

Have your say!

Please give us your feedback on these proposals by answering the following questions:

What domains should we release?

This document contains respondents between 152 and 152 inclusive.

Do you agree that two letter domain names should be released for registration in co.uk, org.uk, net.uk and me.uk as recommended by the PAB?

- Yes
- No

Do you agree that one character domain names should be released for registration in co.uk, org.uk, net.uk and me.uk as recommended by the PAB?

- Yes
- No

Do you agree that existing country codes under ISO 3166-1 such as fr, de, es, us etc be released for registration in co.uk, org.uk, net.uk and me.uk as recommended by the PAB?

- Yes
- No

We outlined the technical reasons why com.co.uk, org.co.uk and net.co.uk should not be released. Do you agree with these exceptions?

- Yes
- No

Do you agree that existing generic top level domains (e.g. biz, info) should be released for registration in co.uk, org.uk, net.uk and me.uk as recommended by the PAB?

- Yes
- No

Do you agree that existing .uk second level domains (e.g. co, org, ac, me, ltd) should also be released for registration in co.uk, org.uk, net.uk and me.uk?

- Yes
- No

Do you agree that "uk" should continue to be reserved from registration in co.uk, org.uk, net.uk and me.uk as recommended by the PAB?

- Yes
- No

What process should we use for releasing domains?

We propose to take the same approach for two letter, one character and the other previously unreleased domains (e.g. pro.co.uk). Do you agree with this proposal?

- Yes
 No

The PAB recommended a two stage release process: a first round for holders of registered trademarks, and a second round for names not taken by rights holders, open to holders of unregistered rights. Do you agree with this recommendation?

- Yes
 No

The PAB recommended a cut off date for qualifying rights for IP rights holders. They suggested 1996 and 2002 as possible dates. What do you think would be a suitable cut off date?

Would agree with the PAB's recommendation

We propose that initially commercial organisations should have priority in.co.uk and charities and not for profit organisations should have priority in org.uk. Do you agree with this approach?

- Yes
 No

We propose to hold a sealed bid auction for domain names where rights holders are competing, and for domain names not taken up by rights holders. Do you think there is a fairer way to allocate the first registration of these domain names?

- Yes
 No

Please give comments

response to 11 :

In principle, commercial organizations should have priority in .co.uk and NFPs would take precedence in .org.uk distribution. However, the question is who is going to check the status of each organization applicant? There is such a wide variety of organizational formats (and some are not one or the other!), that it would be practically impossible and certainly onerous, to try to ensure that these guidelines are adhered to in practice by prospective new registrants. The cost of ensuring a rigorous process for such checks would be high, particularly if outsourced and could detract from the available funds raised by the release for the Nominet Trust.

response to 12:

As a global leader in domain name services provision, Sedo would not recommend sealed bid auctions as a fair allocation method. Sealed bid auctions do not provide transparency for participants or for external stakeholders. As the national registry, it is important that Nominet ensures the chosen process is completely transparent and ideally, that it is accessible to all. During sealed bid auctions, applicants will generally submit a bid of the most they can afford, in an effort to secure the domain. This has obvious advantages for organizations in a position to make a large offer and does not give others the same opportunity, as the domain is not available at a fair market price. As such, sealed bid auctions tend to artificially inflate the value of domain names and thereby has knock-on effects on the remainder of the domains, for the resale market and for any potential disputes at a later date.

We propose to hold a Dutch auction for the general release (“landrush”) of domains not taken up by rights holders. Do you think there is a fairer way to allocate the first registration of these domain names?

Yes

No

Please give comments, particularly in relation to the starting price for any Dutch auction.

Dutch auctions do not recognize the inherent differences in quality between domain names. For example, some combinations of two letters will be more valuable/of higher quality than others due to demand, their use as acronyms or their “brandability”; such differences could not equitably be reflected in a Dutch auction system.

A Dutch auction could result in domains being made available at an undervalued rate and/or in being overvalued.

An RFP process could be implemented for a selection of the domains available for allocation and we would then recommend an open auction for the remainder. An open, transparent auction, where domain names are available to everyone to purchase at a fair market value would be the most equitable release process under these circumstances

We plan to run this whole exercise on a cost recovery basis, and any surplus funds generated from auctions would be donated to Nominet Trust, a charitable organisation established by Nominet with the objects including the education, relief of financial hardship and protection of children in the area of the Internet and information technology. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes

No

Comments

Yes, partially. We propose that the proceeds from the auction go partially to the Nominet Trust and in part to fund diversification opportunity exploration, so that Nominet can “help the development of safety and security on the Internet”, “contribute to the development of new Internet technologies” and “enhance value”. By doing this, Nominet could reduce any risk of having to potentially increase domain registration fees to make up any shortfall in the future as the .uk market matures and new gTLDs may have an adverse effect on the demand for .uk. Nominet could utilize an auction as part of the distribution of reserved, short .uk names to ensure its ability to keep registration costs of .uk low, thus ensuring a low barrier of entry to new UK online businesses and other stakeholders.

Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the proposed release of these domain names?

These domain names would be very valuable to potential owners due to their branding potential and the simple fact that they are extremely memorable. Such domains could fetch six- or seven-figures each. We would warn against a simple landrush, or a first come, first serve basis for the distribution of these names. FCFS is not a truly democratic or equitable process as it favours those who have software and computer programmes written to monitor and immediately register newly available domains. Sedo believes that these high value domain names should not be offered to only large corporations or those with a technology advantage, but to any .uk stakeholder that is interested in purchasing them for a fair market value.

Sedo proposes that after the rights holder phase, the remaining available names be auctioned in an open to all, transparent online process to the highest bidders.

This process would enable all .uk stakeholders to have a true opportunity to purchase these rare .uk domain names and further Nominet's goals of making the Internet something "which everyone can be part of".

In our opinion, an auction, which is accessible to all is the only way to ensure the process is completely fair and unbiased. Auctions are widely recognized as the fairest way to release domains – below is a link to an ICANN

<http://www.icann.org/en/topics/economic-case-auctions-08aug08-en.pdf>

Ultimately, a combination of a rights-holder process, an RFP process for "special" domains and an auction for the remainder of the domains to be released would be, in our opinion and experience as global market leader for domain name services, be the most equitable, fair and transparent release mechanism for .uk short reserved names.

12. Please give us your contact details

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