



Universal Acceptance

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Universal Acceptance?

Universal Acceptance (UA) is a technical compliance process that ensures that all domain names and email addresses can be used by all Internet-enabled applications, devices and systems. UA is essential for the continued expansion of the Internet.

By making all systems interoperable, UA provides a gateway to the next billion Internet users. It enables governments and societies to better serve their communities through the use of an increasing number of new domains, including non-Latin-based, language-specific domain names in Arabic, Chinese and many other scripts.

From a technical standpoint, Universal Acceptance is about the acceptance, validation, processing, storing and displaying of all domain names equally, consistently and correctly.

How serious of a problem is this?

It is an important issue for the expansion of the Internet. Since 2006, the landscape for domain names has changed markedly – in overall number of top-level domain names (TLDs) available, TLD character length and scripts available. But Internet-enabled applications, devices and systems are often still developed using rules created over 20 years ago.

UA is such an important issue that the world's leading technology firms, such as Apple, GoDaddy, Google, Microsoft and Verisign, are devoting time, resources and technical expertise to helping companies become UA-ready.

What is the UASG?

The UASG is the Universal Acceptance Steering Group. It was founded in February 2015 and tasked with undertaking activities that will effectively promote the Universal Acceptance of all valid domain names and email addresses. The group is made up of representatives from more than 120 companies (including Afiliast, Apple, CNNIC, Eco, i2 Coalition, Google, Microsoft, NIXI, THNIC and Yandex), governments and community groups.

How do you propose to get companies to act?

Many forward-thinking companies see the benefits of becoming UA-ready and already have efforts underway. It is important to note that becoming UA-ready does not need to be a separate



project; it can be integrated into normal, ongoing maintenance companies undertake to ensure their systems are current. To help developers understand the basic tenets of UA and learn practical tips on how to become UA-ready, we created both a quick guide and comprehensive guide. Both can be found at www.uasg.tech/documents.

Which companies are currently UA-ready?

We're just starting to see companies make the changes to become UA-ready. Since it is a best practice and not a mandate, there is not a complete list of companies that have made the switch. However, companies like Apple, Google, ICANN, Microsoft and others are actively working to get their systems UA-ready.

What percentage of the Internet is UA-ready?

The core Domain Name System (DNS) is UA-ready, by design and measurement. APNIC Labs confirmed this in a 2015 study. Now, the Universal Acceptance Steering Group is working with companies, governments and organizations to ensure their systems and applications are UA-ready.

Precisely who needs to take action to make a company UA-ready?

We're driving change by talking with CIOs. These executives can raise awareness about UA and the benefits it can provide to their organizations. At an implementation level, the system architects and the rest of the development teams will need to review their applications and make changes where necessary. We provide guidelines in our Quick Guides, which outline easy ways to become UA-ready.

Aside from companies, is there anyone else who needs to take action on UA?

Yes. People who develop software that connects to the Internet's domain name system have an important role to play in ensuring the adoption of UA. Software and application design are fundamental to its success.

What disadvantages will a company face if it is not UA-ready?

Universal Acceptance is essential for the continued expansion of the Internet. We see three core benefits of UA-readiness:

Enablement for culture, society and economics: UA provides a gateway to the next billion Internet users, as it enables government and societies to better serve their populations through the use of an increasing number of new Internet domains and non-Latin based, language-specific domain names (including those in Chinese, Arabic and many other scripts). In addition, with over a thousand new top-level domain

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names in use, people are choosing domain names that better reflect their identities. Photographers may choose a name on .photography, lawyers on .lawyer., or pharmacies on .pharmacy.

Future-proofed Internet systems: To excel in the long run, businesses need to ensure their systems work with the common infrastructure of the Internet – the Domain Name System). When businesses are UA-ready, it means that their systems and services will work harmoniously with the continuously expanding domain name space and will help set those organizations up for future opportunities and success by supporting their customers using their customers' chosen identities.

Better user experiences: UA-ready websites, applications and services lead to better user experiences. Email addresses in any language, on any top-level domain are more likely to reach their destination and not bounce. It also allows customers with new TLD suffixes to more successfully use the site and its forms.

Will non-UA-readiness result in websites, apps, etc. not working?

Yes, websites, apps, etc. that are not UA-ready will not work for people who want to use the new domain names and email addresses. When companies analyze why people fail to convert on a website or application when they enter in their personal details, UA-compliance issues could be the reason. For people using domain names in their native languages and / or some of the new domain names, many websites are not recognizing them as valid addresses and people cannot complete their transactions.

Where are you in the process of developing the test cases?

We have created test domains, built landing pages, and developed a list of email addresses that companies can use with their systems to see if they are accepted. These include ASCII Local Part (Info1@ua-test.link, info2@ua-test.technology and info4@ua-test.世界) and Unicode Local Part (测试5@普遍接受-测试.世界, 测试4@ua-test.世界). These test materials are available in UASG004: Use Cases for UA Readiness Evaluation, which can be downloaded at www.uasg.tech/documents.

What industries most urgently need to make sure they're UA-ready?

This issue is not limited to one industry or region. It impacts individuals and organizations (businesses, governments and NGOs) that have applications that enable them to interact with people using the Internet. Industries with stakeholders (clients, suppliers etc) operating in communities that don't use the English script should move particularly swiftly. We are already seeing this happen in places like China, Taiwan and Thailand. Professionals (doctors, real estate agents, photographers, etc.) and communities (Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, London, etc.) that are associated with new top-level domains should also become early adopters.