

Radix Universal Acceptance
Test Report - Website

Report for UASG

Executive Summary

a. What is this report about?

The following report is compiled to present the Universal Acceptance Steering Group, a research done by RADIX to test Universal Acceptance compatibility of top websites in the United States sampled in the year 2020.

b. What was the scope of the test?

Most visited websites across 8 high user engagement categories were selected to test the following:

1. Acceptance of nTLDs on Signup Forms
2. Acceptance of nTLDs on Contact Forms
3. Email Transmission Success post acceptance

c. How many websites were tested?

787 websites with an avg of 5.8 billion avg unique visitors per month.

d. What were the key acceptance rates?

RADIX's Observation		
Case	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Form Acceptance %
New Short	89.4	93.8
New Long	80.4	88.81
IDN	23.47	33.93

e. What were the key challenges post testing?

Connecting with the website owners or administrators was the biggest challenge. Leaving aside any complexities regarding implementation of fixes, it was really difficult to receive an acknowledgement of the issue reported from over 95% of the websites. We also tried reaching out via the LinkedIn InMAIL option to connect with individuals associated with the websites but did not see any success.

f. What are some recommendations for the UASG?

1. UASG should provide all possible support to prioritize connecting with organizations that have websites that are non UA compatible. Getting an audience with the right executive within the organization should be the key.
2. We require a great push for acceptance on non-ASCII on these websites.

2. Introduction

Taking inspiration from the work done by the UASG in the field of testing UA readiness of websites, RADIX ventured into a project to test top websites in the US. The program was launched as part of an exclusive initiative within RADIX to see the acceptance of emails and domains of NewTLDs on the top traffic generating websites. This project was carried out in a couple of phases where 727 websites were tested for their UA compatibility. RADIX believes it is important for the domain industry to know potential issues and try to address them before an end user may encounter it.

The psyche behind the approach was to approach the problem with the end user's perspective. All decisions wrt the project were driven from an end user's perspective. Right from the selection of the websites and their categories to the actual testing. It was imperative to encounter UA specific errors like "Form Validations" and "Account Creation/ Signups" before the end users did.

Another follow up goal was to report these issues and connect with website owners and try to influence them to make their websites UA compatible.

In this study, we are not going to go into details of UA compatibility or why it is important for legacy platforms to become UA compatible. UASG has published numerous reports highlighting and talking about them at length. One such report being a comprehensive analysis given in the Universal Acceptance Readiness Report FY20. However, we are going to focus more on what we found and what happens after we have detected websites that are not UA ready. With this report, I would like to shift the emphasis to our outreach efforts and then towards fixing compatibility issues.

3. Scope of Test

a. What did we test?

We tested acceptance of email IDs (form validations) on nTLD based domains including an email id on an IDN domain. For a given website, we tested, wherever available:

1. Signup Form - These are basic forms on a website that an end user uses to sign up for the product or service rendered by the company.
2. Contact/Support Form - Usually available on a website to interact with company
3. Subscribe Form - Any subscription based service which requires an email address for periodical mailers.
4. Email Transmission - If the email was accepted in the form tested, was there any email transmission from the website to inboxes.

b. What are the types of emails used in these cases?

Case Number	Case Type	Email ID Used
Case 1	New Short - nTLD is less than 4 characters, eg .uno, .xyz	alisha@writtenfolly.xyz
Case 2	New Long - * nTLD is greater than 4 characters, eg .space, .online	kevin@writtenfolly.online
Case 3	IDN TLD	masjide@डेटामेल.भारत

4. Data Set

- a. Source - Similar Web
- b. Filters - Top Traffic Generating websites in USA. Traffic threshold - Avg 10 million unique visitors per month
- c. Date of Selection - Jan to Aug - 2020
- d. Categories of Websites
 - i. Arts and Entertainment
 - ii. E-commerce and Shopping
 - iii. Education
 - iv. Food and Drinks
 - v. Jobs and Career
 - vi. Lifestyle
 - vii. Social Media/Social Network and Online Community
 - viii. Travel and Tourism

e. Quantum

Total Websites Sampled = 727 in 2 phases
 Sum of Unique Visitors = 5.8 Billion (approx)
 Sum of Avg Monthly Visits = 19.9 Billion (approx)
 Total Test Cases Explored = 2181
 Unique Categories Explored = 9 Categories across 727 websites (Arts and Entertainment, Ecommerce and Shopping, Education, Food and Drink, Jobs and Career, Lifestyle, Social Media, Social Network and Online Community, Travel and Tourism)
 Websites were top of their respective categories based on avg unique visitors per month.

5. Testing Methodology

Testing was done by internal researchers by tracing a user’s journey within a website. We used google form to ensure the flow of a tester is as consistent as possible. For all case types we collected and analysed the following data points:

- a. Domain name
- b. Signup URL Form
- c. Contact Form URL

d. For Case 1(new Short)/Case 2(New Long)/Case 3 (IDN)

- i. Signup - Accepted OR Rejected OR Not Applicable
- ii. If Accepted, did you receive email communication
- iii. If Rejected, enter error type
 - Validation
 - Submission/Processing
 - Unclear
 - NA

Points to Consider

- Not All websites have signup or contact form
- A website’s Signup form may accept an email but it’s contact form may reject it
- A website may be partially compatible
- A website may use 2 different emails systems for communication, one for the signup module and the other for Contact forms
- A website may just use single sign on instead of additional sign-up steps
- A website may not be tested as it may be a duplicate, alias/redirect, or a private portal.

6. Results

a. Case 1 - New Short

- i. Acceptance of new Short on Signup and Contact Form

Test Case 1 - alisha@writtenfolly.xyz (Signup)	No. of Websites	% of Total Count of Avg. Monthly Visits along Test Case 1 - alisha@writtenfolly.xyz (Signup)	Sum of Unique Users	% of Total Sum of Unique Users along Table (Down)	Sum of Avg. Monthly Visits	% of Total Sum of Avg. Monthly Visits along Table (Down)
Accepted	430	59.15%	3,94,97,32,443	78.19%	17,25,58,97,075	86.54%
Not Applicable	224	30.81%	80,27,88,834	15.89%	1,86,01,01,911	9.33%
Rejected	51	7.02%	22,17,26,107	4.39%	63,28,34,491	3.17%
NULL	22	3.03%	7,71,22,308	1.53%	19,14,09,902	0.96%
Grand Total	727	100.00%	5,05,13,69,692	100.00%	19,94,02,43,379	100.00%

Fig 1 - Case 1 Signup Acceptance Results

Test Case 1 - alisha@ writtenfolly. xyz (Contact Form)	No. of Websites	% of Total No. of Websites	Sum of Unique Users	% of Total Sum of Unique Users along Table (Down)	Sum of Avg. Monthly Visits	% of Total Sum of Avg. Monthly Visits along Table (Down)
NULL	22	3.03%	7,71,22,308	1.53%	19,14,09,902	0.96%
Accepted	272	37.41%	1,29,32,31,678	25.60%	3,91,11,04,710	19.61%
Not Applicable	416	57.22%	3,62,98,88,594	71.86%	15,71,92,24,416	78.83%
Rejected	17	2.34%	5,11,27,112	1.01%	11,85,04,352	0.59%
Grand Total	727	100.00%	5,05,13,69,692	100.00%	19,94,02,43,379	100.00%

Fig 2 - Case 1 Contact Form Results

ii. New Short - Signup Forms Impacting Visitors

According to Fig 1 we record the following observations regarding visitors on the websites where signup options were available:

- a. Total Websites Sampled = 727 in 2 phases
- b. Sum of Unique Visitors = 5.8 Billion (approx)
- c. Unique Visitors on websites where signup is Accepted = 3.9 Billion (approx), 78.19% of the sample size
- d. Unique Visitors on websites where signup is Rejected = 221 Million (approx), 5.51% of the sample size

iii. New Short - Contact forms Impacting Visitors

According to Fig 2 we recorded the following observations regarding visitors on websites with contact forms:

- a. Unique Visitors on websites where Contact Form is Accepted = 1.28 Billion (approx), 37.82% of the sample size
- b. Unique Visitors on websites where Contact Form is Rejected = 56.8 Million (approx), 2.48% of the sample size
- c. NOTE* Remaining websites either did not have a contact form or the test case was NULL(repeat or not testable)

ii. New Short - Signup Forms Impacting Visitors

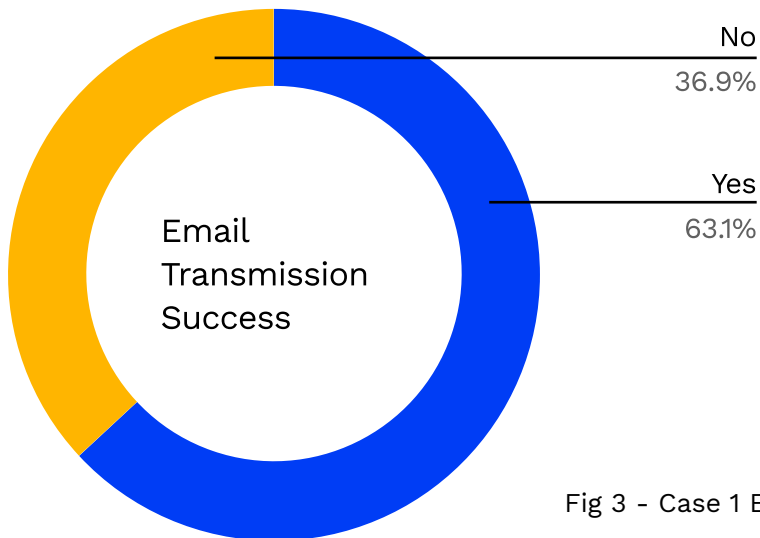


Fig 3 - Case 1 Email Transmission Result

b. Case 2 - New Long Acceptance

i. Acceptance of New Long on Signup and Contact Forms

Test Case 2 - kevin@writtenfolly.online (Signup)	No. of Websites	% of Total No. of Websites	Sum of Unique Users	% of Total Sum of Unique Users along Table (Down)	Sum of Avg. Monthly Visits	% of Total Sum of Avg. Monthly Visits along Table (Down)
NULL	22	3.03%	7,71,22,308	1.53%	19,14,09,902	0.96%
Accepted	385	52.96%	3,78,85,59,450	75.00%	16,88,69,36,726	84.69%
Not Applicable	226	31.09%	80,55,55,100	15.95%	1,87,06,52,341	9.38%
Rejected	94	12.93%	38,01,32,833	7.53%	99,12,44,410	4.97%
Grand Total	727	100.00%	5,05,13,69,692	100.00%	19,94,02,43,379	100.00%

Fig 4 - Case 2 Signup Acceptance Results

Test Case 2 - kevin@writtenfolly.online (Contact Form)	No. of Websites	% of Total No. of Websites	Sum of Unique Users	% of Total Sum of Unique Users along Table (Down)	Sum of Avg. Monthly Visits	% of Total Sum of Avg. Monthly Visits along Table (Down)
NULL	22	3.03%	7,71,22,308	1.53%	19,14,09,902	0.96%
Accepted	255	35.08%	1,24,91,75,662	24.73%	3,78,54,23,251	18.98%
Not Applicable	419	57.63%	3,63,67,18,914	71.99%	15,75,57,75,654	79.01%
Rejected	31	4.26%	8,83,52,808	1.75%	20,76,34,572	1.04%
Grand Total	727	100.00%	5,05,13,69,692	100.00%	19,94,02,43,379	100.00%

Fig 5 - Case 2 Contact Form Acceptance Results

ii. New Long - Signup Forms Impacting Visitors

According to Fig 4 we record the following observations regarding visitors on the websites where signup options were available:

- a. Unique Visitors on websites where signup is Accepted = 3.78 Billion (approx), 75% of the sample size
- b. Unique Visitors on websites where signup is Rejected = 357 Million (approx), 7.5% of the sample size
- c. * Remaining websites either did not have a contact form or the test case was NULL(repeat or not testable)

iii. New Long - Contact Form Impacting Visitors

- a. Unique Visitors on websites where Contact Form is Accepted = 1.24 Billion (approx), 24.62% of the sample size
- b. Unique Visitors on websites where Contact Form is Rejected = 94 Million (approx), 1.09% of the sample size
- c. * Remaining websites either did not have a contact form or the test case was NULL(repeat or not testable)

iv. New Long post acceptance - Successful Email Transmission Split

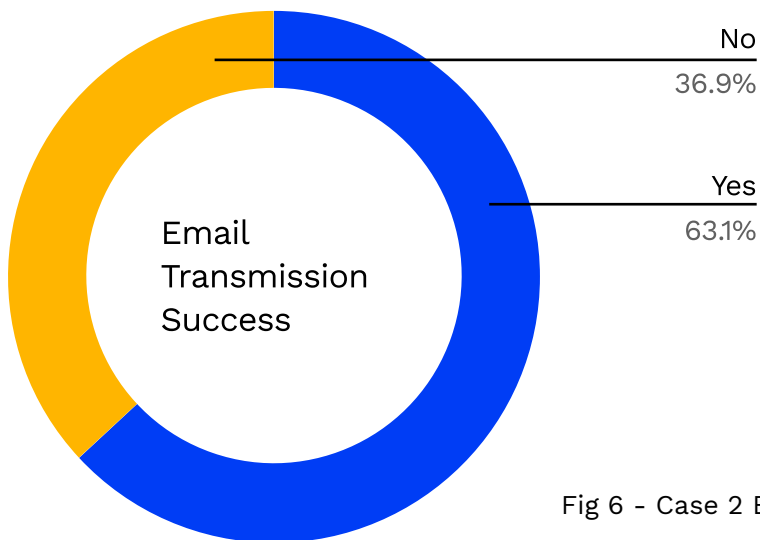


Fig 6 - Case 2 Email Transmission Result

c. Case 2 - IDN

The raw result files are also attached for analysis by UASG.

Shortlisted websites.xls	All websites shortlisted for UA Testing. Including metadata.
UA Testing Website Responses.xls	Complete test results

7. Observations

RADIX's Observation		
Case	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Form Acceptance %
New Short	89.4	93.8
New Long	80.4	88.81
IDN	23.47	33.93

UASG's Observation			
Test Case	2017	2019	2020
ascii@ascii.newshort	91%	97%	98.30%
ascii@ascii.newlong	78%	84%	84.80%
ascii@chinese.asci	45%	50%	47.90%

We noticed that acceptance of new Short and new Long TLDs is far greater than domains on IDN TLDs. The results are quite consistent with UASG's website test results. As expected, even the email delivery sees a drastic drop when it comes to a TLD on an IDN. It just highlights that we need a greater push and generate motivation for acceptance of IDNs. According to [UASG's FY 2020 report](#) and RADIX's assessment, tests conducted on top websites showed that

- The acceptance rate of emails on short nTLDs has increased from 91% in 2017 to 98.3% in 2020.
- The acceptance rate of emails on long nTLDs has increased from 78% in 2017 to 84.8% in 2020.
- RADIX's test results also hover on the 90% mark for new Short and around 80% for new long. The variation can be attributed to the test samples selected for the exercise by UASG and RADIX. RADIX has primarily just focused on the US market.
- The low IDN acceptance percentage is seen on both test results
- [Universal Acceptance Readiness Report 2020](#) also segregated test websites as per different categories such as eCommerce, government, education, etc and the results were promising.

	Overall	Media	E-Commerce	Online Services	Banking	Gov't	Education
ascii@ascii.newshort	98%	98%	96%	98%	99%	99%	100%
ascii@ascii.newlong	85%	83%	84%	85%	82%	83%	85%
ascii@chinese.asci	48%	51%	47%	46%	42%	46%	45%
chinese@ascii.asci	19%	21%	15%	20%	24%	22%	17%
chinese@chinese.chinese	11%	12%	7%	10%	15%	15%	12%
arabic.arabic@arabic	11%	13%	7%	10%	16%	16%	12%

- Such studies help UASG ambassadors and advocates to identify and focus on websites of a specific category that require immediate attention. We conducted a similar study at Radix where we analysed top websites belonging to different categories. These were the results:

	Arts and Entertainment		E-commerce and Shopping		Education		Food and Drinks		Jobs and Career		Lifestyle		Social Media/Social Network and Online Community		Travel and Tourism	
Case	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Acceptance %	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Acceptance %	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Acceptance %	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Acceptance %	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Acceptance %	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Acceptance %	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Acceptance %	Signup Acceptance %	Contact Acceptance %
New Short	94.34	97.92	88.00	86.84	92.31	95.24	81.82	100.00	97.92	91.89	91.89	94.29	76.00	92.00	90.63	86.96
New Long	79.66	95.74	78.38	78.38	92.16	92.68	69.09	90.24	93.75	86.49	75.68	85.71	74.00	92.00	85.94	86.96
IDN	27.12	45.65	17.57	30.56	35.29	26.32	19.64	39.47	27.08	29.73	21.33	31.43	20.00	33.33	23.33	21.74

- While the acceptance rates for new short and new long cases is more than 80% under most categories, we see a drastic dip when a domain is on an IDN TLD. Such comparisons highlight problem areas and provide direction to ambassadors and members who are advocating for Universal Acceptance.

NOTE - One Step further - Deep test of .STORE domains to popular E-Commerce and Shopping websites.

Putting our theory to test we embarked on testing a very specific category for a specific TLD. Due to the low 78.38% acceptance rate of new Long TLDs under the category of E-Commerce and Shopping, we tested if .STORE domains were being accepted on top Marketplace portals globally, within US, UK and Europe. We saw a 100% acceptance rate on signup. However, we could not further test specific features of these marketplace platforms due to pre-activation manual verification limitations.

8. Follow Up methods

Having noticed the inconsistencies and gaps regarding acceptance of emails on nTLDs, we wanted to test if we could build an internal outreach process to connect with website owners/admins who would be able to address these gaps and perhaps work towards making their websites UA compatible. Here is how we approached the problem:

- Draft - Compose a draft with evidence of non UA compatibility. We saved every every screenshot that showed validation errors and composed it with our outreach mail
- Report to ICANN/UASG - We reported these instances to ICANN staff through the UASG report portal to see if they would be able to connect with the website owners. The response from ICANN staff was prompt.
- We had shortlisted 217 Cases, within 127 domain names, where either the signup or contact or both options were not working for any of the 3 types of email ids tested.
- We reached out to ICANN, via UASG’s Global Support Center and simultaneously pursued common connections through linkedin.
- Received acknowledgement from Forever21.com, victoriasecret.com, starbucks.com, carnival.com, torrid.com, footlocker.com, niemanmarcus.com
- Outside the Original list, following were reported:

- Soundcloud.com, udemy.com, jio.com, Surveymonkey.com
- Fastest resolution was provided by SurveyMonkey which fixed the compatibility issue within a week.
- Soundcloud was more of an Abuse Filter Issue while Udemy.com was also fixed. No response from Jio
- Positives:
 - Quick turnaround time from ICANN
 - Rigorous follow up website admins
 - Kept us updated of the progress
- Challenges:
 - Most of the reports did not yield a response from owners
 - Some admins acknowledged with a canned response leaving no door for follow ups for ICANN.
 - Can't influence a website's release cycle
 - Even after receiving acknowledgement of the issue, there seemed to be a lack of motivation from owners to fix the issue.
- One to One follow up - For all the cases where ICANN could not connect with website owners, we tried alternate means to reach out. We used the LinkedIn InMail option to reach out to the most relevant profile associated with the website. We searched for Senior Executives, Product Managers/Owners, Editors who may be in the best position to take notice of what we had to report. Our acceptable response was an acknowledgement of the issue and the fact that issue was documented internally for future release or fixes.
 - Positives:
 - We experimented with a new outreach method
 - We noticed that deeper research is required to use LinkedIn for outreach activity.
 - Challenges:
 - We wanted to reach out to 56 website owners but found contacts only for 44.
 - Received 2 responses out of 44
 - 0 Positive response received.

9. Recommendations to UASG

- a. We see a gradual increase in acceptance of new Short and new Long TLDs. However, promotion of acceptance of IDNs will require a lot of focus.
- b. We should focus on high impact websites and portals with our outreach efforts.
- c. Popular websites within nations that do not speak english nor do have latin scriptures should be tested and targeted with outreach activities.
- d. The Ambassadorship program should expand further and supported with all possible resources to make a successful connect
- e. ICANN should try to establish reliable contacts with website owners and build relationships to make way for UA related solutions to percolate through the ranks within the companies operating those websites.

10. Conclusion

The exercise was a long drawn effort from RADIX to tackle customer related concerns regarding Universal acceptance. The acceptance of new gTLDs will eventually climax with maximum sites accepting them. However, IDNs will only gain popularity with the evolution of a multilingual internet for local users. Although outreach efforts continue to take place, we are yet to see an acceptable rate of positive responses from website owners to make their websites UA compatible.