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MONTREAL – GNSO - (RySG) GeoTLD Group Sharing Session  
Sunday, November 3, 2019 – 15:15 to 16:45 EDT  
ICANN66 | Montréal, Canada

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It is Sunday, November 3, 2019 at ICANN 66 in Montreal at 3:15 in Hall 511-C. This is the generates RySG GeoTLD group sharing session.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Hello, everyone. This is Sebastien Ducos. This is the second meeting of the GeoTLDs, if people could join us, so we can start the conversation, and for the back, if you can start the recording. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Please feel free to join us at the table. This is a really big room for this group. It would be nice for you to join us.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: More than feel free, actually. Please join us at the table because we want participation and you'll need mics for the DotAmsterdam presentation. So, please, do. The room is huge. There's plenty of room. Thank you. Sue, do we have Hartmut online? Oh, there he is.

HARTMUT SCHULZ: Can you see me? Can you hear me?

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SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Okay. So, we will just follow it from the discussions that we're having this morning on marketing. Hartmut is joining us from Vienna, I guess. He's online. For those that can see the screen, I can see. Hello. How are you going? I'll just be quiet and give you the mic.

HARTMUT SCHULZ: Okay. Thank you very much. Good evening from Vienna or good afternoon to Montreal. I hope you can hear me.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Sorry. Just a second, Hartmut, because we can't hear you.

HARTMUT SCHULZ: Oh, that's bad.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Can we get the sound for the remote? I guess you need to talk until we can tell you that we can hear you.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yeah. Please try it again.

HARTMUT SCHULZ: Okay. Do you hear me now? Can you hear me?

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: It's very feint.

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HARTMUT SCHULZ:                   Feeling like [inaudible] somehow.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:           Keep talking, Hartmut, so they can hear you so they can adjust it. Sorry.

HARTMUT SCHULZ:                   I'm running out of idea what to talk about, actually, but I'll try my very best.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:           It's working. We're getting there.

HARTMUT SCHULZ:                   Okay. So, you hear me now?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:           Yes, much better. Thank you.

HARTMUT SCHULZ:                   Okay, that's great. I sent a short presentation a couple of minutes ago. Do you have it?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:           Yes, I do.

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HARTMUT SCHULZ:

I can't see it from here. Do the people see it in the room? Otherwise, we could just start with that because I'll just give a short overview of what we've been doing in the marketing group in the last couple of weeks. We just founded it, as you know, in Santiago, so that's not very long. Oh yeah, thank you. If you go to the next page ... Perfect.

I just listed the TLDs, actually, which are a member of the group and you see quite a lot of TLDs are representing, all of them, though European. And strangely enough, we have majority of the regions and not so many cities, actually. So, if someone from some city feels obliged to join us, we would be really happy. And if someone from out of Europe would join, that would really help [inaudible] anyway.

Basically, all those who have been in Santiago know the members, except for one. DotSwiss has joined a couple of weeks ago. So, they're new to the group. And the rest of the members you should probably know. Okay, if you go to the next slide, please. Thanks.

This is a chart, status of our activities. We have used the first couple of weeks to organize ourselves, and to do that, we have agreed to use a platform called BaseCamp which is an open source platform on which you can chat, on which you can discuss things, on which you have a schedule where you can follow documents to a certain limited amount. It's freeware, so it has its limitations, but for the moment, it's perfect. Whether we will use it in the next couple of years, I don't know. Maybe we have to use it in a more advanced need. But for the moment, it's very fine. All members of the group have agreed to join it and most of them already have.

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The first thing we have done is to compile a list of issues that seem important to us. There is a list of around about ten different aspects on marketing, on communication, on lobbying which will be discussed in the group within the next couple of months and which will all be worked on [inaudible] extent and in which [inaudible] I don't know at the moment. But all of them are pretty much interesting and I think most of them are the things which are interesting to all of us.

The second step after finding the issues we are talking about is to start gathering the data. Our own members already have started doing so. [inaudible] fit different types of data – the data of the registry itself which is the data about our activities, about our creates, our deletes, and so on and all that.

The second thing is ... Is that a question? Sorry. The second is gathering statistical data about the cities we are talking about or about the regions. There is a really surprisingly huge amount of data you get, even from free sources, at least for [inaudible] and for the central European part, and I presume for most of our [inaudible].

The third point is gathering data about our campaigns which means not only documenting what we have done but also looking at how many people had reacted to what we have done, how have our registrars reacted, how has the market reacted?

Okay. So, we are very busy collecting all this kind of stuff and what I can already say now is that we will be dealing with an incredibly huge amount of data which is potentially, perhaps, not the problem but a huge challenge. So, next and final slide, please.

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Okay. Now, here's the schedule for what we are going to do in the next couple of weeks or next couple of months. By the end of [inaudible], I hope that all of the registries which are really directly involved in the group will have processed their data and will have uploaded them to the platform, which means data from the registries and from their local markets, and then until the next ICANN meeting – I think that's in 2020 – in March, 2020, if I'm not mistaken, we'll have to see what the data say and, depending on which registry they come from – they are different at the moment, so we'll have to find the typology to make them comparable.

And as soon as we have those, we'll come forward to the group, to the other group members, which are not directly in the task force, and we'll ask them to give us data from their registries and from the local environment based on those typologies. And I hope until the middle of the year we will have a database gathering data from as many as possible registries all around the globe, but especially of course from Europe because, at the moment, there are only European members, which is kind of a pity, as I already said. So, if there is any non-European in the room, please join us. I'd really be happy to get some information from other markets.

So, finally, we'll keep you informed, as we already said in Santiago. I think every three months – at least every three months – we'll send a short bullet about what we are doing and what the status of our involvement is.

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Finally, I heard Ronald saying you don't know what to do with a lot of money. As you see, we will have to have the help of specialists to analyze all this data. I think I have quite good ideas what to do with all that money because they have to be external and I think we'll need some money for that.

So, thank you very much, and bye-bye to Montreal.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Sue?

SUE SCHULER: We have a remote participant, John McCormack from HosterStats with a question. "Are the registries aware that ICANN has been publishing the [DotVN] registry report as the [inaudible] reports since June of 2018? It makes it difficult to track the growth of these GeoTLDs."

RONALD SCHWARZLER: Hello. This is a known error. We have been informed and we are currently correcting this data. It will be re-edited on the ICANN website in the next two weeks.

DICK KOSHINOVSKI: I'm just curious which data are collected here. We have several data resources from [NTLD Stars], from CENTR, from ICANN and from many other sources. Which data are much different to those which are

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already available on different resources. Is this group collecting, Hartmut?

HARTMUT SCHULZ: I think the basic difference is that we are really collecting the basic data. So, the individual set of data from the registry itself. The [inaudible] you get until [inaudible] accumulated. We take the basic data because, at this moment, we can't really say what kind of results we expect to get from them, so we have to look at the whole basis in itself over a course of five years or however long the respective registry has been on board.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: And this is not something that you can find on the ICANN site? There's all their transactional data month after month, stuff that your back ends have been supplying to ICANN for years.

HARTMUT SCHULZ; True. And in addition to that, the data of the cities and of our geographical environment, of course, is not available at ICANN at all. So, statistical data about population development in a city or about business development or about digital agendas and so on and so on, which is essential to validate our market.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Yeah, absolutely. Another piece of data that obviously ICANN doesn't have, but can be a strong factor to the growth, you see in the ICANN data is all the information about the campaigns we ran, the efforts we

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ran, all the things that we did that are not reported to ICANN.  
[inaudible].

HARTMUT SCHULZ: They're not reported and we don't have the correspondence between the data of the campaign and the data which are at ICANN and to see in which time period when we know a campaign has run from March or April. We have to look at the data for March to April or to middle of June or whatever, and for all that we need the basic data from all those three sources.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Sue?

SUE SCHULER: We have a comment from John McCormack at HosterStats. "The NTLD stats data on parking web usage is not accurate."

HARTMUT SCHULZ: Yes. We know that. We don't actually use those data. We use our own sources, which are more reliable and which are more open to interpretation and we can ask our colleagues if we have a question. We can't ask [NTLD stats] which makes it far easier to work with them.

DICK KOSHINOVSKI: Again, thank you for your presentation. On the inside, what you are doing in the marketing area here that will probably benefit all of us.

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What I'm missing is a bit the goals of the marketing group. You are now acting for three months and had some preparation already and are [missing] goals which are specific, measurable, achievable, and so on so that everyone can see that is exactly what we want to read with all the data collection and what is the outcome for the group and the individual members. That would be really great to have that view on specific goals.

HARTMUT SCHULZ:

I'll gladly give that in one of our letters to the whole group. I didn't add it this time because we talked about it in Santiago. Of course, the basic idea is to find out how our markets work because we all have a feeling of why domains work or why our domains don't work and why campaigns work or why they don't work. But, most of us even can't say why [inaudible] on our individual market, but finding a measure how generally GeoTLDs work on the market is there is no data available for that and there is no solution available for that at the moment.

Beyond that, even for things like lobbying, we have to know what objectives are there and how does our domain work, and together all those things which are necessary to promote or domains – to sell our domains, basically – we have to start gathering the data and finding out what things are in common between all domains, where are differences – where maybe differences between city domains and regional domains or between domains from [last round] and [inaudible] and so on, and to enhance our marketing [inaudible].

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So, what we are doing is obviously for the whole group, not only for the members of this small particular task force.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Any other questions from anybody? No? Well, thank you, Hartmut, and thank you for staying up. Well, 9:30.

HARTMUT SCHULZ: It is not that late. I'm still allowed to be awake.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: There seems to be another question from Sue.

SUE SCHULER: We do have one more comment from John McCormack. "There's a good metric for GeoTLDs in the redirects. They start out as TLD or ccTLD redirects. When the TLD becomes popular, the redirect volume reverses."

HARTMUT SCHULZ: We'll take a look at that. I didn't know it, so I can't comment it, but I'll take a look at that.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Okay, thank you. We should go to the next topic. Now, as we announce – I can't remember exactly what it was but six months ago or something like that. The city of Amsterdam approached us with an offer. They had

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budgets to run a study and were offering to run a study specifically for the GeoTLDs and to organize that. We have sent you some emails through the mailing list in the last two or three weeks asking you to go and fill in a form with questions, [marketing] questions, from that survey and I will now give them the mic to present what they found. My understanding is also from my team that he's intending for this to be interactional. There will be questions and answers. We want debate and participation. I still see a few of you in the background there. If you want to take the seats at the table with the mic, that would be fantastic. The more interaction, the richer the results.

This said, I'll pass on the mic to you guys. It's all yours.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

Okay. Thank you, Sebastien. Yeah, that's very true. I think this subject, what determines the success of a GeoTLD, it's a very big question and we don't have the correct answer. It's up to us to determine what the answer on this very big answer is. So, if you can go to the first slide, please. Thank you.

That's right. My name is [inaudible]. Next to me, my colleague, [Edward Wolf] from the City of Amsterdam. And since we are a government – we work for the City of Amsterdam – where we don't have a direct commercial interest in our GeoTLD, we thought maybe we could contribute to this group and share the study with you guys.

I want to say that it's very important that the results, we'll be showing you our preliminary and it's really all about getting the information here

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in this group or maybe the group members who haven't contributed yet, please fill in the questionnaires, because with all this data, we can answer this big question.

There on the slide, I think we will provide this presentation afterwards. There's the contact of [Bertie Bernese] from [inaudible] Amsterdam Economics and this is the bureau used who is conducting this research for us.

It will be open until the third of November and we are planning to finalize it at the end of this year, December 2019, and then we will present it to you guys on the third of May at the 2020 GDD Summit. We could also put this on the agenda and look at the results. But we are planning to finalize the study at the end of this year. So, next slide, please.

So, how did we start off with this study? Well, this is the basic stuff. We have 50-plus GeoTLDs since 2012. The big question – the objective is the study two. What determines the success of a GeoTLD? I think the main reason for us was, first of all, again, to share all this data with you guys and maybe the lessons learned for the upcoming round in I think it was 2020, the first quarter of 2020. I don't know the exact date but it's all about that, right? To have all those lessons learned.

The research questions behind that, we're going to look really into that in this presentation. What are the proper indicators for the success of a GeoTLD? I think this is the big question behind the question because we determine some of the indicators you will see later on. But of course there are hundreds and some are relevant and some are not relevant

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but let's together try to determine which indicators are the most relevant.

With those indicators, we constructed the benchmark. We present you first results of this benchmark. And with the benchmark, determine the success factors. Next slide, please.

I think in the morning we showed you similar picture but Tokyo is not on there, so this is not a really big surprise but it is important because we compared the different GeoTLDs with our own TLD, DotAmsterdam, with about 28,000 domain names current at the moment.

The [inaudible] is very important. I want to stress this out. That's when we're going to look at the benchmark because you will see differences there. It is really not a competition. It's really bad content trying to solve this big question, what determines the success.

The indicators we used for this benchmark – and again, we're going to discuss if there are any other indicators and if they're relevant. Well, the first is very obvious. They're registered domains. Second is the number of [inaudible] as an indicator for difference in [inaudible] city, regions. And the third is the size of the economy. So, this may determine the potential market for GeoTLDs.

Then, you get [our] indicator. This is the most important number. That's the registered domains divided by the size of the economy, divided by numbers of inhabitants times a million. Then you get an indicator. But you'll see later on, on the benchmark, the results.

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We selected 28 cities and regions and tried to get some different sizes there. So, about eight very large regions, 10 million inhabitants. We, as Amsterdam, are part of a large group of the mid-sized regions and the most small was [inaudible]. Smallest region is less than one million. And what you see – of course, it's not rocket science but there's a strong correlation between regional GDP and numbers of inhabitants. If you look, I think it's very small to see, but you see the correlation right there on the graph.

Again, this is the benchmark and the second part effort will take you on the discussion, if we're on the right track here, if you have other comments, because maybe the end result benchmark will be completely different.

So, [inaudible], they have the high score. They're not winners, again. But they have the highest score if you look at our indicator. And if you look at the large regions, more than 10 million inhabitants, they have relatively low scores due to the size of the economy.

We, as Amsterdam, are in a bit in the range of the DotBerlin, DotHamberg, [DonWin], and [DotVegas]. Again, the [DotEuro], they have the highest score. So, in our definition, what this means in our definition of indicators, that would mean that the big question of what determines the success of a strong GeoTLD, [inaudible] [DotEuro] and [inaudible] are doing very well. Next slide, please.

It's the same benchmark. Now we're coming to the more hopefully very interactive phase of this study, the questions for the group. That's does this ranking match the perception of the successful and less successful

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GeoTLDs? And in general, what are the explanations for this ranking, which we explained high and low results. Not a big question. Why do GeoTLDs of large regions not profit more from their large economic environment?

Just questions to get the discussion going. Nacho has a question already. Very good. Mic is working, I think.

NACHO AMADOZ:

So, it is not a quick question but it's rather a comment about the metrics and the kind of measures used to determine success. And this is something that we've discussed in the group already in the past. And that is that maybe numbers of domain names registered should not be domain measure for success. That creates many, many problems.

The first one is to determine that a TLD is successful and viable and a long-term endeavor just because it has, at some point, a certain number of registration and we've seen the spikes this morning about when it falls, and when it falls, it falls. But because if there are certain policies that are not accepted by the market and then domain names are registered because they cost \$1 but they are abandoned or they are a hive for spammers, they don't really add much value to domain name. That is one thing that I would like to comment

The other one is maybe in connection with that and is about the objectives of the study. What you said at the beginning is that this provides the lessons learned for the next round. And I think that it would be more interesting to focus on the present round and see what

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matters to the TLDs that are actually trying to understand how to be successful.

Then, when you ask about what other measures could be indicated [indicators], that could be used. I think that there are some that might not be difficult to integrate in such a study and you can take some examples like domain names being actually used with content, number of pages per domain name, number of domain names adopted by the public sector, by the private sector, by the small companies. And even names registered in local registrars that provide support in local language, rather than being registered in registrars that are not connected to the local market.

So, maybe this keeps a fuller picture of which TLDs is ... Of course, I missed DotCat in the list of successful TLDs but what I'm going to say is it's not only about numbers. It's about the perception of those domain names in their environment.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

You're absolutely right, and I think when we go to the next slide, exactly on this topic, we want to have a discussion about this. I think it's the next slide.

RONALD SCHWARZLER:

Ronald [DotWin, DotKoeln] for the record. Can you go a slide back, please? As I'm managing [DotKoeln, Cologne] and have been managing [inaudible], I can give you some details among us, so partly confidential things.

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Dot-[inaudible] 61,000 domain names. There are a lot of domain names that are registered, reserved, or call it however you want for the city of [Cologne].

So, exactly what Nacho said. It's a difference to have 60,000 domain names or 10,000 domain names put away for the currently not usage of the city. Yeah, it gives [it a cool number].

The next thing is the price. [Koeln, Cologne] is, to the registrar, eight Euro. Very low price. Could result in higher sales because it's easier to buy a domain name by eight Euros. [Tyrol], to the difference, they are selling for 24 Euros. So, I like the business model of [Tyrol] much better than the one of [Cologne]. And both of them being extremely high indicators out of different reasons

Yeah. Cool to have such indicators but you have to know why these indicators come here. It probably helps [Tyrol] that they are little inhabitants or few inhabitants, but if you start comparing or benchmarking, it's very important that we are acting on hard data. That is why the marketing group is collecting this data. Let's say [Koeln, Cologne] will probably go up with 50,000 domain names and [inaudible] with 61 because we internally know what ICANN cannot know. These domain names aren't just registered for the city of [Cologne], for example. Giving more [inaudible] to do this research then, kind of research.

And some of the TLDs, are the domain names really registered domain names to the public or are they set aside or something like this. This is

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very much ... And it very much ... These different numbers, whether you are including these domain names or excluding these. Thanks.

NACHO AMADOZ:

Just a very quick follow-up. DotMadrid, for example, is here on this list with five domain names. But it was before it launched. So, you can hardly put them into this equation when they have not yet launched.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS:

Just a question for all those that have been running TLDs for a while. Do you have, do you manage, do you run crawlers on your domain names? Do you have tools to go and check what is parked, what is active, what is ... I see Nacho nodding and you understand exactly what my next question is. Can these tools be made available to Amsterdam in order to [inaudible] and collect that information? And the same from Hartmut. I'm sure that he would be interested.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

Yes, and I think that [inaudible] which is from [DotCat] and in both marketing group is willing to push within that marketing group to use the crawling solutions and so forth that we've been using data, not only on [DotCat] but on every domain name using [Catalone] and that includes [DotComs and DotES] and what kind of research and methods we used because that's what we think, and provide us with this kind of data set, not only for this study but also for the group to develop helpful tools to understand how to do proper or better marketing.

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SEBASTIEN DUCOS: So, if we give Amsterdam a list of all the domain names registered in all the GeoTLDs, you can put it through your crawler and give, within a few days, sort of a metric of [inaudible].

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah. It needs to be funded but we can put that to work. Yeah. And that's something that we could discuss about where the money should go, and I think that, Hartmut, if he's still listening would be very happy about it.

DICK KOSHINOVSKI: Dick Koshinovski, DotBerlin. We are doing the same as you do, but where we have struggled with the parked domain names that are ... In the German market we have [inaudible] parked with [inaudible] with United Domains, InternetX. They have typical parking page and we find out with HTTP codes and so on.

But having parking page providers from all over the world is quite difficult to sort this out. What is the typical page? From [inaudible] from undeveloped and so on, and to sort this into this metrics. But we could find something which reflects the most prominent parking things. Then we can really sort out what's going on there.

A second thing is I like what [DotCat] and Nacho were introducing long years ago that measurement which you set domain names per – no, pages ranked at Google per domain names. This is something which is

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completely independent from the number of domain names and we are still – a lot of KPIs or parameters in that area where domain names are taken into account and we know that domain names could be flawed from whatever and this doesn't make sense at the end of the day. Parameters like pages per domain names, this is something really good or let's say domain names ranked with Alexa. It's also independent from anything. It could be a told like [Stockholm] having 20 pages. They are all ranked with millions of domain names, millions of websites behind it and that is real success.

Absolutely, what Donna Austin was bringing up, success factors beyond domain names and that is where we should try to focus more on that. Still, we have the number of domain names in the first row and a lot of parameters. Also our own studies rankings reflect domain names and are important but they change a lot and there are premiums beyond this and city names, registered for city and so on.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

I have one quick remark. Thanks. It helps very much, of course, these comments and everything [inaudible] country [inaudible] study did this will help. But this benchmark was there for the discussion. We didn't actually thought that everybody [inaudible] finer answer to this big question. So, this really helps and let's meet up afterwards and discuss this.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS:

Sue, please.

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SUE SCHULER: Yes. A couple of comments from John McCormack from HosterStats. We have “Those reserved domains do not appear in the zone files” is one comment. The second comment has a few statistics here. “Amsterdam content 7.77% templated. Content 23.79% redirects 19.4. No content 49.04%. And HTTPS is 5.29%.”

NACHO AMADOZ: Just another quick follow-up which is that we should be looking into GeoTLDs. I guess that’s true for every TLD but I’m talking about GeoTLDs because that’s what the concern is. Only as the window to something. It’s not a thing in itself ... It’s a thing in itself because it pays our bills but it only becomes something real and relevant for the people using it when it shows what there is there and we have to take into account into these benchmarks what is being showed and displayed. If you have a window to nowhere then it’s going to [inaudible] some point and it’s not going to be renewed. But if there is something ... But then how you get to that something is what matters.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. I think if we go to the next slide of discussion, actually, it has already begun about the indicators but let’s see if there are maybe some other good ideas. Maybe, [Edward], you take it from here, to lead this discussion.

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[EDWARD]: Yeah. Well, what we saw in the benchmark is a typical quantitative benchmark indicator and we [only] spoke about usage which is more into qualitative benchmarking.

We could also look at a number of registered firms. I don't know if that would make any difference. It was a factor that was used in the launch of [DotFRL], I remember, to see if there was a potential.

We can also look at more qualitative indicators, like marketing, for example. In marketing, in the first year after launch. Or the pricing strategy. There has been a lot of comment on, well, price [inaudible]. We can also take that into account.

Any comments there or do you agree?

DICK KOSHINOVSKI: Last week, AFRNIC brought up a short article about seven parameters, success parameters on TLDs and I found this especially interesting reflecting that first point of market potential. What is the market potential in terms of, let's say, your biggest competitor are DotCom and the ccTLD and how many DotCom and ccTLD domain names are in your city. Not every country has such statistics or ccTLD but some bigger ones have and that gives an indication. If you get near of your potential or if you are far away from that potential and it indicates the whole market size. That article is quite worth the read from AFNIC.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can you send the link?

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UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Was it the number of domains, DotCom domains, in [inaudible] registers within the city of Paris or was it in France? Because I'm not sure we can go to the detail of a city itself.

DICK KOSHINOVSKI: So, the author was just talking about the market potential of domain names in that certain area, in that community. Maybe potential registrants which have already a domain name which includes fish or horse or something which are now TLDs.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Sorry. I misunderstood what you were saying.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. If we can ...

SUE SCHULER: Sorry. We do have a couple comments. First comment from John McCormack. "The biggest competitor for GeoTLDs is the local ccTLD, not DotCom. It was a good article, though."

And he also had a previous comment. "Usage means checking every domain name. it is far more reliable than the domain's population stuff."

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. If you can go to the next slide. As we pointed out, there's this questionnaire. We'll take in some more [GeoTLDs]. I think [DotCat] must be on it as well. Next slide, please.

In the preliminary results, we saw a few indicators which might look familiar or less familiar to you but motivations that were mentioned were economic, cultural, and political. Economic, fulfilling a demand, city branding, the business model. Cultural, to promote regional identity and to promote the language. Political, to support the digital agenda and the provision of real estate for everybody in the region. Also, relative to the success of the ccTLD, of course. Next slide, please.

In all cases, the regional government was involved and we saw broad [correlations] and small [correlations]. One of the questions that came up which we will look into further is the question if a broad [correlation] is a decisive factor for a successful launch. I don't know if anyone has a comment on that one.

NACHO AMADOZ: I don't think it's decisive. It is very relevant but I don't think it's necessary to have that.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay, next slide. Well, then marketing. That's one of the big questions in which we can also see, well, [inaudible] next rounds how much should you spend on marketing. Well, we hope to have more data on that but we can also have little discussion here on what determines successful marketing campaign. I don't know if anyone has any

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comment on that. Any comment? Well, you did two successful marketing campaigns for it, [DotFRL] and DotAmsterdam.

HENRY: This is Henry from [inaudible]. We spend more than 100% of our yearly revenue in the first year on marketing but I didn't fill in the survey yet, so ...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. And in the next slide we see that the results of price campaigns. I think we all notice that – well, Berlin did a one Euro action at the beginning of—

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Zero Euro.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Oh, zero Euro. Okay. And DotAmsterdam did a similar action as well. But we are not sure if it works in the long term. What were your ideas and do you think it has been a success or ...?

DICK KOSHINOVSKI: All over I would say it was a success but not instead of money because we spend some money on the 100,000 registrations, additional ones we had there, and the renewal rates were below 5%, especially when you look into the second years renewed. Almost all domains had been deleted. There were a few registrants at the end of the day taking all the

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hundred thousand domain names. It wasn't getting to the broad audience.

But in terms of ... We didn't expect this but in terms of marketing and PR it was a huge success because we started and we had 150,000 domain names then within the first four months and we had been, for almost a year and all statistics about new TLDs in the top ten. And that is an unbeatable PR thing which we had. You would have spent a lot more money getting this PR coverage and that was a big success but it's not measurable. That's something .... But I wouldn't do it again because it favored at the very beginning a few domainers which caught the best domain names, three, four, and five-letter and general, generic terms and they were blocked for almost a year for others. So, there's a plus and minus on that. For us, it was a success but we would never do it again.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Henry, do you have any ideas?

HENRY: We are selling for one Euro. I'm the owner of a registrar in the Netherlands as well. So we are selling one Euro for DotNL. That's a ccTLD in the Netherlands. And we did DotAmsterdam for one year as well. But the renewal rate of DotAmsterdam, it's one Euro the first year and more than 40 Euros the next year. And the DotNL is one Euro, nine Euro in the renewal. It's harder to get Amsterdam people using the domain name as well. So, I didn't figure it out yet but I think we are

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going to do it again. It works for the Netherland market and for the Dutch [inaudible]. As a registrar, it works. The business [inaudible] for me.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Thank you. Next slide. Oh, sorry.

PAUL: Paul [inaudible], DotBr, DotRio. Speaking of some personal experience on the ride sharing industry, we used to give coupons to users for them to use our service, but these coupons, they didn't mean brand loyalty. So, if Uber gave some coupons and we gave some coupons, they went to the better option and used the coupons whenever they had it, an option.

So, I disagree with price being a driver of domain adoption. You may have a very fast adoption, lots of registrations in the beginning, but as Dirk has said, renewal rates are going to be low afterwards but the PR value is nice. So, as a PR stunt, that would be great but not as a sustainable business strategy.

And there was something else that was mentioned about the ccTLD being a competitor to the city domain. Whenever we think about it, the ccTLDs, lots of times the users are used to typing the ccTLD or DotCom in the end and it feels as if something is lacking in the address. So, they type something.amsterdam, so what is lacking? Could it be a bit of user education as well? Could there be a relationship between users digital

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literacy in a determined area and domain adoption? Like some of my ideas. Thank you.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS:

Thank you. On this [inaudible] point, I've enjoyed a dot-neustar email address for the past two years now. I do a lot of traveling. Every time I go to a hotel, every time I log in to anything, I need to present my dot-neustar. No, I don't need to because I have others. But I present that one to [try]. Yes, that advocacy is still to be done and it will remain a problem for everybody. I strongly encourage every single one of you to have at least one or two domains – sorry email addresses in your own TLDs so that you can try and test in real life how easy they are to use and how people respond to them.

The Canadian visa authority is my last victim. I applied for a visa last week and my DotNeustar domain name was not acceptable because they have a six-character maximum at the back of the TLD level when you ... Because you're lucky enough to have chosen a shorter [inaudible].

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

But you are here. You are still here.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS:

That's because I happened to also have a Neustar.biz email that worked a lot better.

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PAUL: So, could there be a relationship between universal acceptance and GeoTLDs as well? Could there be a barrier?

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Yes. Actually, universal acceptance, they came to us very ... In the beginning. I haven't seen them this time but [inaudible] to make that education very local and regional and counting on us to do that. We have limited resources and time to do that. But it's an everyday task to go and advocate and educate. Absolutely.

RONALD SCHWARZLER: Universal acceptance or call it universal recognition. Whenever you see an out-of-home advertisement and it says something.com or something.at, everyone recognizes this is a URL. If you see a dot-[vine] or a dot-africa or whatever, you all the time have the feeling there is something missing.

So, we tell our agencies in [Vienna] to add “www” in front of the dot-[win] address. Hey, that's not cool anymore. So, please [then] add a HTTPS. That's even less cool. So, it's not universal acceptance ... It is the universal acceptance but it's the universal recognition I think that really, really limits the new TLDs. It's not only the geos, it's all over. All the new ones.

And any usage. Let it be a dot-realestate, a dot-[inaudible] helps a lot because people start to recognize there is not only a DotCom, a DotCC, or a DotWhatever.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Thank you. Can we go to the next slide? What we saw ... Sorry. The previews. What we saw in the preliminary results ... Well, we've heard quite some factors which were mentioned. The lack of awareness among citizens, the unwillingness of local governments, including my own, to adopt the TLD. And the competition from regular TLDs.

Facilitating factors, on the other hand, were long-term creation of demand before the launch through the coalition was mentioned by some. Support from the local government and the cooperation between the registry and local media.

Well, if you can mention any other [inaudible] which we have not discussed yet, please do.

HENRY: City marketing and regional marketing. So, the city pays the local marketing. [inaudible] Amsterdam the same. And this city marketing said, okay, this is not [inaudible] here. I'm not going to help you. It was not very helpful for us. It does the same in [inaudible].

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah. And the last slide.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Sorry. I don't know if these metrics are available somewhere but is there some kind of a measure region by region or country by country of the

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percentage of Internet usage that is mobile versus a laptop and see if there is also incidence of the recognition of domain names in general – not just geo domain names – compared to that? That has an incident. If somebody is using mobile phone and never looks at domain names because they use Apple or Google and hide the URL, does that make a difference?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah. I think, if the information is there, it should be very interesting to look at, of course. I'll take this suggestion and discuss it with CEO.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, we had some discussions on obstacles and [inaudible] to our industry in general in Santiago de Compostela and one of the obstacles is our home-made mess by registries, registrars, and by ICANN. The whole thing of registering a domain name, transferring it, getting premium domain name registered and something like this. So, it's so complicated in comparison to website builders which were on the rise the last three years or four years, [inaudible] and Weebly and a lot of other ones. They are the profitters of our home-made mess. Also, social media, where it's much easier to create for a restaurant or club or whatever, a nice list, and get thousands or ten thousands of fans and followers. That is one big obstacle, too, and we have to work as an industry ... But this is a general thing to all domain names which also fits into [inaudible] new ones as well.

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SUE SCHULER: I have a comment from John McCormack online. “Higher renewal prices actually encourage real users to renew. They are using the TLDs, whereas parked domains drop. About 80% of the domains that drop are parked templated content. 80%-plus of domains dropped have templated or no content. The content sites tend to drop less frequently on renewal.”

Just a little shout-out to John McCormack here. I don’t have his contact details, if you could send an email with contact details to [office@geotld.group](mailto:office@geotld.group), that would be fantastic.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Can we go to the next slide? This is the last slide with some lessons which we already found in the preliminary results. Well, the first one that was just mentioned by Dirk, easy registration process, local government as a factor, timely planning, sufficient means for marketing and price campaigns was a factor. And local government should involve key companies in the [inaudible] area.

Well, what would be the advise from you as a group for future GeoTLDs? We still know that the next round will be ... Well, it has to be decided yet but we can already get some advice for them. Any advice from you? No?

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: At least nobody is saying run away.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Thank you.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We've been discussing this now for almost half-an-hour, I think, 40 minutes. This is not everything. Again, I would like to stress out afterwards, fill in the questionnaire or send us just an email, because given, especially at the beginning of this discussion about the indicators and difference in pricing strategy, I'm sure this benchmark will be changing there quite some time because I saw the first reaction of maybe this is not the way to move forward. So, let me make this promise that this will be different, I think, in the next version of the research.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Actually, I answered the questionnaire immediately after I got sent the link because I wanted to have a look at it, and just purely technically, I think that there are ... And I sent an email to [Bert] and I can't remember the name of his colleague now who sent the email. I spoke to him on the phone a little after.

First of all, these types of questionnaires require possibly different people in the company to come and answer questions, so it needs to ... Whatever technically they need to use something that allows coming back. It says that it does but, actually, if you go through the whole questionnaire, it locks it up afterwards, so we need to stop that.

Second, there was clear questions in there that show that they didn't know what they were talking about in terms of domain names. Like, for

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example, how to sell a domain name or if we – fees and things like that. That needs to be removed. It’s a bit of a waste of time.

But apart from that, conversation I had with him was very helpful and very happy to discuss all that. But I think there might be a few things that need to be done on the questionnaire quickly before we ask everybody to jump back on that. But being able to go back to it and reopen it and change the question and share, that’s important, because otherwise ... Or we get a questionnaire where we get all the questions in an Excel sheet and we fill it [inaudible] and then, at some point, we submit the form. But this way, it’s [not going to work].

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Thank you. Sue?

SUE SCHULER: I have a comment from Hartmut online. “Are there more detailed data from this survey which the colleagues from DotAmsterdam could share with the marketing task force? Or even better, would they perhaps join the group?”

Then, I also have a comment from John McCormack. “Local government might not be a good candidate for marketing as they have a lot of legacy mail systems and web systems. The main targets for marketing should be small businesses and new users.”

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thank you, [inaudible]. This is well-structured market research. You're doing [inaudible] asking the right questions and having clear ideas and aims with your study where it's heading to. I think it's ... I hope you can answer the questions but it looks like you are on a good way there. So, thank you very much, so far, for sharing these preliminary results. Good stuff and many questions you were asking here and that is something I consider. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thank you. And given the question about what about all the information in the final report, there will be much more information – much more detailed information – and hopefully better indicators for this benchmark. So, thanks.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Okay, thank you. Did anybody have any other questions, suggestions? You've got an invitation to join the marketing group. You understood that?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: It's not an order but it's a strong invitation. Okay. What's next on the agenda? Glasses on. This is me, yeah. Do you want to take that? So, we have another 20 minutes, basically.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Next slide, please. So, I have four slides on new developments or new things which were sent in by registries or some presented in Santiago as well. We have that topic of digital identity was the ID For Me standard. There was that ID For Me Summit together with Open-Xchange Summit in Madrid two weeks ago and it was great stuff. So, Ronald and I – and I’m not sure if someone else. Sorry?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: [inaudible] was there, too.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah. [Vanna] was there, participated, and I found this a great thing in getting into something which is required in the European Union from three years ago and digital identity of every single citizen [inaudible] on identity and that’s, I guess, for every European participant here in our group could be a great chance to step in there. So, we are far away from having a [Hamburg] idea of something like this. But DNIC is heading forward in this sense and I feel this is a very good development for our industry.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I have a very short comment on that. It is already working. I tried it. I generated a digital ID with a registrar on a [DotWin] domain and it works. So, DNIC is already authorizing the single sign-on thing so we have to be on the table to define the framework because not having a

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digital ID associated with your TLD is not an option. So, this option is no longer on the table because they are already doing this. The registrar [inaudible] wanted one. You all know them. They are selling – no, not selling – giving away digital IDs to domain names registered with them.

So, as a registrar, if you do not offer it, they tell you you are with the wrong registrar. You have to transfer your domain names to [lonus] then you can have your digital ID.

If it's not a selling proposition for you or selling possibility, it's a possibility of losing domain names as a registrar. So, I will propose – and we will have a discussion in the ExCom in the next weeks – that the GeoTLDs should be member of this ID For Me Consortium to be on the table to be able to define criteria how a TLD will be used in digital ID things and so on.

The membership fee I already asked them will be 1,000 Euros a year. Probably we should spend [inaudible] Euros just to be on the table, just to be able to able to discuss with them on a contractor or contracted party basis.

DICK KOSHINOVSKI: I would support this.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Other comments on ID For Me? Then I think the next slide was I was not sure if we have seen that in Santiago de Compostela. No? So, Ronald, I think it's your [DotWin] campaign.

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RONALD SCHWARZLER: Yeah. It sometimes astonishes me what the not city of [Vienna], in this case it's the [inaudible] – how it's called in English? Chamber of Commerce who has internal rules to use the [DotAT] domain name all over Austria is contradicting itself and using the [DotWin] domain name to my great favor. It starts to become a great name. it's the Chamber of Commerce [win] and they finally recognized that this is a better domain name for them than [inaudible].

It took us five years of talking to them, of getting, “No, we don't want that,” and then suddenly you see this on a printed product on out-of-home advertisements. So, it sometimes gives you a good feeling you're not talking to the wrong people for no use but they're adopting. It's much, much slower, the adoption, than we all hoped, at least in our business plans. But it is coming and it is one of the most powerful organizations in [Vienna]. Once the University of [Vienna], the technical university, the [inaudible] or whoever will start using [DotWin] domain names, it will hopefully finally lead to a faster growth then. But you have to have this lighthouse or ambassador project. We really tried hard to get them and I don't know why they did it, but fortunately, they are using it right now.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay, thank you, Ronald. Another development, on the next slide, something from Berlin. Last week or the week before we published a transparency report as first registry in Germany and it's transparency report about GDPR cases and the handling and abuse cases [and the

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handling]. That was attracting a lot of media coverage in all the major IT media, just to let you know what we are doing in this area. Next slide, please.

Then two other things which are getting prevalent and which are somehow on the discussion with the Governmental Advisory Committee and in the abuse scene. We have, in Germany, due to incredible inexpensive DotDE domain names, but also DotCom domain names which are still less expensive, the problem of fake shops. That means shops that use expired DE or DotCom domain names or [inaudible] Google ranks and they put instantly a fake shop on it. So, you pay for what you order but you don't get anything. And they use often a crappy domain name, which in the dropping scene, wouldn't be working because you can't sell a domain name of a former sports club or whatsoever.

This is something which is hard to fight. It's hard to fight and we had this discussion that regulation seems to be underway in Germany to have domain name owners identified by ID card or something like this.

Another thing is, which was last week, it's also about expired domain names. So, it's obvious if you catch an expired domain name and that domain name might have a history. A history with email addresses. So, you put an NX record on that expired domain name. So, newly registered expired domain name, an [NX] record with a wild card and you get all emails from that previous owner.

So, if you had a bank account or a PayPal account or something like this, you get the email address he was using. You can directly put this

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email address as a post box and answering then and asking PayPal for renewal of the password or something like this and you can take over whole identities from people. That's a topic that [Domain Name Wire] was bringing up. I haven't thought about this and I was really surprised but it's logic that this can happen. It's also some topic coming up now in the discussion with the abuse things and with the government. So, just to give this as some news here into the group.

What else do we have?

SEBASTIEN DUCOS:

Does anybody have anything else? New market trend or something like that that you'd like to speak about? I noted the same. We have ten minutes left. I'd like to take those ten minutes. We spent a great amount, fantastic, around on marketing and how to better our TLDs. But I do want to take ten minutes now to sort of talk about a few points of discussion that are going to happen this week and try to find, at least [inaudible] – I don't care about that, but at least some awareness for you guys to have before you go into these discussions.

The ongoing discussion on the EPDP and everything that has to do with GDPR. Last year, I followed phase one quite tightly for my own reasons but also for the group. But for a million reasons, I wasn't able to do it this year. Able is probably the wrong word. Willing to spend that much time on it.

I want to be careful how I word this because I don't believe that I should be judging the work of people that are spending so much time if I'm not

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doing it, but I personally think that we're slightly going through a rabbit hole. They're spending a huge amount of time and effort working out systems to automate reopening that information to the right people, etc., when we as operators have seen that actually there's very little demand. That demand is completely manageable by hand. Operators even a bit bigger, TLD operators within our midst have been doing it for years still don't see the volume that would explain the massive engineering and undertaking they're thinking of in order to have this unified access model.

My own personal take, and by the end of the week, I won't have a personal take anymore because of the GNSO and the fact that I'll be speaking in the name of the Registry Stakeholder Group but they're going in a bit of a wrong direction there. If it comes in discussions, etc., I think that it's something that we should be aware. It's something that we will have eventually to implement, manage, etc., if we believe and experience the fact that this is not a big deal and we can do it by hand. Let's say it loudly before we're imposed some massive undertaking to find solutions to a problem that doesn't exist.

I've heard also this week that there was some study that was being conducted by ICANN on what it would take to reopen WHOIS for companies only. So, what it would take to be able to ensure that a registrant is a company, is not a private person but a legal entity, and what it would take to reopen that data for that.

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Actually, personally – this is my own personal opinion – I think that is a much more sane discussion than the rabbit hole that they’re getting into. Again, maybe something to be aware there.

Having seen the pain that it is to go through the process of decision making through that group ... I don’t want to criticize. I’m just alerting as a conscious citizen on something that I think is going the wrong way. Nacho, you wanted to say something.

NACHO AMADOZ:

Yeah. I totally agree with that approach. That’s what [DotCat] is still doing and we didn’t apply temporary specification because we agreed with the Spanish DPA on a framework before GDPR. We presented that to the Board. It was approved. And we still stand by it so we are still applying it. And so far, so good.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:

This is really important. And you have no problems with ICANN?

NACHO AMADOZ:

No. Well, I don’t know if they have a problem with us, but they haven’t told us anything.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:

That’s really interesting. Okay.

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NACHO AMADOZ: Yeah. And I don't want them to challenge that but it would be interesting for them to challenge that so that we could say, "So, you are asking us to revert the agreement we reached with the staff and the Board, endorsed by DPA? Can you give us something so that we can bring back to the DPA and see what DPA has to say about it?"

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: And maybe I'm getting this wrong and I'm not legally trained to be able to understand the defined notions there but the temporary specification allowed us to stop showing WHOIS whilst something else was coming in terms of policy. They didn't make us not show it.

NACHO AMADOZ: Yeah, I think it makes you—

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: It allowed us to do it without getting in trouble with compliance. It's not an obligation.

On this ... So, after part one of the EPDP, there's an IRT group working on implementation. I don't have all the details and I don't know if there's going to be communication this week on it. But it looks like that February deadline for implementing the data change of requirements is not going to be met. So, I expect there will be a formal announcement this week, probably towards the end of the week as they're meeting I believe on Thursday. But this is not going to be ... It probably won't be a deadline.

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This is maybe less important for those that have a backend that worries about these things. I'm a backend that worries about these things and it's actually quite important to know that we won't have a race due February. It probably will take another ICANN to come to about. Again, non-official but this is what I've heard.

Then the other thing I wanted to raise is the discussion on Wednesday on abuse. I don't want to stress – I can't stress more the fact that I think that there's pressure on registries and registrars to do more in terms of abuse. I think that there is our own pressure to keep our house clean. The discussion within the Registry Stakeholder Group is very much to say we're responsible businesses. We have responsible people. We do a lot. And we'll keep on doing a lot but let us do what we need to do instead of telling us what we need to do and police it.

I'd like to see as much, as many as possible of us in the room on Wednesday pushing that point, because otherwise, other people will make rules for us that may or may not one fit purpose to be what we want to do. We are responsible people. A lot of people do a lot of things. This is not just about spec 11.3b. It probably will extend a bit and specifically into spam when used to develop botnets, etc. I think that we need to accept that this is a reality that will work but let's work all together to make sure there is not something that's imposed on us.

RONALD SCHWARZLER: Just a short notice on that. I had a meeting that morning with the INTA, the International Trade Association. It was an early breakfast, business breakfast. And the first speaker on the panel, I think it was from Afilias,

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said in principle, or if you take it serious, the registry operator is the last one who can do something [against]. If you watch some abuse, you first contact the hosting provider. Then probably the registrar. Then you probably get information about the registrant.

And if there's nothing you can do about it, the registry can be asked to take down the domain name. it's the only thing that a registry can do. So, there are multiple instances before that we can or should [act]. You can do abuse with any domain name. You don't see it by the domain name whether it's used in an abusive way or not and the registry itself can do nothing [inaudible] take down and I would wait for an order by court or by whoever to tell me that I have to change name servers or whatever to a domain name.

But – and this is the point – somehow we are the ones who are blamed for abuse worldwide or whatever. Probably by people who don't really know what the registry is doing.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: It's been on Spamhaus listserv, [hosts], registrars or whatever. I've seen on Spamhaus [inaudible].

RONALD SCHWARZLER: [inaudible] and this is at least not fair. This is not a business category, I know.

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SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Yes. It's not fair but it's not [inaudible]. We are adults and we'll have to ... Yeah. I understand.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Just on this subject, at the ccTLD level, in the CENTR, for example, we had a lot of discussion on that, going in that direction, saying, "Okay, we're the last best choice for acting [inaudible]." Well, on the [inaudible] abuse because there's also this aspect of [inaudible].

The thing is that there's also some registries at the ccTLD level who are kind of starting to put into place some takedown policies, so it's not helping the others because they are kind of showing that they could act on content or on website or whatever if they were asked to. So, that's also something we need to be very clear on that.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Sorry. Sue, your hand.

SUE SCHULER: I do have one comment online from John McCormack. "Restricting or being careful about discounting would kill a lot of DNS abuse. A lot of the problems are facilitated by low price registrations."

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Absolutely true, too. Yes, absolutely. And I note, by the way, that I still haven't seen John's email with his contact details if he wants to send that.

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That's a wrap, 4:45. We'll have to give the room [inaudible] last call but make it short.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

Okay. Welcome in Montreal. Welcome in Quebec. I have some invitation card here for the gala tomorrow that does not called a gala but a Quebec night. So, please, come and see me so I can give you an invitation card to all the geo members. Thank you. Have a good week. Let's party.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS:

Thank you very much and see you on Wednesday morning. Enjoy your week. I have small invitations. The Neustar organizes a happy hour every night Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. Please come and see me. You need wrist bands to come. It's at the [Inter Continental] and you're very welcome. There will be free beer and free other beverages.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**