

# Competition and Choice Topics

## Competition

1. Has the expansion of gTLDs been effective at promoting price competition between TLD operators?
  - a. Consider data on retail and wholesale prices
    - Have wholesale prices from registries
    - Have limited retail prices: 69 observations on gTLD prices (MAY NEED MORE RETAIL DATA)
    - Premium prices: registry premium data (list of names, price for each); related: registry reserved lists
    - Segmentation based on geography or language(who is the TLD targeted at?)
  - b. Consider secondary markets
    - Contacted Sedo for Transaction-level data
    - Changes to listing prices
    - Look at resale price in new gTLDs vs. legacy gTLDs
  - c. Prices in ccTLD vs. legacy gTLDs vs. new gTLDs
    - No response from ccTLDs
  - d. Effects of price caps
    - What were the historical/current price caps?
  - e. First mover advantage?
    - Launch dates
  - f. DATA: Bundled services pricing
2. Has the expansion of gTLDs been effective at promoting non-price competition between TLD operators?
  - a. If the competition is not founded on price, what services should be identified for competition?
    - What additional registry services are offered for each TLD?
    - Do registrars offer custom services for specific TLDs?
  - b. First mover advantage?
  - c. DATA: Are registrants buying new gTLDs when the same string was available in another TLD? (Availability in various TLDs intersected with registration data)
  - d. DATA: Are registrants choosing to register in new gTLDs because of the policies of the TLD?
  - e. DATA: Are registrants choosing to register a new gTLD?
  - f. DATA: Compare prices of equivalent words across different languages
  - g. PROJECT: Why are prices different in different new gTLDs?
3. What are reasonable definitions of relevant markets that we might use to analyze competition?

- a. 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)
  - How to approach this? Twitter? Facebook?
  - Maybe this is a separate track?
  - Maybe a good survey.
- b. Community vs. Standard vs. Brand vs. Geo
- c. Single TLD vs. portfolio registry
- d. How do we evaluate the success of TLDs that are targeted for small consumer segments?
  - DATA: Renewal rates
- e. To what extent have new gTLDs displaced legacy gTLDs/ccTLDs and is this good for competition/price?
  - DATA: New registrations versus renewals
  - DATA: Are registrants replacing previous TLD registrations with new ones?
  - DATA: ccTLD registration volumes/annual renewal figures
  - DATA: CENTR HHI data
- f. Impact of competition of (new) GTLD's in areas where uptake of ccTLD's is low?
- g. Impact of alternate roots
- h. Bare domain versus bundle of functionality (including, e.g. hosting)
  - DATA: Analysis Group looking at add-on services
  - DATA: "Standard Shopping basket" to look at the service
- i. Do specific sectors or clusters of topically related TLDs form a market?
  - DATA: Analysis group did some of this in their initial report
- j. DATA: parked vs. not
- k. DATA: Traffic information
4. Have different types of TLDs been able to provide effective alternatives to other TLDs?
  - a. Community vs. Standard vs. Brand vs. Geo
  - b. Single TLD vs. portfolio registry
5. How has the introduction of the new TLD's affected competition among registrars and/or resellers?
  - a. Impact on # of registrars?
    - DATA: # of registrars
    - DATA: # of registrars per TLD
    - DATA: # of registrars per geo
  - b. Effects of vertical integration
    - PROJECT: Compare market shares of registrars in TLDs with vertically integrated registrars; followup: look at prices in TLDs with vertically integrated registrars
    - DATA: Identify registrars that are vertically integrated with registries
  - c. DATA: Can we look at # of registrars versus (retail vs. wholesale) prices and does it lower prices?
    - # of registrars per TLD
  - d. DATA: Can ICANN identify information about resold domains
6. Are consumers sufficiently aware to allow for competition?

- a. Who is responsible to promote GTLD's?
- b. Are registrars aware of the Program?
- 7. Are domain names being allocated more efficiently to registrants who will use them well?

## **Consumer Choice**

- 8. Is further segmentation and regulation of the namespace valuable to consumers navigating the name space?
  - a. Do internet users expect different TLDs to have different types of registrants? (Should this sub-question be covered by safeguards & trust group?)
- 9. Has the benefits of the increase in choice outweighed the potential for the cost of confusion?
  - a. Can registrants get "better" domains in the new TLD's?
- 10. Do consumers have expanded choices in different...
  - a. Regions
  - b. Languages / Scripts
  - c. ...and do they have options to purchase domains? (are there available registrars/resellers in their language/region/etc.)
- 11. Is a new TLD a valid choice for a registrant if there isn't universal acceptance of it?
  - a. Special effects on IDNs?

## **Related Considerations**

- 12. (3.4) What is the minimum viable scale for a TLD registry?
  - a. Cost and cost structure (fixed v. variable) for providing registry/registrar service
  - b. Are there registry operators willing to operate a TLD regardless of profitability?
- 13. What is the effect of exogenous influences of new technologies on the introduction of new gTLDs?
- 14. Is it too soon to accurately consider these issues?