

New TLDs: The ICANN Story

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Context

- **Lots of people depend on the Internet**
 - 420+ million Internet users worldwide
 - 601+ million by 2002
- **Lots of people depend on the Internet's Domain Name System (DNS)**
 - Highly reliable - billions of name resolutions every day
 - Highly scalable - massive growth of Internet supported
 - Universal resolvability - means every computer on the Internet can reach every other, with amazing reliability
- **Lots of businesses depend on the DNS**
 - User confidence is essential



New Top-Level Domains

- **Why add new TLDs?**
 - Usefulness of the DNS for Internet users
 - Increased registry competition
 - User choice
- **First group chosen in November 2000**
 - Global Open: <.info>, <.biz>
 - Professionals: <.pro>
 - Individuals: <.name>
 - Specialized: <.museum>, <.aero>, <.coop>

1st Round of New TLDs

- **“Proof of concept”**
- **Basic idea:**
 - Choose diverse TLD models
 - Launch with care
 - Observe carefully
 - Learn from experience

Selection process

- **Basic features**
 - Transparent & predictable
 - 44 applications, publicly posted
 - Independent review by technical & financial experts
 - Community input mechanisms
- **Result was diverse group for proof of concept:**
 - For-profit and not-for-profit registries
 - Open and chartered TLDs
 - Established firms and entrepreneurs
 - US & non-US

Challenges for new TLDs

- **Biggest challenge: Launch phase**
 - Intellectual Property & cybersquatting fears
 - Opening day rush:
 - Robust technical infrastructure
 - Fairness to everyone
- **Consumer Alert: Sleazy pre-registration offers**
 - See **Federal Trade Commission Warning:**
<<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/domainlrt.htm>>

The Future

- **If the “proof of concept” phase is successful, there will be future rounds**
 - So far, every reason to think it’ll be successful
 - Goal: Less burdensome, less expensive, more objective selection process
- **Bottom line(s):**
 - It’s an exciting time for the Internet
 - Businesses need to pay attention

For Further Information:

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