2021 usTLD Annual Stakeholder Meeting Report

.US™

PREPARED:

January 2022

Q1-2021 usTLD Stakeholder Meeting

Date: March 18, 2021

I. Welcome

II. Roll call and approval of December 2020 minutes

    a. Attendees: Becky Burr, Tom Barrett, Alex Deacon, Doug Robinson, Karen Rose, Ray King, Bryan Britt, Barlett Cleland, Laureen Kapin, Dustin Loup, Crystal Peterson, Kristin Johnson, Melissa Cohen, Stacy Cheney, Susan Chalmers

    b. Dustin makes a motion to approve minutes. Karen Rose seconds

III. Q1 Marketing Update

    a. Conrad Challenge

        i. A STEM focused annual, multi-phase innovation and entrepreneurship competition for high school students to participate in designing the future by solving global and local challenges in sustainability.

    b. Startup Weekend

        i. First quarter activity to be centered around virtual events, while communities are looking at returning to in-person activity once vaccination becomes more widespread and local governmental protocols are more conducive towards large gatherings.

    c. SMB Activation

        i. Developed and launched new creative assets based on ad responsiveness and marketing performance. Doubled down on SMB market to support and engage with this audience and bring them online.

    d. Content on about.us

        i. Four new articles posted in Q1.

        ii. 50% of all organic traffic from blog site visits and Organic traffic up 19% YoY

        iii. "How To Identify A Trustworthy Website" was top 5 most viewed page on the website in Q1

    e. Juneteenth.us

        i. Dustin gives overview of Press Conference opportunity and positioning for .US through the juneteeth.us campaign initiative to make Juneteenth a federal holiday. Dustin was able to speak at press conference on 2/25 and bolstered .US branding and positioning.

IV. Policy & Security Updates

    a. Security sub-committee

        i. Privacy Plan Recommendation

            1. Crystal reviews open comment period and confirms no comments have been submitted since open date February 26.

            2. Laureen asks for privacy plan comment link and Dustin sends via chat: https://www.about.us/policies/ustld-stakeholder-council/ustld-privacy-recommendation

            3. Alex asks what type of outreach we have done for the Open Comment Period on the Privacy Plan.

            4. Crystal confirms that Alex and others can forward the privacy link and/or send through social channels to ensure people interested in commenting can.

            5. Dustin comments that the close date for the comment period falls on a Sunday and requests to extend through Monday

            6. Crystal confirms and comments received through Monday will be included.

        ii. KIDS.US

            1. Crystal discusses KIDS.US is still under review with actions pending.

V. 2021 Meeting Schedule and Key Dates

    a. ccNSO Meetings

    b. Confirmed 2021 Meeting Schedule

VI. AOB & Closing

    a. Bryan Britt asks about status of Locality tool update. Crystal confirms that MVP went live and will follow-up offline for next steps.

    b. Doug Robinson provides update on .gov domain and .gov act that passed. Management of namespace transition happens in April 2021. Requesting low or no cost domain availability to state and local governments. The mandate is specifically targeting election fraud and positioning .gov as a trusted source of information.

    c. Crystal refers to .US localities serving not only governments but schools and other community online spaces which may be impacted. Doug expects majority of schools to remain on .US locality namespace.

    d.   Crystal discusses possible opportunity to serve U.S. government from a usTLD specific zone to meet increased security needs.

    e.   Ray talks about .US Nexus requirement and positioning it as a positive in terms of verification of a U.S. oriented entity.

    f.   Bryan Britt requests to be included in ongoing conversations.

Q2-2021 usTLD Stakeholder Meeting

Date: June 10, 2021

I. Welcome

II. Roll call and approval of March 2021 minutes

    a. Attendees: Dustin Loup, Becky Burr, Bryan Britt, Tom Barrett, Michele Neylon, Laureen Kapin, Ray King, Susan Chalmers, Stacy Cheney

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

III. Q3 Marketing Update

    a. Major League Hacking - Major League Hacking (MLH) is the official student hackathon league. Each year, they power over 200 weekend-long invention competitions that inspire innovation, cultivate communities and teach computer science skills to more than 65,000 students around the world.

        i. Activation:

            1. Exclusive Domain Sponsor for APAC

            2. Domain offer promoted to students before, during and after each event

            3. Best Domain Category Sponsor

        ii. Q2 Presence:

            1. 19 Events (5 to be held in June)

            2. 3,9000 students (April – May)

        iii. Featured winners:

            1. Beyondthebinarycens.us

            2. Proud-of-pride.us

    b. Startup Weekend - Lead partner of Startup Weekend, providing domain names to startup founders at thousands of hackathon events around the world.

        i. Second quarter hackathons saw the return of in-person events in several cities across the world while there were others that still remained virtual.

        ii. A big focus for Q2 was efforts around sustainability which continues throughout the month of June.

        iii. Q2 Highlights:

            1. Events: 65

            2. Countries: 42

            3. Entrepreneurs: 2,100+

    c.   Marketing Campaigns

        i.   Overview: Ongoing deployment and optimization of small business paid marketing campaign.

        ii.   Platforms: Facebook, Instagram, SEM

        iii.   Q1 Highlights:

            1.   Total website traffic up 10% over previous period and 30%YoY

            2.   Conversion rates up 12% from previous period with a 23% increase in total conversions.

            3.   Facebook continues to be our top platform for driving engagement with audience expansion to include the extended network

    d.   Content - Four new articles posted in Q2:

        i.   Improve Your Google Ads Quality Score with these 7 Steps

        ii.   How To Build A Highly Profitable Online Business

        iii.   Improve your User Experience with these Design Essentials

        iv.   How to Make Your First Ecommerce Sale in 30 Days

    e.   IGF USA

        i.   July 14-15, 2021

        ii.   Session Topics:

            1.   Building Better Online Markets and Communities

            2.   100% Online: How to close the Internet access gap once and for all

            3.   Why don't we have better digital IDs? And what could we do if we did?

            4.   The 5 Ws (and 1 H) of Content Moderation

            5.   The Security Concerns Impacting the Internet

            6.   Policy, Standards, and IoT

            7.   Re-examining Antitrust in a Digital Economy

            8.   The Future of Data: Privacy Foundations and Legislative Approaches

            9.   Regulatory Changes and the Potential Fragmenting of the Internet

IV.   Policy & Security Updates

    a.   Privacy – Working on DOC proposal

    b.   KIDS.US – Namespace remains closed

V.   AOB & Closing

Q3-2021 usTLD Stakeholder Meeting

Date: September 16, 2021

I.   Welcome

II.   Roll call and approval of June 2021 minutes

- Attendees: Dustin Loup, Becky Burr, Bryan Britt, Tom Barrett, Michele Neylon, Laureen Kapin, Ray King, Susan Chalmers, Stacy Cheney
- Registry Services: Crystal Peterson, Kristin Johnson, Melissa Cohen, Fernando Espana

III.   Q3 Marketing Update

    a.   Creative Breakthrough Testing.

       i.   Objectives: Creative Likability, Emotional Connection, Relevance to Domains and .US

       ii.   Market: United States, Audience: Gen Pop*, 18 – 45, Sample: n=600 in total (100/ad set)

       iii.   3 Total Concepts: Endeavour with Pride, In Pursuit of Connection, High Hopes. Big Dreams.

       iv.   Goal is to validate new concepts by putting the creative through user testing to see where it sits and differs from the previous content, as well as among each other. "High Hopes. Big Dreams." clear winner from testing results.

       v.   Launched new brand ads in July of 2021

    b.   4th of July Promotions

       i.   Coordinated with global channel team to amplify .US 4th of July sales and promotions from registrar and resellers.

       ii.   Included exclusive content articles written and distributed to partners and promoted via newsletter and social media posts.

       iii.   Point of sales promotions included front of site placement, Facebook and twitter sales posts and promotion throughout registrar/resellers sites

    c.   IGFUSA: July 14-15, 2021

       i.   Total Attendees - 415

       ii.   Countries - 25

       iii.   Branding Included:

           1.   Mention in opening remarks

           2.   Logo display on break slides

3. Logo on event agenda website

4. Logo on emails before and after the conference

5. Dedicated tweet for sponsors

6. 779 impressions and 24 engagements

d. Marketing Content

i. 5 New Articles Posted in Q3:

1. IGF USA 2021 Registration is Open

2. Drive Traffic To Your Website: A Beginner's Strategy For Gaining New Visitors Online

3. Meritorious.us Entrepreneurs Start Professional Network for Veterans

4. The 5 Pillars of Website Design for Small Business Owners

5. How weCultivate.US is Helping Small Businesses Thrive

ii. Organic Search Traffic up 18% over previous period (and 38% from prior year)

e. Partnerships

i. Startup Weekend

1. Overview: Lead partner of Startup Weekend, providing domain names to startup founders at thousands of hackathon events around the world.

2. Q3 Highlights:

a. Events: 15

b. Countries: 20

c. Entrepreneurs: 800+

ii. Major League Hacking

1. Overview: Major League Hacking (MLH) is the official student hackathon league. Each year, they power over 200 weekend-long invention competitions that inspire innovation, cultivate communities and teach computer science skills to more than 65,000 students around the world.

2. Q3 Highlights:

a. 10+ Events

b. 1,000+ Student Impressions

IV. Policy & Security Updates

a. 3RD FDA Summit Participation

b. usTLD Contract Extension

      a. Update: Accountable WHOIS in the usTLD Namespace

V. TOWN HALL - November 4, 2021 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time

      a. Agenda:

            i. State of the Domain

            ii. Marketing Review

            iii. Administrator Updates

            iv. Stakeholder Council Updates

            v. Q & A

VI. AOB & Closing

usTLD Town Hall
Date: November 4, 2021

I. State of the Domain
- a. Locality
  - i. Locality Domains
    1. 12,327 recorded to date (+1.7% from 2019)
  - ii. Delegated Managers
    1. 439 Total
- b. Second Level
  - i. Domains Under Management: 1,757,903* *(30 Sep 2020)*
  - ii. Domain Ranking:
    1. #24 – DomainNameStat*
    2. #8 – DomainState.com*
  - iii. Domains in Alexa Top 1 Million: ~3,000 sites
    1. Zoom.us is top ranked .US site (#14)
    2. 1,200+ Locality domains in the Alexa Top site rankings
- c. .US Data Usage
  - i. Community Engagement: Penetration Rate of 246
    1. (Based on the number of Pages Indexed on Google)

II. Marketing Review
- a. Creative breakthrough testing
  - i. Objectives:
    1. Creative Likability
    2. Emotional Connection
    3. Relevance to Domains and .US
  - ii. Market: United States
    1. Audience: Gen Pop*, 18 - 45
    2. Sample: n=600 in total (100/ad set)
  - iii. 3 Total Concepts:
    1. Endeavour with Pride
    2. In Pursuit of Connection
    3. High Hopes. Big Dreams. – Winning Concept
- b. Partnerships
  - i. Conrad Challenge: (High School Students)
  - ii. Major League Hacking (Undergraduate Student Hackathon League)
  - iii. Startup Weekend (University Students & Entrepreneurs)
- c. Paid Advertising
  - i. Overview: Focus on reconnecting with Small Businesses. Launch of new assets on top performing platforms to drive engagement and brand awareness.
  - ii. Audience: Small Businesses
  - iii. Geo: United States
  - iv. Platforms:
    1. Facebook

2. Instagram
3. SEM
4. YouTube

d. Retail Channel Engagement
   i. July 4 Promo example of global registrar and retailer participation in .US marketing and sales

e. Brand Ambassadors
   i. Dedicated outreach efforts to the .US community for brand ambassador features.
   ii. When: Ongoing
   iii. Objective: Drive awareness by highlighting adoption and user stories of successful small businesses and entrepreneurs building their homes .US domains.
   iv. Promotion: Interviews, social media promotion, registrar features.

f. Content Engine
   i. Dedicated efforts for driving a steady drumbeat of content throughout the year.
   ii. Mix of educational, informational and user story content
   iii. SEO focus on keyword, high quality topical content
   iv. Cross-promotion of all articles across social channels to promote engagement
   v. 18+ Articles YTD

III. Administrator Updates
   a. usTLD contract extension
   b. 3rd Annual FDA Summit for Opioids

IV. Stakeholder Council Updates
   a. Kids.us
   b. Accountable WHOIS
      i. Accountable Access to Registration Data.
      ii. What is Accountable WHOIS?
      iii. Unredacted WHOIS data served via email in response to a usTLD WHOIS query
      iv. Accountable WHOIS is not a privacy or proxy service
   c. Why Accountable WHOIS?
      i. Ensure timely access to registrant data while reducing risk of registrant harm
      ii. Preserve the authoritative usTLD registrant database
      iii. Encourage growth of the usTLD namespace
   d. Secure WHOIS Gateway Proposal
   e. Secure WHOIS Gateway Technical Highlights
   f. Secure WHOIS Gateway Reporting & Audits

V. Q & A

Q4-2021 usTLD Stakeholder Meeting

Date: December 16, 2021

I.   Welcome

    a.   Welcome Judy Song-Marshall to usTLD Stakeholder Council

II.   Roll call and approval of September 2021 minutes

    a.   Attendees: Dustin Loup, Becky Burr, Bryan Britt, Tom Barrett, Michele Neylon, Laureen Kapin, Ray King, Susan Chalmers, Stacy Cheney

    b.   Registry Services: Crystal Peterson, Fernando Espana

III.   Q4 Marketing Update

    a.   Evergreen efforts - Ongoing activation of "always on" paid advertising efforts to drive continued awareness, engagement, and conversions for .US. Marketing Platforms Include: Facebook, Instagram, Paid Search, YouTube, Retargeting. Facebook is top performing platform

    b.   Direct to Channel Marketing Campaign NameSilo - Joint paid advertising efforts with registrars to amplify promotional and branding activities for driving conversions and streamlining path to purchase. Set-up: Leveraged top performing platforms Facebook and Instagram, Dedicated .US landing page: https://www.namesilo.com/tld/us/, Implemented retargeting pixel with unique click-through for return visits. Audience targets focused on SMBs and Entrepreneurs

    c.   Partnerships

        i.   Startup Weekend - Lead partner of Startup Weekend, providing domain names to startup founders at thousands of hackathon events around the world.

            1.   Q4 Highlights:

            2.   Events: 15

            3.   Countries: 20

            4.   Entrepreneurs: 800+

        ii. Major League Hacking - The official student hackathon league. Each year, they power over 200 weekend-long invention competitions that inspire innovation, cultivate communities and teach computer science skills to more than 65,000 students around the world.

            1.   Q4 Highlights:

2. 10+ Events

3. 1,000+ Student Impressions

d. Content - Curated content in partnership with registrars for exclusive topical articles across registrar sites.

e. 6 New Articles Posted in Q4:

   i. Small Business Cyber Security Tips: Understanding the Basics

   ii. USER STORY: How Jewelry Startup Astrid & Miyu Brings London Style To The States

   iii. USER STORY: How to Spark Innovation and Build Tech Communities in Cities Across Rural America

   iv. The Power of Passive Income: 5 Ideas To Source Extra Earnings

   v. USER STORY: The Energy Democracy Project Wants To Make Clean Energy A Neighborhood Initiative

   vi. 9 Website Design & Development Best Practices

IV. Policy & Security Updates

   a. Accountable WHOIS in the usTLD Namespace – drafting proposal for the NTIA. Expect to submit at the end of Q1-22. Proposal (as drafted) will be available to Stakeholder Council as confidential preview.

V. 2022 Meeting Schedule

   a. Q1: March 17, 2022 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time

   b. Q2: June 9, 2022 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time

   c. Q3: September 9, 2022 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time

   d. TOWN HALL: November 3, 2022 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time

   e. Q4: December 15, 2022 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time

VI. AOB & Closing