

WHOIS IN BRIEF

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WHAT IS IT?

- Data captured on registration of a domain name.

The **WHOIS DATASET**:

- **Data** about the domain name licensee (registrant);

or

- The **service** that provides access to the data;

or

- The **access protocol** that supports the communications exchange to the data (RFC 954, later 3912)

WHOIS DATASET

- The Registered Name;
- The Registered Name Holder
- The names of the primary nameserver and secondary nameserver(s) for the Registered Name;
- The identity of Registrar
- The original creation date of the registration;
- The expiration date of the registration;
- The name and postal address of the Registered Name Holder;
- The name, postal address, e-mail address, voice telephone number, and (where available) fax number of the technical contact for the Registered Name; and
- The name, postal address, e-mail address, voice telephone number, and (where available) fax number of the administrative contact for the Registered Name.

WHAT IS IT?

- **As service and protocol:**
 - enables anyone to look up information about a domain name or IP address.
 - The information provided includes the domain name registrant's name, address, phone number, email address, and other details.
- **Purposeful**
 - provides transparency and accountability in the registration of domain names and other resources

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Trust and compliance
 - Role in consumer confidence for business online
- Mulling name availability
- Intellectual property protection
- Safety and security
- Network stability and resilience

WHEREABOUTS OF REQUIREMENTS

- Imposed on Registrars:
 - In their contract with ICANN; Registrar Accreditation Agreement (**RAA 2013**)
- Imposed on Registries
 - Under individual contracts with ICAN
- ccTLDs also impose WHOIS requirements but they are national in scope and with no ICANN oversight

THE PROBLEMS

- Lack of a coherent policy
 - The “Thin” and the “Thick” WHOIS issue
- Data Accuracy
- Access and response
 - One-by-one query/lookup tool
 - Bulk access via Port 43
 - Decentralized
- Violations of Privacy Protection laws; **GDPR**

THE RESPONSES

- Consensus Policies
 - **RAA 2013 Specifications**; Accuracy; **Privacy/Proxy**
 - Thick WHOIS; last big thin WHOIS registries to migrate to thick format
- WHOIS Reviews
 - Two to date WHOISR1 & WHOISR2
 - WHOISR2 addressed the implementation status of recommendations from WHOISR1
- Expert Working Group (EWG)
- EPDP

WHATS NEXT

- The policy implementation kerfuffles continue
- The policy making continues
- The privacy issues continue
- The access issues are being addressed by SSAD

THANK YOU