

UA EAI Working Group Meeting

31 October 2023

Attendees

Mark Svancarek

Abdalmonem Galila

Abraham Selby

Emmanuel Oruk

Jim DeLaHunt

Kalpesh Chaudhari

Krislin GoulBourne Harry

Sasa Covacevic

Seda Akbulut

Yin May Oo

Meeting Agenda:

1. Welcome and roll call
2. Developing a [5-year action plan](#) for EAI WG to achieve the [UASG's 5-year strategic plan](#)
3. Draft an [SOW for FY24 Action Item E2.1](#) (Make it easier to experiment with a self-hosted working EAI systems)
 - a. [EAI Self-Certification Score Generator](#) to go along with the SOW (completed spreadsheet)
4. How could the WG help for the upcoming UA-Day
5. AOB

Meeting recording: [Link](#); password E2^QS8ahSV

Meeting Notes

Mark led the meeting by announcing the new main item of the meeting, the agenda is about Developing a 5-year action plan for EAI WG to achieve the [UASG's 5-year strategic plan](#). The document is open to receive comments.

Agenda#2: Developing 5-year action plan for EAI WG to achieve the UASG's 5-year strategic plan

Seda joined to present the current draft of UASG's 5-year plan, and discussed with WG. The next day, there would be the UA-Coordination WG meeting to work on this draft further. Before that, EAI WG can take a look at the draft and add inputs.

From the UASG's 5-year plan, EAI WG could develop a separate 5-year plan or adapt it to the yearly plans of each year.

Section: "Problem Statements"

Mark said point A is stating the current situation, point B states that the lack of UA is hampering the Internet accessibility and innovation for many people. Lastly, point C states economic impact, which means businesses, governments and organizations which use non-latin scripts are being affected by this.

Mark commented that point A states the lack and the other two are the problems because of the lack, so they are not all at the same level. Mark said the rewrite could have started the introduction with A before B and C. Seda agreed.

Abdalmonem said for the new members who just joined the UASG or attended one of the WG meetings, it would not be interesting as it did not seem to reflect the current situation. Point A should state the information of digital transformation projects by governments on reaching out to a lot of citizens or locals with an idea of universal acceptance should be at the floor, before others.

Abdalmonem said that the digital transformation projects are already going too fast, and one of the goals for additional transformation bridges for governments and all over the world is reachability. Reachability and accessibility to the internet is very important. Abdalmonem suggested covering one of the issues related to UA. Abdalmonem shared his governmental related IT work experience, some people may care more for project opportunities and would be motivated to pay attention to UA.

Mark said governments are making investment in their people, that investment is digital transformation, and they would not be able to fully process it unless universal acceptance is achieved. That is how it would be linked to Point B and C.

Mark said the fact that these governments are making the investment right now should probably be part of this problem statement somewhere. We could say that is exclusion and frustration. Abdalmonem point is to weigh more on the project opportunities while stating the problem and challenges, Mark noted.

Seda said point A covers all non-UA issues whether government or business or other organizations, and point C addresses government as well. The audience of the document is the UASG community, and governments may not be looking at this. There were some government related action items as well, however, the goal is to be focused on UASG. In the later part of the document, there are government related items. Abdalmonem mentioned that this was for multi-stakeholder interest. Mark said UA still needs to be with increased urgency as the cause and risk is increasing.

Section “Achievement to Date”

Mark said there is nothing notable to comment on the section. Abdalmonem added the bullet C is still dead. This section contains the graph of “EAI Acceptance Rate by 1000 Websites Globally” and Abdalmonem suggested adding the link for the source of this graph. Mark said the trend has been very slow in progress, and it hopefully would change. Abdalmonem suggested adding the updates of 2023 in the graph. Mark said the coordination WG would decide which of our suggestions to process.

Mark made sure the feedback for the graph was added to the document.

“Feedback - figure 1 is missing 1H 2023 and maybe the link to the document is sufficient”

Seda explained referring to the [UASG 039 EAI Acceptance Rates of the top 2000 global websites in 2022](#), saying that there are two statistics to rely on, one is the EAI acceptance rate, and the other is EAI test survey to look into gTLD zone data by which how many MISC servers respond to EAI email addresses. There is another chart for EAI support level which was captured by ICANN IT Support Team conducting analysis. The 5-year plan was set up based on all this information.

Section “Way Forward”

Abdalmonem pointed out two points:

The graph for EAI support, if the reader is for ccTLD, would not be able to related to the gTLD zone situations.

The second thing is in the “Mission of the UASG” section, point 2, “EAI acceptance by email servers”.

Abdalmonem suggested it to be “EAI readiness ...” and the sub-bullets to be all three levels, Platinum, Gold and Silver, also suggested the percentages to be 10%, 45%, 60% accordingly. Previously, it mentioned only two levels - Gold and Silver, and expectations were 10% and 90%, which was viewed as unrealistic by both Mark and Abdalmonem. Mark reminded that these three levels are no longer relevant to the Level1 Level2 Level3 which were used much earlier. Mark said there is hope that Dovecot, Xgen and Coremail would be upgraded to Platinum level, but these may not be money. Also, there is no control over how many new email servers or websites would appear and to calculate the Silver level out of them would be a challenge. Mark said it would be good to have actual data to support the assumptions. If we know the existing trend until now, it would be easier to predict or set it as a measurable goal. Abdalmonem said as some Silver would become Gold, some Gold would also become Platinum, therefore, to measure the number for Gold level could be tricky. Mark said it would somehow work out, from the supply side, the softwares would be doing well and becoming more and more UA ready.

Seda shared the link to UASG 30A document, [EAI Software Test Result](#), [EAI Acceptance Rate Survey](#).

Mark asked Abdalmonem on foreseeing the situation in Egypt in the next 5 years. Abdalmonem said the government focuses on the universities regarding the UA developments. From that, the business stakeholders would be persuaded to adapt UA. If the education and the business sectors do not work together, this might stall for many more years. Mark asked if it would be possible in Egypt to adopt UA as a regulation. Abdalmonem answered that it could happen like the baseline is Silver or Gold level mandatory. Mark said this kind of information would be required to derive the numbers, and Nitin might be able to share information of Rajasthan. Abdalmonem said, population-wise, India has more than Egypt, so it would be hard to compare when it comes to EAI email users. The level of digital literacy and percentage of internet accessibility or user count of email servers would help the idea.

Jim referred to the email he sent to UA-Discuss mailing list, [[Jim’s comment on ua-discuss](#)], his immediate response to this 5-year plan was that the content and

the framing was wrong. Based on what Abdalmonem said, the expectation should be on a certain portion of the population of email user seats. We can focus on email servers but more importantly, the count of email seats is the concern. Considering inputs from Jim and Abdalmonem, Mark concluded that focusing only on servers and not the seats, then we may not actually measure the benefits.

Jim explained the term in chat:

“Seats”: a term which literally means “chair”, as in, “the chair in which a computer user sits”. In this discussion, “seats” is a metaphor for “people”, that is, “people who use the service”.

“Seats” could be defined in different ways for different purposes. It could be, “email addresses in use”, or “people” (who might have multiple email addresses each).

Mark also helped explain that the number of ‘seats’ or active email accounts is important. If 50 operating servers had only 10 seats on each one, it would not be as effective as other servers with many more seats. Without considering the seats, it would not be able to measure the real tangible accomplishments.

Mark went back to measuring the EAI readiness levels of Platinum, Gold and Silver, basically, the plans rely on increasing the number of providers, in terms of adoption by users, we do not have the power to choose winners. Jim said the UA concept may not be appealing to people out there in the world and our plan needs to be based on that understanding. Mark said we have ground understanding of the room about what the challenges are in this section.

Jim suggested UASG reflecting on how it worked previously to plan better for the future. Mark said WG has not gotten to that point yet. Abdalmonem said this document did not include having all email providers on the table in order to discuss developing some patch for all email servers to be EAI ready. Any email server to become UA ready would only need a certain patch would be a good idea. It would be a kind of update for email server software. Abdalmonem suggested going through the list of softwares to see if one patch would help them. Mark said this is interesting and could be a separate topic. To Mark’s experience, there is no single patch for leveling up from Silver to Gold yet.

Seda explained that this 5-year plan is for UASG, and ICANN also has a 5-year plan. The plans would be aligned and the UA-EAI WG will also have its own.

Jim said it would be tempting to think that universal acceptance and EAI readiness as part of the engineering problem, however, it is more of a market and business issue. The engineers could make it happen if they were told to, however, the way to persuade the people who decide where to invest the engineering resources with UA demand or EAI demand is a question. We need more business people or government people who may have influence over procurement policies. Seda added that in the part “Global Collaboration and Partnership” can have another point for “Businesses”.

Jim said UASG should understand more about the incentives and motivations of businesses, understand how to change those incentives, and also to steer them towards UA goals. What we need are the people who understand those instead of the people from the businesses themselves.

Mark said WG should continue the discussion next week since the time is up.

Next meeting: Tuesday, 08 November 2023, **14:00** UTC

Action items:

No.	Action Item	Owner
1	Make sure meeting time is 14:00 in every invite	Yin May
2	Review the document and discuss more on UASG 5-year plan	WG