



Registry Services Evaluation Policy (RSEP) Request

October 16, 2023

Registry Operator
DOTSTRATEGY CO.

Request Details

Case Number: 01261269

This Registry Services Evaluation Policy (RSEP) request form should be submitted for review by ICANN org when a registry operator is adding, modifying, or removing a Registry Service for a TLD or group of TLDs.

The RSEP Process webpage provides additional information about the process and lists RSEP requests that have been reviewed and/or approved by ICANN org. If you are proposing a service that was previously approved, we encourage you to respond similarly to the most recently approved request(s) to facilitate ICANN org's review.

Certain known Registry Services are identified in the Naming Services portal (NSp) case type list under "RSEP Fast Track" (example: "RSEP Fast Track – BTAPPA"). If you would like to submit a request for one of these services, please exit this case and select the specific Fast Track case type. Unless the service is identified under RSEP Fast Track, all other RSEP requests should be submitted through this form.

1. PROPOSED SERVICE DESCRIPTION

1.1. Name of proposed service.

NameBlock

1.2. Provide a general description of the proposed service including the impact to external users and how it will be offered.

dotStrategy, Co., would like to offer NameBlock as a service to block second-level domains for the top-level domains offered by the dotStrategy, Co.,.

Blocking provides protection to the end user by preventing their brand and/or variations of their brand from being used for abusive purposes NameBlock will be offered as a service to registrars and other resellers who will be able to offer this service to clients and registrants.

The NameBlock service offers both an exact match and a variant block option. The NameBlock exact match service blocks the exact match of the block label or certain variations of the exact match label (eg. plurals, hyphenated, etc). NameBlock will check the block label against TMCH and other international and national trademark databases. If the block label is a trademark, end users will need to provide NameBlock with evidence proving ownership of such trademark registration in order for NameBlock to implement the block(s). Exact match blocks may be applied without trademark verification if there is no trademark registration found.

The NameBlock variant blocking service uses an algorithm that analyzes the most commonly used terms for DNS Abuse to determine which variants of a certain domain name should be blocked in the Registry's TLD. This variant block service does not block the actual block label domain name, only the variants of that domain name, as generated by the algorithm, will be blocked. Variants may include common misspellings, or commonly used terms that may be added to a label for abusive purposes such as "-login", "-forgotpassword", etc.

NameBlock will block IDNs as per the approved IDN tables for the TLD that will contain letters/variants that are confusingly similar to ASCII letters.

The blocked names must comply with the provisions described in Specification 5, Section 3.3 of the Registry Agreement.

All blocks are implemented in the Shared Registry System (SRS) as per the Registry Agreement and hence are subject to all relevant technical requirements, including escrow.

In addition, the following will apply:

- Multiple blocks on the same label will not be permitted. NameBlock only allows one block per label, so if there is an existing block on any given label it cannot be blocked by someone else.

- Registered domain names will not be blocked. NameBlock will not accept a block request for labels that match a domain name that is already registered, nor will NameBlock monitor registered domains to apply a block in the future.
- NameBlock has a Dispute Resolution policy to handle disputes over blocked labels. NameBlock has engaged FORUM as a dispute resolution provider.
- Blocks may be applied when a domain name is deleted. If/when a name becomes unregistered after the normal life cycle of the deleted name (including all the grace periods), the block will automatically be applied, as long as the block is still active within the NameBlock system. This applies to both the exact match and variant blocks. The domain would not be eligible for drop-catching action to take place because as soon as the domain name is deleted from the zone, it will be moved to the reserved list and the block will be applied. This is how the other protected marks/blocking services work as well.
- Once a block expires, blocked domain names are unblocked and available for registration.
- Existing blocking services will continue to work with NameBlock. If a block is already applied to a domain name, then NameBlock will not apply another block to the domain name, and the block request will not be accepted.

NameBlock service is provided by NameBlock AS, a third party provider that will implement the Blocks between the Registrar/reseller and the Registry Technical Service Provider.

The NameBlock service will be offered to Registrars and other resellers via NameBlock. As the RO we are not interacting directly with the Registrar or the reseller.

1.3. Provide a technical description of the proposed service.

NameBlock is a subscription service that allows end users to block domains within the TLD(s). NameBlock will allow registrars and other resellers to submit orders to block a second-level string on behalf of an end user. When an order is received, exact match and/or variant labels of an end user's label are blocked from registration within the TLD(s). Blocks may be offered from 1 - 10 year terms and have no outward impact on DNS resolution, zone files, or any other critical registry services. Each blocked label may only be blocked by one user. If a domain name is already registered, no block will be applied, and the domain will remain registered. However, if the domain name is not renewed and becomes available, then the block will be applied, and the label will not be made available.

1.4. If this proposed service has already been approved by ICANN org, identify and provide a link to the RSEP request for the same service that was most recently approved.

ShortDot's RSEP Application for NameBlock: <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/rsep-2023032-bond-et-al-request-24jul23-en.pdf>

1.5. Describe the benefits of the proposed service and who would benefit from the proposed service.

Adding NameBlock as a service will be beneficial to end users, in particular intellectual property rights owners, globally as it will enable them to block labels across multiple dotStrategy, Co., extensions, thereby preventing third parties from registering such labels for abusive purposes such as impersonation, phishing and other forms of harmful activities. Further, registrars and resellers will benefit from being able to manage and access such services from a central and independent provider such as NameBlock. Essentially, the core benefit of adding the NameBlock services is that it prevents DNS Abuse.

1.6. Describe the timeline for implementation of the proposed service.

dotStrategy, Co., is ready to launch this service upon ICANN approval.

1.7. If additional information should be considered with the description of the proposed service, attach one or more file(s) below.

1.8. If the proposed service adds or modifies Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) languages or scripts that have already been approved in another RSEP request or are considered pre-approved by ICANN org, provide (a) a reference to the RSEP request, TLD(s), and IDN table(s) that were already approved or (b) a link to the pre-approved Reference Label Generation Rules (LGR). Otherwise, indicate “not applicable.”

N/A

2. SECURITY AND STABILITY

2.1. What effect, if any, will the proposed service have on the life cycle of domain names?

The service will not affect the life cycle of domain names.

2.2. Does the proposed service alter the storage and input of Registry Data?

No, the service does not alter the storage and input of Registry Data.

2.3. Explain how the proposed service will affect the throughput, response time, consistency or coherence of responses to Internet servers or end systems.

The service will not affect the response time, consistency, or coherence of responses to the Internet servers or end systems.

2.4. Have technical concerns been raised about the proposed service? If so, identify the concerns and describe how you intend to address those concerns.

No technical concerns have been raised.

2.5. Describe the quality assurance plan and/or testing of the proposed service prior to deployment.

dotStrategy, Co., the .buzz registry has placed names on a block list for other reasons, including the ICANN Specification 5 list of blocked names. dotStrategy, Co., will utilize a similar process, so the labels being blocked, once verified, will not be in the zone.

2.6. Identify and list any relevant RFCs or White Papers on the proposed service and explain how those papers are relevant.

N/A

3. COMPETITION

3.1. Do you believe the proposed service would have any positive or negative effects on competition? If so, please explain.

The service will fairly compete with other programs already in place in other new gTLD registries that provide name-blocking services to trademark holders, such as GoDaddy (Registry Service LLC), Identity Digital (DPML) , and .Club (Trademark Sentry).

3.2. How would you define the markets in which the proposed service would compete?

There are many other registries offering similar services for their TLDs in the registrar market.

3.3. What companies/entities provide services or products that are similar in substance or effect to the proposed service?

Other Registry Operators such as Identity Digital, GoDaddy, and .Club Domains, LLC, offer similar products.

3.4. In view of your status as a Registry Operator, would the introduction of the proposed service potentially affect the ability of other companies/entities that provide similar products or services to compete?

No

3.5. Do you propose to work with a vendor or contractor to provide the proposed service? If so, what is the name of the vendor/contractor and describe the nature of the services the vendor/contractor would provide.

We will be working with NameBlock AS who will market, sell and manage the blocking of domain names with a technical connection to our technical backend service provider.

3.6. Have you communicated with any of the entities whose products or services might be affected by the introduction of your proposed service? If so, please describe the communications.

We have consulted with a wide variety of Registrars, both those primarily serving corporate clients and those targeting the general public, and have received positive feedback about NameBlock and the service it provides.

3.7. If you have any documents that address the possible effects on competition of the proposed service, attach them below. ICANN will keep the documents confidential.

4. CONTRACTUAL PROVISIONS

4.1. List the relevant contractual provisions impacted by the proposed service. This includes, but is not limited to, Consensus Policies, previously approved amendments or services, Reserved Names, and Rights Protection Mechanisms.

We propose an amendment to Exhibit A of TLD's RA to add the Proposed Services as an approved service.

4.2. What effect, if any, will the proposed service have on the reporting of data to ICANN?

N/A

4.3. What effect, if any, will the proposed service have on Registration Data Directory Service (RDDS)?*

N/A

4.4. What effect, if any, will the proposed service have on the price of a domain name registration?

N/A

4.5. Will the proposed service result in a change to a Material Subcontracting Arrangement (MSA) as defined by the Registry Agreement? If so, identify and describe the change. Please note that a change to an MSA requires consent from ICANN org through the MSA change request process. The RSEP request must be approved prior to submitting the MSA change request.

N/A

5. AUTHORIZATION LANGUAGE

5.1. A Registry Agreement (RA) amendment is required when the proposed service: (i) contradicts existing provisions in the RA or (ii) is not contemplated in the RA and, therefore, needs to be added to Exhibit A of the RA and/or as an appropriate addendum/appendix. If applicable, provide draft language (or a link to previously approved RA amendment language) describing the service to be used in an RA amendment if the proposed service is approved. If an RA amendment is not applicable, respond with “N/A” and provide a complete response to question 5.2.*

For examples or for IDN services, you may refer to the webpage for standard RA template amendments for commonly requested Registry Services.

NameBlock

NameBlock is a service that allows the Registry Operator to block certain labels from registration on behalf of NameBlock users. The blocked labels must not be allocated to the NameBlock user. The NameBlock service must be offered in compliance with all provisions of the Registry Agreement,

including Specification 5, Section 3.3 of the Registry Agreement. Domain names blocked by the NameBlock service must be (a) an exact match of a label or (b) variations of a domain name registered by that NameBlock user for the purpose of preventing abusive behavior. NameBlock does not allow blocks on domain names that are already registered by other third parties. Labels which are blocked as a result of participation in NameBlock do not prevent third parties from following rules established by the Registry Operator to request to unblock and register a domain name associated with a blocked label.

5.2. If the proposed service is permissible under an existing provision in the Registry Agreement, identify the provision and provide rationale. If not applicable, respond with “N/A” and provide a complete response to question 5.1.

N/A

6. CONSULTATION

6.1. ICANN org encourages you to set up a consultation call through your Engagement Manager prior to submitting this RSEP request. This is to help ensure that necessary information is assembled ahead of time.

Identify if and when you had a consultation call with ICANN org. If you did not request a consultation call, provide rationale.

The NameBlock service provider has had several discussions with ICANN Org about the NameBlock service.

6.2. Describe your consultations with the community, experts, and/or others. This can include, but is not limited to, the relevant community for a sponsored or community TLD, registrars or the registrar constituency, end users and/or registrants, or other constituency groups. What were the quantity, nature, and results of the consultations? How will the proposed service impact these groups? Which groups support or oppose this proposed service?

The NameBlock service provider has had discussions with numerous registrars globally, both those serving the trademark community and those serving the general public, by email and by phone. The purpose of those discussions was to determine potential demand as well as the best method for NameBlock to function, and if there were any likely unintended consequences.

7. OTHER

7.1. Would there be any intellectual property impact or considerations raised by the proposed service?

No

7.2. Does the proposed service contain intellectual property exclusive to your gTLD registry?

No

7.3. Provide any other relevant information to include with the request. If none, respond with "N/A."

N/A

7.4. If additional information should be considered, attach one or more file(s) below.

Affected TLDs

Current Registry Operator	Top Level Domain	Registry Agreement Date
DOTSTRATEGY CO.	.buzz	2013-10-02