the Council's work on privacy service implementation, premium names plan and IDN to completion. The second half of the year will be geared toward public service ideas.

Neustar announced that the public comment periods for the Privacy Service Plan and the Premium Domain Names Plan has gone live and will remain open until at least January 16.

Deadlines for Q1 2017

1. The Secretariat to submit the Q4 Quarterly Report to the Council.
2. Solicit public comments on the Privacy Services Plan and the Premium Domain Names Plan.

Appendices

Appendix 1: usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes November 16, 2016

Council Chair Scott Blake Harris began by asking the Council to approve the October Minutes for the record. The Council approved.

Crystal Peterson of Neustar presented information regarding the Town Hall. There were forty total attendees, with thirty six external to Neustar. The attendees responded to three polls and asked twenty nine questions during the event. According to the Town Hall survey responses from the attendees, the primary reason for participating in the event was for business interests. Participants also responded that they felt overall satisfaction with the event.

Kimberly Miller of Neustar began the Council discussion of whether or not to establish a public comment period for the Privacy Service Plan and Premium Domains policy proposals. The Council decided that the Secretariat should circulate its .US Privacy Service Plan and .US Premium Domain Name Proposal to the Council members for final comments and if no further comments are posed, the Secretariat to post both policies for public comment by Tuesday, November 29th.

Specifically regarding the .US Premium Domain Name Proposal, the Council asked that the Secretariat clarify the scope of the Council's consideration. The Council decided that the Secretariat will revise the policy to include an introduction that address scope of consideration, and circulate this new version for Council comments before posting for public comment.

Action Items-

- The Secretariat to revise the .US Premium Domain Name Proposal to include an introduction addressing the Council's scope of consideration.
- The Secretariat to circulate both policies to the Council for final comments.
- The Secretariat to post both policies for public comment if after one week there are no further comments.

Appendix 2: usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes December 16, 2016

Council Chair Scott Blake Harris opened by asking the Council to approve the November Minutes for the record. The Council approved.

Then, Becky Burr explained Neustar's announcement to be acquired by a private investment group. In summary, Neustar remains fully committed to fulfilling the privilege of being the usTLD Administrator with the same excellence as has been delivered in the past.

Next, Kim Miller described the 2017 Work Plan. Several changes were discussed. Regarding administration, the Secretariat moved that the Council meet every six weeks as opposed to once a month, and that the Council meet on Thursdays instead of Wednesday. In regards to Council initiatives, the Work Plan proposes that the first half of the year be dedicated to concluding open policy issues, and the second half of the year be dedicated to public service ideas.

The Council adopted the 2017 Work Plan as final.

Finally, Ms. Miller announced that the public comment periods for the Privacy Service Plan and Premium Domain Names Plan had gone live and are open until January 16th. The results of which will be discussed on the January 26th call.

The Chair presented concluding remarks and the Council dismissed until the New Year.

Action Items-

- N/A