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MONTREAL – GNSO - (RySG) BRG Community Session  
Wednesday, November 6, 2019 – 13:30 to 15:00 EDT  
ICANN66 | Montréal, Canada

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Hi. For those that have joined us already, we'll just wait another couple of minutes for people to settle down and then we'll get going. Thank you.

COLE QUINN: Hello. Hi, Nisha.

NISHA PARKESH: Hi, Cole.

COLE QUINN: Hi, Dawn.

DAWN SHACKLETON: Good afternoon, Cole.

COLE QUINN: How are you feeling, for the record, today? For the record.

DAWN SHACKLETON: I'm fine today. Thank you very much for asking.

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**Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.**

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COLE QUINN:

Excellent. That's fine. All right. Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome. My name is Cole Quinn and I work for Microsoft. I manage the corporate domains portfolio as well as the registry operations for the eight top-level domains that Microsoft owns. We're going to be expecting people to come in, so welcome as you drift in. Welcome to everybody that might be on the line as well.

I just wanted to take a moment to explain what the Brand Registry Group is (the BRG) and where we came from, what we're all about, and for those of you who are not familiar.

Basically, back in the first days of this last round of new generic TLDs, the whole idea about having a company come forward and owning a slice of the DNS at the top level, like DotMicrosoft or DotAzure, DotFox, DotAudi, DotAmazon, DotAWS, there's a new approach to how we're going to be running the registry because our intent, as a company, was to maintain exclusive use for that top-level domain. So, we're not going to go off and sell a bunch of second-level domains. That's not our business model.

So, we started recognizing some of these companies that weren't really part of the domain industry proper, typically, but all of a sudden, we're kind of thrust into this role as being part of the ecosystem and the community and there was a lot of things that we didn't know. This is a tricky space.

What we did realize and recognize was the value in coming together, as like peers and having a collective voice, having shared experience, and having larger amplified influence of our values and our specific needs

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that are specific to our use case, which is, again, to have exclusive use of the TLD.

So, one of the things that the folks that were involved at this stage of the last round wanted to do is let's put a trade association together and we'll call it the Brand Registry Group (BRG). The top order of business was actually to lobby for, develop, and help negotiate in the registry agreement the specification 13 which basically carved out our use case.

So, we've grown. We have over 50 members and a lot of the members own multiple TLDs. And we have memberships that are for companies and folks that have delegated and actually do own their TLD. But we also have a membership category for those who, for whatever reason, did not apply in the first round or did not get a TLD but they are interested and have expressed interest in doing it in the next round. So, recently we've been creating some space for just not the classic TLD owners in the dot-brand space but also prospective companies that are seeking to get their TLD in the next round, as well as friends and brand advocates that are in the community as well.

Martin Sutton, he'll be MC-ing this community session for us, he's our executive director. He's been around for a long, long time. He used to be one of the members representing HSBC and now he kind of functions as the spokesperson and the gears and grease of the BRG. He keeps things running and keeps us legal. So, I'm going to turn it over to Martin here. There's more. Okay. You've got the slides going.

So, there's just not Martin. We also have a Board of Directors here that are primarily representatives from different companies, like Microsoft

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and like Amazon and Sky and Neustar. We have HSBC. So, we have these directors that are in place for terms of a couple years.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Sorry. Can you speak up just a little bit? It's very hard to hear you.

COLE QUINN: Yeah. I'm sorry. I apologize for my voice. I'm trying to not strain but I will lean into the mic a little bit. So, the Board of Directors are in place. They're voted in by the members and they serve a term of a couple of years. Then after a couple of sequential terms, they have to take a break.

So, we are always interested in creating opportunity for folks to have a chance to participate and step up and that's built into our bylaws and the rhythm of business.

In addition to the policy development and the activities that we have at ICANN, we also have a very clear sense of purpose and the purpose there feeds into our strategic goals and those strategic goals would also be feeding into our tactical implementation and our activities.

I'm not going to read the slide but there you have a list of what our strategic goals are. Basically, to advocate for ourselves and for our members inside and outside of the ICANN community, at the policy level and just in a general awareness level. But also within the membership, what's really important and what's probably most special to me is the way that we communicate and share best practices with

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each other because we are all registry operators and we're all in our respective corners and companies in our day jobs developing use cases and we have sometimes unique, but sometimes common, experiences and challenges. So, the idea of being able to share those practices and use cases and experience, and even failures. A lot of the times some our best learnings come from failures and those challenges. That's where I think the real sustained, perpetual value of the BRG membership really comes into focus here.

We are, except for Martin who is the highly paid professional that's keeping all the trains running, we are a band of volunteers that do have day jobs. So, to the extent that we can grow our membership and have good, meaningful participation and have an inclusive culture where people are able to take part and kind of have a stake in the deliverables of the value stream, we really encourage that. We don't want to exist just for the sake of existing. We want to exist for a purpose and that purpose is to continue to be able to represent effectively and have a seat at the table so that companies like us would be able to be well-represented in the ICANN and the domain industry community, so that we can ensure a viable future. Martin, can you hit the next slide there?

I'm going to turn it over to Martin Sutton now. I think you for your time, and again, I apologize for my voice.

MARTIN SUTTON:

Thank you, Cole, and welcome everyone. Traditionally, we just try and do a bit of a raise of awareness of activities across dot brands across the industry just to make sure that people are aware of what is going on

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because it's not always evidential unless you go and explore individual brand TLDs and find the domains and see if they resolve to websites, you're unlikely going to notice them particularly if they're located in an area that is distinct to that brand.

Highlights so far this year. Last month, the number of domains has increased to over 18,000. So, for the full year, we've seen a growth of about 16%. This is on domain names and we'll talk to that point later on. It's not a key measure for dot brands but in terms of the industry—and it traditionally looks at that as a measure—it's useful just to acknowledge that there is domains there at the second level. They are being used. They're active. But they're certainly not in the proportions that you would see or expect to see in the traditional open commercial environment.

So, with the number of dot brands totaling well in excess of 50 that have delegated since the new round was opened, there's about 290 that we would classify as active. So, they've got more than two domains registered indicating that they are starting to actually use their TLD.

And within the environment of dot brands, we're seeing on average across that 500-odd TLD base approximately 32 domains per TLD. Not high in significant volumes. And we'll talk about that in a short while.

So, what we are seeing is some significant moves by certain players that have spent a lot of time planning, building their strategy and implementing it. One example, one of our members is KPMG and they did a significant push this year to move across to home.kpmg and that

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provides a very consistent base for their global community to drive and navigate towards.

And depending on which location the user is actually coming in from, it will use things like geo-location to present the right landing page, the right language for that particular client or user. So, it's a significant move.

We do appreciate within the Brand Registry Group our members have conversations about the difficulties in engaging internal stakeholders and promoting activities and a plan of implementation for a dot brand. So, these are significant achievements when a strong move towards an environment like home.kpmg comes to fruition. So, that's a good example for this year. I presented others previously so I won't dwell on those too much but just give you a flavor of some of the activities we're starting to see.

So, in particular, it gives opportunity to very quickly apply domains at the second level to suit up coming events and significant sponsorship deals that may come about. So, here are examples for next year and Olympic sponsorship, for instance, in some of those cases.

So, the quick and easy advantage here is that you'll see that all of these brand TLDs can use the same extension, 2020 for instance, and to really be distinctive and easy and quick and memorable to promote future sponsorship activities.

Others take the opportunity to celebrate, and certainly 50 years with DHL [inaudible] has given them the opportunity to present a very quick

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and simple domain-led website material for those events. So, these are, therefore, not starting to develop as long, extensive URLs. These are very sharp and very useful for marketing purposes.

The other thing we see is consistency. So, example of CENTR here, they use the same website content with appropriate languages to suit their particular marketplaces, and then always apply a correct term under the domain name space so it's very easy and understandable for the market that is searching for the particular information.

The second example underneath is Audi with all of their car dealerships. So, these are all consistent in terms of what the content is. That makes it very much easier to manage and police compliance activities on those websites as well and truly just gives a customer experience—a very consistent customer experience in those cases.

And I suppose it's because they can. They have the freedom to put whatever they like at the second level here. So, DotAAA. It's relevant to that particular business and very short and unique domain name for that brand. But the freedom that it affords brands to put something there that is succinct, meaningful towards their particular activities that they're trying to promote either through websites or other activities on social media, for instance, means that people—the users—feel confident that they are landing on trusted environments on the Internet. So, it does certainly build up confidence from users and we've seen that noticeably in the social media marketplace where typically the short URL links are just a random set of characters and they are—or can be—used in malicious activities. So this is providing much more

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confidence to users when they're seeing the links quoted in social media with a dot brand at the end of it.

So, I'll just summarize some aspects here which I think are useful to remember in terms of attributes for a dot brand. It certainly provides a greater control element to running a registry rather than all domains across different registries and to support your business. So, there is a great deal of control that's applied to this right from the root of the Internet through to the user. End to end control.

The dot brand operator controls all of those registrations at the second level and beyond. That ensures that that domain space is free of malicious registrations, there's no typo squatting, cybersquatting. There's no domain speculation in that space. They're all for a purpose. So, that is a very clean environment and creates a very authentic, trusted space that users are reassured about.

It certainly gives a platform that can be used to add further layers of securities and controls to enhance safety for not just the organization but more so for users of the Internet.

What we can see then is that typically, in terms of trying to make sure that all that environment is using the right protocols or the base level of controls that want to be applied by that organization, it can all be applied at the network level and sometimes in an automated fashion so you remove all the manual processes that could be involved with a lot of the security measures or certification perhaps that's required throughout the dot brand environment.

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I mentioned earlier there's low volumes of domains. Typically, it is because they only need to apply domains into their registry for a purpose. And despite those low volumes, it is useful to be aware that the dot brands already account for a significant amount of DNS traffic within the new gTLD environment. And that's something, certainly, amongst other things that we'll be talking about during our brands and domains event which will be posted tomorrow in Montreal amongst many other topics that we're covering. But that will be interesting. There will be more details that will emerge from some of the presentations there.

Thinking of how this is now progressing and we're seeing a lot more activity and a lot more brands wanting to activate, what we do predict is that there will be a significant contribution towards security and safety as the Internet continues to grow from this core base of dot brands that are now in existence and using those platforms.

So, I'm going to stop there because, typically, it's really nice to hear from brands themselves and some of the use cases and experiences that they have. So, we're just going to pick out a few that some of our members have kindly come forward with to share with you in the community session here today.

Typically, brands, it can be difficult for them to be able to share information and certainly we're very encouraged by the fact that our membership do have the opportunity to talk to one another in confidence about their experiences.

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Here today we will be able to share a few examples, one of which we'll start with is Microsoft. Then we'll go to Sky and we'll go to HSBC. Cole, I'm going to hand back to you.

COLE QUINN:

Thanks, Martin. So, for a lot of us, when we think of domains, one of the first things that we think of in terms of use cases goes to websites. Now, at Microsoft, we've got a very passionate group of leaders that have invested a lot of time and money and effort in thinking into the Microsoft.com name space. It's one of the most well-known brands in the world and the idea of lifting and shifting away from that and going into a DotMicrosoft naming convention was a really tough sell.

So, as a registry operator and as a dot brand advocate within my company, I needed to come up some use cases that did not interfere with the corporate strategy to double down on a few approved primary domain names, like Microsoft.com or xbox.com or bing.com and those kinds of things.

So, in my journey to keep my ear to the ground and keep my eyes open and keep talking about our dot brand, I would always look for good ways to either spin up some [inaudible] of the URLs. For instance, Philanthropy.microsoft would go to our philanthropy.microsoft.com site and we could use it as a short handle. Whenever anybody in the company needed to submit a DNS request or go to our domain name manager tool, I would say just visit domains.microsoft and they would be taken there.

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But this use case here, the first one that I'm going to talk about, was really exciting for a couple of reasons. One, not only did it not interfere with our website strategy, the naming strategy, because it wasn't going to be used for a website, but what was more exciting to me was a team in the active directory space within Microsoft, like this IT Ops team, came to me looking for a use and permission to use a second level of the DotMicrosoft space.

So, this marked the first time where it wasn't me going out to try to sell this to the company. Apparently, enough of that and enough socialization had happened so that people were starting to come to me and that was worth celebrating in my mind.

The use case here was these guys ran data centers all around the world and these vendor suppliers—these OEM guys—would come in to install hardware or do any number of jobs that were required to build out the data center and then come back and maintain it. The security concern and the risk was that these guys need some network access but we don't want to give them that network access to anything that had production traffic or production system. And a lot of these guys already have Azure accounts or Office 365 accounts, like beyond Microsoft.com. So there would be the potential where it would be difficult for these vendors and contractors to be logging in without having some name collisions. So the active directory team said, "Can we create dc.microsoft and have these guys be given accounts in dc.microsoft?"

If you look over here on the right, that's just a screenshot of an auth page (and authentication page) that pops up when I'm going into a

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production environment. At the top, you'll see my Microsoft credentials. Below that that's not highlighted is my brand registry group credentials because I've got a One Drive and a calendar and a profile setup over there to help Martin run the Brand Registry Group stuff.

Then there's a couple active directory profiles there for GME, which stands for GFS-Managed Environment, or [ALT-] AME, which stands for Azure-Managed Environment. Here, if I were a contractor, I'd click on User Another Account. I'd probably type in [colequinn@dc.microsoft](mailto:colequinn@dc.microsoft) and it would take me into the right environment, the right active director, with the right permissions and the right credentials. I thought that was a really slick way to solve their problem with a great way of leveraging our own namespace, which also reduces the risk and promotes the security and resiliency of the namespace.

The next use case that I was really excited about came to me from the engineers from our Azure Traffic Manager Team. They had a problem because, whenever they have a set of nameservers delegated to anyone of their subscriptions or DNS resources, it would stripe it across .org, .com, .net, and .info. That was a strategy for not – what's that called? Deviation strategy? Anyway, they don't want to have everything in .com. They wanted to split it up so that it would minimize the risk there.

The problem was, in this particular use case, they had a migration from one system to another, and the traffic was very volatile. For a number of engineering/technical reasons, they needed to be able to go in and update nameserver glue record IP addresses pretty quickly and

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dynamically. One of them was .net, and they had a glue record requirement that had a two-day minimum Time To Live. That means, if you set your record to a certain IP address, you could not change that for two days. That was not going to meet the requirements of that engineering team.

So they came to me looking for another TLD that wouldn't have that same requirement. I said, "You guys know that we have our own TLD, and we could probably create nameserver records and we could probably do whatever we want to. But let me check with Verisign to make sure that they don't have the same requirement for us as they do for their own .net.

It turned out, after I talked to my account manager, he said, "No, you're good to go. In fact, you don't even need glue records if you don't want them." So we decided on the name tm(for traffic manager).azure. Again, I quickly checked to make sure that the TM, which was the ccTLD for Turkmenistan, wasn't going to cause any issues to use that name. There was no confusability. Obviously, we weren't going to represent anything that even looked remotely like Turkmenistan. It wasn't even going to be a website, so I thought we were all good to go.

Within a day, we had the name. We had the zone propped. We had the records, and the Traffic Manager Team was all unblocked and very happy to use the .azure. That was another kind of "move the needle a little bit" in terms of socializing the fact that we even do have a .azure TLD to use.

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Thanks for letting me share that. I'll be happy to talk to you guys. Anybody who has any questions about either of those uses cases, we can talk about it later on. So just hit me up. Thanks.

MARTIN SUTTON:

Thanks, Cole. We've got an opportunity at the end to do questions and answers. So, if you've noted any questions down at this stage, we'll come back to that.

Before we get to that stage, though, we've got a number of other examples and a report that we'd like to be introduced by [Katrin Olmer] shortly as well. So, before we go there, we're just going to move to our colleagues from Sky. We've got Dawn Shackleton, who is a Board member from the BRG. We've all got Nisha Parkash, whose first meeting at ICANN is this Montreal meeting. So, welcome, Nisha. I'll hand it over to you to describe your use cases. Thanks.

DAWN SHACKLETON:

Hello. Sky, for those of you who do not know, is Europe's largest media company. We operate in seven territories now in terms of providing content to folk in those countries. It's terrific content as well. I have to say that. We are also now fully owned by Comcast. Yes, it's exciting times. We're in the throes of building an OTT platform for NBC Universal. We're now starting to use our top-level domain. It's been five years now since it was delegated.

Although we started off very, very slowly, only using redirects to our main sites, it's very confusing. For those of you who are in America,

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.com is king, but outside of the States, a lot of territories, a lot of countries, tend to use their ccTLD as opposed to .com. Now, in the U.K., we're slightly different. We do use sky.com for the U.K. But all of our other territories use the ccTLD. So the main strategy at Sky is quite diverse and we do have to have a domain strategy.

We decided a couple of years ago that what we would do is bring in the top-level domain, .sky, into that domain strategy. That was really the most effective way that we have found to date to promote awareness of the fact that we do have .sky within our group businesses.

To the extent that, when our CEO, Jeremy Darroch, decided that our corporate work site should be moved off of sky.com, he made an executive decision that came down to myself and my team very, very quickly to say, "I want to use our .sky top-level domain for our new corporate website."

Now, I'm going to hand over to [Tunisia] because she was prominent in helping the marketing and the communications team to move the corporate website over to the TLD. It took several months, to say the least. Also, aside from talking about that, she will also then go on to talk about how we use contact.sky for e-mail newsletters and all sorts of stuff from our PR and marketing businesses that are third-party agencies sending out material to our customers.

What I will say is that the beauty of having your own TLD is, when you've got businesses in multiple countries, it's holistic across that whole group. You can use it any way that you want to. Everybody has a say in

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how you use it. I've found it's brought people together within the organization, which is terrific news.

Nisha, would you like to talk about the migration of our corporate website briefly, over to skygroup.sky, and then go on to talk about how we use it for e-mail services?

NISHA PARKESH:

Yeah. Hi, everyone. I'm Nisha Parkesh. I'm the Online Compliance and Brand Protection Manager at Sky and I've been there seven years. When we decided to get the instructions for that migration from corporate.sky.com to skygroup.sky, it was quite daunting. I think there wasn't a lot of planning involved from different parts of the areas, which I was involved to facilitate that whole dialogue: my background is I've come from a corporate domain registrar. I've got excited about DNS very early on in my domains career, which is a bit of geeky, but it's all right. It helps now with what I do.

There were several aspects that were never considered in that migration because it wasn't just migrating that sub-domain, corporate.sky.com. It was about taking on every single /vanity URL, as well as any fourth-level that sat on corporate.sky.com.

In the end, it took about 20 months and it wasn't easy. We got there. Even on the day of launch, it was a difficult day because some things still remained down, actually. But ultimately it's not impossible and I think that's the message I'd probably give out. Somebody like me who didn't come from that side of the world (only nine years ago) has

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understood how to migrate a sub-domain off one of our critical domains onto not only a completely new domain but a completely new TLD that also at Sky sits on something that's called split-brain DNS, which makes it even more confusing when you're doing a migration like that because you have the opportunity to just go externally or just go internally, or you have to both. So, when you're doing a migration like that or where you're doing any sort of DNS, you have to consider at Sky that split-brain DNS module and work effectively on both areas.

Like I said, 20 months is a good case study. I think it can be done a lot quicker now, based on that experience. I think it's about engaging the right teams and making sure that the people that are going to start that project are going to be at the end of that project as well. That's probably a really good tip. It brought [inaudible] together, London and Yorkshire, and we worked really closely with each other.

So that's a successful corporate website. Contact.sky is really interesting because, with GDPR coming in now, when people are receiving e-mails from us, yes, we can create a very branded .com, but where there's not an opportunity to look up the WHOIS and actually see if you're receiving an e-mail from a legitimate business, .sky is very on-brand. So people may still be confused because they still want to say Sky end in .com or .uk or something. Even when I say it to people – “so-and-socontact.sky” – I get repeated back: “contact.sky.com.” “No just contact.sky. But what it does allow us people to understand that, if they're receiving an e-mail from .sky, it is pretty much going to be sky without having to understand how to look at a WHOIS record on a .com because anybody can register a .com.

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Anyway, what we've done there is build a nice file for each department that requires a third party to send e-mails on our behalf – legitimate e-mails, of course – where we don't have the capacity to send automated e-mails. An example would be if, you go to ShoppingCart and you select that you want to buy a new remote control but you don't check out, there's going to be an automated e-mail that you receive as that user to say, "You've got something in your basket and you haven't checked out." But the third party is sending that e-mail on our behalf ultimately, so all the mail records and the mail host provider is third party.

So the way we control that is by setting up a sub-domain. In this particular instance, it's yourbasket.contact.sky, or basket.contact.sky, and then it would be youratbasket.contact.sky. So that would be what the e-mail looks like.

We know it's not being spoofed because we ask the third party to provide an SPF record and a DKIM record where the tilled doesn't end [the "all]. So it's not [tilled-all. It's -all.] So it's not a wildcard. Then our own DMARC record authenticates the SPF and DKIM. So then we know if they're trying to make any changes to the mail system, basically: because our DMARC record is verifying the SPF and DKIM.

So we've got probably about 30 now per department, so you might have Sky Vision events. So you'll have skyvision.contact.sky. These event e-mails are going to go out to join their events. You've got—

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: [inaudible]

NISHA PARKESH:

Yeah, we've got Italy. So, yeah, we're able to use it across territories, which is really nice. With Sky, our territories are very territorial, so you have to work with your German and your Italian colleagues in such a way that allows them to feel like they're still being really territorial because they love to use .de, they love to use .it, and they ask the question about why they should use .sky and then answer themselves out of using .sky because they're so focused on using .de and .it. So with the case of setting sub-domains up, we can make it a little bit more territorial by using certain terms that make the flavor feel a bit Italian or a little bit German.

But I highly recommend to use a .brand in this way because, like I said, you don't want a customer to think that they're getting a phishing e-mail. Like I said, with GDPR in place at the moment, you're not being able to look at the authentication of an ownership of a domain name. That .brand will give the customer indication straight away that they are actually dealing with a legitimate company and they can reply or don't reply or they can click links.

So, to date, we've got 37 .sky domains registered, and I just literally registered two as I left to come out to Montreal, one for backend infrastructure for Portugal and one as a generic operational .sky. So all the operational work can be migrated off bskyb.com, which is our internal domain. But BskyB as entity doesn't exist anymore, but the actual infrastructure is a cobweb. It's awful. So we've never going to not

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use bskyb.com, but where we're building new infrastructure we don't want it to built to bskyb.com. We're going to build it to a .sky ultimately.

That's where we're at. We're a [inaudible] registry, 100%. Everybody is really excited about using it. Now that we're able to build on that, you'll definitely see a lot more .sky out there.

MARTIN SUTTON:

Dawn and Nisha, thank you so much. That was really helpful. Fascinating and exciting times ahead. But it does also illustrate, I think, the amount of effort that's required to get the ball rolling and get something active in there which starts to gain attention, similar to Cole's experience.

NISHA PARKESH:

Yeah. I think a really good tip, though, as well is that, anybody that's running that .brand, if you understand DNS at a basic level, you'll really manage that brand effectively. DNS is very king when it comes to making sure that you're keeping that brand really, really tight and you're not actually going to cause any vulnerabilities with your brand as well. That's always the case, whatever sub-domains setups you want to do and mail records. As an example, DNS is going to keep that really, really tight and really ensure that people are not sending strange e-mails on our behalf: because we've got that locked down. So a big recommendation is to try and understand DNS, even at a really basic level. It will really help you shape your TLD.

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MARTIN SUTTON: Thank you. I'm going to move now to HSBC. We've got Kevin Audritt, again another Board member, and an example to talk us through. Thanks, Kevin.

KEVIN AUDRITT: Thank you, Marty. .hsbc. As you can see, we've had a bit of artistic license on our dot. This is especially for attendees from Canada and to ICANN itself. We have a presence here in Montreal. We have a strong presence in Canada itself. Hopefully, for those that arrived by air, you would have seen our brand on the gateways and all across the airport.

In the bottom right-hand corner – Martin, if we could move to the next slide please; yeah – we've got what we call the .hsbc nexus. As part of the HSBC brand refresh, we now use this term “the nexus” which connects one part of the business with another. What we're wanting to do is make sure that we had a connection between traditional HSBC digital and the new gTLD, digital. So that's our .hsbc nexus.

The use case that I'm going to talk about today is a new site that we launched in September, which is tech.hsbc. This is a bespoke technology microsite. It looks to address a certain audience. It introduces a new domain technology and it marries that with our business transformation program and technology transformation program.

If we can move to the next slide, the objective is to get feedback and articles from business leaders on what is trending in the HSBC techno space. Then we combine that with regular engaging content. If we could

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have a look at that on then next slide, where you'll see different styles of technology articles. These are all regularly updated. We look at individuals that we've recruited through various different programs. We look at various different programs that we run in the technology space.

The concept is – if we can move to the next slide, Martin – we have the traditional links to social media. What we're trying to do is raise the profile of HSBC as a technology employer and a technology partner of choice. We hope that it attracts individuals and talent to HSBC.

On the first slide, you would have seen that we also have easy access to a recruitment portal. I'll speak a bit more in depth about this tomorrow at brands and domains, but hopefully that gives you an idea on what the objectives are and how we've delivered it. If you've got any feedback, please see me outside or please seem more around. I welcome your comments. Thanks very much.

MARTIN SUTTON:

Thanks, Kevin. We'll come back, as I said, to questions and answers at the end. So we'll move on, but thanks for that.

Now I'm delighted to introduce [Katrin Olmer], who's coming here to talk about digital company brands research that they've undertaken. It's just only been freshly released this week, as I understand it. So we're privileged to have had a copy a couple days ago. I shall hand over to you, [Katrin]. Thank you.

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[KATRIN OLMER]:

Thank you, Martin, for inviting me. My name is [Katrin Olmer]. I'm the CEO and Founder of [.sun]. Why did we do studies about the success factors of dot-brands and other top-level domains? It's a very simple reason. We saw that the whole industry really is more focused on pure figures, at least from past decades and that at least with the new gTLDs the main success factors are not really the pure figures.

We started in 2017 with some research on geographic TLDs and continued into 2018 to extend that to dot-brands. I would like to show you our results from this year. As Martin mentioned, this had just been released yesterday, so it's brand-new and fresh data I would like to share with the BRG.

Next slide, please. Roughly as an introduction, we did this for the second time. The first time we only analyzed the European dot-brands, but this time we extended it to all global dot-brands. This are at least [of] September 2019 527 with roughly 19,000 domain names. We analyzed the performance, meaning the success factors, based on seven KPIs, which are the number of registered domains, the number of domains which resolve, the number of domains which do have a mail server – you can see that in the next slide – the number of domains which are used for new websites – so not just a pure forward to an existing domain, which is done pretty easily, but really being used for something new.

And then we have three factors which are really more focusing on then visibility and the marketing and SEO areas. These are the number of

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Alexa ranks, the number of Alexa back links, and the visibility, which we measure by a tool called SISTRIX.

Let me then go to the next slide, please, to show you the results. This is a bit unfortunate that the light situation is not that great. I have a couple of copies here with me, so anyone who's interested can get a copy.

As you can see from this table, the ranking pictures are on the top and on the left are the results. Number one is .audi. For this year, they improved a couple of ranks from last year. Number two is [inaudible], and number three is .abbott. All those three really are doing well in terms of visibility. It's not really the main factor that they have a lot of registrations, but it's really more about the visibility and the Alexa performance.

What's interesting about that – can you switch one more slide, please? – is how the difference from the figures of 2018 are. So we have three brands which have not been part 2018, which is from .abbott, of course, because they're from [the U.S.] and .neustar, which is also a U.S. brand and, I understood, also member of the BRG. We also have .bradesco from Brazil, which is a brand I honestly haven't noticed before (that they're so active in this space). So that came as a surprise to me that they're also in the top-ten ranks.

Some observations I would like to share beyond the focus of European brands which is interesting to see is that we have a strong focus on some industries, which are, on one side, the car manufacturers, I think. Except for a very few car manufacturers, most of them applied for their

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dot-brands and some of them are really active and doing well with their dot-brand. Also, the finances companies are pretty active in using their TLDs.

What we saw when we moved from the European to the international level was that, of course, since three new ones are part of the top ten, the others dropped out (four, actually), since Lamborghini went up a few places. The ones which are not in the ranking anymore is .[arco]. They are, I think, for this year, 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup>. So they're pretty close to the top ten and might score up again in next year's ranking. .sina went down by more than 20 places. So this will be one task for the next week: to analyze why they dropped such a lot of places. BMW and [MA] are, as well as [Arco], pretty close to the top-ten lists. So we will see quite some movement in the 2020 rankings.

Next slide, please. We also have the individual winners. What we did is we analyzed the rankings for each of those seven KPIs and then added them, made a sum, and divided that by seven to come up with the overall ranking. But we got questions in the last year: how about the individual winners and rankings? So we included this for transparency reasons for this year's results. This is also, in the printed study and the online version of the study, explained.

As you can see: DVAG. That's German financial company who gave a lot of domains to their consultants, similar to .audi with their dealership. They performed really good, so we might as well see some increase in their ranking for the next year. They don't perform that well in visibility, although they have a lot of domain names. For instance, if their

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consultants would have flyers and active websites and so on online, we might as well see them performing even better than the top ten in the next year.

We have [one cern] being the number one of the Alexa links. We see that they are really popular on the Internet and they have very nice websites. I encourage you to check their websites. They have really decent web designers who take care of their websites.

Next slide, please. Last observations and then some examples. What's really interesting to see is we looked at some further figures we didn't include in the KPI. But still, we analyzed them, and this included the question of, are domain names secured by SSL? What was really interesting to see is that it's pretty different. We have two figures. The left one was a bigger yellow lock. It means that only a quarter of all nic.tld domains are secured with SSL, whereas the right-hand side figure shows that over 80% of all domains overall under the .brands are secured by SSL. So I wonder why. It's a simple thing to set up an SSL certificate for nic.tld. Why do some brands not do it? But this would be an interesting question to follow up on for next year's study.

What we also saw is that a very limited number of .brands, even though they are active in areas or territories – that's a nice word, by the way – did [inaudible] application [inaudible] strategy, meaning that they very rarely have their Latin script dot-brand and then probably the Chinese or Taiwanese or Cyrillic or whatever, wherever they are active as well. We see that there's still quite some room for improvement and more activation.

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Now to some examples. Can you switch to the next slide, please? We categorized the potential use in different areas. This is probably not really good to see. The first one is the use case of service domains, as we call that. A service domain is a domain which directs very easily to content which is far more down in the navigation. The example, which is not really good to say, should read [van.man]. The car manufacturer does have a lot of websites with a lot of great content, but of course it's very hard to find them from the homepage. So they set up van.man.

Then we have the Swiss watch manufacturer, Omega, which uses [terra.omega] for their responsibility campaign. We see that it's with Microsoft to combine the product with the company brand. That's a very neat idea to make end users aware that a certain product is tied to a certain company. So sometimes I think they just are not aware of the company, which products the company has, or which products belong to a certain company.

This is [tetraline.starter], which is a pharmaceutical company based in Germany but working globally.

Next slide, please. Then we have some campaigns. I think we've seen the DHL campaign. We see [Webber] and some others. So I think you can check that out in the study. Martin, are you going to distribute those slides to members?

MARTIN SUTTON:

I'll see if we can get them posted onto the ICANN meeting part as well so that they're publicly available. They should be anyway. The other

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thing is I will try and circulate them. I think this deck is a heavy one, so I'll have to reengineer it a little bit to get it through the mail.

[KATRIN OLMER]:

Thank you. Can you switch one more slide, please. This is just to show examples of real-life brands in the wild. The left one is berlin.audi, which we see pretty often in the city. Once Audi supports events and provides VIP shuttles, they usually berlin.audi on the side of the cars.

The other one I can't read, actually, but this is a magazine we stumbled upon. But there are some many other examples right away that – yeah, Martin?

MARTIN SUTTON:

Fashionshow.mango.

[KATRIN OLMER]:

Ah, mango. Right. Mango doesn't have too many domain names, but this is a pretty decent of example of what they do with their TLD.

Could you switch one last slide further? Finally, some shameless self-promotion. I'll go very quickly over that and who we are in case you're interested and don't know us. We've been out there pretty long but we're not that visible because we take care of the clients, mainly. We have a broad variety of clients, including a couple of brands – for example, Audi/Lamborghini – and we also have quite a number of generic clients and also geo-TLDs. So we probably pretty much cover all categories which are out there.

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Next slide, please. We publish studies and white papers. In case you're interested in further material, we do, as I mentioned before, also analyze the geographic TLDs on an annual basis and publish that. That's all on our website. That's all transparent and you can them [under] the common license agreement.

I would like to finalize my presentation with that we're not a domain management company nor a brand registrar or whatever. Our focus is really on more of the marketing side and developing marketing strategies, URL strategies, and how to bring your TLD to life. I hope I could give some insights on how this can be done. Thank you, Martin.

MARTIN SUTTON: Thank you, [Katrin]. Just to be clear, is the latest publication available on the website now?

[KATRIN OLMER]: Yes. Since Monday evening.

MARTIN SUTTON: Since Monday. Excellent. Thank you. One thing that was useful to point out, I think, was the [Cern] example there. We had [Kate Carl] from [Cern] join at last year's brands and domains events and she was talking about the strategy that they had built up and were ready to deploy. So it's lovely to see that come to fruition with the results table that we've seen today. And he fact that new and fresh content from the brands

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themselves are being pushed into that dot-brand environment. So good examples as well. I appreciate that.

COLE QUINN:

Yeah, that was awesome. Thank you. I have a question. You mentioned .[cern]. You said, “They have got a lot of lovely websites. You should go check it out.” When you go to a TLD, just looking at the websites under there, how do you start out? Because, in the dot-generic TLD, you would have this string, .com or .net or .de, but in this case, the string is moved up one. So what kind of domains do you start out with if you want to start exploring their namespace? Do you start home with home.[cern]? What’s your typical?

Deitmar, you can get in queue.

[KATRIN OLMER]:

You want to have a lawyer answer? I’m not a lawyer by the way. So, it depends. What we do on a monthly basis as a service for our clients is we analyze exactly this question because this is one of the main topics everyone wants to know. Should it be home.tld? [www.tld](http://www.tld)? Does it have an individual relation, which makes, for instance, sense? We had a pretty lengthy workshop with MAN, for instance – our client in Munich, on what their new home domain should look like. We discussed several ways. So I think I couldn’t say this one recommendation but it really depends on a couple of factors. We can talk about that afterwards.

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COLE QUINN: Thanks. Dietmar?

MARTIN SUTTON: Hang on. Wait. Because you've already disrupted the whole process here, Cole, as usual. So we're just going to hold on one minute and then we're going to leave it all open to Q&A.

COLE QUINN: Ugh.

MARTIN SUTTON: All right? Hold back. Remember those questions.

COLE QUINN: All right.

MARTIN SUTTON: Just as we close up, thank you very much, [Katrin]. I just wanted to round off any information stuff that we wanted to put across today, which is you had talking about brands and domains. That is being held tomorrow. If you're interested to find out any more information, you'll find it on our website, on [brandregistrygroup.org](http://brandregistrygroup.org). There's a whole content page for brands/domains 2019. It includes a number of brands talking about their case studies for putting their TLD into action, plus a number of industry experts. So the discussions will be much more broader and wider than just dot-brands. So do come and see me afterwards if you're interested in attending that. It's free for our

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members. So, if any of our members are here and haven't yet registered, please do so now.

That's it. Q&A, please? Cole, have you got a question?

COLE QUINN:

I'm a born contributor but not a born disruptor. Back to the question, what do you start looking for in terms of second-level domains? Deitmar, you raised your hand, indicating that you had some ideas.

DIETMAR STEFITZ:

It's Deitmar, if this is being recorded. I don't know if it is. One of the places you can actually look, other than thinking about what term you should use, like home, www, and all those types of things, is actually what your competitors or like-minded brands are actually doing at this present moment in time by looking at the CZDS records. I'm sure everyone hopefully knows what that is and where to find. That's one way to get an understanding of what other people in the industry are actually doing with regards to websites. Are they starting with home? Are they starting with www? Are they starting with shop, etc.? So that's a good place to also have a look: the CZDS files.

COLE QUINN:

Thanks. [Katrin]?

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[KATRIN OLMER]: Exactly. This is also the place where, for instance, we digest information on how the domain length gets shorter with the .brand because you don't have to add or minus your brand -- .com, .de, .whatever – to that term but [it] makes it much shorter. The usual number of characters per domain name, if you check .com and other zones, that really shrinks because it's much closer and shorter. I hope I made clear what I was saying.

COLE QUINN: Yeah, absolutely. To your point, I think then shorter the string the easier it is not only to type – we might not be typing years down the road –but it's easier to remember and recall and trust because it's not a confusing jumble. You have fewer numbers. So the idea is that your click-through rate on your call to action would be higher. So that is one of the most valuable benefits.

Martin?

MARTIN SUTTON: We have been through some of the data before, I think, last year or the year before as it was starting to be used. But there wasn't awful rich amount of data at that stage. With the fact that there has been growth on the domain side, it's a useful time to start exploring those, especially where you can start to segment it by sectors, for instance, and see how they approach it. But that's going to get more interesting as that data increases in size and population. So it's useful to acknowledge.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: One other little comment. Maybe everybody knows this, but if you just type [inaudible] colon.(whatever the string is), it's a handy little tool just to see what's new. It's not definitive. Dietmar is right on CZDS. But it's a fun tool.

KRISTINA ROSETTE: Kristina Rosette, unaffiliated former BRG Board member. I think it would be actually a really useful thing for the BRG to undertake by pulling the CZDS files of the dot-brands and pulling together that data for members to see what are the 20 most frequently used second-level names because I just think that would be a really helpful resource. Quite frankly, it would be one less thing for all of the BRG members to have to do themselves.

MARTIN SUTTON: Got it. Thank you. That sort of data I have got but it's just not represented here at this stage. But we can start to do the heat maps more regularly, I think, in that respect.

I'll go to Alexander first.

ALEXANDER: I'm not a member of [inaudible].

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: That's all right.

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MARTIN SUTTON: It's an open community. Everybody is welcome to join us around the table and ask any questions.

ALEXANDER SCHUBERT: Hi. My name is Alexander Schubert and I am with .airport, which is not exactly a brand. What might be interesting for all kinds of future applicants and especially brands is if there would be a [rep] side maybe provided by the brand group that shows examples of usage of brand TLDs, like Audi or BMW.

COLE QUINN: That's excellent. Dietmar, you're raising your hand. There are a few websites out there already that, Dietmar, you can ring the bell for Observatory for.

DIETMAR STEFITZ: Yeah. Observatory.domains. Have a look. It's resurrected and it's got case studies on it at the moment. It will be improved and increased and a little bit more fancy coming up. But is it up and live, so have a look.

COLE QUINN: So it's observatory.domains.

DIETMAR STEFITZ: Observatory.domains. It makes it very easy.

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COLE QUINN: I'd also like to mention makeway.world, which is a fantastic site that's devoted to highlighting the activity around dot-brands.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: There's also one brand TLD, .news, that just has a few on it as well.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Yeah.

MARTIN SUTTON: Any more in the queue?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: There's lots of spots to find sites.

MARTIN SUTTON: Hang on a minute. So I think that's really valid in terms of whether we need to recreate those things on the BRG website or if we're able to, under permission, include the links or perhaps some resource pages that actually brought in some of the content. That would be really helpful as well, I think, rather than all do the same thing in a very different way. So that would be helpful. And I think that there is. There's some really good resources out there now that have been built up over time. They content rich. With the fact that it's growing and growing, it's nice to be able to have that at your fingertips. So thanks for that.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: [inaudible], Vice-Chair of the Geo-TLD Group. What we figured out in the Geo-TLD Group is that the public visibility of domain names in all our geo-top-level domains, like .berlin or .nyc or so are tens of thousands of web pages where a domain name is mentioned. But seeing the domain names in the wild, in the public, is that thing that matters and really leads to awareness among the community. I see many projects on observatory sites and other sites, but mostly websites where the domain name is the only thing you see in the URL bar but not on the site on any advertising the companies do. That will be something to encourage the companies to use the domain name in the public. So, yeah, it's [inaudible]. It's a challenge.

MARTIN SUTTON: It is, but when we do spot them, it's great to be able to publicize them. That's exactly why we try to do this here: to at least present a few examples so that the community that may not be hunting around for this kind of activity is at least easily presented with some information and some resources to go and have a look further. Otherwise, it does very much remain in the background and it's not something that brands themselves typically will go out to promote as being supportive of a dot-brand registry. But the fact that they are actually actively doing stuff on websites and promotions and, for some, e-mail usage that recognition is building. So that's really helpful.

I've got a question, but I also just want to point out that, those attending remotely, if you've got any questions, feel free to put them in the chat.

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I was just interested with the examples that we had for the use cases. For any of you, when you started to use it, were there any universal acceptance issues that arose that are worthwhile to flag?

[KATRIN OLMER]: We haven't experienced any UA issues to date.

MARTIN SUTTON: Marvelous. Kevin?

KEVIN AUDRITT: I do have one. [Cruise Gore] from Fox. I hate to call out GoDaddy if they're in the room. Recently we've changed over our nameservers to dns.fox. It's been an interesting year for Fox. We went through a little bit of a merger and out came a new Fox. So we had the opportunity to really start fresh. So all of our internal systems are on .fox and our nameservers are now on .fox. We recently purchased a domain name in the aftermarket and it landed at GoDaddy. Within that 60 days, we needed to update the GoDaddy nameservers from domaincontrol.com to our own dns.fox nameservers. When I put ns1.dns.fox in GoDaddy, it did pop back out and say, "This is not a valid TLD. Please put in another domain extension. So that's one thing that arose because we didn't have any other kind of domain extension we could use for our nameserver, so we were stuck when we weren't able to use that domain name. So that's one universal acceptance issue we have had in the recent month.

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MARTIN SUTTON: Thanks, [Cruise]. Have you been able to resolve that with GoDaddy?

KEVIN AUDRITT: The ticket has been with support for two months now or a month-and-a-half, so I'm waiting to hear back something soon.

NISHA PARKESH: Sorry. Can I just quickly—[inaudible]

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: [inaudible]

MARTIN SUTTON: Is that in response or? Okay. You first then, please. Please introduce yourself as well.

[IKE]: Thanks. My name is [Ike] from the Nigerian Internet Registration Agency. I have a couple of questions. What's the minimum requirement to be accepted as a brand before you'll be allowed to set up a dot-brand domain? And how do you resolve issues of different people applying for the same brand registration? How do you resolve the issues of copyrights raised, especially across various jurisdictions? How is that resolved?

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Then last question is if she could list the seven KPIs, even if it's not discussed extensively. Just to know the seven KPIs that were used in the ranking.

MARTIN SUTTON: Thank. Good questions. Essentially, what does it take to be a dot-brand? If you ever wanted to apply, what would the conditions be? I think that's relevant to Spec 13, which Susan is a champion of within the Brand Registry Group as our legal advisor. The second part was the—

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: [inaudible]

MARTIN SUTTON: Oh, there we go. Thank you, Susan.

SUSAN PAYNE: Thanks. Hi. I'm Susan Payne. On the first question about the qualifications, obviously we're talking about an application process where it's not currently possible to apply for a new gTLD. We're not in an application phase at the moment. So this is what happened in the past. Assuming the same or largely the same rules apply when a new window opens, then what you needed to demonstrate that you had a registered trademark that predated a particular date which was, I think, off the top of my head, the date when the program was announced to try to minimize gaming so that it was a genuine brand that was in use

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in respective goods and that was non-generic. So it was a non-generic descriptive trademark.

The way use was demonstrated was by placing your trademark in the Trademark Clearinghouse, which was really developed for rights protection mechanisms at the second level. But we determined that that was the best way, the most convenient way, for everyone: if we could use that process. So brand owners would put their trademark in the Trademark Clearinghouse and upload the relevant evidence of use in the same way they would be using that for their rights protection sunrise and claims process at the second level. In third-party registrations, they could then also use that as their evidence of use for the purposes of Spec 13.

Then there are some restrictions on how you use the TLD, particularly on how you allocate names. It's essentially intended to be a closed space. The registrants of the name must be yourself, the company that is the TLD operator, or their close corporate affiliates or their trademark licensees. That is intended to maintain the dot-brand as a closed space that the TLD operator, who is the brand owner, is controlling.

In terms of your second question – how are conflicts in application dealt with – there was a provision and objection process built into the application process for top-level domains: a legal rights objection process. If you were an applicant and you felt that someone had applied for a string that was confusingly similar to your trademark, that was an objection process built in. I have to say that, generally speaking, the particular grounds were set out and determined in such a way that it

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was a very, very bar to get over. So, if a term had another dictionary meaning, then generally speaking those legal rights objections were not successful.

Now, there were very few cases where two brands both coexisting outside the ICANN space applied for the same TLD. The most type of profile that comes to my mind is the Merck one, where there are two different companies that use the brand “merck” is the pharmaceutical sphere. It’s one of those areas where a company was broken up. So, territorially, there are distinctions between the two and they operate in different geographic spaces. But obviously, once you come into the top-level domain space, it’s very global. [Katrin] maybe be able to answer or to talk more about that or may prefer not to because I think she worked with one of those Merck companies, but they are still in dispute over this.

[KATRIN OLMER]:

Yeah, I can’t talk about any Merck stuff. You’re right. To your question, yes, the KPIs are public and they are online already on our website. As mentioned, I have some copies with me.

I would like to ask one question.

COLE QUINN:

Let me just add on to that real quick. For companies that did not apply in the last round and do not hold their own dot-brand TLDs but may be thinking about exploring opportunities to do that in the next round, the BRG does have a category of membership for those types of companies

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so that they can get themselves on the runway and start developing business cases and best practices and start getting themselves ready so that, when the application window is announced, they don't have to start from stop.

You're next question then, [Katrin]?

[KATRIN OLMER]:

Thank you. So that has been a great use case to see about your efforts in migrating .sky. So I would be interested if you could talk about how you engage with the whole team at Sky. How did they understand what it's all about and that they're not expected to use .sky.co.uk or sky.fr and so on? How did you manage to take the whole team with you?

DAWN SHACKLETON:

Thank you for the question. We worked very closely with our IP legal team and our international brand team. We also have to work closely with all of our marketing/promotional teams – in fact, everybody at Sky. One half of my team is about domains, DNS, SSL certificates – that side of things. They're very much a technical aspect. The other half is about online compliance and it's about brand protection in the online space. So we work closely with our security teams.

We have a process at Sky where anybody embarking on a project that is either onboarding an online service or building a website, building a mobile app or even infrastructure that touches the Internet in any shape or form has to go through what we call the "I comply" process. It's a very, very simple process. I've got members of my team that

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facilitate a half-hour meeting with the owner of the project and they tell us what their project is and then we provide them with the guidance and the people that they need to talk to in order to build in compliance into their project. So the whole idea is, by the time that they come to launch, that everything is in order.

There are a myriad of regulations and a myriad of policies that everybody has to follow. Without that process, for a developer, for example, it's very confusing and nobody can expect to know what all the regulations are, what all the policies are.

So that's how we start and that's how we know. We're talking to literally everybody in the organization. As a constant, we're always promoting. Because we pulled our TLD into our domain strategy, we from the get-go are talking about sub-domain they're going to use. We just start at the very beginning. So we promote .sky as one the possible domains that they could have going forward.

COLE QUINN:

Thanks, Dawn. That was a great answer as that was a great question. There's a lot of rich detail to be had and gleaned from the community. That's one of the things that I pointed out before: my favorite part is sharing these kinds of stories.

We are at time now, but I would encourage everybody to hang out and do a little bit of networking, even in the hallway. Hit us up if you have any other questions. I know Karen is standing here offline. I'm sorry that we didn't have enough time.

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Two things before we adjourn that will be eating at me if I don't say them. One is that my phrase for the nameserver was a ... let's see here. Gosh darn it. It was a diversification strategy. I don't know why I couldn't remember that word.

But the second thing, more seriously, is that, when I was explaining about the Board of Directors, I should have taken a moment – I will right now – to recognize publicly Kristina Rosette from Amazon, who served before I even showed up – formerly of Amazon). She was a mentor to me and did just boundless energy work to get things inside the BRG and within the ICANN community. So she's moved on. We have a nice emeritus relationship with her now and look forward to her continued involvement. So I would kick myself if I didn't just grab that opportunity to publicly thank you, Kristina, for all of your hard work and your leadership. So thank you very much.

With that, we'll let you guys go. If you do have any other questions, anyone online, it's not just if you want to join the BRG. You can contact us at [info@brandregistrygroups.org](mailto:info@brandregistrygroups.org). Thank you very much.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**