UASG

UASG & Local Engagement

Executive Summary

Raising awareness of the issues around Universal Acceptance will be more effective when local software developers and their direct customers are aware of the issues and build more modern and robust approaches to Accepting, Validating, Storing, Processing and Displaying domain names – including the Top Level Domain Names.

Background

Universal Acceptance (UA) is the state where all valid domain names and email addresses are accepted, validated, stored, processed and displayed correctly and consistently by all Internet- enabled applications, devices and systems. Due to the rapidly changing domain name landscape, many systems do not recognize or appropriately process new domain names, primarily because they may be more than three characters in length or in a non-ASCII format. The same is true for email addresses that incorporate these new extensions.

The Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG), supported by Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), is a community-led, Internet industry-wide initiative working on creating awareness and identifying and resolving problems associated with the universal acceptance of domain names. The purpose of these efforts is to help ensure a consistent and positive experience for Internet users globally.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a model for establishment and operation of a local UA initiative.

Key components of a local model

Focal Point

There should be one organisation and one person within that organisation that is passionate about the issue and can act as the local catalyst and evangelist.

This person should be articulate and well respected, should understand the issue, and should be able to devote the requisite time to the effort.

Getting a Group

A group which will allow amplification of the message should be gathered.   This group should include:

Trade, Professional and Community Bodies	Academic & Community Groups	Government
• Local Computer Society • Local Open Source Community • ISP Associations • Computer Supplier Trade organisations • Association of Government IT Managers • Very large industry groups – Banking, Insurance, Health, Manufacturing. • Chambers of Commerce	• Chapters of the Internet Society • At Large Structures • Universities and other Tertiary Training Institutes IT Programs, IT Departments, and Language and Cultural studies departments • Association of Vice-Chancellors • Indigenous IT Societies	• Ministers – ICT, Business, Industry, Indigenous Affairs, Culture (and their relevant Ministries) • Ministry of ICT • Government CIO • Local Government Associations • Local Government CIOs
Internet Industry	**Media**	**Others**
• ISPs, Email & Hosting providers • ICT Consultants • ccTLD • gTLD with local operations • Registrars (local and global)	• IT industry publications – newspapers, magazines • Technology Bloggers • Business media • Indigenous Culture advocates •	• Community leaders in the ICT, Business, Cultural, Indigenous Language topics. • Well known and highly visible local ICT businesses

Creating the Message

The UA initiative is about raising awareness with the software community that the Internet has changed markedly since 2010 and that the domain name space has changed.

There are now more than 1,000 top level domain names that may not have been visible when existing software was developed.

Universal Acceptance

Software developers need to take this into account as they develop new applications and as they revised existing applications.

The UASG will be developing a variety of materials, including technical guidebooks. The UASG produces materials in English.   These should be translated for the local community. And, similarly, local materials should be shared with other national initiatives where they are relevant.

Raising Awareness

The operation of the local initiative should be like an ever expanding spiral.

Start with a small group who know each other and will be most likely to work well together.

Develop a work plan of creating relevant local material and spreading the message.

Start organising some workshops to discuss the issue, demonstrate the lack of UA Readiness, and share the experiences of others who have already started down the path.

Identify some tangible and achievable activities that can be assigned to individuals.

Set some dates and review.

Repeat with an expanding base.

Celebrate local success through targeted media.

Measuring Results

The UASG has identified some measures of success. These include checking popular websites to see if they accept a variety of email addresses for registration.

Local websites can be included in the measurement process.

Reporting

It will be useful for the local initiative, other local initiatives, and the global UASG community to produce regular reports.

These reports should include:
- Nature of those engaged (numbers, types of organisations and people)
- Activities of engagement (newsletters, mailing lists, media reports)
- Measures of success – data based and anecdotal.

Universal Acceptance