

**ICANN
Transcription ICANN Hyderabad
GNSO RySG – Brand TLD Awareness
Wednesday, 09 November 2016 at 09:00 IST**

Note: Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases it is incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages or transcription errors. It is posted as an aid to understanding the proceedings at the meeting, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

The recordings and transcriptions of the calls are posted on the GNSO Master Calendar page <http://gns0.icann.org/en/group-activities/calendar>

Martin Sutton: Right, thank you, everybody, for joining us. I know it's been a – ever such a long week at ICANN so thanks for joining this morning's session, which is an open session for the Brand Registry Group to really be able to offer some information out to those of you that may not be familiar with what's going on with brand TLD registries so we've got some information to run through in terms of trends and analysis that we're seeing this morning.

And also then if you're not too aware of what the Brand Registry Group does, I'll be able to talk you through that and then open it up to questions and answer. So it's a fairly relaxed open session, very much welcome any questions as we go along from the audience. So before we do that it would be helpful I think if those that are from the BRG, I know some have already departed India, so we're probably just a few in the room. If you could just raise your hands so that we can – I can spot BRG members? Cole?

Cole Quinn: Oh I'm sorry.

Martin Sutton: Right? So if you've got any questions afterwards and you know who to come and try and track down, okay. So actually if we can move to the next slide? I should really say then at least – Martin Sutton from the Brand Registry Group, Executive Director. So Luca Barbero, Cole Quinn, Freida Tallon. Was there any others? So okay.

So what I thought would be useful is that there's kind of a regular concern that there's nothing happening with brand TLDs, so they're not activating. So I thought it would be useful at ICANN just to be able to give an illustration as to what is actually happening and also some of the rationale or reasoning that might be behind that so it gives a clear picture as to what typically a brand registry needs to consider before it even starts to activate behind the NIC page, which is the minimum compliance required.

Within the Brand Registry Group, we're also keen not only to, you know, be represented at industry fora like ICANN, but also to help our members understand what's going on. So we work with them to try and offer information out that helps them internally. So what we've recently prepared is a trends and analysis report. And so I'm going to take some of the information out of that. It's fairly fresh off the press so bear with me as we go through some of this because I may not have the – oh sorry, I'm not pushing the slides am I? That's it.

So I may just need to refer back to the more detailed elements if anybody's interested through my notes here. But let me just take you back one step in terms of why did brands apply in the first place, because I think primarily people understand it's to safeguard their brand so that was an immediate priority at the time but also to support the application process that's about controlling and securing their digital assets. They have better control over a brand TLD and how that operates.

It's also to enhance the consumer protection for the customer so that especially where you're dealing with transactional services is, you know, highly critical but that element of trust that you can give to the end consumer was again a very high priority.

And then in terms of usage, so in terms of your consumer or business to business market, it gave you quite the flexibility in terms of switching things on and off on your registry. Something that you didn't have too much flexibility in the existing gTLD and ccTLD landscape because often things that you wanted to register at the second level had either been taken, or there was quite a bit of confusion where lots of similar registrations are applied by third parties to try and, you know, direct some of the traffic away.

So that greater flexibility meant that for marketing purposes it was very valuable just to be able to quickly go live with a certain campaign or product and service.

On the backend of all of this you've got suddenly access to the data that's important to you about how do your consumers navigate around your digital landscape. So that is going to be extremely important as brands start to activate their brand TLDs even further.

And ultimately at the end of this it reinforces the brand. There's no – you don't need to have unnecessary strings attached to your brand as you start to populate that registry.

What it is not is anything about selling domain names. So there's no income stream from this so your business case is very much about supporting – providing another platform essentially to support your business. It doesn't distribute domains to third parties although those associated by licensee are permitted just as an example. But it's all closely connected and controlled by the registry operator. So essentially the registrant is the registry. Okay?

Next please. Oh I'm struggling to see that. Hang on. If we look now at the current landscape for the applications that were received, out of the completed delegated numbers, we're now talking about 1200 virtually from the new gTLD round, have been delegated. And in contractual elements, we've got Specification 13 which clearly outlines a brand – closed brand TLD, accounts for 479 of the 1200 or so completed executed registry agreements.

Now also within the code of conduct exemption, we see a number of 67 there, so a good proportion of those are also brands that haven't wanted to or haven't thought about yet converting to a Specification 13. So you can see that around about 40% or slightly more relate to brand TLDs in this new landscape of those that have contracted so far.

Next please. Now this typically well what the appetite of the standard registry operator is domains under management, you know, that's the testing of, you know, value in a normal registry. But it doesn't really matter in a – thank you – in a brand. But what we do now is track the domains under management just to see what's starting to emerge as trends within the brand TLD market.

Now within the 500 or so that are now delegated, there are well over 5000 second level domains that are in operation. So bearing in mind that probably 1000 of those is related – sorry, not 1000 but 500 or those is related to a NIC page, we're talking about well over 400 second level domains are now in active use.

This was bumped up, as you can see there's a couple of times during the last quarter where there was some movement, a shift in the market. And this was represented by dotMMA, which is a French insurance company, registering a large proportion of domains, 1700 domains, that largely related to the locations of their offices. So that's one way that they're obviously trying to look to utilize their dotBrand is to give easy indications as to, you know, if you're in a certain location this is where you go for this information is kind of like your local office.

Now then later on we see another bump of 500 domains at the second level by dotNeustar and, you know, so these are significant bumps up. And not necessarily for websites, so it could well be that they're using them internally for other reasons. But what we can try and see is those that are actually running websites we've got a bit more richer data that we can actually have a look at. But we've got to understand that as a resource for the brand itself they're not necessarily going to resolve into a consumer or corporate B2B Website.

The reason why I say that the domains under management, therefore, is irrelevant is that even in the current landscape when brands are trying to think about transitioning across to their brand TLD, they currently probably only operate a small number of critical domains that support their business. So given my past experience with a global bank, you know, a dotCom was typically a corporate site, which didn't attract a huge amount of traffic, probably just at reporting periods during the course of the year.

Our actual network to the consumer base was via ccTLDs. And typically in the sort of European Asia market people are very familiar with using ccTLDs to distribute their services to the consumers. So to transition then to a brand TLD, we would probably not see a significant number of second level domains registered to support any of that type of activity if they so choose to move that part of the business across to the brand TLD.

So typically we're going to see low volumes unless they think of other ways to distribute or utilize that brand TLD which is more innovative. So I think that's just an important thing to bear in mind because a lot of the time in terms of history of registries, the main focus has been on volume of domains. That's not the value proposition for a brand TLD, it's just supporting their business to reach to their consumers or internal purposes.

So a little bit further digging down here and drilling to the domains that are being used, as I mentioned, that 530 odd domains, second level are in operation, you know, taking off the NIC pages we've probably got about 4800 I think we've got a count for. So that's excluding the NIC so this is more about what has been put into activation.

So let's have a quick look and see what's happening here. Without too much surprise a large proportion of that at the moment is the redirect to existing content. So where they haven't had to do much it's already in situ but they want to start testing and using their new brand TLD and see what sort of traffic starts to emerge from that. So they're just sort of approaching this carefully.

There's another sort of quarter chunk where the 22% where there's an error message, so there's no site resolved, the DNS hasn't been set up. So it could be just testing again, to try and work out what to do, how to structure their naming conventions and purpose behind the thing so there's, you know, no activity can be identified on those domains.

And then about 12% represent active sites, and a good proportion of those are more campaign-oriented so it's kind of a less than 100 pages probably on the Website, typically will be a campaign which they have the option to switch on and off quite easily. And then a smaller proportion where there's some significant activity, they've transitioned and put quite a lot of real estate that is regularly used and is probably much heavier in design so probably larger than 100 pages associated with that Website. And I'll run through a couple of examples that – where we see that.

Thank you. So it is important I think just to sort of figure out this difference between consumer and corporate so I kind of alluded to it earlier. There are only a handful of brands that have really pushed forward with using their brand TLD as a main corporate or consumer or both type of site. And here

I'm just illustrating Barclays.co.uk is on the left hand side, very difficult to see, sorry about this, so I'll read some of the bits out here.

So this is, again, whether delivering services to their consumers in the UK, day to day banking services. So they want it still highly secure, they want to make sure that, you know, it still remains where customers know where to go so that has been, for this point in time, left in the dotUK local TLD environment.

Whereas they've moved their corporate site where it's easier to do regular messaging and point them when reports are issued on a quarterly basis and get people used to seeing this new landscape.

And there is a plan there for, you know, Barclays have publicly stated that they will be transitioning. And it's just the normal course of business now where they review and renew their digital assets and websites, there is the process to then transfer it into their brand TLD. So that's kind of a, you know, a gradual, steady, secure and standard way of operating for a company.

Okay. And here just to kind of illustrate there's the consumer on the left side column and the corporate on the right hand side. So this is the sample of 16 brands that have really pushed forward with this where the top green boxes really represent that they're covering both consumer and corporate markets. They tend to be more of the business to business market so there's not a massive consumer base that is punching into the site day in, day out. This is more about B2B, it's going to be irregular but steady traffic that's going to be going across those.

There are some in there or one in particular I'll drill down a bit further where that is far more interesting. Others have just sort of, dipping their toes in the water with the corporate site, as I say, less traffic going through there but it's an easier and steady marketing message to put them across to that space with the potential to move across to their consumer base as and when they

feel comfortable with that so that's going to be suitable for them. And there's a lot of work in terms of getting that messaging across to customers to make sure that they feel very confident that's the right place that they should be going to.

So here's one that has transitioned across their consumer and corporate sites and highly successfully too. BNP Paribas have created a (Mabank).pnbparaibas where they ask us and gave them the opportunity if they wanted to switch over to that particular site. They were able to do so. There was a gradual transition then of traffic. And it's more or less completely converted from their previous transactional site, which is under dotNet.

Now that's really one of the values here which, you know, domains under management volume is irrelevant, it's really about the traffic and getting consumers to go to the right destination. So the traffic that is generated from these is far more important than the actual number of domains; a business can run one domain for, you know, millions of customers.

And on the corporate side they've done that as well. I think earlier this year in April converted across to group.bnpparibas. and this is interesting where we're starting to see different naming conventions so there's no real standard naming convention at the second level, it's about what suits their customer base, what's more relevant to their customer base as they start to transition across.

Thanks, Sue. And this is more of a sort of an opportunity where a brand, which is – has got the same term, I suppose, as other brands has taken the opportunity to move forward at the brand TLD to elevate its particular brand into the string. So JCB, I'm pretty familiar with JCB as a heavy goods vehicle type, you know, diggers, operating machinery whereas it's actually, you know, in Asia it's a well-known global cards issuer.

And so with their previous business running on, you know, dotCodotJP I think it is, they've transitioned their corporate or – yes, the corporate main site over to global.jcb so it elevates their brand a lot higher and significantly as they've done that.

Thanks, Sue. And (Weir) is a Scottish engineering firm so this is more of a business to business market. So they took the opportunity to read all of their digital Website interactions for their customers and that was all incorporated with the launch of their brand TLD. Thanks, Sue.

And they've been following this and getting people to look at this and score it and rate it so there are different ways that websites, especially for their market, are rated. And they've seen an improvement over the last six months as to the usage and the feedback has been really positive in terms of that setup that they've created in their brand TLD environment.

And Sue, I think this is very relevant to us these days. This was just a few weeks old, as I understand, but my.stc, My Saudi Telecom it is, so this is a great illustration of where there's no confusion to using a two-character code for your customer base. And this is an operation, they've got their Website in Arabic and English so, you know, a great example for enhancing customer experience, getting your brand there and it's a very short string for them to remember. So a great illustration to now start seeing those come through.

And I think with some of the changes that were – or the resolution for the two character codes yesterday will help a lot of brands now feel comfortable about structuring consistently the second level country levels for moving ahead with some of these, which is what they're kind of used to, creating short country code strings to manage at the second level.

Okay thanks, Sue. So just to wrap up this particular element, the – I think it's clear to say that, you know, that most of the activity tends to center on very easy redirects to existing content so it's sort of a toe in the water.

Some, you know, but it's only a small number at this stage, have transitioned, you know, a significant part of their business including consumer – large consumer portfolios across to their brand TLD with no detrimental impact so they've monitored this very closely, it's very, very concerning to anybody particularly with SEO traffic for that to drop in any way. So it's got to be carefully managed and handled.

But brands remain cautious and they'll carefully manage that transition. And I regard this as a gradual and quiet evolution. They're not going to be announcing this with lots of bells and whistles every time they transition across, it's just a very slow educational maneuver across that they don't have any issues for their consumer base. That's what's critical for them.

Okay thanks, Sue. So before we go onto this then, is there any questions or remarks anybody's got regarding the last section? Please, Kurt.

Kurt Pritz:

Hey, Martin. This is Kurt Pritz. So just for my own understanding, it's clear that a dotBrand could be a company name but can it also be another name owned by a company? So I'm thinking of Grainger, you know, Grainger has dotGrainger and also dotSafety. So would dotSafety qualify as a brand TLD? And then how do the fees work? So when the registries register names are they obligated – under what circumstances they obligated to pay a fee of the 43 cents to ICANN or how do they get out of it?

And then my third question is, and you might be coming to this, is about the mission of the BRG. Is it targeted like at helping brands spin up and utilize their TLD in the best way possible or is it meant as, you know, policy advocacy group where, you know, you have a bunch of common interests so you want to make sure you can operate in a way that's beneficial to the most of the members?

Martin Sutton: Thanks, Kurt. So three questions there. Throw them all in. Well the last one we will just park for now because I think the next section will help cover that. In terms of the first point, in terms of dotSafety, that doesn't strike me as a potential dotBrand, unless anybody has got a trademark and was able to register it as something like a Spec 13 model. So that's doubtful. But so was there something else behind that in terms of trying to match in Grainger.safety?

Kurt Pritz: Well, I was just thinking Grainger might choose to – I don't know anything about Grainger but they might choose to use dotSafety very similar – in a fashion similar to how they might use dotGrainger or they might decide, you know, they want to talk about their own safety-related products and use that in a very similar way. So the question is really a, you know, is the trademark required to be a brand TLD or is it a TLD owned by a brand that wants to use that TLD in a manner similar to how they would use the trademark name TLD?

Martin Sutton: The former. So it's the – they need to have a trademark. And I've forgotten the second question now or did we...

((Crosstalk))

Martin Sutton: So in terms of the fees, you know, the volume of domains were probably under that \$25,000 so for a typical brand it will just be contained within that amount. I don't think any brand yet has reached anything like that. I think MMA is the highest second level volume so that's – was 1700 pumped in a few months ago. So in that respect, no.

And in – I can't imagine for the near future that that would – probably in terms of fees anyway a lot of them will maneuver that through their front end provider so it'll be captured there. Susan.

Susan Payne: Hi, Kurt. It's Susan Payne. I was just going to say if the – what you were asking was is there a different rule for brands in terms of fees? No, they pay the exact same fees as everyone else does. It's just that in reality most of them aren't hitting the threshold yet where they're paying a price per domain.

Martin Sutton: Thank you, Susan. And I know a few of us joined in the room after we started so I'll just like to introduce Susan Payne who's a legal advisor for the Brand Registry Group. Thanks, Susan.

Jim Prendergast: Yes, good morning. Jim Prendergast. I think regardless if you're talking about brands or generics I think everybody agrees that there is a significant consumer awareness gap about the new gTLD program in general. And I think it's dragging on the entrepreneurial types and it's giving brands cold feet when it comes to launching in a big way.

I've been known in my circles to advocate that the world will change when we see an advertisement that says run.nike. They spend \$2.3 billion a year on advertising. Are you hearing of any brands that are talking about incorporating this into any consumer-facing advertising?

Martin Sutton: It's already happening. Already happening. Le Clerc in France is – you've got their shopping bags and products and services. It's already marked up with...

((Crosstalk))

Jim Prendergast: I should have looked; I was in one in August.

Martin Sutton: Yes, so and really pushing hard. So that naming convention, they have been excellent on that. PNP Paribas, so not only is that probably limited in terms of the consumer market, they've targeted their home base in France. But nevertheless, they do have structures outside of France and they are bringing commercial, etcetera, it's publicized. I see the news prints and everything for

– I think it's commercial or corporate dotPnpparibas. So we are seeing those very much.

And I think, again, it's going back to that point that I mentioned earlier. They don't want to go out shouting and ringing bells on this because you don't want to be suddenly targeted for whatever reason because, you know, people like to think that when you start doing changes there might be some weak spots that they can target for initial times.

So I would say that it's very much targeted to their consumers that they will market. They're not going to be out there marketing in support of everybody's else's dotWhatever.

Jim Prendergast: Right. No, it's good, I wasn't aware of those so that's good to know. I mean, and anything I think the BRG can do to develop a repository of those types of examples I think would be helpful.

(Depak Pomar): This is (Depak Pomar) for (unintelligible) registration are require a registered trademark only for any country?

Martin Sutton: Can you repeat that?

(Depak Pomar): For registration of dotBrand domain do we require a registered trademark of any country will do or some specific country?

Martin Sutton: Can I defer to you, Susan, to articulate that in your legal manner? Thank you.

Susan Payne: Yes, essentially it's pretty much any country. The way the rules in Specification 13, which is the specification that the brand TLDs enter into, the way those rules were set up they require you to have a trademark that you've recorded in the Trademark Clearinghouse. And the Trademark Clearinghouse was set up for the rights protection mechanisms under the new gTLDs so you

need to comply with the kind of registration requirements or record requirements of that.

But essentially the Trademark Clearinghouse is just a repository so you just – if you have a valid mark you put it in there, it doesn't matter which country it is.

((Crosstalk))

Susan Payne: But you – the brands also need to make – when they're signing up to Spec 13 there are also some requirements around actually proving that, you know, having proved that the mark is also in kind of genuine use.

(Depak Pomar): Just more clarification, sometimes a (theme) brand will be known by the trademark by the multiple owner in different classes. So whoever come first will get right for that particular brand?

Susan Payne: Yes, first come first serve, pretty much. I mean, there are a couple of situations – I don't think there's anyone here from Merck. Merck is a brand which is used in the US by one company and outside of the US by another. And they – both those companies applied and they are still in dispute about that. But essentially it's kind of first come first serve.

Martin Sutton: (Yoshi).

(Yoshi Maraka): (Yoshi Maraka), (unintelligible). My boss is in the same room so I really have to speak my own capacity. But I just want to add up some information about dotJCB.stc. I've never seen my.stc so this is my first time. But this looks like just a homepage of the company. But JCB actually have a PH.jcb which is targeting the Philippines market just like that. So I think the use of the two-characters before the brand TLD, depending on the size of the company, depends on where they are actually marketing to or targeting and stuff like that.

But I'm actually thinking this may create a confusion in market in the future because if we go to My it looks like – Malaysian.stc for some people but it's got PH@jcb, that's targeting the Philippines, right? So I think we need to be careful and need a (unintelligible) to these brand TLDs.

Martin Sutton: So how would it confuse anybody when they go to My.stc and see what they see?

(Yoshi Maraka): I think this is really depending on where the companies are targeting. But if the STC it is Saudi Arabian Telecom, goes to the Malaysia market, my.stc, probably the people from Malaysia think that's for Malaysian Website because if other companies, many other companies start using like PH or JCB or stuff like that. Just my – what I actually think right now.

Martin Sutton: Thanks, (Yoshi). Okay we'll move on to the next section then which is just going to cover some elements of BRG. And I'm going to hand over to Cole because Cole has been leading an effort within the Brand Registry Group to revisit our strategy because we've gone a long way for the last three years in terms of achieving certain elements particularly around the ICANN arena but we've spent a lot of time and effort thinking about what we should be doing for the future. So if I could hand over to you, Cole?

Cole Quinn: Sure. Thank you very much, Martin. And my name is Cole Quinn. Excuse me. I manage the team that manages the corporate domain portfolio at Microsoft. And I came into this role about a year ago. My previous role had been to manage the team that was engineering the name server platform and the recursive caching layer of DNS at Microsoft as well. So I kind of moved in from the compute and DNS side and opened the gates to the wonderful world of domains about a year ago.

And my first event was the Dublin ICANN where my predecessor said, hey, before ICANN really gets rolling there's a Brand Registry Group meeting that

you might want to attend. I think you'll find it interesting. And so I wandered into this meeting and found a society of like-minded people kind of in the same boat as myself where there was a set of premises that the industry was throwing around as assertions to why companies would want to buy a TLD.

And from the Microsoft perspective, we accepted the premises kind of on a contingency basis to let's buy them defensively and then wait and see what they're actually going to do. And kind of put me in a bit of a toothless position where I didn't have a lot of influence necessarily with these senior guys that had been working on this for several years.

And so to be around many people that were kind of in the same boat really was very therapeutic to me and so it kind of helped me to get a sense that what my senior leadership team did not need was a enthusiastic newbie coming at them all hopped up on, you know, new ideas and stuff, but really what they needed was data to inform them to be making a better more informed decision as to what we wanted to do with our TLDs.

And so I started asking some questions, and I was saying things to Martin and Cecelia, who is the President of the BRG at this point, I said so what is it actually that the BRG does? I'm trying to get a quick orientation. What's the purpose?

And there was a lot of convoluted abbreviations and acronyms and I couldn't really understand exactly what it was I was thinking about getting into. And I said, you guys really need to work on your elevator pitch.

So recognizing that I think Martin said here's our strategic vision, or our strat plan that we had been working off of for the last three years, and it was pretty obsolete and it had a lot of references to things that had already kind of passed us by chronologically.

It became very apparent that we needed to do a reset on that and really get a good...

Martin Sutton: Sorry.

Cole Quinn: Really get a good crisp sense of mission and purpose. And so he talked me into kind of heading that up. And we quickly formed a working group called the Strategic Vision Working Group. And leveraging the discipline of the program management and like the Agile philosophies and stuff that I had incorporated into being a PM, I brought that same approach to the BRG where with a software development team or an operational team what you want to do is start at the very top level and look at the company's business objectives and the missions.

And under those are going to be different scenarios and value propositions. And within those value propositions and goals those are going to decompose into actual from strategic to tactical and from tactical into what does that look like on a day to day basis? How does all of that actually taking shape in a recognizable form?

And so if you are able to map everything you do back to a sense of purpose and a strategy, then you can be assured that you're making the highest and best use of your limited resources, right? Everybody, I mean, that's not a difficult concept to grasp.

And so since we're dealing with mostly volunteers and everyone has a day job, we wanted to be very careful that, A, the same three people weren't doing all the work; and, B, everything that we are doing was mapping to something that we say that we want to do that rolls into our purpose and strategic goals; and, C, we wanted to also make sure that the things that we're doing are actually accruing value.

And so if you go to the next slide please, Sue? This speaks to Chuck's questionnaire. So the first step was to really gain consensus in a very concise way as to what our purpose is. And so we spent a little bit of time really distilling down the essence of what the Brand Registry Group is all about. And I'm not going to read this entire slide, you're welcome to read through it yourself. But let me just touch a couple of the points. I will read out the main header.

"It's an association of companies who share the goal of empowering brand top level domain in the domain name industry." And the BRG's purpose, to speak to your question, is to support the collective interests of our members and help them to derive the maximum value from their brand TLDs. And we do that in a few different ways.

We adv advocate externally, we inform each other, we inform externally within the community, we really spend a lot of time empowering and drawing people in that would normally be sitting on the sidelines just watching or paying a consultant to watch, no offense, Susan.

So then the thing that's kind of unique about brand TLDs is that one of the criteria for qualifying for this sort of scenario is that we're not in the domain industry. So almost by definition, we're amateurs. And so being able to be empowered and have multiple simple ways of injecting our talents and skills and interests into the system is really important to us.

And likewise, we're looking always around on a continual improvement framework to look for opportunities to make things better internally and externally. And also really take all of these individual voices of the different companies and bring them together in a sense of collective voice. And that's really what the BRG is all about here in creating opportunities, like I said, for additional members to come join the three, four people that have been doing all the heavy lifting in the past.

Next slide please. So those aspects of our purpose really come into the next level, which is our strategic goals. And essentially, again, it's just a sense of taking our external influence and making positive change in the environment as well as taking internal education and best practices and shared experiences so that the first person to be hitting some of these landmines don't leave them for the next person to hit as well.

So if somebody finds out that there's some SEO tricks or there's some specific ways of setting up their DNS so that once they delegate they do it in a way that it actually shows up on the grid. We don't have 100 people or 100 companies that need to learn that same lesson serially. The first person can learn it, and we put it into the tribal knowledge database, as it were, and we circulate that stuff and it becomes a best practice.

And so the last thing up there is to deliver a useful service and do things like hosting events and sitting on panels like this and having sessions where we are open to engagement and discussion and really kind of educating the community hopefully we start having these conversations with some of the more technical influencers out there because as was mentioned earlier, there seems to be a lag in the cultural ecosystem, right, where there's just not a whole lot of awareness and that's causing a drag on our ability to socialize even the concept of a new gTLD.

So essentially those are the three sides of the triangle about what our strategic goals are. They map very nicely into our purpose. And if you – up here, those goals break down into tactical implementations. So we're going from purpose to strategic goals to tactical implementations. And it's like how does this – how is this going to look? Right? So we don't have just a handful of philosophical tenets and pillars and things that sound nice, but what are the hands and feet of our operation look like?

And so we've just spent a little bit of time going from the strategic vision to framing up the strategic vision implementation, right, the implementation

architecture is going to look something like this where those goals have activities and the activities and the tactical things that we do will map to one or many goals. Again, if there's an activity that we find ourselves spending a lot of time doing and investing in that doesn't map to any of our goals, we really have to call into question whether or not it's appropriate for us to be doing that.

Conversely, if we are finding an area where we're doing some investing and it doesn't map to a goal, maybe that should be one of our goals. And so based on our framework, we're able to regularly check back in and do a feedback loop and make any course corrections as necessary as the world changes and we're able to adjust for reality.

So going from purpose to goals to tactical implementation, the framework that we noticed was that we have a handful of committees that serve various purposes. These committees are long-term in nature and they seem to serve as parents for children temporary endeavors, some more temporary than others, but these would be called the working groups.

So if you take a look up here, we've got five of them that we identified, the committees that we found as we took stock of ourselves are credentials, registry operations, industry watch, making a better tomorrow for brand TLDs as well as membership development and outreach.

And then just to give you an example of how we might further decompose these committees and kind of next the working groups, we've got a few of the examples of the working groups there where we, you know, we have Registry Stakeholder Group, thank you very much, as well as the SubPro and the RA drafting and some of those types of things.

And so not to be too fussy of an accountant, but it seems to really resonate with the folk that we've talked with, especially with our members, to have the sort of, like I said, a chart of accounts that every little thing that we do

practically, really maps back to our general and focused sense of purpose, to our North Star as it were. And that really helps us to, in a data driven way, ensure that we're accruing value in the best way that we can with the limited resources that we have.

Martin Sutton: Thanks, Cole. Move on to...

Cole Quinn: Yes, next slide.

Martin Sutton: So happy to take any questions that anybody may have. So, Kurt, I think – I hope that covers the question you had.

Cole Quinn: Sorry, Kurt, I called you Chuck.

Kurt Pritz: It's a compliment.

Martin Sutton: Okay, no questions. Yes, please. Please do.

(Vanda Scartazini): I really – my name is (Vanda Scartazini). I have been for so long, I don't remember anymore, but not in this group. But I was quite involved with the – I'm from Brazil and Latin America. And I was quite involved in the promotion of new gTLDs in the Council in the region. And I have consulting with many, many brands around.

I have been President of (Patant) also Brazil so I'm quite involved in this area too, I'm engineer. But anyway what I'd like to thank you very much for your presentation. It was – I believe it was very focused on what the clients want to do. But I'd like to share a little bit.

We have done a survey last couple months around the country about those that have been – and the region too – those that have been applied as a brand name and others that maybe never heard about and when we touched then wants to know more and are waiting for new rounds to have a chance to.

And that is something that maybe this kind of group I can send more information to you about what is going on in the south because it's another kind of market, it's another environment.

Majority of large companies, international companies, from that region that are around in fact has no clue about what ICANN is or what is going on. So it's something that we have the (structure) that we are talking about. May be very helpful to put some more information on that about what's going on on the south region. It's just to share some general ideas to you because the survey shows that first of all most of the brands has – that they had applied, had two points; one banks, and the others that have huge network.

So they want to share the brands and have their closed network under their brands. And new guys that I have talk around in Argentina, Colombia, all those countries in Brazil, they would like to use the brand name maybe for ecommerce purpose. So that's another new approach that they may use that.

But what they're asking me, what is going on on the other regions that I'd like to learn how they are dealing with that. So that's exchange of information. I do believe that is quite important. And I don't know if I can join the group because I do not belong to the Registries or whatever. I have been in many positions here, but I'm not in that. So just to see if I can join. I'd be glad to. Thank you.

Martin Sutton: Thank you, (Vanda). That's great in terms of some information exchange. That's really helpful for the Brand Registry Group itself in terms of looking at membership development, awareness-raising and those are some of the focus that we've got on from the strategy that we've developed that Cole walked through.

In terms of becoming a member, we typically ask for the brand to register as a member, but they can actually assign a proxy to look after them and directly

represent them within the Brand Registry Group. So there are different options. Very happily talk through with you afterwards so that it's more detail.

((Crosstalk))

Martin Sutton: Yes, I mean, something that's been hard to do up until now really was to do a lot of awareness globally on, you know, because typically it's just rooms like this where people are more comfortable, especially brands, to come in, talk to each other and share information. But as we see more interest from others that didn't apply the first time around, wanting to get to know more about this, we will be very keen to try and match that with some kind of way of reaching those, whether it's we try and do some events or we participate somehow in some of these events, it will be great because we do have members stretching the globe.

I don't think we have got any representing South America though so that probably is a gap.

(Vanda Scartazini): I haven't heard.

Martin Sutton: So that will be really interesting if we could do something more there. And, you know, for our members because we are spread globally we're trying to think of it innovative ways of making sure that information that we share in one place like ICANN between a few of us gets deployed to the many. Now that could be in terms of education and awareness where we start to create tolls like from webinars, recordings and things like that. So we can start to reach out to the market at their own leisure.

(Vanda Scartazini): It would be public, no? People can reach the – your Website or, you know, we – or whatever, the – whether you achieve for that.

Martin Sutton: So there's certainly various information in the public domain and there's obviously some member areas where it would just be restricted to members

to discuss things. But in terms of awareness and the stuff that we've been talking through this morning, you know, the whole intent here is to raise awareness that stuff is happening to start with. That gives confidence, I think, to those that haven't been able to launch because, you know, three, four years has passed since they actually had the ability to go and get sign off for the application.

People have moved out, things have changed in the market. And, you know, this can probably have dropped down seriously in their priority list of doing anything. So they've got to try and be confident enough to go back in, engage with a stakeholder group internally to get the motivations along for, you know, switching and testing the brand TLD. It's a lot of hard work, we understand from our members' side.

(Vanda Scartazini): Okay thank you.

Martin Sutton: Thank you, (Vanda).

Kurt Pritz: So piling on, (Vanda), who's my good friend. I don't recall everything in the mission but I'm asking about the communications aspect and the outreach aspect. So you're a community that's setting out to help your members but recruiting members and new gTLD applicants. Of course to the rest of the applicants we see the – like Jim Prendergast said, we see the brands as leading the way as far as, you know, knowledge and awareness and possibility of new TLDs. So you represent – the brands represent an opportunity for the whole program.

And so, you know, well BNP I think is in South America, right? But, you know, outreach to different areas. And we'll kind of, you know, social media and earn media and other things that would encourage existing brand registries to join and to encourage others to join in the next round.

((Crosstalk))

Martin Sutton: Great points, Kurt. I think in terms of the workloads that we've dealt with up to now it's taken the focus off in terms of a lot of outreach effort. But as we've now gone through this process of trying to organize ourselves and put some structure in place then we'll be able to prioritize all of these things and there will be a bigger drive in terms of marketing and awareness campaigns coming through.

I'll talk about one event that's coming up, but this hopefully still start to trigger some regular type of activities and not just limited to one location. So we do take opportunities. We sit on panels in various, you know, when we have those opportunities to sit in front of brands.

And this is also looking at trying to reach the right type of people, the right functions within organizations so marketing is clearly an area that needs to be made more aware of this and understand it because otherwise they're not going to be asking their third party providers that run all their marketing campaigns, to think about promoting something on a brand TLD. So we've not only got to reach the brands themselves, but those organizations that support them especially in the digital marketing environment.

I think we'll see some more events and capabilities building up as we focus on prioritizing this. But if you're aware of any events that people are running where it would be opportunistic to get a panel running or invite some BRG members along, we very much welcome that idea and we're doing that regularly anyway. So again, you may not see it in the spheres that you're in but we had a panel session running in San Francisco a couple months ago. It was well received. They didn't know about this stuff and what was going on.

And that's why we took the opportunity today as well whilst there's lots of people in different environments in ICANN it's great to be able to illustrate what is going on rather than think what may or may not be going on.
(Banner).

(Banner): Yes, (Banner) (unintelligible) from Core Association. Core is a registry service provider just as many others who are sitting in this room. And actually in terms of a relationship with the Brand Registry Group, we had a barrier to overcome, typically our customer have a barrier to overcome because they don't know it. So they ask us about it.

And, you know, we would then have to say to customers, look, of course we could go there but I represent you but it's a little bit – as a little bit pushy to go to the customer and say, look, I mean, just give me your credentials, I go in in your place. You know, so it ends up being similar – a similar situation that the one we have with respect to ICANN where there's no separate credentials for the registry service providers or other representatives to clearly show that they're acting as an intermediary. And to they're not directly, you know, empowered.

So if there was some kind of a channel by which we could, you know, be informed and, you know, help our customers be informed and in this way actually make it easier for them to kind of, you know, decide to go to an ICANN meeting and participate themselves. That would be actually very welcome.

Martin Sutton: I will just flag again that there is opportunity still to represent a brand registry if they would like somebody else to represent them within the BRG. So there is that access. And that is used. So we have some members, you know, up to three members could be represented by one individual on their behalf. That might be a sensible thing to have a look at.

But we also want to have a look at membership development and criteria periodically to see what's going to be more suitable in the future as we see more people coming forward to say that they're interested in the next window of opportunity as well as all of those that have applied already that are – may not still be aware of the BRG.

You know, it's quite surprising still the number of code exemptions where they haven't quite understood about Spec 13 so haven't transitioned to that. We've met with people representing Indian brands this week. And they were unaware of it. So they're going back and obviously trying to think yes, I need that, I need to go and apply for it on behalf of the collective brands that they support.

So there's still some education and awareness as people have gone through a lengthy application phase. It's taken – absorbed an awful lot of time and effort as we know from everybody's part. Now the interesting thing is so many are delegated, so many are now starting to get hands on operationally with their TLD, maybe with CZDS requests, but at least they're starting to feel that something is alive and what do they do with it. And they come and want to talk and see what everybody else is doing.

So, you know, there is going to be open type sessions in the event that I'll talk about in a short while is designed to just encourage people to come together and network and understand who's who, what they do, what's it all about, should I be interested? Those are the types of things that will try and help.

(Banner): Just, is there a mailing list that is open to others than just brands, for instance, they could be informed?

Martin Sutton: There isn't a mailing list wider than the members. But good point in terms of, I mean, what we tend to do is try and think of things like the RA negotiations that have just been taking place. They come to an end hopefully very soon, and it's to educate this new set of customers, if you like, of ICANN because they're not – this isn't their core business; this is an irritation normally in terms of paperwork and references to all sorts of different policies that they regard as irrelevant.

They're going to have a request soon to vote on the RA negotiations that have been undertaken for the last couple of years. So it's about reaching them at that stage as well as say, look, we are the BRG. What we want to make sure you're aware that this going on. It's important that you do vote. So there's some important bits that we do. We probably don't do enough yet in spreading out, say, newsletters or anything like that. That tends to be more internal to our members. But I take the point, it's a good thing for us to bear in mind.

(Greta Levine): Thank you. My name is (Greta Levine). I'm with the dotPharmacy gTLD. And earlier in the discussion you talked a little bit about in the context of My.stc, the use of country codes at the second level and I'm wondering how the brands are incorporating that into their business model given the existing patchwork of allowances for using those names?

Martin Sutton: Good question. I think the reluctance to do anything at this stage because ideally you want a consistent model. Now it may not actually be used for sites to customers; it might be just a method of directing them to the right content within your brand TLD. So don't forget, a lot of these things may not resolve, they may just direct them through to the right landing page based on other information that they're building up from the session, which is, you know, geo location, anything like that that says okay I can understand where this customers is coming from and I'll put them on the right path to content that's going to be useful for them.

(Greta Levine): Thank you.

Martin Sutton: Okay. Any other questions? Yes.

(Martin Crinta): (Martin Crinta) from (LeMott), good morning. I would be interested to hear about the BRG members structures, what kind of – of course I know the list of the members, but what I would be interested is who is representing the members, like because when I hear Microsoft is represented by the Global

Domain manager, so to call, maybe in your company, and which – where are these people from? From the marketing department? From which kind of departments within the corporate?

Martin Sutton: I wish I'd planted that question. That's an excellent question because I think that's one of the...

(Martin Crinta): You gave it to me before.

Martin Sutton: Oh did I? Okay thank you. So this is worthwhile to note because to begin with, when the BRG was formed it was very much close to the, you know, time of applications were sent in and we were trying to unravel all the issues we're going to face ahead. So those tended to be in terms of the brand protection or IP legal function within an organization.

We've seen a change, so even across the board structure now there's a change where there's either digital marketing, DNS, domain name management, compliance, so it's real mix just starting to emerge. And whilst there's still a strong IP legal set of candidates around it's shifting. And as well as that as we structure ourselves to undertake certain smaller working group activities that Cole referred to, those are opportunities for other people within the organizations to be encouraged to participate because they're going to have the skills, they're going to have the knowledge, and interest to do certain things whether it's regarding SEO or a bit more security, how do you – how do you structure your SSLs across your brand TLD? How do you simplify that?

So not everybody is going to be knowledge in skill to operate and run this entirely. They're going to have to rely on a very strong internal network or stakeholder group, their stakeholder members, as well as that needs to be replicated eventually within the Brand Registry Group and its committees and functioning working groups.

(Martin Crinta): Thank you. One additional question, and we have been talking about that a lot the last year. And I understand that the Brand Registry Group wants to have the brand registries as a member. But my experience with the brand owner – or dotBrand applicants, we have helped to apply and which we are serving now is that they want to be updated but they don't want to be like involved so much in the – in all ICANN related issues.

Actually, bringing them to some events made them – they were shocked about some things going on. And they said we really cannot understand why we should be part of it, we have you. Please take care for us. And but on the other side they are also not willing to spend so much from their perspective so much money right now on this issue. And I understand that it's mainly for the representative of the brands, but I would really be pleased to – and we talked about it that you think about the membership possibilities also for representative of the brands and not for the brands by themselves.

Because I could easily represent my brand customers when the BRG would be open up also for the consultants who are working for the brands because they don't want to show up. And they don't want to point me out for them, they just want to get the information and they also willing to pay but not single voice.

Martin Sutton: And I think, you know, that's something that we do hear from others as well. Rewinding back to three years ago when we set the BRG up, it was at a time where the focus was ICANN and the policy and trying to get the contract sorted out, at that stage it was extremely important that we had the face of the brands there rather than representatives of brands. Otherwise I think there would have been less ability for us to convince the need for these sorts of things. So that was the real driver for that approach.

And I think it was the right approach. It did what we needed to get done at that stage. We are of course now moving on and having to rethink as to how do we serve the market that's emerging these days? And, you know, it's been

interesting come to India and talking to people here. Similar type of thing. And it's something that we will take away from here and work through those committees especially membership development and Credentials Committee just to say, look, how do we get ready for this year coming? What do we need to adjust? And we'll take that feedback on board. Thank you, (Martin).

(Martin Crinta): One very last thing. I appreciate very much that we have non-domain industry people now into the domain industry because we need to change the focus. And of course we internally and it's very important but I think it's – and finally it's just put these things together. The industry focus people who focus on the brand owner's perspective and who have a lot of experience, but also the insights of the corporate. I think together it will be – we can make it maybe even better and even more efficient. Just my last word, thank you.

Martin Sutton: Thank you. Noted. Great input. Okay thanks for that. I think we're just – for the sake of time we'll just move on. I just wanted to click though to the next slide. Take the opportunity to pick up on some of the points that have actually been raised is, you know, how do we get some of these messages out? How do we get people engaged? Ordinarily if you said anything about ICANN to them their eyes would glaze over and they would walk out the room.

We're doing this very differently now in terms of trying to attract the marketing people or DNS people into a place where they feel comfortable, want to learn, want to share information. And so I've worked with Dietmar Stefitz who runs domain related events in Europe. So he's used to doing these over a number of years now.

But we wanted to specifically focus on brands. So we've set up an event for 1 December in Valencia, or Valencia, to accommodate that and start that off. So whereas before I mentioned there's panels and other things that we've done, workshops. They tend to be smaller setups and just smaller target market. This gives an opportunity for brands themselves to come together. Different functions with are encouraged to come along.

And also as a neutral event, so it's not run by say a specific backend provider or a frontend provider. Any of those are welcome to come along too because I think it will encourage some networking and some interesting information flows about, you know, who do you need to support you in applying, running, a dotBrand registry. So people are interested in trying to find this out now. So we're just going to – this is the first event that we're doing.

We hope if it's successful and the feedback is good that is something we will be able to continue and also replicate in other parts of the globe so that we can bring people together, talk through these things, find out what's important to them, what are they interested in finding more about and build up on that.

And so I think awareness-raising will be a great opportunity in sessions like that. And encourage any of you in Europe or beyond to take a look and if you're available to come along please do. The details are on the Website. I've dropped a card on the seats, please take that and have a look. But any questions first off? No? Okay.

And then finally is just open to Q&A. The lovely thing is there's been quite a few Q&As along the way, but is there anything else that anybody wants to talk about before trying to figure out what's happening on the elections? Or, Kurt, would you like to give us an update on elections, please?

Kurt Pritz: It's close.

((Crosstalk))

Martin Sutton: Well with that, thank you so much for your time, everyone. Really appreciate that. And if you do have any questions you know some of the faces and names around the room that are still here, go and prod them for questions and answers. But it's been really lovely to have you here. Thank you.

END