

Post-Expiration Domain Name Recovery PDP WG

Registrar Survey

Final Results

Updated 4 January 2010

Background

- Objective of registrar survey to review current registrar practices regarding domain name expiration, renewal, and post-expiration recovery
- Survey covers top 10 registrars by total domains which represent approx. 69% of domains registered
- Information gathered by ICANN Staff from internet research and registrar feedback

Final Results

- **Final Results**– complete findings for ~~top 4~~ **9*** registrars, still awaiting feedback **from 1 registrar**
- Results presented cover those questions where information is confirmed (by registrar) or was found as result of on-line research
- ~~Final results will be presented once feedback has been received from all registrars~~

* (note, results for GoDaddy.com and Wild West Domains have been combined into one response as responses were identical)

Question 1 – What is the registrar's practice in case of registrant silence?

- All registrars renew the registration on behalf of the registered name holder
- As a courtesy, RAE should be able to reclaim its name with most registrars
- With one registrar, if auto-renewal is **explicitly** switched off, registration moves directly into RGP
- Many point out that recovery, however, is not an obligation but at the sole discretion of the registrar, with one registrar stating that after expiration 'the registrant has no rights on such registration, and ownership [...] now passes on to the registrar'

1a. Does registrar allow auto-renew?

- Yes, for majority of registrars
- Questions also interpreted as asking whether registrar provides auto-renewal option for registrant – in some cases this is the default setting and registrant need to take affirmative action to switch off auto-renewal; in some cases this is optional; one registrar does not provide the option for auto-renewal but many of its resellers do provide this feature

1b. When / how are notices sent?

- Notices are generally sent by email, often to the different contacts on file
- Some provide detailed calendar of when notices are sent, others don't
- Two registrars note that 'as a convenience to the registrant, and not as a binding commitment' the registrar may notify the RAE, but in practice these registrars do appear to send notices to their customers

1c. Notices after expiration

- ~~4-6~~ Most registrars confirm that notices are also sent following expiration.
- One registrar does not send notices following expiration, but the user account does contain alert
- ~~No info yet for other registrars~~

1d. Are substantial changes made to Whois data?

- 6 registrars note that Whois records ‘may’ undergo changes such as replacing the RAE contact information with that of the registrar, although one registrar confirms it actually does not make any substantial changes
- ~~One~~ **Four** registrar **do** not make substantial changes to Whois data apart from changing the nameservers

1e. Cost of recovery prior to RGP

- 4→6 registrars indicate that RAE may recover domain name at least for a certain period (in some cases as short as 3 days) for the normal renewal fee
- In other cases an additional fee may apply, which in certain cases is the same as the fee charged during RGP
- Not applicable to the situation where registration immediately moves into RGP (no ~~auto-renew~~ grace period offered)

1f. When is the DNS changed and where does it point?

- ~~(Almost)~~ All registrars reserve the right to redirect IP address to registrar designated page which may include notification or renewal info, in addition to PPC advertisements or other promotional info
- In one case, RAE can opt out of display of registrar parked page before expiration
- Other registrar states in registration agreement that it may 'intercept any communication requests' and 'monetize such requests' at its sole discretion
- **N/A for situation where there is no renew-grace period**

1g. Does page say it has expired?

- In 5 6 8 instances the new page will display information that the registration has expired, info on how to renew or advertise the sale / auction
- In one case it does not
- N/A for the registrar that does not operate a ~~auto-renew~~ grace period



1h. What happens to email following expiration?

- In most cases, the email will bounce and is discarded, unless the DNS is hosted with the registrar and only the A record is changed.
- Only one registrar confirms that the email is delivered.
- N/A for the registrar that does not operate a renew grace period

1i. If RAE email address uses the domain name, is this factored in?

- No, for the six registrars that send post-expiration notices, this is not factored in.

1j. Are reminders sent from the same address as other communication?

- Some note that in cases where a reseller is involved, this might differ as it is up to the reseller to configure
- Four registrars confirm that all communications come from the same address
- One registrar notes that it uses different 'from' addresses to identify the type of communication intended for the RAE

1k. At what points is it made available to others?

- In most cases, the registrar can in theory renew or transfer the registration to the registrar immediately upon expiration
- Several specify that this in practice only happens at the end of the auto-renew grace period
- In certain cases, the registration is put up for auction after a certain amount of time (e.g 25 days, 30 days after expiration)

11. If a reseller was involved: How does RAE determine it is a reseller

- The reseller information shows up in the Whois database and serve as the first point of contact of the RAE
- The RAE can tell by the absence of the 'ICANN Accredited' logo on the web site
- One registrar notes that it provides a reseller information retrieval tool



11. If a reseller was involved: How does RAE identify the affiliated registrar

- Most note that this information is available through a Whois lookup



11. If a reseller was involved: may RAE work with registrar to recover name?

- Most note that the reseller should be the first point of contact for the RAE, however in case of escalation (e.g. unresponsiveness of the reseller) the registrar will assist the RAE

1m. What options are available for contacting the reseller / registrar?

- Most note that all pre-expiration support options (e.g. web, email, telephone) also remain available after expiration

1n. When does name enter RGP?

- In most cases, only if the registration has not been renewed by the RAE or transferred to a third party
- One registrar allows for the RAE to notify the registrar that he/she does not want the registrar to proceed with a transfer to third party => registration is deleted
- In one case, if domain has been canceled or auto-renewal is explicitly turned off, the registration will immediately enter RGP

1o. Duration of ~~auto~~-Renewal **Grace** period

- ~~Auto~~-Renewal **Grace** period provided by the registrar **to the registrant**
- Ranges from zero (one registrar) to 30, 35, 40, 42 days

2. What if explicit instructions are given not to renew registration?

- Most registrars follow the same procedure as for no notice given
- Only in one instance, if the domain has been canceled from the registrar system, it will not be renewed and go straight to RGP

2a. How is request for deletion prior to expiration dealt with?

- ~~4~~ **5 Most** registrars indicate that registration is immediately deleted upon request **or treated differently from an expired registration**
- 1 Registrar will treat it as an expired registration
- ~~Further details required from other registrars~~

3. Where can information concerning expiration / deletion be found

- In most cases information is contained in the registration agreement
- Some provide additional information in FAQs, Help Centre or Deletion / Renewal policies
- Not always obvious where to find information
- Language in registration agreements is often too legal to be clear and often not specific (e.g. may/may not, in its sole discretion, no guarantee, can change without notice)
- In certain cases, language in registration agreements does not seem to match actual practice

4. If registrar makes changes to Whois, does this depend on registry charging or not?

- All respondents ~~so far~~ indicate that this does not have an impact

5. Is there a right for RAE to remove domain name from auction / sale?

- In **five** cases, the RAE can remove the domain name from the auction / sale by renewing the registration
- One registrar confirms that if the RAE has notified the registrar that he/she does not want to proceed with transfer to third party, the domain name will be deleted
- In **two** cases, the RAE cannot remove or recover the domain name from auction / sale.



6. How many RAE's have used right to recover name from sale / auction

- Data not available ~~for registrars that have responded to date~~

7. Is the transfer of a domain during the Renew Grace Period allowed?

- In certain cases this is possible, although in some instances only after the domain name has been renewed (following the normal transfer procedure)

Questions?