

January 6, 2012

Mr. Steve Crocker  
Chairman  
ICANN  
4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330  
Marina del Rey, CA 90292-6601

Dear Chairman Crocker:

We are writing to ask the ICANN board to launch the new top-level domain program as planned, respectful of those who have, in good faith, contributed the thousands of hours of work required for the global planning and review process for the next generation Internet.

Designing this new program was, like past ICANN initiatives, a public, multi-stakeholder process, this time conducted over six years. Anyone and everyone with an interest in TLDs has had numerous opportunities to influence the program. Moreover, the new program is informed by the experience of past new TLD launches.

As potential applicants for new TLDs, we followed and engaged in the ICANN process and have subsequently invested substantially in planning our application for, and development of, our new top-level domains. A delay would be costly to hundreds of companies, organizations and investors who have relied on the proven ICANN process.

Our investments have been made because we see the enormous benefits new TLDs will bring to consumers. Operating a TLD registry for a particular community of interests, brand consumers or residents and visitors to localities will enable innovation that is impossible under the current limited gTLD structure. As a TLD registry operator, we will be able to implement rules, procedures and processes that will enhance user experiences and far exceed what is possible as a simple domain name under existent TLDs. We believe these benefits, while much discussed, examined and confirmed over the past six years, have been largely absent in the debate in the United States over the last few months.

Employing and operating a gTLD will enable companies, associations and non-profit communities to provide a more secure environment for their online audiences. New systems, procedures and processes developed by consensus over the past six years will better protect the end user from fraudulent activity.

We take very seriously our responsibility to employ all the new measures afforded by ICANN for the protection of our users and the stability of online commerce and issue advocates. Indeed, it is in our best interests to do so. We will not risk our reputations by allowing misuse of domain names under our TLDs. A generic or brand TLD will be viewed as a reflection of that company or interest group. Any deceitful or fraudulent activity under our TLDs would seriously undermine our efforts. We cannot tolerate any type of online duplicity and will make every effort to prevent it.

We, furthermore, believe there are strong protections for trademark holders in the new gTLD program. More important, having been involved in the ICANN community and seeing its

commitment to building consensus, we are confident that as the program unfolds, any unexpected issues will be quickly and forcefully addressed by ICANN to bolster trademark protection.

Finally, any delay in the new gTLD program has the potential for harm. ICANN's collaboration with the Governmental Advisory Committee is vital, as GAC provides advice related to countries' laws and policies and international agreements. If the program were delayed, it will be perceived that ICANN is not an organization committed to worldwide cooperation and consensus but one unfairly influenced by American political interests. To serve their citizens, countries may then employ their own root servers that are disconnected to the current ones, resulting in parallel Internets that could irrevocably harm universal accessibility.

Our missions vary considerably. But our interests are aligned: We see the opportunity for a improved, secure online experience for consumers. Therefore, we implore ICANN to stay the course and respect the work and investments of governments worldwide as well as the thousands of companies and organizations that voluntarily participated in the ICANN review and design of the new gTLD program. A delay at this late juncture would severely undermine the cooperative model that many of us have participated in for more than a decade.

Respectfully,

Christopher Ambler, Founder/CTO, Image Online Design/.Web Internet Domain Registry

Clyde Beattie, Principal, The Yorkland Group

Sophia Bekele, Executive Director, DotConnectAfrica

Moses Boone, ecoprenuer, theDOTeco

George Bundy, CEO, BRS Media

Roy Crane, Business Development and Strategy, Instra Corporation

Larry Crump, President, dotLove, Inc.

Effie Gershom, CEO, Automotix LLC

Ann M. Glynn, President/CEO, GJB, Inc. (.jewelers)

Mary Iqbal, Founder, Domain Security Company LLC

Shaul Jolles, CEO, Dot Registry LLC

Matthias Junbauer, Top Level Domain Consulting

Thomas Lenz, CEO, dotKoeln Top-Level Domain GmbH

Alex Machinsky, CEO, Name.Space Inc.

Aras Noori, Project Management, DotKurd

Hirokatsu Ohigashi, Executive Director, GMO Registry, Inc.

Massimo Ralli, President, Roma TLD Srl

Rob Rozicki, New TLD Evangelist, Adrenaline TLDs

Constantine Roussos, Founder, .MUSIC/MyTLD

Kevin Saimon, President, UrbanBrain

Scott Seitz, CEO, dotgay LLC

Thorston Smeets, Vice Chairperson, dotSaarland Associates

John Styll, President/COO, Far Further

Richard Tindal, EVP, Donuts, Inc.

Antony Van Couvering, CEO, Minds and Machines

Tad Yokoyama, President, Interlink Co., Ltd