

# EAI Format Usability Discussion

Universal Acceptance Steering Group

ICANN 57 Hyderabad

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# Topic

Can a prohibited alternate input format enable ASCII-only users to contact EAI users?

# Internationalized Email Formats

- Email Address Internationalization (RFC 6530 - 6533)
  - Both portions of the address – the **local part** and the **domain name part** – are in Unicode

用戶@example.みんな

- IDN-style Email Address
  - Related to RFC 3492
  - Replaces the Unicode domain name portion with **Punycode domain name**
  - From RFC 3492, these representations *\*should\** be equivalent, but there is no guarantee that all software and services will treat them the same

用戶@example.xn-q9jyb4c

# Good Practices for EAI From UASG-007

- Users should be allowed, but not required, to enter ASCII Compatible Encoded (or “Punycode”) text in place of its Unicode equivalent
- Convert non-Unicode data to Unicode before display.
- For example, the end user should see “example.みんな” as opposed to “example.xn-q9jyb4c”.
- Don’t generate IDN-Style email addresses, but do be able to handle them if presented by someone else’s software.
- Robust UA-ready software and services may be able to handle and treat all these formats, even those which are not RFC-compliant.
- UA-ready software should generate true EAI email addresses only.

# EAI “Chicken & Egg” problem

- Problem: How can I begin sending to an EAI-enabled colleague who uses a script which isn't installed on my computer?
- Typical solutions:
  - Colleague sends me a mail message, and I save their contact information in my address book.
    - Similar to sharing mobile phone numbers
  - Colleague and I share addresses via a UA-Ready 3<sup>rd</sup> party service
    - E.g. future version of LinkedIn
    - But still assumes that my colleague has an ASCII-searchable account

# This Prohibited Format May be Helpful

- Using Punycode equivalents in the **local part** of the email name is not allowed by EAI and is not defined by RFC 3492

ユーザー@example.みんな ✓

xn--youq53b@example.xn--q9jyb4 ✗

- If robust email software allows the entry and conversion of this format, any ASCII-only user can create EAI address book contacts

# Discussion

- Should UASG encourage UA-ready software and services to Accept the prohibited email address format and automatically convert it to EAI?