

New gTLDs & consumers

Jeremy Malcolm

Consumers International

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About Consumers International

- Global federation of consumer organisations
- 240 member organisations in 115 countries
- Independent and not-for-profit
- Global research and campaigns through and for our members
- One of our four priority issue areas is *Consumers in the Digital Age* which includes Internet governance (mostly outside ICANN)

End-user consumers

- Percentage of individual domains registered very low (.me.uk 1%, .id.au and .name 0.1%)
- Most impacts on consumers from DNS issues are domains they *use*, not domains they *own*
- A lot of the rhetoric on both sides about new domains invokes the interests of consumers
- But *none of the concerns expressed actually emanate from consumer groups!*
- So what *actually* concerns consumers?

The 8 consumer rights

Consumer policy is based on 8 consumer rights

- Right to safety
- Right to basic needs
- Right to be informed
- Right to be heard
- Right to choose
- Consumer education
- Right to redress
- Healthy environment

Right to safety issues

Possible right to safety issue may include:

- Increased attack vector for phishing attacks
.corp for .com, .next for .net, .ong for .org
- Potential software incompatibilities
Could raise safety issues eg. for contacting
Internet helplines hosted under new gTLDs
- Unclear expectations of pre-screening of
registrants in regulated industries
.dentist, .doctor, .pharmacy

Otherwise, mostly positive effects

Effects on the right to choose are mostly positive:

- More choice for email, web hosting domains
- Consumers as creators will have more choice

Likewise the right to be heard:

- .gripe, .sucks, .wtf
- These domains should be excluded from availability for defensive registrations

Conclusions

- The stereotype about end-user consumers and gTLDs is that they don't know and don't care
- It's mostly true
 - Minor negative impacts on right to safety
 - Minor positive impacts on the right to choose and the right to be heard
- Larger issues about transnational consumer protection – but this goes beyond new domains



jeremy@ciroap.org

twitter [@consumers_int](https://twitter.com/consumers_int)

consumersinternational.org

