



# **WHOIS TASK FORCE 1**

Restricting Access of Whois for  
Marketing Purposes

# Background - - Consensus Policies

- February 19, 2003:
  - Use of bulk Whois data for marketing should not be permitted.
  - Recommendations did not address marketing use of Whois information acquired through other required means of access.
    - Port-43 Access
    - Web-based Access

# Previous Workshops

- Montreal Workshop (June 2003)
  - Series of short tutorial-style presentations dealing with current Whois Policy and practice.
  - Panel discussion on balancing public policy issues
- Tunisia Workshop (October 2003)
  - Identifying the priority Whois issues

# Background

- Issue is that the combination of the zone file with a registry or registrar's whois information is the equivalent of “bulk access” – Data Mining.
  - No fee charged for Zone File Access.
  - Gets around previous consensus policy.

# Purpose

- To determine what contractual changes (if any) are required to allow registrars and registries to protect domain name holder data from data mining for the purposes of marketing.
- The focus is on the technological means that may be applied to achieve these objectives and whether any contractual changes are needed to accommodate them.

# Milestones

- “Needs and Justifications” for whois information for “non-marketing purposes.”
- Review general approaches to prevent automated data mining.
- Determine whether any changes are required in the contracts to implement an approach to prevent automated data mining.

# Out of Scope / Assumptions

- Goal is NOT to provide a technical solution
  - That is being done by standards bodies (IETF)
- Task Force Assumptions
  - Assumes that there will be a Whois
  - Does not address which data fields should or should not be required.
  - Does not address accuracy of data or mechanisms for verification
- These are the jobs of other Task Forces

# “Needs and Justifications” from past workshops

- Commercial and Business Users
  - Network problems
  - Spam
  - DDOS attacks and viruses
  - Fraud problems
  - Cooperation with law enforcement
- IP Owners
  - Cybersquatters
  - Websites offering counterfeit or pirated goods



# Needs and Justifications (continued)

## ● Law Enforcement

- To identify where a perpetrator is located.
- To Serve Process
- To get investigative leads
- Find e-mail addresses

# Summary

- Lots of information submitted on uses for Whois information.
- Very Little information on which type of Access is used by such organizations:
  - Port-43
  - Or Web-based Access

# Questionnaire

- Sent to 30-40 identified “non-marketing” users of Whois information.
- Placed on GNSO Website
- Focuses on use of Whois information and mechanisms to access the Whois information.

# Summary of Questions

- How do you obtain Whois information?
- Through whom do you get this information?
- How often do you access the Whois information?
- What are the general purposes for your access?
- If Port-43 access to Whois were unavailable, what other sources would you use for the data?

# Second Questionnaire

- To be distributed to Registries and Registrars over the next week or so.
- Questions
  - How are Whois servers are affected by use of automated processes that obtain large amounts of Whois data.
  - Quantify number of Port 43 queries

# Second Questionnaire

- Sample type of Questions (continued)
  - Have you implemented measures to block automated processes?
  - What are the costs associated with those?
  - If port-43 were abolished, only leaving Web-based access, what would be the impact

# Results to Date

- Only 7 non-spam responses received to date.
- We need to get more information on how entities that use Whois information access such information.

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# Next Steps

- Constituency Statements (March 19)
- Preliminary Report (April 9)
- Close of Comment Period (April 29)
- Final Report (late May) submitted to the GNSO Council