

Competition and Choice Topics

Competition

- Has the expansion of gTLDs been effective at promoting price competition between TLD operators?
 - Consider data on retail and wholesale prices
 - Consider secondary markets
 - Prices in ccTLD vs. gTLDs
 - Effects of price caps
 - How many domain names are reserved by registries as “premium”, disrupting the regular marketplace?
- Has the expansion of gTLDs been effective at promoting non-price competition between TLD operators?
 - If the competition is not founded on price, what services should be identified for competition?
 - What services have any registries provided beyond pure registration (examples: .NGO attempts at community building, .CEO directory)
- What are reasonable definitions of relevant markets that we might use to analyze competition?
 - Consider non-domain identifiers/navigation (As more and more apps go directly to service providers, e.g. facebook, etc., the impact to the market for domain names and implications) (As we have discussed many times before, this is not just apps but also QR codes, URL shorteners or search engines that bypass the need for memorable names)
 - Community vs. Standard vs. Brand (vs. Geo?)
 - Closed generics versus open ones: are there any innovative domain distribution models being used by closed generics?
 - Single TLD vs. portfolio registry
 - How do we evaluate the success of TLDs that are targeted for small consumer segments? (what is a small consumer segment?)
 - To what extent have new gTLDs displaced legacy gTLDs/ccTLDs and is this good for competition/price? (not sure they were they ever intended to displace? Have they even

- o slowed growth in legacy? What is the effect on non-.com legacy TLDs such as .info, .biz, .pro?)
 - o Impact of competition of (new) GTLD's in areas where uptake of ccTLD's is low? (Are geo/city TLDs impacting ccTLDs? Example: is .scot cannibalizing from .uk?)
 - o Single TLD vs. portfolio registry
- How has the introduction of the new TLD's affected competition between registrars? (In what ways are registrars differentiating themselves from each other?)
- What is the minimum viable scale for a TLD registry?
 - o Cost and cost structure (fixed v. variable) for providing registry/registrar service
 - o Are there registry operators willing to operate a TLD regardless of profitability? (Are there non-monetary incentives for operating a registry and what might those be?)
- Is a new TLD a valid choice for a registrant if there isn't universal acceptance of it? (Suspect this depends on who's blocking, yes?)
- Are consumers sufficiently aware to allow for competition? (Well more to the point, do they even care? And can we absolutely establish that it is consumers as a group that have driven demand for the TLD expansion?)
 - o Who is responsible to promote GTLD's?
 - o Are registrars aware of the Program?
- Are domain names being allocated more efficiently to registrants who will use them well? (What do we mean by "well")

Consumer Trust

- Is further segmentation and regulation of the namespace valuable to consumers navigating the name space? How do we factor 'confusion' here?
 - o Do internet users expect different TLDs to have different types of registrants? (Should this sub-question be covered by safeguards & trust group?) And was there ever an expectation?
- Has the benefits of the increase in choice outweighed the potential for the cost of confusion?
 - o Can registrants get "better" domains in the new TLD's? Was there ever a difficulty getting customers to use or remember the new TLD name registered?

Related Considerations

- What is the effect of exogenous influences of new technologies on the introduction of new gTLDs?
- Is it too soon to accurately consider these issues?