

RECOMMENDATION 13: TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR COLLABORATION

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Part One – Which ICANN Objective does this meet

Promote role clarity and establish mechanisms to increase trust within the ecosystem rooted in the public interest. Also, evolve policy development and governance processes, structures and meetings to be more accountable, inclusive, efficient, effective and responsive. See Strategic Plan main web page at: <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/strategic-engagement-2013-10-10-en>.

Alignment with Strategic Goals

Goal

- Shared understanding by Board, staff and stakeholders of the allocation of responsibilities for design, development and implementation of policy and operational processes.
- Shared understanding of the roles, responsibilities and accountability of the Board, staff and stakeholders.
- Board, staff, and stakeholders use best practices and exercises appropriate behavioral norms.

Project/Recommendation

That the GNSO Council evaluate and, if appropriate, pilot a technology solution (such as Loomio or similar) to facilitate wider participation in Working Group consensus-based decision making.

SCOPE DESCRIPTION

Scope Statement

1. Staff to provide information concerning the types of tools available and in use and associated costs, if any.
2. The GNSO Review Working Group to determine whether this recommendation has been implemented or whether further steps need to be taken to meet the intent of the recommendation.

Out of Scope

The above scope is sufficiently clear.

Assumptions

That there is a desire for collaborative tools to be available to Working Groups if they need them.

Deliverables

Guidance on collaborative tools.

OPTION ANALYSIS

None were considered or were necessary to be considered.

SOLUTION

Staff research found the following:

GNSO Working Groups and staff supporting those groups primarily use Microsoft Word as a tool for collaborating in the development of documents, but there is increasing use of Google Drive products – particularly Google Documents. For example, the Policy Development Process Working Group on New gTLD Subsequent Procedures is using Google Documents both in its collaboration in the full Working Group and in its collaboration in its Work Track Sub Teams.

Staff found in general that any technology solution for collaboration in the development of documents, a “document management system,” should have at least some, if not all, of these attributes:

1. Support both online editing and offline editing, with the ability to resolve conflicts in both online and offline version editing.
2. Allow at least near-real-time reflection of the comments and edits received on the document.
3. Have a version control mechanism.
4. Have an issue tracker to catalogue questions and comments, their discussion, and their resolution. The issue tracker must support multiple people being able to manage the issues in the system.
5. During a multi-stage review process, the document management system must be able to reproduce and display the changes made from any version of the document to any later version. The changes must include showing what comments were received and how the comments were addressed, alongside of the relevant text. These capabilities would offer a redline and strikethrough feature, with added sophistication.

Staff evaluated Google Drive and Microsoft Word concerning the above attributes. The table below shows the results of that analysis:

Table 1: Summary of Evaluation Results

	Google Docs	Microsoft Word
#1: Enable both online and offline editing, with conflict resolution of edits	Qualified YES (limited conflict resolution for reviewers)	NO
#2: Real time reflection of the edits	YES	NO
#3: Version control mechanism	Qualified YES (no ability to specify version. It is done automatically)	Qualified YES (manually)
#4: Issue Tracker	NO	NO
#5 Redline from any version to any other version	No (only able to do redline from two adjacent versions)	YES

Staff found that when Working Groups are collaborating to develop reports, comments, proposals, or other documents where it is particularly important to encourage as much participation and input from members as possible, and not to overly rely on staff-produced drafts, Google Documents appears to be a more useful tool than Microsoft Word. However, for the production of drafts where staff is gathering input and creating a near final, or final version, Microsoft Word appears to be the better tool. Finally, it appears that Microsoft Word is quite commonly used, although not universally so, in the GNSO community.

Costs: Staff notes that Google Drive products are currently free to use. Microsoft Word is part of the Microsoft Office suite. Office is produced in several versions targeted towards different end-users and computing environments. The original, and most widely used version, is the [desktop](#) version, available for [PCs](#) running the [Windows](#) and [macOS operating systems](#). The most current desktop version is [Office 2016](#) for Windows and macOS, released on 22 September 2015 and 9 July 2015, respectively. The cost varies depending on whether the version is for home, business, or professional use (currently \$149/\$229/\$339 respectively).

Current ICANN Initiative: ICANN launched the Information Transparency Initiative (ITI) in March 2017. Per the ICANN Org Executive Team Report delivered to the ICANN Board of Directors in March 2017, “The proposed solution for document and content management and the replacement of the existing ICANN.Org website was presented to the executives who have provided internal approval for the project.” The ITI is not focused on

providing collaborative tools for the community and staff to use to create content, but instead one of the goals is to make content more accessible. See: https://www.icann.org/static_documents/executive-team-reports-march-2017-public.pdf.

Working Group Determination:

The GNSO Review Working Group has determined that this recommendation is implemented as there currently are technology solutions available and in use (Microsoft Word and Google Drive) to facilitate wider participation in Working Group consensus-based decision making.

KEY DEPENDENCIES

Review of existing technology solutions that are currently in use.

RISK IDENTIFICATION

None.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

It is not clear to staff whether a KPI applies in the implementation of these recommendations.

NECESSARY TO PROCEED

Next Phase Activities/Resources

None.

APPROVERS

Name	Completion of Recommendation Approved by Consensus
GNSO Review Working Group	27 July 2017

REVISION HISTORY

Date	Version	Description	Author
20 June 2017	V1	Original charter.	Julie Hedlund, Policy Director
13 July 2017	V2	Modified following discussion at the meeting on 22 June.	Julie Hedlund, Policy Director
13 July 2017	V3	Modified for consensus call based on the Working Group decision at the meeting on 13 July.	Julie Hedlund, Policy Director

Attachments:

1. Description of Google Drive tools
2. Description of Microsoft Word

Excerpted From: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Drive.

Google Drive is a [file storage](#) and [synchronization service](#) developed by [Google](#). Launched on April 24, 2012, Google Drive allows users to store files in the cloud, synchronize files across devices, and [share files](#). In addition to a [website](#), Google Drive offers apps with offline capabilities for [Windows](#) and [macOS](#) computers, and [Android](#) and [iOS](#) smartphones and tablets. Google Drive encompasses [Google Docs](#), [Sheets and Slides](#), an [office suite](#) that permits collaborative editing of documents, spreadsheets, presentations, drawings, forms, and more. Files created and edited through the office suite are saved in Google Drive.

Google Drive offers users 15 [gigabytes](#) of free storage, with 100 gigabytes, 1 [terabyte](#), 2 terabytes, 10 terabytes, 20 terabytes, and 30 terabytes offered through optional paid plans. Files uploaded can be up to 5 terabytes in size. Users can change privacy settings for individual files and folders, including enabling sharing with other users or making content public. On the website, users can search for an image by describing its visuals, and use [natural language](#) to find specific files, such as "find my budget spreadsheet from last December". Along with a revamped computer app, Google Drive will, starting June 28, be able to upload any folder on the user's computer to Google. The website and Android app already offer a Backups section to see what Android devices have data backed up to the service. A Quick Access feature can [intelligently predict](#) the files users need.

Google Drive is a key component of [G Suite](#), Google's monthly subscription offering for businesses and organizations. As part of select G Suite plans, Drive offers unlimited storage, advanced file audit reporting, enhanced administration controls, and greater collaboration tools for teams.

Following the launch of the service, Google Drive was heavily criticized by some members of the media for its privacy. Google has one set of Terms of Service and Privacy Policy agreements that cover all of its services, meaning that the language in the agreements grants the company broad rights to reproduce, use, and create [derivative works](#) from content stored on Google Drive. While the policies also confirm that users retain intellectual property rights, privacy advocates raised concerns that the licenses grant Google the rights to use the information and data to customize advertising and other services Google provides. In contrast, other members of the media noted that the agreements were no different from competing cloud storage services, but that the competition uses "more artful language" in the agreements, and also stated that Google needs the rights in order to "move files around on its servers, cache your data, or make image thumbnails".

As of March 2017, Google Drive has 800 million active users, and as of September 2015, it has over one million organizational paying users. As of May 2017, there are over two trillion files stored on the service.

Excerpted from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft_Word

Word contains rudimentary desktop publishing capabilities and is the most widely used word processing program on the market. Word files are commonly used as the format for sending text documents via e-mail because almost every user with a computer can read a Word document by using the Word application, a Word viewer or a word processor that imports the Word format (see [Microsoft Word Viewer](#)).