

JIG Final Report on Single Character IDN TLDs

Date: 09 Nov 2010

Version: DRAFT1

1. Introduction & Background

[Similar to Initial Report]

2. JIG Implementation Recommendations on Single Character IDN TLDs

The JIG makes the following policy implementation recommendations regarding Single Character IDN TLDs:

- A. The GNSO policy recommendation in the Final Report for the Introduction of New Generic Top-Level Domains for Single Character IDN TLDs should be implemented.¹
- B. The definition of an “extended grapheme cluster” from section 3 of Unicode Standard Annex #29, where a combining sequence of a base character and combining mark(s) appears to be a single character, should be used to define the concept of a “Single Character IDN” TLD / Label / String.
- C. Requested Single Character IDN TLD strings should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis in the new gTLD process depending on the script and language. Non-alphabetic script Single Character IDN TLDs should be generally acceptable, while alphabetic script Single Character IDN TLDs should have a default presumption of confusability to single and two-character ASCII strings, to which exceptions may be made in specific cases.
- D. Other restrictions, qualifications and requirements for ASCII and two-or-more character IDN TLD strings would equally apply to Single Character IDN TLD strings, including but not limited to considerations of geographical names, similarity and confusability, intellectual property rights, etc.

3. Suggested Edits to New gTLD Applicant Guidebook

In order to implement the above recommendations, the JIG makes the following editorial suggestions to amend the New gTLD Applicant Guidebook:

- I. The following edit is suggested for Module 2, Section 2.2.1.3.2 String Requirements, Part III 3.2:

¹ <http://gnso.icann.org/issues/new-gtlds/pdp-dec05-fr-parta-08aug07.htm> “Single and two-character U-labels on the top level and second level of a domain name should not be restricted in general. At the top level, requested strings should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis in the new gTLD process depending on the script and language used in order to determine whether the string should be granted for allocation in the DNS with particular caution applied to U-labels in Latin script.”

Applied-for gTLD strings in IDN scripts (i.e., strings in which the U-label includes at least one non-LDH character) must be composed of ~~two~~one or more visually distinct characters in the script, as appropriate.

II. The following edit is suggested for Module 2, Section 2.2.1.3.2 String Requirements, Part III 3.2.1:

It is visually similar to any one-character ASCII label ~~(in any script)~~; or

III. A new section (3.3) is suggested to be added for Module 2, Section 2.2.1.3.2 String Requirements, Part III:

3.3 Single-character Applied-for gTLD strings in IDN scripts will not be approved if:

3.3.1 It is visually similar to any one-character ASCII label; or

3.3.2 It is visually similar to any possible two-character ASCII combination.

Single-character strings that consist of Unicode code points in alphabetic scripts (such as the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic script blocks) are intrinsically confusable with single character ASCII strings. Therefore, a very conservative standard is used to assess applied-for strings that consist of a single character IDN in alphabetic scripts: a default presumption of confusability to which exceptions may be made in specific cases.

In performing the comparison of a single-character IDN string to single and two-character ASCII combinations, the following rankings are used. The higher the rank, the more likely the applied-for gTLD string presents a significant risk of user confusion.

[6] The character is visually identical to an ASCII character.

[5] The character is visually identical to a combination of 2 ASCII characters.

[4] The character is visually confusable with an ASCII character

[3] The character is visually confusable to a combination of 2 ASCII characters.

[2] The character is visually distinct from a combination of 2 ASCII characters.

[1] The character is visually distinct from an ASCII character.

These rankings are for guidance only, and the assessment is made based on the rankings and on the expertise of the panelists. The probability of user confusion presented by a given string does not depend strictly on the individual confusability of each character, if considered separately. The assessment of visually distinct and visually confusable takes into account both the individual features of each character and their combined effect.

Single-character IDN strings in non-alphabetic scripts are generally considered to be distinct from an ASCII character (or a combination of 2 ASCII characters). For Single-character IDN strings in alphabetic scripts, the panelists may also take into

consideration other aspects of confusability in their assessment, such as the likelihood of user slip with relevance to keyboard layouts.

Other editorial adjustments may be required in the Applicant Guidebook where appropriate.

4. Policy Aspects of Single Character IDN TLDs

[Same as Initial Report]

<http://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/jig-initial-report-26jul10-en.pdf>

5. Summary & Responses on Public Comments (for Initial Report)

[Responses to Staff Summary Report on Public Comments]

<http://forum.icann.org/lists/jig-initial-report/pdfzDk88UdRCw.pdf>

Issue 1: The issue of string confusion whether between IDN and ASCII string or within specific scripts will be further considered by the WG. The working group notes that its scope is limited to IDN's, and therefore does not consider ASCII character strings.

In response to the comments received and advice received from the technical community, the JIG makes the recommendation to generally accept Single Character IDN TLD strings in non-alphabetic scripts, while Single Character IDN TLD strings in alphabetic scripts may be considered to be intrinsically confusable with single character ASCII strings, for which exceptions may be made in specific cases.

Issue 2: The comment is noted, however the issue raised is addressed in other ICANN fora, for example the Joint SO/AC Working Group on New gTLD Applicant Support (JAS WG).

No further comment.

Issue 3: The comments are noted, however some relate to other area's of the new gTLD and IDN ccTLD's processes, for example topics of the Draft Application Guidebook version 4. The working group notes that the discussions in these area's are taking place in other ICANN fora and have not been concluded to date and therefore should be raised there.

In response to the comments received, the JIG especially emphasizes in its policy implementation recommendation that restrictions, qualifications and requirements including considerations of geographical names, similarity and confusability, etc. must be applied to Single Character IDN TLD strings as well.

Issue 4. It is unclear that merely typing one character in fact leads to more errors than typing complex words or combinations of words which is commonly done today at the second level. The comment is noted, and will be taken into consideration by the working group.

In response to the comments received, the JIG makes the recommendation to suggest evaluation panellists to consider other factors of confusability in their assessment, such as the likelihood of user slip with relevance to keyboard layouts.

Issue 5: Comment noted that the current distinction between IDN ccTLDs and IDN gTLD should be maintained and it is assumed that under the current rules and procedures the criteria are sufficient to qualify a string.

Same as response to comments received for Issue 3 above.

Issue 6: It is suggested to initiate more outreach to application communities to bring more awareness and improve TLD/domains validation or related concerns in order to promote acceptability of IDN's. The comment is noted. As indicated in the public announcement soliciting public comments and input on the universal acceptance of IDN TLDs is considered one of the main topic areas of the JIG. The suggestion made will be considered in the context of the WG discussions of that topic area.

The JIG takes note of the comments received and will proceed into working on the identified issue of common interest: "Universal Acceptance of IDN TLDs" immediately after the completion of our work on the first 2 issues: 1. Single Character IDN TLDs; and, 2. IDN TLD Variants.