



Registry Operator Monthly Report

June 2021

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Registry Services, LLC
2155 E. GoDaddy Way
Tempe, AZ 85284



Monthly Progress Report for June 2021

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As required by the Department of Commerce/Registry Services, LLC ("Registry Services") Contract, this report provides an overview of Registry Services' activity during the reporting month.

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Section 1: Summary of Major Events

Contractor and Policy Update

The usTLD Stakeholder Council held its quarterly meeting on June 10, 2021. The agenda included a marketing update and policy updates including information on the Security and KIDS.US sub-committees. Approved minutes will be shared following consensus approval at the next stakeholder meeting scheduled in September 2021.

ICANN71, for which Registry Services participates in the ccNSO to support usTLD interests, was held June 14-17, 2021, as a virtual meeting. Notwithstanding that a virtual meeting can never replace meeting in person and is the only way to address the divisive time zone issue, the virtual meetings do seem to be settling into a new type of normal. The incremental technical enhancements that have been made over the last five meetings are to be commended, particularly the live transcription and translation functionality that has been added to the Zoom platform.

One of the plenary sessions at ICANN71, Impact of Regulatory Developments on ICANN Policy Topics, shone a light on the challenges for ICANN and the multistakeholder model in an environment where more national regulation is being drafted that impacts, or has the potential to impact, domain name businesses. We have seen through the introduction of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and its subsequent impact on the availability of WHOIS, that national regulations have the potential to have considerable impact on ICANN's ability to develop consensus policies particularly where Registry and Registrar businesses are compelled to operate in accordance with the law at the expense of such consensus policies. While the policy process to address GDPR was finalized more than two years ago, the policy is still to be adopted as consensus policy by contracted parties as the ICANN community debates how the policy should be implemented. While national regulations happen at a steady pace, ICANN's ability to track, mitigate and address is generally even slower, compromising the relevance of ICANN's multistakeholder model. ICANN has been debating for more than three years how to improve the model and make it more effective; however, it seems we have reached a moment in time where leadership from the Board is required to make the changes necessary to ensure ICANN's long term viability.

Throughout the virtual meetings, the GAC, ALAC and ccNSO have, at least on the surface, managed to maintain some semblance of normality in terms of having substantive discussions on topics of interest. One highlight topic of interest from the ccNSO was a session on ccTLD governance models. CENTR presented a [blog](#) regarding the session.

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Locality Update

The usTLD Locality space is monitored by Registry Services to ensure adherence to usTLD policies and procedures. We now have 12,420 total usTLD Locality names. Of those, Registry Services manages 9,163 as the Delegated Manager, and the remaining 3,257 are covered by external Delegated Manager Agreements. Registry Services continues to work through a migration plan for the former Texas Regional Hostmaster delegations to ensure policies, services and domain names have no degradation during the migrations.

There were no Delegated Manager agreements executed, and there were no delegations or Delegated Manager agreements rescinded during the month of June 2021.

Technical and Operational Update

There were no operational changes during June 2021.

Marketing Update

Throughout June, marketing efforts leveraged a mix of paid, earned and owned media to drive brand awareness through proven media and sales channels to support namespace growth. Paid media efforts continue to drive significant increases over last year for both website referrals and outbound leads to registrars. Interestingly, Instagram has risen over Facebook for the platform with the highest engagement and leads. A dedicated creative strategy was launched for Instagram in Q2 and has taken off for providing reach, engagement and quality visits to the about.us website. In addition to social media, efforts for paid search, retargeting, and key partnerships are ongoing throughout the month. Highlights from June efforts are included below:

- Instagram: 2,792 website clicks (30% of all traffic) and 226 registrar leads (47% of total)
- Paid Search: Continues to be the highest converting channel with a 13.2% conversion rate (compared to sitewide average of 5%). Paid search strategy focuses on a branded approach of .US domain keywords only.
- Impressions: Total media 720K
- Clicks: Total media 3,172
- Conversions: 299 (63% of total)

Organic traffic remains strong, showing a 7% lift from the prior year. A total of 61% of organic traffic stems from blog content, demonstrating the importance of high-quality, keyword rich content regularly posted to the website. While no new blogs were added for June, the impact

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of regular posting of articles over time provides ongoing, long-term SEO value for education and awareness of the usTLD.

June, also wrapped up the creative user study conducted to better understand how best to connect with end-users and what styles of creative and messaging resonate most within the target audience of small business owners. The Registry Services team set up .US concept testing to identify opportunities for improving communication and brand style for the .US brand identity. A survey of ~600 people, ages 18-45, based in the United States, participated in the study to evaluate three unique creative approaches to brand execution and messaging. This effort is intended to inform future creative direction and improve impact of ads to drive top-of-mind awareness, as well as connect and engage with the audience.

Testing Objectives: To validate new creative concepts through creative breakthrough testing to measure consumer response.

To detect and quantify the emotional response and sentiment to uncover any highlights (or lowlights) aligned to (or departed from) the brand strategy and synergy.

Lastly, the tertiary goal was to evaluate if or how the connection to domains and .US exists for audiences' in their perception of the content and how that impacts their consideration or propensity to engage.

The testing revealed creative with a high emotional connection and score, also ranked as the highest for brand recall, likeliness to engage and propensity to buy. This underscores the .US brand strategy of driving a sense of community, inclusion and connection through all marketing and brand efforts. The Registry Services brand team has incorporated learnings from this survey to create a refreshed look for .US ads and marketing, looking to roll out the assets in July around annual Fourth of July sales and promo efforts. The Registry Services team plans to test and optimize this updated creative direction in-market to drive increased consumer response and brand impact.

Rounding out June efforts are strategic partnerships through Startup Weekend and Major League Hacking. .US is a featured domain for each of these partners as part of the Registry Services portfolio and partnership agreement. Activation highlights are included below:

Startup Weekend

- 9 Total events
- 7 countries
- 363 attendees

Major League Hacking

- 6 events
- 969 participants

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Themes:

- 2021-06-04 Hack Girl Summer 2.0
- 2021-06-11 SurfsUpHacks
- 2021-06-18 GardenHacks
- 2021-06-26 R. U. Hacking?
- 2021-06-25 SigmaHacks 3
- 2021-06-25 PrideHacks

Other Updates

New registrations in June 2021 were 9.18% lower than June 2020. Names under management in June 2021 were 1.15% higher than June 2020. The renewal rate in April 2021 (most current data available due to 45 day grace period) was higher year over year at 81.22% vs. 74.86% in April 2020.

Section 2: Performance Data

Service Level Agreement Measurements

Service Level Requirement	Requirement	Actual
Service Availability – SRS	99.900%	100%
Service Availability - Nameservers	100.000%	100%
Service Availability- Whois	99.950%	100%
Planned Outage Duration - SRS	8 hours	0 hours
Planned Outage Duration - Nameservers	None	0 min
Planned Outage Duration - Whois	8 hours	0 hours
Extended Planned Outage Duration - SRS	18 hours	0 hours
Extended Planned Outage Duration - Nameservers	None	0 min
Extended Planned Outage Duration - Whois	18 hours	0 hours
Processing Time - Add, Modify, Delete of all objects	3,000ms for 95%	100% < 3,000ms
Processing Time - Query Domain	1,500 ms for 95%	100% < 1,500ms
Processing Time - Whois Query	1,500 ms for 95%	100% < 1,500ms
Processing Time - Nameserver Resolution	1,500 ms for 95%	100% < 1,500ms
Update Frequency - Nameserver	15 min. for 95%	100% < 15 mins
Update Frequency - Whois	15 min. for 95%	100% < 15 mins

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Section 3: Monthly Transaction Statistics

Total Domains Under Management	1,755,043
Totals Nameservers Managed	222,311

Billable Transactions

Transaction Type	# of Transactions
Adds	26,232
Auto-Renews	7,793
Renews	81,673
Transfers	2,049
Deletions for Credit	760
Total	118,507

Total Extensible Provisioning Protocol (EPP) Transactions during the Month (Includes failed transactions)

Command	# of Transactions
Check Contact	1,420,898
Create Contact	973,963
Delete Contact	195,311
Info Contact	12,028,249
Transfer Contact	0
Update Contact	3,157,682
Check Domain	48,451,473
Create Domain	18,795,022
Delete Domain	35,124
Info Domain	3,736,468
Renew Domain	99,134
Transfer Domain	2,049
Update Domain	471,606
Check Host	9,936,119
Create Host	10,401,215
Delete Host	43,712

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Info Host	727,986
Update Host	9,549
Totals	110,485,560

Daily EPP Transactions	# of Transactions
Maximum Daily Transactions	4,781,261
Minimum Daily Transactions	2,771,840
Average Daily Transactions	3,689,244

Transaction Type	# of Transactions
Total Billable Transactions	118,507
Total number of Whois Queries	46,951,346
Total number of DNS Queries	113,575,910,836
Total EPP Transactions	110,485,560
Total Registry Transactions	113,733,466,249

Section 4: Monthly Registration Data

Spreadsheet provided.

Section 5: Website Statistics

URL: www.about.us	
Page Views	16,003
Visits	9,082
Average Visit Length	0 min 48 sec

Section 6: Accredited Registrar Status

Registrar Status	Count
Operational Registrars	228
Registrars in Ramp Up	0
Registrars in Pre-Ramp Up	0

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Section 7: usTLD Locality Statistics

Statistic	Count
Number of Delegated Managers	441
Changes to Delegated Managers	0
Updates to Locality Domains	24

Section 8: Nexus & WHOIS Compliance Statistics

The following WHOIS complaints were received during June 2021.

Date	Registrar	Domain Name	Complaint	Action	
6/28/2021	NameCheap, Inc.	Gramfree[.]us	whois	Invalid	Not confirmed
6/28/2021	NameCheap, Inc.	gramfree[.]us	whois	Registrar	
6/28/2021	NameCheap, Inc.	gramfree[.]us	whois	Invalid	Not confirmed
6/28/2021	NameCheap, Inc.	gramfree[.]us	whois	New	
6/27/2021	NameCheap, Inc.	Dhhsgrant[.]us	Nexus	Invalid	Not confirmed
6/24/2021	Town of Agawam,	agawam.ma[.]us	whois	Registrar	
6/24/2021	Google LLC	apollo-solutions[.]us	whois	Registrar	
6/24/2021	NameCheap, Inc.	nssupport[.]us	Nexus	CSR Rejected	
6/21/2021	Network Solutions,	itwgse[.]us	whois	CSR Rejected	
6/21/2021	Tucows Domains	panasystem[.]us	whois	Registrar	
6/19/2021	NameCheap, Inc.	scottslawnscape[.]us	Nexus	New	Not confirmed
6/19/2021	NameCheap, Inc.	scottslawnscape[.]us	Nexus	CSR Rejected	
6/2/2021	GoDaddy.com, LLC	somers[.]us	whois	Registrar	

Registry Services, LLC conducts regular spot-checks for Nexus compliance each month. These checks are in addition to investigating specific validation requests from third parties through the complaint tool.

Description	
June 2021 .US domain names reviewed (Nexus)	937
% of domain names pass primary investigation	91.78%