

NEXT STEPS

CCT-RT DISCUSSION PAPER WORKSHEET

HIGH LEVEL QUESTION: Have Benefits of Choice Exceeded Costs?

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SUB-QUESTIONS: 1. Have brands switched to their brand TLD and moved away from using their legacy TLDs.

2. How many brand TLDs are in use and what fraction of those are canonical? ?

FINDINGS:

The authoritative Dot Brand Observatory (<https://observatory.domains/>) reports that as at the end of August, 2016 there were a total of 557 dot brands of which 464 (83%) were live, that is, having at least the mandatory .nic at the second level. However only 86 (12%) were active, that is, having second level domains other than the mandatory holding.nic.

Of the 5082 domains registered in the 86 active dot brands, 3050 domains are redirecting to legacy domains, "making this solution the most popular use of dot brand". Of the 86 active dot brands, only 10 have switched their core web sites completely across to the dot brand domain.

The overall conclusion is that compared to the number of dot brands, there has not been high level of switch-over (migration) to actual use of the new gTLDs

CAUSES:

Various reasons could be advanced:

1. Some registries could still be exploring and testing various different approaches. BNP Paribas (.BNPPARIBAS) has for example done part migration, moving its France operations to the new gTLD while global operations remain in legacy mode. **That is, migration may be a function of time.**
2. **Defensive registration may have been a strong motivation in registering the dot Brand.**
3. **Industry feedback may be discouraging some to go live. Netflix has stuck to Netflix.com rather than move to Netflix.netflix despite the later having been delegated on 28th May, 2016¹.**

PRIORITY TO ADDRESS:

Additional research requires to be undertaken to understand:

1. If migration is a function of time, i.e. if there is a correlation between the delegation date and those that have already gone active.
2. If the brands that are not yet active are actually planning to be active in future

¹<https://icannwiki.com/.netflix>

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3. The nature of response to the new brand gTLDs by consumers, e.g. do consumers feel they improve consumer experience, security, trust, ease of use, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Given the finding that less than 2% of .brand gTLDs have migrated more than a year since the gTLD program commenced, it becomes difficult to comprehend the reasons they applied for their gTLD in the first place. We recommend that ICANN initiate a .brand study to determine, inter, alia,

1. reasons for .brand applications
2. probabilities of migration in the future
3. .brand perceptions of consumer confusion and trust issues
4. role, if any, of high costs of migration

REVIEW: *TBD*