



## Quarterly Report of the usTLD Stakeholder Council – Q1 2016

### Contents

Overview.....	2
Council Recommendations.....	2
Other Informal Input Provided .....	2
Membership Update.....	2
Summary of Public Comments .....	2
Summary of Topics under Council Consideration.....	2
Privacy and Proxy.....	2
Nexus .....	3
Town Hall .....	3
Blogs and Media .....	3
Summary of Meetings .....	3
January 27, 2016 Meeting: .....	3
February 22, 2016 Meeting: .....	3
March 30, 2016 Meeting: .....	4
Deadlines for Q2 2016 .....	4
Appendices .....	5
Appendix 1: Blog Post - The Politics of Domain Names .....	5
Appendix 2: usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes January 27, 2016.....	6
Appendix 3: usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes March 30, 2016.....	7

## Overview

The work of the Council began in January of 2016 by picking up with the Privacy and Proxy issues of the previous year. At the January 2016 meeting the Council decided that the Secretariat would poll council members individually offline regarding their opinion on approaches to consider. After completion of the poll, the Secretariat will create a report collating the findings and will submit it to the Council. Privacy and Proxy work continued in March with the Council deciding to create a subcommittee for continued discussion and policy development. March also brought a conclusion to the Nexus procedures internal review. Three areas were identified for customer improvement and overall policy application.

## Council Recommendations

The usTLD Stakeholder Council did not provide any formal recommendations to Neustar or the Department of Commerce during Q1 2016.

## Other Informal Input Provided

The usTLD Stakeholder Council did not provide any other informal input to Neustar or the Department of Commerce during Q1 2016.

## Membership Update

No membership changes were made to the usTLD Stakeholder Council during Q1 2016.

## Summary of Public Comments

The usTLD Stakeholder Council did not open any public comment periods during Q1 2016.

## Summary of Topics under Council Consideration

### Privacy and Proxy

Most Council members expressed favorable opinion regarding the implementation of Privacy and Proxy services for .US. A subset of the Council stated that commercial domains should be excluded from using Privacy and Proxy services; however there was no clear definition of what exactly constitutes a commercial business. There was also no conclusion on a reliable method for distinguishing commercial domains from noncommercial domains. Members of the law enforcement community expressed several concerns. A primary concern is that bad actors will hide behind privacy and proxy services. Law enforcement requested evidence that legitimate actors refrain from registering and/or supply incorrect information to protect privacy and that privacy and proxy services create a barrier to accessing information. Law enforcement also expressed a need to better understand how abuses will be prevented and monitored and whether a carve-out will exist for commercial domains. The Secretariat cited ICANN's Study of Privacy and Proxy Abuse and presented a range of Privacy and Proxy implementation models to

address those concerns. The Council decided that it would form a subcommittee for continued discussion and policy development.

## Nexus

Neustar performs monthly spot checks to ensure Nexus compliance. As a result of the internal review, it was determined that there were three areas for improving customer experience and overall policy application. First, once the domains are selected, but before the registrant is contacted, our customer support team will conduct preliminary research to determine if Nexus can be confirmed without contacting the domain holder. Second, Neustar has revised the initial letter that we send to registrants to promote a supportive tone and emphasize avenues for customer service. Third, Neustar will implement an escalation process if, in responding to our request for nexus evidence, the domain holder provides documentary evidence of a type that is not already on our list of acceptable evidence. This will be done on a case-by-case basis. The conclusion is that Neustar will be much more substantive, rather than formulaic, in an effort to provide a better customer experience and better understand the overall impact of the Nexus policy of .US registration.

## Town Hall

The Council discussed the 2016 Stakeholder Council Town Hall and decided that it will plan for an October timeframe.

## Blogs and Media

In Q1 2016 there was one blog post, “The Politics of Domain Names,” published on about.us.

## Summary of Meetings

### January 27, 2016 Meeting:

In January, the Council kicked off the year with a high level overview of Neustar’s 2016 .US marketing plan and by summarizing the Privacy and Proxy work of both ICANN and the Council thus far. Becky Burr gave a presentation summarizing the Secretariat’s August 2015 Privacy and Proxy white paper and the ICANN Working Group’s December 2015 recommendations. At the conclusion of the presentation, the Council decided that the Secretariat would poll council members individually offline regarding their opinion on approaches to consider. It was decided that after the completion of this poll, the Secretariat would create a report collating the findings to be submitted to the Council for the February meeting.

### February 22, 2016 Meeting:

The Council did not meet in February.

### March 30, 2016 Meeting:

The Council agreed that Scott Blake Harris and Shane Tews should continue to serve as Chair and Co-Chair for an additional year. The Council decided on an October timeframe for the Town Hall; the specific date to be decided later. The Secretariat presented the results of the Nexus internal review and identified three areas for improving customer experience and overall policy application. It was decided that the Nexus policy, as a whole, could be reconsidered at a later date, after these improvements have been implemented and reviewed. Finally, the Secretariat presented the results of the Council's Privacy and Proxy poll. While most Council members expressed favorable opinion regarding the implementation of Privacy and Proxy services, members of the law enforcement community expressed several concerns. The Council decided that it would form a subcommittee for continued discussion and policy development.

### Deadlines for Q2 2016

1. The Secretariat to submit the Q2 Quarterly Report to the Council.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Blog Post - The Politics of Domain Names

(<http://www.about.us/blog/the-politics-of-domain-names/>)

A domain name is so much more than a web address. Think of it as the foundation of your digital identity. It supports the brand and image you've worked so hard to build – and maintain.

And to protect it, you need to think beyond the main URL you *want* people to use.

How else might they find you? How might they look for you, search for you, type in an address for you? And how might your competitors hack your brand? Or maybe it doesn't matter. After all, you're directing people to your main site in all your ads and literature, right?

Not exactly. Just ask Jeb Bush. At some point, his campaign owned jebbush.com. And at some point, it didn't. The registration lapsed. Jeb's main campaign site is jeb2016.com, so maybe it didn't seem necessary for him to own jebbush.com, or maybe it was a simple oversight. Either way, jebbush.com now redirects to donalddjtrump.com.

Now take it a step further to think about the domain extension itself – what's to the right of the dot, aka the top level domain.

It looks like Bush's team doesn't own jeb2016.US, .org, .CO .info or any of the other top extensions. On the other hand, Trump's campaign didn't reserve donalddjtrump.biz, .info or .org either.

And it's not just on the Republican side. While HillaryClinton.biz redirects to her fundraising page, HillaryClinton.US, .info and .org don't seem to be affiliated with her campaign. Ditto for Bernie Sanders' sites.

Brand protection extends to the entirety of your web presence – not just your main website URL. Think broadly about all the domain names and related domain extensions you should register to both promote your brand — and to protect it from unscrupulous competitors.

Take ownership of your digital presence — or you too might get “trumped.”

And when you really think about it, shouldn't all campaigns geared to the American citizens [Start with .US?](#)

## Appendix 2: usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes January 27, 2016

Cory Lancaster took roll.

Scott Harris announced that the December Registry Operator Monthly Report has been submitted. Crystal Peterson gave a high level overview of Neustar's 2016 marketing plan.

The Council then turned to the Privacy and Proxy policy issue. Becky Burr gave a presentation summarizing the Secretariat's August 2015 Privacy and Proxy white paper and the ICANN Working Group's December 2015 recommendations. At the conclusion of the presentation, the Council decided that the Secretariat would poll council members individually offline regarding their opinion on approaches to consider with regard to privacy and proxy services for the .US TLD. After the completion of this poll, the Secretariat will create a report collating the findings and will submit it to the Council for the February meeting. The Council will work toward reaching a consensus on a recommendation during the February meeting.

### **Action Items:**

- The Secretariat to create a report summarizing the Council members' ideas on Privacy and Proxy Service approaches within .US.

### Appendix 3: usTLD Stakeholder Council Minutes March 30, 2016

The Secretariat announced that Scott Blake Harris and Shane Tews will continue to serve as Chair and Co-Chair for one more year.

The Council discussed the 2016 Stakeholder Council Town Hall and will plan for an October timeframe.

The Secretariat presented the results of Neustar's internal Nexus procedures review. Neustar performs monthly spot checks to ensure Nexus compliance. As a result of the internal review, it was determined that there were three areas for improving customer experience and overall policy application. First, once the domains are selected, but before the registrant is contacted, our customer support team will conduct preliminary research to determine if Nexus can be confirmed without contacting the domain holder. Second, Neustar has revised the initial letter that we send to registrants to promote a supportive tone and emphasize avenues for customer service. Third, we will implement an escalation process if, in responding to our request for nexus evidence, the domain holder provides documentary evidence of a type that is not already on our list of acceptable evidence. This will be done on a case-by-case basis. The conclusion is that Neustar will be much more substantive, rather than formulaic, in an effort to provide a better customer experience and better understand the overall impact of the Nexus policy of .US registration.

The Secretariat presented the results of the Council's Privacy and Proxy poll. Most Council members expressed favorable opinion regarding the implementation of Privacy and Proxy services for .US. A subset of the Council stated that commercial domains should be excluded from using Privacy and Proxy services; however there was no clear definition of what exactly constitutes a commercial business. There was also no conclusion on a reliable method for distinguishing commercial domains from noncommercial domains. Members of the law enforcement community expressed several concerns. A primary concern is that bad actors will hide behind privacy and proxy services. Law enforcement requested evidence that legitimate actors refrain from registering and/or supply incorrect information to protect privacy and that privacy and proxy services create a barrier to accessing information. Law enforcement also expressed a need to better understand how abuses will be prevented and monitored and whether a carve-out will exist for commercial domains. The Secretariat cited ICANN's Study of Privacy and Proxy Abuse and presented a range of Privacy and Proxy implementation models to address those concerns.

The Council decided that it would form a subcommittee for continued discussion and policy development.

Action Items:

- Formulate a Privacy and Proxy subcommittee.