

## WELCOME TO TORONTO AND ICANN45!

Hot off the Press, here is the October edition of the NTAG Newsletter, an update of the New TLD Applicant Group, or NTAG. The NTAG is an interest group focused on ICANN's new gTLD program and moving it forward in a responsible efficient fashion. The NTAG represents the views of its members to the RySG, the GNSO Council, ICANN Staff / Executive Management, the ICANN Board of Directors and other influential ICANN Stakeholder bodies impacting new gTLDs. Current NTAG officers are:

Jon Nevett – Chairman  
Bill Doshier – Vice-Chair  
Tim Switzer –Treasurer  
Krista Papac – Secretary

### **NTAG WEBPAGE - [http://www.gtldregistries.org/ntag/about\\_ntag](http://www.gtldregistries.org/ntag/about_ntag)**

Information about NTAG can be found on its webpage. The webpage contains information such as current members and upcoming calendar of events, and all letters and position statements issued by the Group.

### **NTAG CONSENSUS – BENEFITS OF NEW TLDS**

The NTAG supports a strong representation and communication of the benefits new TLDs offer the Internet community. The key objectives of the new TLD program are to expand consumer choice, encourage innovation and increase competition while ensuring the security and stability of the Internet. Along with these stated goals, the NTAG champions the following benefits of new TLDs:

- An increased flow of venture capital investment into the Internet industry.
- Alternative options for combating the increasingly saturated domain namespace.
- A more robust regulatory system designed to protect trademark owners.
- Expanded opportunities for consumers to grow their online business strategies.
- Low barriers to entry for new and creative business models.
- Dedicated namespaces for communication and development of cultural communities around the world.
- New opportunities for search, mobile, social and media applications.
- A platform for new and unique marketing opportunities.
- Global job creation around new TLD business development, marketing, policy development, management, products and services.
- The infusion of new talent promoting partnering around new ideas and creativity.
- Business relevant, and vertical market specific, domain extensions.
- Wide-open, alternative international name opportunities.
- Relevant web-addresses in non-Latin characters such as Chinese, Arabic, and Cyrillic.
- Depending on the business model, new TLD extensions offer increased security features and validation of domain registrants.

### **A TEAM EFFORT – THREE NEW NTAG TEAMS FORMED**

Updated information and developments around new TLDs continues. The NTAG forms teams of member volunteers for the purposes of disseminating information to the full membership, and to provide comments and/or address issues related to new gTLD program policies and implementation. Three new teams were added in September bringing the total number of teams to eight. The teams are responsible for monitoring developments within their area, updating membership and offering comment to ICANN and the community as deemed necessary. The eight teams, their coordinators and volunteers are listed below.

#### **Team 1: Overall New gTLD Timeline Including GAC Issues & ANA - Bret Fausett (Coordinator)**

Tim Switzer  
Jon Nevett  
Sarah Falvey  
Avri Doria  
Krista Papac  
Dave Panos  
Richard Tindal  
Carolyn Silbernagl

#### **Team 2: Batching/Sequencing/Metering - John Toland (Coordinator)**

Tom Brackey  
John Styll  
Tim Switzer  
Richard Tindal  
Jordyn Buchanan  
Amanda Fessenden  
Antony Van Couvering

**Team 3: 1000/year Rated Delegation Limit – Alex Stamos (Coordinator)**

Warren Kumari  
Chris Wright  
Richard Tindal  
Jeff Eckhaus  
Krista Papac  
Michael Young  
Wayne MacLaurin

**Team 4: Operational Improvements -Sheri Falco (Coordinator)**

Alex Stamos  
Krista Papac

**Team 5: Monthly Newsletter - Bill Doshier (Coordinator)**

Krista Papac

**Team 6: ICANN Survey - Jacob Malthouse (Coordinator)**

Yasmin Omer  
Tim Johnson  
Michael Young

**Team 7: Objection Period Response - Yasmin Omer (Coordinator)**

Liz Williams  
Jon Nevett

**Team 8: 1 and 2 Character Names - Liz Williams (Coordinator)**

Avria Doria

**NTAG BUDGET APPROVED**

An NTAG \$5,000 budget was approved as part of RySG budget, with an additional \$5,000 earmarked for future expenditures.

**NTAG LETTER TO ICANN SEEKS INCREASE IN EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATIONS**

In a letter dated 5 September, addressed to the ICANN staff, the NTAG encouraged ICANN to increase the communication with and support for New gTLD applicants during the application review and processing process. The letter reflected consensus support of the NTAG and offered the following requests and points:

- The addition of regularly scheduled webinars is encouraging.
- Applicant comments should be taken into account prior to decisions being made which affect new gTLD implementation.
- Publish and regularly update a New gTLD process dashboard or scorecard
- Conduct an applicant survey to gather additional information for refining remaining processes.
- Designate a New gTLD Applicant Liaison(s) to interact with the applicant community.
- Requests guidance for ICANN Staff and Board members on appropriate forms of interaction with applicants.
- Requests ICANN's New gTLD Program Director regularly attend NTAG teleconference to provide program updates.
- The NTAG expresses support for the 1 September letter submitted by the RySG: Timelines and Milestones in New gTLD Program.

The letter is publicly posted up on the NTAG Correspondence page of the RySG website and can be found here:

<http://www.gtdregistries.org/ntag/communications>.

**NTAG RESPONDS TO PROSPECTS OF AN EXTENDED OBJECTION PERIOD**

In a letter dated 26 September, addressed to the ICANN CEO, Board and gTLD Program Committee Chair, the NTAG responded to the Business Constituency's 10 September letter requesting and extension of the New gTLD Objection Filing period. The NTAG letter articulated its position that extending the Objection Filing Period past ICANN's previously documented date of 13 January 2013 is unnecessary, delivers questionable value, and unreasonably raises uncertainty for New gTLD applicants. In summary the NTAG contends:

- A seven month objection filing period does not constitute a change to the Applicant Guidebook.
- Ending the objection filing period in June/July 2013 was not 'advertised' by ICANN.
- There is questionable value in extending the objection filing period until Initial Evaluation results are published.
- Dispute Resolution and Initial Evaluation are independent processes.
- ICANN may consider refunding the objection filing fee where an application does not pass Extended Evaluation.
- A seven month objection filing period promotes fairness, transparency, predictability and smooth operations.

The letter is publicly posted up on the NTAG Correspondence page of the RySG website and can be found here:

<http://www.gtdregistries.org/ntag/communications>.

**NTAG members are encouraged to tweet or forward the links to both September letters to other interested parties.**

## **SEE YOU IN TORONTO – NTAG MEETING SCHEDULED**

The NTAG will be hosting an in person meeting at ICANN45 in Toronto. NTAG's meeting is open to all interested parties. The meeting will be Monday, 15 October from 1300-1500 in Harbour A/B. Information about the meeting can be found on ICANN's Toronto meeting webpage located here: <http://toronto45.icann.org/node/34193>.

The meeting is an in-person meeting, however remote participation is available. If you plan to attend either in person or remotely, please notify the NTAG Secretary via the NTAG mail list (for members) or via the NTAG contact page <http://www.gtldregistries.org/ntag/contact>.

## **MEMBERSHIP DRIVE – 19 NEW MEMBERS IN SEPTEMBER - NTAG Membership Application:**

[http://gtldregistries.org/observer\\_application\\_form](http://gtldregistries.org/observer_application_form)

NTAG membership continues to grow rapidly with 77 members representing 884 strings.

The NTAG continues to educate the public on the numerous values New gTLDs bring to the Internet as well as the importance of all new gTLD applicants having a voice in the ICANN policy-making model. If you haven't yet, please become an NTAG member and support the effort of leveraging our communications to ICANN. There are many ongoing discussions around topics important to applicants where your opinions need to be heard. The NTAG is the best vehicle for including applicant voices in important discussions impacting the future of your business as a new gTLD registry operator.

NTAG leadership continues to work closely with the Registries Stakeholder Group around positions of importance to all applicants. Important topics teed up as we moved from our meeting in Toronto toward the New Year are:

- Batching and Metering
- Trademark Clearing House
- Uniform Rapid Suspension System
- Whois Verification and Data Retention
- 1000 TLD Annual Limit on Root Server delegation
- GAC Processes
- International Olympic Committee and Red Cross Names
- 1 and 2 Character Domain Names
- ICANN intercessional meeting in early 2013

Repeating what has previously been stated, the importance of your voice and membership in the NTAG cannot be stressed enough as we work together to positively move the new gTLD process forward to final delegation. There is strength in numbers. A complete list of current NTAG members can be located at: [http://gtldregistries.org/observer\\_membership](http://gtldregistries.org/observer_membership)

## **ON TO OCTOBER -**

ICANN45 Toronto, Canada

Review key topics as described above "in person" with ICANN Leadership and Staff

NTAG Applicant Survey Proposal to ICANN (final draft being reviewed).

NTAG Letter to ICANN Board and Staff regarding TMCH Implementation (in process).

"Basecamp" communication tool development for operational improvements continues.