Universal Acceptance

UA EAI Working Group Meeting
25 July 2023

Attendees

Mark Svancarek

Nitin Walia

Anna Bagdasaryan

Harsha Wijayawardhana

Imran Hossen

Jim DeLaHunt

Kunle Olorundare

Sanoussi Baahe Dadde

Solomon Kutiame

Arnt Gulbrandsen

Yin May Oo

Meeting Agenda:

1. Welcome and roll call

2. Draft an SOW for FY24 Action Item E2.1 (Make it easier to experiment with a self-hosted working EAI systems)

3. Clean up the EAI Self Certification Guide

4. AOB

Meeting recording: Link; password <cdH6N&pG*0>

Meeting Notes

Which sort of software can be identified in SOW
Mark requested Arnt to explain the policy requirements or restrictions on mentioning commercial products in the SOW. Arnt's email before the meeting is in Appendix-A.

Arnt said whether it is Docker or Kubernetes, the type of container would not make a difference, the limitations or restrictions would be the same. For the restrictions regarding what sort of softwares are allowed, ICANN could pay for packaging the solutions for softwares or tools which are open-sourced. However, putting the extended products of non-open-source or commercial items would be nonneutral. It is not about the technology of the container, but more of what is in

the container. We could get into trouble by packaging up some tool which is not open-source. On the sidenote, Courier is fine. Adding commercial products in the container may not be a practically effective marketing, however, it might be seems as doing marketing of some sort in principle. Mark agreed.

Arnt referred to his email sent before the meeting. If the document says here is the VM, and then, here is also links to a docker image that Xgenplus built with its employee hours. That would be fine as Arnt understood it. We can say that Xgenplus exists, but we cannot host the packages on ICANN provided docker.

Mark said if we paid a vendor to build a container that contains a proprietary software, then we have paid to create a benefit to one vendor over another. Mark asked if we could request vendors to create scripts that show how to package up solutions which are already available in the wild, would that be acceptable? If Coremail or Xgen already had container images, and the vendor could create a script to point to things that exist out there, even so, it might still cause some problems. According to Arnt, testing the provided solution is fine, however, the vendor should not be paid to create new solutions. Commercial product support should be from the product owners, not ICANN's vendors. Mark said every solution provider creates their own offering that could be picked up for the SOW.

Jim said the primary goal is to make it easier for the people to experiment with EAI email services with their own choice of domain names and their own choice of addresses in non-Latin scripts. If we can encourage vendors to make those experiments easier, using the vendor's products. Some vendors may not distribute their own products as free software, also not able to rise to the challenge of making it experimentable, then they are not as competitive.

Jim suggested what we can say would be - The vendor is to create preconfigured VM or scripts with instructions on how to set up the pieces that the product maker downloads to make a working system. And then, also make instructions on how to support their own script that will follow the same template. And then we invite product makers to conform to those instructions and make their own script

systems. Arnt said "yes, if the testing were done by product makers or product owners, but not by the company that was paid by ICANN".
Arnt said the product owner must do experiments of their own product, and not be paid by ICANN for the same purpose.

Nitin added that he was concerned about the issue raised by Arnt's email. Nitin shared about Sri Lanka's Local Initiative, Harsha, who did experiments on hosting, testing, managing open-source products to make EAI server ready. And also, for giving demonstrations and training presentations with UASG's funding. Nitin would like to know if it conflicts with anything. What Nitin understood was to allow people to experience EAI. What message he recognized from Arnt, and earlier from Sarmad, was "ICANN cannot fund email services".

For this SOW, we will just become facilitators by collecting the links of the hosted email platforms which are EAI ready and offer a free trial on custom domains. Nitin said the role of ICANN or UASG is limited, in this case.

Harsha said the issue that he is trying to work on is for email servers in Sri Lanka which do not support utf-8. After Harsha and team build the platform, there is demand for email addresses in Sinhala and Tamil scripts for users to experience. Harsha said this is the way to let people know what universal acceptance is, and how it can be done.

Nitin shared what he thinks was that funding is not allowed on making email services. Mark suggested adapting on current policies that we know of and continue working on the SOW.

Jim shared that, by his understanding of the policy, it is to avoid packaging up commercial offerings which are not free or making instructions of how to use commercial tools or software by the paid vendor. There is no prevention of making VMs of free software. We could still do what we planned. Arnt confirmed that it is fine if the vendor's work only involved free licensed software. Harsha confirmed as well, and their purpose was for teaching and training.

Nitin pointed out that not all free software are free, and at some step, the hosting cost or software license would be billed. Arnt said ICANN cannot pay for commercial software experiments done by UASG's vendor.

Mark quoted Stallman conversion on definition of free software. In simple words, is this software free like free speech or like free beer. Imagine if Nitin did much work on a solution and handed it out for free without charging, although it could be free to the end user, it could be a conflict of interest for promoting that solution. This would remain as a policy question to answer. Something that is open-source and available under specific license is going to be the one.

Jim said in terms of free software, it means 'free libra' as anyone is allowed to redistribute it without getting permission from the license holder. Jim clarified that in this SOW, he did not see anyone paying and hosting an email service and letting people use it for free. This SOW expects explanations and instructions on how to host their own email services, or how to take advantage of a service that somebody else hosted.

Mark would like to assign ICANN staff to talk to some policy people on this. Jim would also like to check if the idea of a registry of self-certified email systems, a list on the UASG system is allowable. That list would consist of what would be a matter of promoting commercial vendors for their commercial products. The reason we would like to promote them is because they provide EAI support as measured with their certification. Mark said it is a good thing to do from the universal acceptance point of view. For the perspective of this community, there may be restrictions within the bylaws or published policies. Jim added that the scope of this policy issue is more than this SOW, it might affect our work.

Mark explained to those who joined later, the policy implemented were newly adapted and this was being run off the books two years ago.

Discussion of SOW for FY24 Action Item E2.1

Mark went through the SOW document, reading and responding to the comments accordingly. The commenters were Seda, Arnt, Nitin and Jim.

Kunle discussed the language in 'Deliverables' section, point 1, description of "known tools", which is later changed to "tools and environments provided by UASG", according to Jim's input. Mark and Jim discussed the choice of work and concluded without saying "known tools" or "recognized tools", it should be just about the tools which were documented by UASG. Mark said the purpose is to add the reality that UASG knows these tools are usable, we cannot assume anything is certified yet because we are not there yet.
This whole paragraph is later moved to the 'Structure of Bid' section.

Kunle put up his hand, but this voice was not delivered.
Nitin put his hand up and discussed the 'Description of Work' section. Nitin pointed out that if it suggested to work only on open-source solutions, how about doing the self-certification for other email services. Mark said there would be solutions that fall within the acceptable of the policy.
Arnt said he would manage to add a comment and work with the rest of staff.

Mark suggested WG looking at the previous [SOW documents in the community page](). It could be different from what was initially designed from this WG, however, we can put it forward with policy people to look at it. Arnt said he could write to teams, however, some delay would be expected if the staff is on holiday.

Mark concluded the meeting. Nitin will not be attending the next week's meeting as he must travel.

Next meeting: Tuesday, [TBD] August 2023 and 14:30 UTC

Action items:

No.	Action Item	Owner
1	Confirm with policy team on what services to appear in the SOW, and how to do it	ICANN Staff
2	Prepare the SOW for potential vendor	Mark & WG
3	Prepare to accept submission of proposals and evaluate	WG
4	Add comments in the SOW document	Arnt
5	Confirm the schedule next of the next meeting (1 August or 8 August)	Yin May

Appendix-A

[Arnt's email to EAI working group]
Subject: [UA-EAI] SOW E.2.1

Hi,

I see the E.2.1 SOW draft contains a suggestion to build ready-to-use server images, or docker images, that includes proprietary commercial software. I'm afraid ICANN won't be able to do that. Nothing against any of the software involved, but ICANN can't pay for packaging or distributing it.

The stuff ICANN pays for packaging/distributing has to be open-source. I suppose it might be possible to add wording to the report, "xgenplus/coremail/… has also made available a similar docker image for evaluation, which you can download at https://…", but ICANN can't pay the work to build that docker image or host the download site.
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Sender: Arnt Gulbrandsen