



ICANN

LOS ANGELES

Registry/Registrar Meeting

IDN Update

18 May 2012

IDN Variant TLD Program

- *Exploring solutions to the issues associated with the inclusion of IDN variant TLDs in the root zone.*

Phase 1: Script Case Studies

- Six teams: Arabic, Chinese, Cyrillic, Devanagari, Greek, Latin.
- Comprised of community experts.
- Case study teams completed reports in October 2011.

Phase II: Integrated Issues Report

- Summarizes and synthesizes issues identified by case study teams.
- Identifies areas where further work could be pursued.
- Integrated Issues Report completed in February 2012.

Key Highlights of Integrated Issues Report

- Definition of the term 'variant'
- Range of possible variant cases
- Establishing variant labels
- User experience considerations
- Potential additional work

What is a “variant”?

- No commonly-agreed definition.
- Used to refer to a number of different concepts.
- Report continues to use the term in a loose sense.
- More specific terms are recommended, e.g., “variant” with a qualifier to give more information.

Classification of Variants

- **Code point variants:** based on a relationship between code points
 - E.g., a single code point is a variant of another code point or sequence of code points
- **Whole-string variants:** based on a relationship between whole strings.
 - E.g., their meaning to a language community

Establishing variant labels

- Code point repertoire for the root zone
 - Identify code points that are allowed/disallowed for the zone
- Label generation rules
 - Identify code points that are variants of one another
- A prerequisite for implementing IDN variant TLDs

User experience consideration

Many types of users: system administrators, network operators, registries, registrars, registrants, software developers, law enforcement and security investigators, and end users.

Priorities for Phase III and beyond

1. IDN tables format updated.
2. Process for IDN table creation and maintenance for the root.
3. User experience of active IDN variant TLDs.
4. Update new ccTLD and gTLD programs.
5. Update ICANN and IANA processes.

Program Plan

- ICANN created a program plan for next steps.
- Earlier version discussed in Costa Rica.
- Feedback expressed concerns about implementation timeline and project prioritization.
- Program plan has been updated and it is now open for Public Comment:

<http://www.icann.org/en/news/public-comment/idn-variant-tld-revised-program-plan-04may12-en.htm>

So, What Changed?

Prioritized Projects

- Priority given to:
 - **IDN Table Format (Project 1)**: develop a standard format for listing allowed code points and corresponding variant(s), if any.
 - **IDN Table Creation and Maintenance Process for the Root (Project 2.1)**: develop, in consultation with the community, the process to define allowed code points, corresponding variant code points, and related allowed states for IDN Variant TLDs. Follow-on work (project 2.2) will focus on using this process to populate the tables for the root.
 - **User Experience with active Variants (Project 6)**: Identify the potential user experience implications of activating IDN variant TLDs

De-prioritized Projects

- **Whole-String Variants Feasibility Study (project 3):** project removed based on community feedback that the Integrated Issues report had clearly highlighted the difficulties involved in whole-string variants and did not make a compelling case for IDN variant TLDs of this type.
- **Mirroring Variants Feasibility Study (project 5):** project removed based on community and technical feedback, that the Integrated Issues Report presented enough data to show that mirroring variants is not feasible with the currently available technology.

Shifted Away from the IDN Variant TLD Program

- **Visual Similarity Process Enhancement (project 4):** while this work should occur, this project has been moved to take place outside the scope of the IDN Variant TLD program. Improvements to the string similarity review processes will support multiple ICANN initiatives, and the applicability is not limited to IDN variant issues.

What's Next?

- The Final Program Plan will be presented during the ICANN meeting in Prague.
- Work on the prioritized projects has already started, with most of it is scheduled to happen between July 2012 and February 2013.

Questions?

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Thank You