

**2Q-24 usTLD Stakeholder Meeting Minutes  
May 30, 2024 | 12pm Eastern Daylight Time**



*May 30<sup>th</sup> 2024*

- I. Welcome
- II. Roll call and approval of February 2024 minutes

**Attendees:**

**Stakeholder Council:** Ray King, Dustin Loup, Doug Robinson, Tom Barrett, Bartlett Cleland

**Registry Services:** Crystal Peterson, Kristin Johnson, Melissa Cohen, Fernando Espana

**NTIA:** Stacy Cheney

**DLoup:** Motions to approve 2Q meeting minutes. BCleland motions and TBarrett seconds motion. Minutes approved.

**DLoup:** We are adjusting the order of the agenda to move marketing ahead of stakeholder updates for this meeting. As we did not have time to cover marketing in the last meeting, we will be reviewing all front half marketing updates.

*Handed off to KJohnson*

### III. Q1 & Q2 Marketing Update

#### *Bipartisan Tech Conference*

.US was a proud sponsor of Next Century Cities, Bipartisan Tech Conference April 16 – 17 this year. Next Century Cities' Bipartisan Tech Policy Conference provides local, state, federal, and Tribal officials, policy advocates, and residents the ability to connect for a day on Capitol Hill to elevate community perspectives about broadband and digital equity to federal legislators. Local elected officials and community advocates also share their challenges and successes while learning from broadband leaders nationwide.

The .US sponsorship included premier logo placement throughout the event and a dedicated mention during opening remarks. .US was the exclusive sponsor for the coffee break station, providing hot and cold brew coffee as well as branded materials such as cups, coffee sleeves, mints, water bottles and napkins.

#### *Paid Advertising*

2024 paid media strategy seeks to further drive conversion-based marketing with the introduction of Google's Performance Max. Advertising consists of direct consumer outreach targeted to up-and-coming

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small business owners across a variety of media platforms to reach customers across all stages of the purchasing funnel.

Channels:

- Performance Max
- Paid Search
- Facebook
- Instagram

Highlights:

- Creative refresh for 2024 including the development of new static and video ads to run across all paid media platforms. A total of 6 new videos produced as well as 12+ new static assets based on 2023 performance.
- Launched new Google Performance Max as part of bottom of funnel marketing efforts. Performance Max uses Google AI across bidding, budget optimization, audiences, creatives, attribution, and more. Initial results show performance in line with Paid Search results.

### *Creative Refresh*

Added new creative into rotation for 2024 leveraging new carousel style ads which have proven to drive increased engagement. Regularly refreshing creative content is crucial to stay top-of-mind and maintain engagement.

- Keeps brand message and visuals relevant and engaging to the target audience.
- Avoids stagnation and keeps the audience interested in the brand.
- Allows for experimentation and testing, which leads to improved performance and increased ROI.
- Demonstrates a brand's adaptability and willingness to evolve, which can enhance its credibility and reputation in the marketplace.

### *Social Media and Content Highlights*

Social media and content creation go hand in hand with driving community engagement, keeping a brand relevant, and contributing to brand loyalty and conversions. To support these goals, the first half of 2024 focused heavily on curating keyword-rich, SEO friendly blog material to connect with the SMB audience, as well as promoting content and conversations on social media (Facebook and X).

Content: 8 articles published (Jan. 1 – May 30)

- The Secrets to Converting Your Social Media Followers Into Repeat Customers
- Sequoia Films (sequoiafilms.us) is Building a Bi-Coastal Creative Agency on a Global Mission
- Boost Your Conversion Rates: Build a Website that Turns Visitors Into Instant Customers
- The SEO Glossary: The Top Terms to Know to Excel at Web Content
- How OKPrint.US is Bringing Bespoke Luxury Into the Printing World

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- Your Step-by-Step Guide to Conduct Keyword Research
- ColumbusMark.us | Join Mark Levin's Country Adventures: A Lighthearted Look at Country Life
- A Creative Shopping Opportunity for Top Etsy Businesses in 2024

### Highlights:

- Blog traffic:
  - Accounts for 40% of total organic traffic to the website and 41% of overall traffic
- Social Media: (Facebook + X)
  - Reach: 331K
  - Posts: 422 posts

### Partnerships

.US is a key sponsor as part of the Registry portfolio partnerships for tech and STEM organizations. Ongoing activations with strategic partners supports brand equity for the .US TLD with entrepreneurial, STEAM and innovative audiences.

- **Startup Weekend**
  - Events – 87 (Jan-April)
  - Attendees – 4,612
- **Major League Hacking**
  - Events – 78 (Jan-April)
  - Includes Global Hack Beginners Week
  - Attendees – 25,000+ (sampling of events)
  - *SheHacks+* - 1/12/24
  - *SB Hacks* - 1/12/24
  - *Hackville* - 1/19/24
  - *BoilerMake XI* - 1/19/24
  - *CruzHacks* - 1/19/24
  - *Rose Hack* - 1/20/24
  - *Hack BI VII* - 1/20/24
  - *HoyaHacks* - 1/26/24
- Sampling of domain names registered:
  - liamdye.us, brandonmcdonald.us, mycoloringbook.us, thirdstreetjournal.us, endinghomelessness.us

*KJohnson hands off to CPeterson*

## IV. Stakeholder & Administrator Updates

### *Stakeholder Updates*

Approval and sub-committees:

- Premium names
- Internationalized domain names

**DLoup:** These sub-committees are designed to answer high-level questions. If we have more questions during the review process that may impact our response we can pose these to Registry Services. Let's review Premium tiers now. Question to the council, do you think this is a topic that warrants interest and discussion? Are these the right set of questions? Let's open up to council.

**TBarrett:** I don't see premium names devaluing the namespace. The market will decide if it's worth doing.

**CPeterson:** As we look at proposing the implementation of premium names in the space, we want insight and feedback from the stakeholder council on if this will be helping grow the space and enhancing the value of the TLD? If there are any questions we've missed, please let us know. Our current proposal, is around High-Low pricing models so this will not impact renewals.

**TBarrett:** This would be on the registrar to get pricing extensions for premium tiers for domains.

**CPeterson:** Yes, the registrars would have to do this if they want to sell premiums.

**RKing:** You first asked, should there be a premium tier sub-committee and if there is interest. I feel there is interest. In terms of these questions, they are good. They aren't the first three I would have asked. Most important question is how to maximize revenue. How do we balance against maximizing revenue?

**TBarrett:** A lot of registries announce they are releasing premium names. It might be tough to promote, because they will have to bid on these names.

**DLoup:** Of those here, RKing, thank you for raising your interest in participating in the Premium Names committee. Is anyone else interested in joining the sub-committee. We'll need three people to be a valid committee.

**CPeterson:** Let's put this out on email too. There are a couple of folks interested that aren't here.

**DLoup:** Before we proceed, TBarrett and DLoup would be interested. Are there any other concerns or adjustments needed before we proceed? Okay, we will move forward to form a Premium Names sub-committee and will address the three questions posed by Registry Service. A follow-up email will go out to solicit any other interested Stakeholder members to join.

**DLoup:** We have another topic for consideration. IDNs and evaluating if we should we introduce Spanish language characters? Also, should other languages be considered? My questions for the Stakeholder Council are, should there be a sub-committee for this? And are there other questions that should be considered?

**TBarrett:** Yes, this does warrant a sub-committee review.

**RKing:** It makes sense. Based on percentages, if we didn't do other language characters, we need to define why? Why aren't more languages covered? And what is the value it brings to the namespace.

**TBarrett:** Maybe the Registry can provide a breakdown of what registrant demand looks like?

**DLoup:** We are moving to approve the sub-committee for IDNs, conditionally based on three members interested in participating. We will meet to discuss other languages as well. In follow-up we will send out an update to the entire council, with the new subcommittees, asking who wants to volunteer. I'll schedule any meetings that we need to have and get the work underway.

**CPeterson:** We are looking to move forward with the approved sub-committee topics and are taking names for any Stakeholder members interested in joining either the Premium Names committee or the Internationalized Domain Names committee.

### *DNS Abuse & Mitigation*

**CPeterson:** The 2024 anti-abuse metrics have been updated to reflect as of April 30, 2024. There are a total of 2,162 alerts which represents a very small percentage of total DUMs in the .US namespace. We have also included an abuse form on the about.us website, that allows report of abuse to be routed directly to our Registry team for further investigation.

## V. AOB & Closing