



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

16 August 2017

**RESPONSE to ICANN ENFORCEMENT OF UNIVERSAL ACCEPTANCE OF NEW  
GENERIC TOP-LEVEL DOMAINS**

**VIA EMAIL**

LifeJourney Church

Dear Spencer James,

Thank you for your submission regarding the number of email validation systems and software that still do not recognize new generic top-level domains, and for your question about whether ICANN plans to enforce compliance of these systems and software. I appreciate the frustration this has caused you. I've researched this issue with various departments inside the ICANN organization and worked with the Domain Name Services and Industry Engagement team to provide you with this response.

Since 2006 the domain name system has expanded dramatically. There are now more than 1,500 top-level domains, many of which are longer than the traditional two- and three-character domains (e.g. .com, .edu, .nz, and .org) or are in non-ASCII based scripts – such as Arabic, Cyrillic and Thai.

While this expansion is ongoing, the addition of these new domains across the domain name system is not an entirely automatic process as not all software and/or systems (e.g. browsers, spam filters, registration databases, user profiles, ISPs, etc.) work seamlessly when new top-level domains are added. Many organizations and businesses have not updated their systems to become Universal Acceptance-ready, meaning these systems are programmed and equipped to recognize and “accept” all new top-level domains. As a result, many applications and Internet-connected devices and systems are unable to accept, validate, store, process or display all domain names. This causes problems for organizations and users like yourself because if the applications do not recognize or appropriately process the new domain names or email addresses that use these extensions, it can result in a poor user experience.

However, the ICANN organization along with industry leaders (including Apple, GoDaddy, Google, Microsoft and Verisign) recognize the importance of this issue and in 2015 joined efforts to assist the broader technical community with remediation. This group, known as the [Universal Acceptance Steering Group](#), has worked to help software developers and website owners understand how to update their systems to be Universal Acceptance-ready so they can accept all valid domain names and email addresses. Additionally, the Universal Acceptance Steering Group has a campaign to raise awareness among software and systems providers to increase their awareness of the Universal Acceptance issue and to encourage implementation of



## The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

remedies to achieving Universal Acceptance-readiness. The Universal Acceptance Steering Group is already seeing progress from its work with and outreach to software and systems providers, however it is going to take some time to get there.

In the meantime, you and others can help. The Universal Acceptance Steering Group provides a web-based form where users can log issues they are experiencing such as email validation systems and software not recognizing new generic top-level domains. As users log their issues, the Universal Acceptance Steering Group is able to identify exactly where remediation is needed, which enables them to provide real world examples to various providers and to solve the logged issues. In some instances, the fix may be relatively simple. Users contributions are valuable to the work of the Universal Acceptance Steering Group and help progress resolution. To assist the Universal Acceptance Steering Group's effort and to request assistance with your specific concern(s), you can log your issue(s) by either visiting [www.uasg.tech](http://www.uasg.tech) and clicking on the "Issue Logging" button, or you can directly navigate to the form here: <https://uasg.tech/global-support-centre/>.

To your question about enforcement, ICANN is not a governmental agency but instead a private sector, non-profit organization with limited technical responsibility for coordinating the assignment of Internet domain names and IP addresses. This coordination is provided using a bottom-up, consensus-driven, multi-stakeholder model comprised of three parts: [the ICANN Community](#), [the ICANN Board](#), and [the ICANN Organization](#). The ICANN community is a volunteer-based group of diverse stakeholders from across the world. They work together to give advice and develop policy within ICANN's mission. In order to create new policies or amend existing ones, the [Policy Development Process](#) described in [ICANN's Bylaws](#) must be utilized and driven by the ICANN community. The ICANN board is a group of representatives from the ICANN community that oversees the ICANN organization. The ICANN organization provides staff and resources to support the ICANN community and board, and implements policies developed by the community.

The ICANN organization accredits registrars and registries to provide certain domain name registration services. ICANN's authority is purely contractual, and limited to [registrar agreements](#), [registry agreements](#), and [ICANN community developed policies](#). The agreements between ICANN and registrars and registries outline certain responsibilities for both ICANN, the registrar and the registry. The ICANN organization is responsible for overseeing and enforcing these contracts.

ICANN organization's authority is therefore limited to registrar agreements, registry agreements, and ICANN community developed policies, so we do not have the authority to enforce Universal Acceptance-readiness of all Internet-enabled applications, devices and systems. While I suspect this is not the exact answer you were hoping for, I do hope you'll take time to assist the Universal Acceptance Steering Group with its efforts.



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

The multi-stakeholder model, established by ICANN's Bylaws, provides a venue for all users of the domain name system to participate in evolution. Participating in ICANN provides the opportunity to share your thoughts and concerns regarding current and future policies and contractual requirements. I encourage you to consider contributing to the work of the ICANN community. If you're interested in learning more about how to participate, you can review the "[About ICANN](#)" section of our website. You may also want to think about reviewing and commenting on proposals through our [Public Comment Forums](#), or attending an [ICANN Meeting](#) in person or remotely. Lastly, you can learn more about the Universal Acceptance Steering Group's work and/or how to participate in their work by visiting [www.uasg.tech](http://www.uasg.tech).

Thank you again for your submission regarding Universal Acceptance. I hope the information and guidance is useful to you.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide you with this information and encourage you to consider participating in the ICANN model.

Kind regards,  
Krista Papac  
Complaints Officer  
ICANN