
ICANN75 | AGM – GNSO RySG BRG: .Brand Community Outreach Session
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NATHALIE PEREGRINE: Thank you. Hello, and welcome to the Brand Registry Group Community Outreach Session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior. During the session, questions or comments submitted in chat will be read aloud if put in the proper form as noted in the chat.

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MIKE RODENBAUGH: Thank you. I am Mike Rodenbaugh. I am on the Board of the Brand Registry Group. I'm from California. I am going to try to guide us seamlessly through a presentation about the current state of the industry with respect to .brand top level domain names; which just a brief introduction on those are essentially new top level domains that are closed and can only be used by a trademark owner, its licensees, or its affiliates.

I will first introduce the panel today. We have to my left, Nisha Parkash from Sky, runs the manager's domain name portfolio for Sky. To my right is Crews Gore, who is the president of the BRG and handles domain name Port Folio for Fox. And to his right is Michael Flemming of GMO Brand Security, and his clients include many .brands and BRG members.

And myself, I represent .caravan Caravan Tours Inc. a company in the United States which has only one .brand domain name. But we're going to talk about companies that use them much more than that today. Also, we have Tony Kirch. Sorry. You're just a very little person on my screen there, Tony, dialing in from Melbourne with the .GoDaddy and GoDaddy Registry Services.

So we'll start out with a little bit of an update with statistics that we're seeing as of a couple of months ago. We've got still almost 500 .brands that were out of the I think 1600 new top level domain

names from the 2012 round. And of those, we've got just in the last year new registrations of 1800 domain names. So still fairly small numbers, but growing as we're going to demonstrate here today.

In fact, we're making decent progress between 5-7% in various metrics that we see on the screen. But again, the numbers 23000 total domains among 477 .brands. So that averages out to 48 average per TLD. There's still a lot of uptake yet to happen in this space, but progress is definitely being made, especially in Europe. It's tended to have a lot more marketing of new top level domains in general.

In Europe and particularly with .brands where we're seeing 17000 domain names registered in that brands for European companies to date. And there some concentration, although the numbers are not huge. 8.5% are banking and financial, 3.4% automotive. So really this slide indicates that there's a great diversity of the different industry sectors represented within the Brand Registry Group.

Some recent use cases that we're seeing, swoosh.nike is hopefully going to be very exciting. We don't know exactly what they're going to be doing with it yet, but it is coming soon. We also have a global.toyota, which is a primary website of Toyota. They're doing all sorts of things there for marketing purposes and

for internal purposes, both. safety.google, which is actually been seeing some marketing in the United States, which is something that .brand registries have been waiting for, for a long time. Thank you, Google. It's good to see this website and to see the related marketing around that that's been happening in the last several months.

Amazon has their pharmacy services website on a .amazon domain name. They also the pharmacy.amazon will also redirect to this website. So that's a curious practice. But it's happening. ncar.nissan, another new website. This is primarily for Nissan car dealers. So it's more of a not customer facing website, but still good to see a large company like Nissan, of course, starting to use their top level domain.

And then e.leclerc, I just definitely don't speak French. This is their primary website it would appear, and they are a fairly large French online shopping company. So next, we're going to turn it over to my other panelists. Keep going. And first up is going to be Crews with .fox to give us an update with what's going on in his registry.

CREWS GORE:

Hi, everyone. My name is Crews Gore, and I oversee the .fox registry and manage Fox, the main portfolio. Wanted to share a little bit today about what we're doing with .fox, with the

company. I just wanted to start out with maskyourself.fox. So the mass singer has been a big show internationally. And in the US, the marketing team wanted to have a campaign where you could take a picture of yourself using the QR code, and then you would be masking yourself. So it was surprisingly good to see that they chose to go with the .fox on this because maskyourself.com was not available.

For employees that start working at Fox, we want to get them started at getstarted.fox. We've been using .fox internally ever since for a while now, since we had a split from Disney assets to Fox assets, and we really got a chance to start over, and most of our internal websites are now on .fox and I'll list those benefits in a little bit, but this is one of those with getstarted.fox. And then our main portal for Fox employees that they would go to visit to find all kind of information about our company is at one.fox.

And I pulled some data from 2019 which is when the split happened where Disney acquired many assets of Fox. And from that, we really saw a big increase in .fox registrations. So starting in 2019 we had around 65 registrations. Up to now we are close to a 180 registrations. And keep in mind for .brands, we're not trying to register a lot of domains with a generic domain extension. You are looking for a lot of number registrations. Of those 180, I'm registering every single one of those knowing exactly what I'm going to be using it for. And you'll see on this

next slide right here. From those domains, a 180 that we currently have, 57% of those websites are active.

And then I have set up 225 of those as web redirects because there's a keyword focus. I want to make sure that we're capitalizing on that traffic with those domains. So I do set up redirects for those. And then we do have 21% that are currently inactive. Maybe we are getting ready to launch a site on there where we're sun setting a website. That's what that number would represent.

And so the different reasons why we as Fox like to use a .fox domain extension, being able to share with the different brands within Fox that we have this opportunity. Because we launched new shows, we launched new products, most of the domain names are going to be unavailable in .com. So they do have this opportunity of instead of paying a premium domain in aftermarket, we can get a .fox domain extension that's shorter and more relevant to the actual end user that's viewing the domain.

So we're seeing certain business units have a lot more interest in the .fox domain extension. But one of the great benefits about .fox with is with our security team. They have made it a priority that we are only using .fox internally. And for those internal websites, you're able to do a lot around security. So for our SSL

certificate provider, they are able to validate all the Fox domains immediately because they know we are a verified domain owner of the .fox TLD. Anything that we register in .fox will automatically be validated at the certificate authority.

So that helps speed up the process for our security team. As well as when we send out emails to our employees, we are only sending it out. Links inside the email, will only be on a .fox domain name. That helps us make sure that there's no phishing attack or spam attacks so that we know exactly what domain is being linked into those emails. It gives us better oversight for the security team having those .fox domains.

As I mentioned before, the availability, we are able to create any domain name that we see fit and that the business may want. So it really gives us a great opportunity to register domains because we've been buying domains at, huge price tags, acquiring them in the aftermarket. And this really gives us that flexibility of if you don't have that budget, or if you see the benefits of using the .fox, we have that available for you. And now I'm going to pass it on to Nisha.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Not yet. You got to answer some questions, Crews.

CREWS GORE: okay.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: So you raise a really good point about the numbers here really aren't that important. That's why I go through the statistics pretty quickly because they're just frankly not that important. What's important is the use cases even if a brand has one domain, it can be very beneficial to that brand and to all of the people in the world that interact with that brand. And so in general, I think I know the answer to this one, but does Fox consider it to be very successful so far it's investment in the .fox TLD?

CREWS GORE: I would say it is successful. Using it internally, our security teams launching marketing campaigns on the .fox, our own named servers for at Fox are set up on DNS .fox. So it's integrated within our systems, all internal systems and our DNS security wise and marketing wise has been an absolute success.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: And what are you still hoping to see as a use case in your TLD?

CREWS GORE: So I'm always trying to let the different businesses know the benefits of a .fox. And what I'd love to see is, in America, we have

local affiliate stations across the country like a Fox New York, or Fox LA, FOX 5 DC. I would love them to be able to use the .fox. Instead of having fox5dc.com, they could just use the domain name dc.fox for their affiliate or la.fox for the news that's going on in LA. So that's what I'm trying to sell on them and just show them the benefits, but that's what I'm keen on getting accomplished.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Thank you. Alright, Nisha, over to you to talk about .Sky.

NISHA PARKASH: Hi, everyone. So I'm Nisha Parkash from Skye. I'm also on the board of the BRG. So, yes, .sky. I guess you can read this in your own time, but I will pick out some bits. So for us .Sky is more than just aesthetically pleasing. We have got many use cases for .Sky, and I think what I will share is probably some parts of what companies are feeling quite daunted by.

So things like migration or like moving from something to their own brand DOD. I think a lot of people find that an impossible task, whereas at Sky, we've managed to find workarounds and actually move from .coms, which is quite bizarre, I guess. There's a lot of people think .com is king, and we have really proactively moved away from .com in some instances.

So one thing about an issue we have in Europe and anybody will suffer this really is the GDPR issue to gauge ownership of domain names. And for us having a .sky already, it authenticates that you are landing on an actual Sky website because only Sky can own a .sky. So we see a workaround to the whole GDPR issue. We want our customers to feel safe, and we want to make sure that they don't need to go to a who is all the time to see whether a .com or maybe a .UK is actually a sky site. If you are landing on a .sky, you are with a Sky site. You're buying a sky product, you know it because it allows that. It's almost like a visible pass ball.

So at Sky you have to champion it and use it. And at the moment you start championing something as valuable, all of a sudden, people will start reacting. So, Crews, do you want to move to the next slide, please? So we've helped with a certain part of the business, which was big issue. At Sky, we use third parties to send our email exchange. So we will be sending marketing emails, we'll be sending your basket, or anything like that. It's all managed by a third party. Now as a business, you do not want a third party to phish your-- you don't want them to spoof, sorry, your domain names because you can't authenticate them as the people that are working on your behalf, basically.

So we used a domain contact.sky to combat this issue. Crews, you want to me to the next slide so I can give some examples. So contact.sky is set up as Sky with correct records that allows our

messaging team, a very specific team to know what is being set up to this domain, so it cannot be spoofed. So that will be done with d mark and d kim and SPF records. This is just examples of how we've used contact.sky.

So if you have something in your checkout and you forget to purchase it or you might want to purchase it later, you'll get a reminder from @yourbasket.contact.sky. And so we know that that's a third party sending that on our behalf, and it's not an infringer or it's not a phishing attack to somebody to click on something.

Again, we've got products and services using notifications. We've got corporate using corporate. We've got cybersecurity using cybersecurity and so forth. It's a really good way to manage your messaging system if you're using third parties to send emails on your behalf. So that's just a use case that we have found to work brilliantly. Everybody at sky will use contact.sky, and that's the only domain that they can now use.

Just next slide. Thank you. So one thing I wanted to highlight is just three different use cases and three different ways of going about launching with a .sky. So if everyone knows Sky, sky.com is our main website. And you would wonder why anybody would move away from using our main website, our main domain name, which has incredible amount of SEO. We actually migrated from

corporate.sky.com as subdomain to skygroup.sky, which was massive. It was such a big task. But the reason I'm using this case as an example is because it can be done. And what I've found speaking to people is that they just find this completely daunting.

Now if you have the correct team in the background, the developers, and you have a project lead, and then you have somebody that understands migration, I work in the DNS space as well, it's not impossible. It will take time, but it's not impossible. So this migration took 18 months, but we now have our corporate site on skygroup.sky, which is amazing to say that we move from our main domain to a completely new domain, not only that, a .sky brand TOD.

This is another one where we actually moved. So the previous example was a subdomain that we moved. We actually then moved an entire .com domain to again .sky. So this is another example productionservices.sky moved from skyproductionservices.com. And in this instance, the reason why we did that is because this particular service is offering production facilities. So for third parties to come into Sky using our studios, using our cameras, using our facilities in the production space, but they might not want to be necessarily associated to being in a sky building doing that.

So where we had Sky at the start, it branded us as you're coming into Sky to use Sky services. But where we've now got Sky at the end is just a representation to say you're using production services, but with Sky. So we read the tag differently or we read the branding differently in this way. So we're offering a service where third parties don't just feel like they're stuck in Sky facilities. It's just Sky facilitating it. And that's why we made that change.

And again, we moved from a .com, which is amazing. And just examples of sub domain set up. So we have registered at .sky. Now we took a decision to use AT as the word at rather than it denoting Austria, which is what that country code is. So we at Sky will no longer have any of our businesses around the world or around wherever countries. We will not set up their country codes to .sky. So I wouldn't do say de.sky for Germany because we've already taken the approach that AT will represent the word.

So it's really important for me as a domain manager at Sky to remain consistent in our portfolio, in our domain management. So once we've decided one thing, we don't then go off on a tangent. So if I can't now offer austria.at, I will not offer Germany DE, or Italy IT. But the example here is @.sky is a website that represents everything that goes on at Sky. So today @.sky is our Internet site. It's what you land on when you log in in the

morning, it's what you see. But also, we have many things going on at Sky.

So, for example, if you have ever visited our London offices or come to London, you will get to a train station, you'll have a bus or shuttle service that will take you to the campus. So in that instance, we will use bus@.sky. So you can find your bus timetable. You will be able to eat on the campus. So you will have food@.sky. And so that's how we've decided to use this particular domain, and it's really effective because everybody internally that's doing anything will naturally know that it's @sky. So let's put it to @.sky, and then you just create the subdomain.

So what we've done here is have one domain registration for multiple uses. And it works and it's really effective. And yeah. So I guess those are my three examples. And then contact.sky being the first one in terms of how to use it from a technical setup, how to create that safety awareness and making sure your customers are receiving emails from you, although it's coming from a third party.

MIKE RODENBAUGH:

Thank you, Nisha. So your examples are, is it correct they're mainly internal uses to date, as opposed to consumer facing or different examples of--.

NISHA PARKASH: Yeah, so production services is external. So if you've got a maybe a small production company that wants to use us, that'll be an external site. skygroup.sky is our corporate site. So if you wanted to find out anything about what's going on Sky on a corporate level, you would use skygroup.sky. That's external. @.sky, however, is internal. We've got three .sky domains set up for our data centers. So that's internal. Yeah. So it's quite mixed. It's quite mixed. We're happy to keep this both internal and external, and we will register domains that make sense to that view, really for the consumer.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: So it's clearly been a success so far as you continue to add new domain names. What are you still hoping to see from the company as far as use of the .sky TLD?

NISHA PARKASH: Well, my hope is actually a reality because we're growing. So when we had this TLD 10 years ago, it was hard to get it off the ground. It has got so much traction now and it's a growing registry, and I think that's what's great about it. Where everybody is coming to us for a .sky now. So my hope is more a reality now, which is good.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: All right. Okay. So we'll go over to Michael Flemming from GMO Brand Registry, Brand Security. Apologies.

MICHAEL FLEMMING: There we are. So hello, everyone. My name is Michael Flemming. I'm with GMO Brand Security. I'll just take a little moment to say who we are. Probably a little bit less known to Sky and Fox. But I am part of Internet conglomerate in Japan known as GMO Internet group that basically focuses on supporting pretty much every aspect of business online. And you can check us out online if you have any more questions in regards to that. So I'm going to be talking a little bit about the current state of what how Japanese brand TLDs are currently operating.

And as you can see here, there's currently about 46 or so active brand TLDs in Japan. A lot of these are household names are very common that you probably seen before. But I'd really like to get into looking at overall. There's about 35 of them that are very active. We see about 510 registrations. And we right here, I've split this into what? I guess you would consider active as a unique site that does not resolve directly to that website. And then there's a lot of redirection going on.

But there's also a lot of what we title is in preparation. It's a lot better than non-active because in preparation usually shows that they're either preparing for something in the future or they're actually used locally. And I can tell you personally having the pleasure to work with many of these brands here, that they are utilizing these internally for different purposes. But the numbers here can speak for themselves. There's a lot of active brands and there are some that was just a few. But as Mike pointed out earlier, it's not the numbers that matter rather the quality and how it actually serves you.

So I think one of the things that has been very, I think, popular or at least what we've seen come out of Japan is the aspect of organizing the corporate site. Starting with Canon several years back, they switched to global.canon. And then after that, globally, we've seen about 30 companies that have actually been using that, and 15 of them are in Japan.

And so from this, a lot of very famous brands like, Brother, Honda, Toyota, Sharp, they have utilized global as their overall global corporate site. And it's not just the string global, there's others like SoftBank who also use group or home.komatsu. And very recently, a rebranding on behalf of Panasonic actually has had them utilize their brand TLD for the one of the very first times into holdings.panasonic.

So I'll speak on two more popular, I think, very unique cases within Japan. Canon, again, is very popular. They were one of the first TLDs that really, I think if I have the English term correct, evangelizing of brand TLDs, to utilize them. And what they basically utilize this for the very first time is rebranding of their corporate site with the global.canon.

And, gradually, they've been spreading that awareness through internally as well as doing different acts of PR. They have a lot of inner branding. So, basically, what we've seen is that a good example here is recently they had an M&A -- sorry, they acquired Toshiba Medical Systems, and they immediately rebranded it to Canon Medical, and the medical.canon became the website for that.

And it's not just that as well. There's been a lot of different service sites that we've seen that they're utilizing to promote their service branding like image.canon, fotomoti.cannon, as well as restructuring some countries where they have branches like vn.com. So what we're seeing here is that Canon is gradually increasing their portfolio within .canon, and they're spreading that awareness. They're increasing governance. And it's been very effective for them.

And then I think this is a little bit lesser known. I haven't seen a lot of people actually pay attention to this. But I think Sharp is a

very good example because, first of all, much like Fox and Sky, it's a generic name like brand. And they've actually utilized .sharp to overcome a very large difficulty to have in acquiring domains.

And because of this, over the years since they started with their web presence, they've grown and it's developed into a very complex domain structure. And I guess, for many, from outside it could be seen as inconsistent, but they've been able to utilize Canon sorry, not Canon, excuse me, Sharp, the .sharp to bring better governance here, to bring a simpler structure.

And we have seen this within, they've already developed for nine different countries. Within Asia, they have taken the country code and applied that to be the website for that region. And jp.sharp that actually the headquarters where Sharp is located is a great example here. They have basically turned that into jp.sharp. And under that, they are using subdomains to create the product pages as well. So you have corporate.jp.sharp.

And you might be asking the question, what's the difference between global.sharp and corporate.jp.sharp? Well, if you go and look at it yourself, you'll quickly see one is in English and representing the entire global Sharp presence, and the other one is very region specific in the local language. And I think it's a great example of how you can take a complex structure of a brand that is in an everyday word and utilized the brand TLD to bring

governance and to strengthen that under the umbrella of the brand TLD.

And then there's just some usage trends here, which I will not get into all of them, but you can see how we have many corporate site transitions, how they utilize them for group company development, product services, as well as specific events and sponsoring. And there's a lot of different use cases that we see coming out of Japan. And it's very interesting. And I think it's they're quite a pioneer in the brand TLD movement and there's a lot of innovation and unique aspects coming out of that.

And I just wanted to highlight lastly here, there's some other points of interest, something that I speak from my own experience and working with a lot of different brands that we've seen. A lot of brands, a lot of, at least our clients as well have started to shrink their legacy domains. And I think this goes back to what Nisha might have since said earlier, but they have better control over their brand TLD.

And a lot of our clients, if you look at the historic way that web presence has been built for a lot of clients, a lot of the .com area came out of America or Europe. And for a lot of companies that are headquartered in other countries, were late to the game. And so within that, there's a lack of control of their very dispersed

portfolio. Starting to utilize their brand TLD, they're able to stream shrink that.

Another thing I like to highlight is that they're actually doing this to reduce security risk entry points. A lot of brands have so many different domains that it actually, if somebody can get a hold of that, hack that domain, it can quickly become a really big issue for them. So getting rid of those domains that you're not utilizing or that you can do much more efficiently under your brand TLD is actually reducing various security risk entry points. And of course, this is actually centralizing their portfolio and it allows them to restructure as we saw with the .sharp example.

Some other cool stuff that's happening, a lot of our clients are utilizing it for email. I have the pleasure also saying that I now utilize the .gmo for my own email. But day to day communications, we're getting emails from them, from .honda, from .komatsu, and it works efficiently. And something I just like to highlight lastly in the way that we've actually been able to use .gmo in a very innovative way is that we've actually opened this up to be a management of environment for IoT devices. So to do say, secure environment for an lo for basically a domain name to be connected to an IoT device that which would require it if they have a lot of different points with that IoT device. And that is my presentation.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Thank you, Michael.

NATHALIE PEREGRINE: Mike, I'm sorry, we do have a question online for Michael.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Not sure if that was for Michael or it was for all of the panelists. So I was going to get to that question in a bit. But thank you. So first of all, Michael, I mean, what are you still hoping to see or expecting to see from any of your clients that would be exciting to you and to the world?

MICHAEL FLEMMING: So that's a great question, Mike. And while I have very high hopes and high expectations and what they themselves have said they would really like to do, which I think would require a lot of movement here at ICANN would be the country name .brand TLD. And this is a very touchy subject, so I will not get into it. But from their perspective, it is country codes .brands where we can utilize them. And that was a great step in the right direction. Country names are much more recognized by their customers. And for them to be able to connect that country name with their .brand,

there is no better way to say that that is the official location or the official website for them.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Yes. So this was one of the grand compromises around specification 13 and allowing the concept of closed brand registries was the governments required that they be able to opt out essentially of having their country names in their TLDs. And I guess to date, only a couple dozen are allowing that out of the 477 TLDs, was that right? Yeah. Okay, so let's go over to Tony. No, I haven't forgot about you, mate. It's good to see you, wish you were here. Just give us a rundown on what's going on with GoDaddy.

TONY KIRSCH: Thanks, Mike. Can you hear me okay?

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Yes. Perfectly.

TONY KIRSCH: Excellent. Hello, everybody. My name is Tony Kirsch. I am the director of global consulting for GoDaddy registry. I'm formally at the Neustar registry until a couple of years ago when we're acquired. Lovely to be with you all today. I'm very lucky in this

space. I'm going to talk about GoDaddy and what we've been doing there with our parent company, obviously, GoDaddy Inc. But personally, I'm responsible for helping over 150 .brands in an advisory capacity. I'm also the editor of makeway.world and the BRG former board member and now strategic adviser to the board.

So I'm in a really lucky position in the sense that I've been doing this for a long time. I was heavily involved in the .neustar project, which for those that have been following this space, you'll realize there's been a very successful project for that technology company. They were one of the first to move across to home.neustar for their corporate site.

But today, I'm going to talk to you a little bit about .godaddy. As I said, I've only been with the organization for around about two years, but I want to show you a little bit about what we've been doing, and give you a little view as to what we've been doing in a very slow sense.

And as you can see here, we're not as large in the sense of the number of domains that, for example, Fox and some of the Japanese companies have done. There are 10 active .godaddy names in use. Some of them are quite large. I'm going to show you some examples. Others are more internal things that perhaps a little less prominent. And we've used a blend of

resolving and redirecting. What I mean by that is we've got some sites where the actual web content is built on .godaddy, and we've got somewhere we're redirecting it through to another location.

And it's been a really interesting journey. As I said, I was asked to come in and work on this over the last couple of years, And despite GoDaddy being a domain name industry participant, very strong one, it's been a really interesting education process for me working with the global marketing team, working within other sub-departments, within legal and IP to find the best path for .godaddy to join the digital assets. Thanks, Crews.

A lot of the early campaign activity that was done with .godaddy was redirecting. You can see here an example is activating our go forth campaign over the last couple of years. And in effect, if you were clicking or typing this domain, it would take you straight through to the YouTube page. It's not the first of these what we've done. There's another one that will come up in just a moment.

We really like that. We like it using it in our electronic marketing, whether it's social, whether it's direct to customer. We like the idea of our domains is being short, meaningful. We like them appearing in people's ability to be able to click through. And this is just one example of, an example, we might go to the next one if

we could, please, where we've started to engage both at a redirect level, but also at a concept level.

So last year, those that are interested may have read an article on this in in makeway.world. We have an annual customer event called GoDaddy Open. Last year's one was fantastic. We had Naomi Osaka, as you can see here is our primary evangelist. And it's an awesome thing. Goes over a couple of days. We've got millions of impressions that we put through media and social media. And obviously tens of thousands of people to come and join the event. And this one was done in particular online. But it's a fantastic opportunity for us not only to bring our community, the GoDaddy community together to learn about our products and services, but also, for every one of these, we're showing them the open .godaddy URL.

And you'll see as we progress through this over the next few years, I suspect that the organization will continue to drive innovation in this space looking for short and meaningful URLs that match our products and our campaigns and get people to cross to our digital content. Increasingly, as I suspected it is for most people on this panel, our digital content is spread and diversified away from, not necessarily away from, in addition to our primary .com site.

As our business continues to evolve, we're looking for more and more landing places. And .godaddy gives us an opportunity to bring identity to some of those other products and services and indeed regions and things that people have spoken about already today to give those domains an identity, give those concepts an identity using .godaddy. And as I said, I think we're going to continue to do more and more of that. Thanks, Crews.

One key part, and this is the function, in particular that I work for, is our registry services function. We have clear identity as registry .godaddy. Obviously, there was a lot of discussion back at the time when the acquisition happened from neustars to what they call us. And this idea of being registry .godaddy has been really instrumental for us, not just in the sense that we have this microsite where we put all of our content under registry .godaddy, but as Michael -- thanks Crews, as Michael alluded to, I myself have a .godaddy email address. And we just love the idea of reinforcing this in all of our communications, you can imagine, across the organization. We're sending hundreds of thousands of emails a year out to our clients and to our customers across the world, continuing to reinforce this .godaddy positioning.

And it has a range of other benefits for us that we're looking at across the broader parts of the organization. We're looking at it. Historically, we've done a lot of other things in terms of putting our Internet on .godaddy. We have a lot of security protocols

through .godaddy from internal stuff perspective. We've done a number of other external things. We're looking at link shortness.

We're looking at other things that just help an organization like GoDaddy similar to some of the ones that we mentioned earlier with Nisha, is that we've got a lot of requirement to protect people's data. And our ability to use .godaddy in as many different ways as we can to ensure that we have a really secure and reduce the number of threat factors that we're able to offer. This is an important thing for us to continue to look at. How do we use .godaddy? Not just a simple email address or just as a simple microsite, but how do we work towards a bigger future?

And the thing that I wanted to leave you with today before we move on to the next topic is that as part of this process of educating the organization on the benefits of .godaddy, one really interesting piece of information was shared by our social media team in New York. I wanted to leave that with you today because I still find for me this was possibly the most empowering and revolutionary sort of thinking. And it happened off the back of some series of workshops we've done with some executives around the world. And one of the team came back to us.

We'll just look at that next slide if we can please, Crews .And I asked them, "Why were you so comfortable doing open .godaddy, following the ideas that we put to you." And the story I heard was

this. The gentleman he was a VP of the social and brand team, said that in the presentations that we were talking about .godaddy, he had this light bulb moment where he realized that the future of branding for large companies-- we're not talking here about moms and dads. We're talking here about large companies who have .brand TLDs. Was a brand perception difference? And the way that he saw it was .brand was the top of the pyramid. If you had the .brand, you were really in the Uber Elite of being in branding.

And he explained that to me in the context that as a perception based customer mindset, if you have your .com, I think everyone would agree that that's your main portal for the majority of your countries, maybe not all, but certainly for the for the majority of them. And in his view, previous understanding about what we were talking about with .godaddy, .com was the gold standard. If you had your ccTLD and that was your primary business, no problem.

Most likely, you were more marketing in a regional level. No problem, that would from a perception perspective. But typically, if you had another TLD, it generally tend to mean that you were late to the party, or that your organization was a startup, or you were growing in some nature, or perhaps a little bit less legitimized in the mind of a typical custom. I hadn't heard this before. This was his story.

The way that it was explained to me was that he saw that the gold standard was moving from .com to .brand. And that over time, companies like the ones that you're hearing from today, will slowly and continue to slowly educate customers over the next dozens of years that the .brand is the gold standard of branding, both in the sense that from an external point of view, you can trust that you come into the right place, the exclusivity of it all, but also internally for us as the organizations, the control, the cost savings, all the things that you've heard of from other people on this panel today.

So as I said to you, .godaddy is in its infancy. We have a lot of things that we're still working on and we've got a long way to go. But I'm really excited about what we've done and more excited about the opportunities that we have to continue to drive .godaddy. I firmly believe in this idea of the pyramid. And I think gradually a lot of the people in our organization are doing the same. So with that, I'll pass back to you, Mike. But that's sort of the .godaddy genesis over the last two years.

MIKE RODENBAUGH:

Thanks, Tony. So you mentioned you're excited about what's to come. So can you reveal, what exactly are you hoping to see from .godaddy in the near future?

TONY KIRCH:

Yeah. That's a great question. I think internally, Mike, we're going to continue to look at .godaddy as an internal asset, primarily in the security and efficiency of network access for our organization. We've got, like, a lot of companies now, a lot of remote employees. We've got a lot of systems that drive an organization the size of GoDaddy and gradually piece by piece, we're building a tighter organization in that space.

To add to that, I'd love to see us doing more on an external perspective. We'll continue to look at opportunities to that whether it's in social or normal media marketing that we'll do as an organization. And I guess big picture hopefully, no one's would listening to this so I can keep my job tomorrow. But I think over time, I'd love to expand adding more into our customer journey. I think there's millions of customers that we have as GoDaddy. We do a lot of site building, those sorts of things for people. I would love for .godaddy to start to become part of that genesis. A long way to go, but, yeah, that's the quick answer to your question.

MIKE RODENBAUGH:

All right, thanks. So, yeah, we want to move on to discuss what we're anticipating for the next round in new TLDs. Talking about - no, we don't need these slides, get that one. Sorry about that. Seamless has promised. So, yeah, that was what I wanted to

hone in on the bottom left is how many .brands will apply because that's an issue that people talk about and always a lot, certainly one that we talk about in the BRG a lot. And what can we expect in the next round.

Certainly, we know from the 2012 round, there were some very famous companies that didn't even exist. There was TikTok, there were companies that were brand new, Uber, Airbnb, and then there were companies that set it out, for whatever reasons, like Facebook and eBay. So those are all that's five big companies that probably we could bank on applying for a top level TLD. But curious to hear from members of the panel what their seeing from their companies and their clients as to the next round of new TLDs. We could start if I could call names or unless one of you wants to volunteer?

MICHAEL FLEMMING:

I'll jump in. You don't have to start calling people out here. So Michael from GMO Brand Security, again, for the record. So from what we're seeing from clients is, again the first round was very much a, who knows what the future is going to hold? What am I going to do with this for now? It's like, I'm going to keep doing this for now. Better just apply for it and just hold on to it for protection basis.

But you know what we saw? We saw, go back to my slide and you'll see there are dozens of companies, there's 35 of them that are now utilizing this in some capacity. And one of them has over 70 domain names in there. And most of them most of them, I would say, there's just a fraction that are not resolving in a unique manner. They're very innovative.

So what I see from us in the next round again, there's a lot of companies that weren't sure in the first round and some that didn't even exist. But we are seeing a lot of demand, a lot of constant calls. They want to know when the next round is. I mean, they tell us, they ask me every month to provide some crystal ball view on this. And they say, "We don't care if it's wrong. Just keep us in the loop." And so there's a lot of demand. We have a seminar every month to talk about brand TLDs domains in general as well. But we have two 250-400 every month, attending those to learn more about the state of brand TLDs as well as what ICANN is trying to do about it.

CREWS GORE:

From a brand perspective, having .fox for us, that's our main trademark. That's our brand. But since 2012, we have launched new brands that don't contain the word Fox. So I'm going to mention this later, but I think it's time now that I have those discussions with the internal businesses to see if they would be

interested in applying for when that next round, hopefully, in the next few years is to come.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Nisha

Nisha Parkash: Yeah. I think from my point of view, it's whether we go the IDN route, really, and have the word Sky in IDN. So those conversations need to happen as well for second round. So that's just food for thought really.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Yep. Tony, I'm sure you have some thoughts.

TONY KIRSCH: No doubt, Mike. No doubt. I'll go back a step. There were, I don't know, something north of 550 .brand applicants back in 2012. And the first slide you show today said that there was about 475 of them left. So that means that we've lost a few. And in some way, you could look at that as a disappointment, but the reality of that was that many of those organizations bought it out of fear and then realized that they didn't need it and then ultimately decided to get rid of it.

So of the ones that are left, Mike makes a really interesting point. There is a lot of brands that weren't around organizational changes, mergers, etc. And some that I know that I work with, they were like, "Oh, well, I'm not going to apply this time, but I know that there'll be around in a year or two, I'll be able to get it then." So the demand from those that I see in my role is there, there's a little bit of, I guess, a tempered excitement because of lack of visibility on pricing and things like that that's going to come from ICANN. But I think we're going to get there next year, and I think that that'll show a lot more.

I think the other thing that we need to consider is brands that have got one now, .brand now that have found them to be successful. Like Crews, if gone through organizational change, maybe there's a merger and acquisition, new products, etc. So I think you're going to see a really different market next time. I think you're going to see, I don't know if I want a forecast number, but I think it'll be very similar if not more than what it was in the first round for brand TLDs.

Because if you look at the market, you've got, on one side, people who missed out that have seen lots of cool things that other companies have done, and have the ability to learn from that and execute that in their own way. You've got folks that already have one that have for the majority of them, who looked at and said,

hey, this is pretty great. Maybe we need another one for a variety of purposes.

So when you look at all of those things together and you realize that we're in a world where I think it is advantageous for the internet as a whole to have another ramp for .brands or indeed new tier deals in the first place, like as the brand registry group. We're very supportive of this. We've had our members talk to us about wanting more .brands. And I think that that's a great thing. I think it adds innovation to the internet I think it helps existing brand, .brand owners now. There is a competitive factor to it, but I would dare say that the majority of people who have a .brand right now would welcome the competition, welcome the innovation.

And I think that the best part of all of this is that anyone who applies for a .brand in the next round will have a really clear strategy. We won't see what we saw last time where the launching staggered over a year or two or three or four or five. I think if you're going to do it, you've got incredible examples. You've got the BRG as an organization where you can learn from. You're going to apply. You're going to use it more often than not in a very quick and meaningful way.

So I'm really bullish about what that means over the next two, three, four, five years. I think that there'll be quite a few, and I

think it'll surprise us. I think as I alluded to in the top of the pyramid, I think this will become the gold standard for branding. And I very strongly suspect that it'll outdo what happened in the first round for .brands.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Thanks. And you make a great point that going into the last round, ICANN was saying that we were going to have another round a year later. And I'm guessing that nobody's going to believe that next time, and they will not be sitting it out hoping for that to happen. So we do have a couple of good questions at a queue that I think we can get to. The first one is, what are your plans to increase penetration in Africa with .brands? If anybody has comments on that. That's a question that was put into the chat, and it was directed to all of us.

CREWS GORE: You know, we talk with companies, and it's ultimately the company's decision if they want to apply or if they purchase the .brand in the past. So it becomes their strategies. So from the BRG perspective, I mean, we educate everyone around the world on the benefits of a .brand, but it ultimately comes down to that business in that region to apply and then make the decision to use it. Yeah.

TONY KIRSCH: I still just add to that Crews. I think that there is a logical and probably a reasonable argument that in developing nations in the first round that there wasn't enough notification and support. So I know that that's a part of what's been working through sub-pro and the next round. But I think the BRG is doing as much as we can to prepare resources and have these available for companies around the world.

Nonetheless, I think when ICANN launches the next round, significant attention needs to be paid to promoting not just .brands, but new TLD potential for applications and benefits to across the world, not just to folks who attend an ICANN meeting or happen to live in certain parts of the world where it's more popular.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Thanks, Tony. Good question from Roland's La Plant. I'll say, Mike, do you want to talk on that?

MICHAEL FLEMMING: No. So I just wanted to quickly jump on the question of that about at penetration Africa. That was asked, I believe, during Nisha's presentation. So I'm going to take it with a different perspective about, I guess, utilizing a brand TLD in Africa, not necessarily an

African company. But one thing that I can point out is that Honda did a while back was that they did not have a presence for of the countries there, but they did utilize the two letter code for one of the countries in Africa in order for that. So that is an example of how Africa, I think, benefited from at least .honda's perspective.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Okay. We're not going to get to all these questions because we only have a few minutes left. So I'm going to have to use a little editorial discussion here, and we'll go on the order that I saw them at least. So we got Roland La Plant asked the question, does Sky or Fox believe their .brand is giving them a competitive advantage?

NISHA PARKASH: I guess I'll answer that. It depends on your interpretation of competitive advantage. I think I'd say that with .com being a saturated space, yeah. Because at the moment, we don't need to pay thousands of pounds for a domain. We've got our own registry. So I think from that point of view, if you look at it from that perspective, then, yeah, it's a huge advantage. We're not being bullied to be paying thousands of pounds for names now. We have an option.

CREWS GORE: And I would just say from our side, the security wise that does give us a competitive advantage. We're able to do with having our .fox, and limit any other domain extension that's being used. That is a big benefit for us.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Okay. I think we need to move on because we only have a couple more minutes and wanted to cover off a couple of things, including some very important news about a cocktail party coming up shortly. Go ahead.

CREWS GORE: Yeah. I just wanted to give a talk about our history, and who we are, what the BRG is. So we were founded in 2013 by a few people, a few of them are in this room, to support the unique needs that a brand would need for their .brand domain extension. So we were able to help successfully put through Specification 13, which is the specification that allows for .brand to apply and have certain restrictions lifted.

And the BRG is included of many company representatives. And we've assisted in dozens of .brands launching. So we are a collective group of brands and domain managers where we help with strategic support that goals for policy support and compliance. So it's a great collective group of individuals where

we are able to share ideas in a safe space. We're able to talk one another, learn and move forward and use our .brand the best way that we can.

So here's just our board made up and key focus areas. Yes, BRG, we're trying to promote the benefits of .brands to the community and across the broader digital landscape. And we are trying to help out different members to help them understand how they can best use their .brand. We do that by sharing ideas and also giving feedback. Things that Nisha does at Skye.

I definitely listen to and we can see how we or another brand would want to use it in a similar way. And we're always looking to grow our membership because that brings in new ideas. And that's where we really are, a collaborative space of brands and how we want to use .brand. And we are continuously supporting ICANN to push for that next round because we do have members that are ready to apply for that next round. So that's something that we are eagerly waiting for, and we're trying to push that this happens in the next few years.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Michael.

MICHAEL FLEMMING: Oh, no. I was just going to tell Crews to talk about our associate membership as well since we're getting a question about that. Its good timing.

CREWS GORE: Perfect. All right. So then I'll go to this next slide. So we have two different kind of memberships. We have the regular member that if you already have your .brand, you can join and have voting rights. And as an associate member, as a member that's looking to apply in the next round. So it's a great space and great association to join. If you're looking to gain help or understand how to launch a .brand and what is needed. That one question. All right. Did you want to pick out any other questions?

MIKE RODENBAUGH: No, no, more questions because we are basically out of time, we're a minute over, but these are these are the things that we offer, the services that we offer to our members, and including our associate numbers, of course. And I think the only other news is to, what's the next line? Oh, yes. That's it. All right. I thought we had a slide about our cocktail party today. No? Oh, well. Never mind then.

CREWS GORE: 6:30 cocktail party, telepads.

MIKE RODENBAUGH: Okay. So we did not get to all the questions because we don't have unlimited time. But for those who asked questions in the chat, if you could feel free to reach out to any of us, you have the email address here info@brandregistrygroup.org, and we will certainly answer your questions that way. Thank you. And thank you everybody for coming to our session.

SUE SCHULER: Thank you. We can end the recording.

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