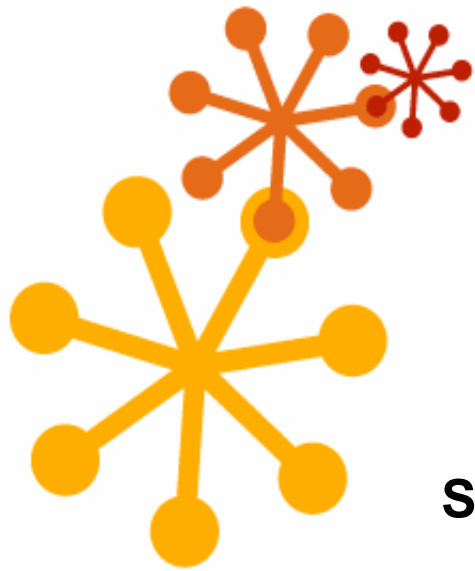




**Special Conditions in
Sponsored TLDs**

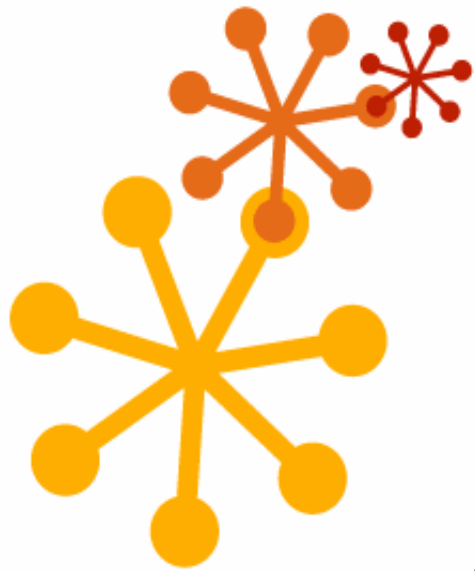
**ICANN IDN Workshop
Kuala Lumpur, 21 July 2004
Cary Karp, MuseDoma**



Supporting IDN in an sTLD involves the same concerns as it does elsewhere, with two additional considerations.

One makes things easier.

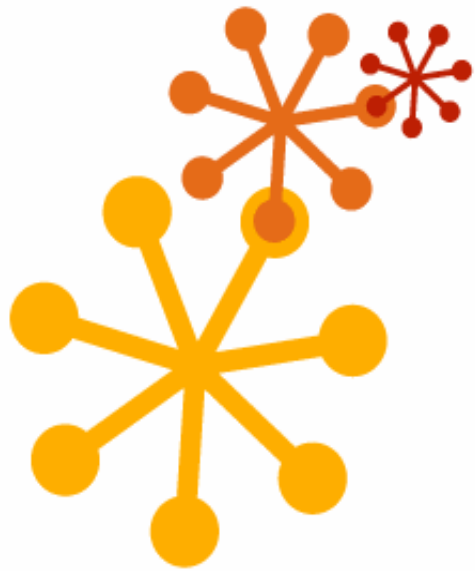
The other doesn't.



The Problem

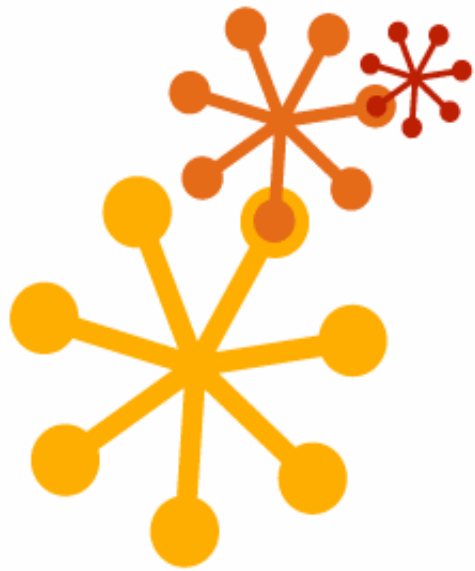
**Any gTLD, whether sponsored or not,
serves a global registrant base.**

**It must respond to the needs of that
community and therefore be prepared
to support a large number of
languages and scripts.**



It is unlikely that every gTLD registry will be able to develop all requisite character tables independently.

Nor does it make sense for each gTLD to undertake this effort on its own.



The sTLD Difference

By definition, names in an sTLD are only available to entities conforming to mandated eligibility criteria.

The sTLD sponsor is obligated to ensure that the policy basis for the domain's operation is upheld.



An sTLD's policies normally include naming conventions, and some form of discussion with a prospective name holder is likely during the registration process.

This "Eligibility and Name Selection" (ENS) dialog provides opportunity for the individual consideration of requested IDNs.



There are obvious reasons for automating the process of acquiring a name in any TLD to the greatest possible extent.

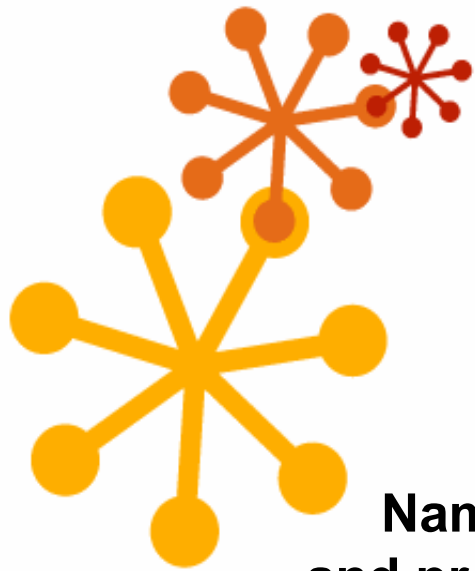
An unrestricted gTLD must deal with high-volume real-time contention for attractive names and cannot shunt IDN requests into a special queue for manual review.



Different conditions and priorities pertain to the controlled name space of an sTLD.

An unregistered string of characters is not available solely by virtue of that fact.

Every name requires individual authorization.



Naming conventions are sets of prescriptive and proscriptive rules, generating what in effect is a dynamic list of permitted and restricted labels.

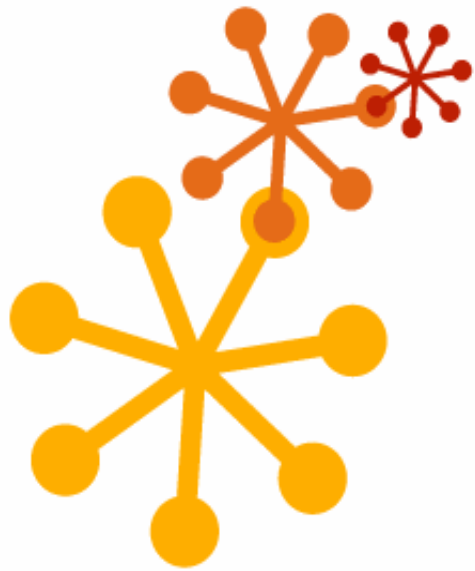
Both the rules and their application are based on continuous dialog between the sTLD sponsor and the domain's target community.



Applicants in a given language community contribute knowledge about the requirements of that language.

The sTLD sponsor fits this into the developing IDN framework and flags potential confusion.

If the initially requested form of a name gives cause for concern, a stable alternative can be determined in the ENS process.



The ENS dialog is not amenable to full automation irrespective of the particular difficulties attaching to IDN.

Eliminating the confusion that may result from the introduction of IDN is not amenable to full automation despite its apparent necessity in many TLD management contexts.



For as long as it takes for us to acquire the understanding of IDN necessary to determine the full extent to which the registration of IDNs can be algorithmically supported, ENS provides useful means for proceeding on a common-sense community-driven basis.

(How does one quantify risk for confusion?)



The holder of an IDN is quite likely to use the declared language when naming subdomains and hosts.

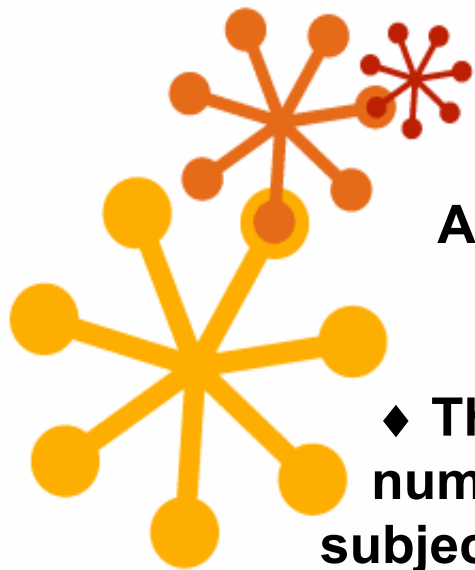
The holder of a name in an sTLD is obligated to adhere to chartered policies when using the name.

If TLD operators are uncertain about IDN implementation detail, what can reasonably be expected of subdomain operators?



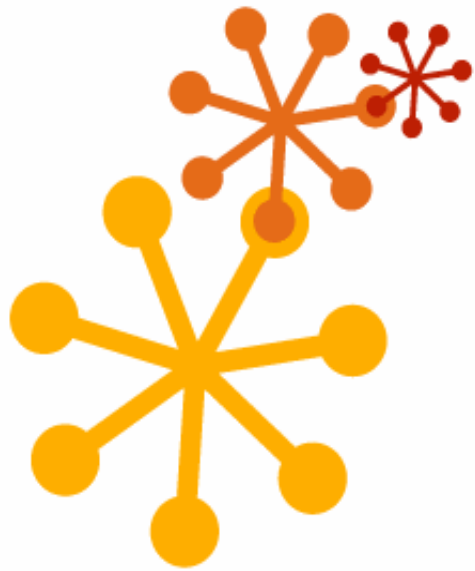
The bounded community served by an sTLD is more likely to share a sense of common purpose than would be the case among registrants in an unrestricted TLD.

All this may be illustrated with an application of IDN on the third level in .museum currently being tested by the International Council of Museums (ICOM), which also has a central role in maintaining the policy basis for the TLD's operation.



A few things should be noted while examining the material on the demo pages:

- ◆ **The range of available characters is large but the number of permitted labels is extremely limited and subject to generally accepted orthographic convention.**
- ◆ **All names containing IDN characters are kept in a single zone and are operated centrally by ICOM on behalf of the designated sub-bodies but without autonomous delegation to them.**
- ◆ **The IDNs are in a segment of the icom.museum name space that is subject to regular revision and amendment. Anything that is discovered to be wrong is set right. Incorrectly represented names are removed from the zone.**



<http://icom.museum/idn/>

**There is an additional list of all
test IDNs in icom.museum at:**

<http://icom.museum/idn/full.html>

For further info on IDN directly under .museum:

<http://about.museum/idn/>