

1 What do you believe is a function of a domain name?

The function is to provide an 'address' in a form that masks the details of the technical implementation and does not vary. A good domain name would arguably reasonably suggest the name and/or nature of the business or interests of a the company, organisation or individual. The TLD should reflect the location or operating market of the owner of the domain name, and any SLD should indicate something of the nature of the domain owner.

I believe it is rather unfortunate that .com, .net, and .org domains names ever came into being with the latter two being a particular embarrassment.

2 Would you class yourself as working in, or being part of the ISP/network provider industry?

Not at present. However in the past I have worked for a company involved in online internet services that also set up a 'virtual ISP' targetted at its users. That is to say it was marketing internet dial-up and e-mail services provided by an ISP under its own branding and not providing the infrastructure itself. Despite the wish of the technical staff to do the 'right thing' and use .net.uk domain names for the servers and for associated support e-mail addresses the request to register .net.uk domain names were turned down flat. I consider this to be unfortunate as the proposed usage was entirely in keeping with the spirit of the .net.uk domain and could only have improved awareness of .net.uk with the wider internet user community.

3 Do you associate ".net.uk" with an ISP/network provider-type company?

Yes.

4 On a scale of 1 to 5, do you believe that the "average Internet user" associates ".net.uk" with an ISP/network provider? (1 = No association, 5 = Strong association)

2 at most.

5 (a) How far do you see .net.uk as a duplicate for .co.uk, .net or other TLDs/SLDs? (b) Would this be different if anyone could register a .net.uk domain?

(a) Not at all.

(b) If there were no restrictions it would be a totally worthless domain.

6 How would you attempt to define an "Internet Service Provider (ISP)" and what would you say are typical characteristics of an ISP? Are these objective criteria which are easy to verify automatically?

I would say an ISP is a company, organisation or even individual supplying internet services to others. These are end-user services such as connectivity, e-mail and hosting services. They are not objective criteria unfortunately.

7 How would you attempt to define a “Network Provider” and what would you say are typical characteristics of an Network Provider? Are these objective criteria which are easy to verify automatically?

I would consider a network provider as a company, organisation or even individual that supplies backbone internet connectivity to others. It is not mutually exclusive with being an ISP. There are probably some objective criteria that could be concocted but these might also be met by ISPs and even larger organisations with elaborate corporate networks. The latter isn't necessarily a problem.

8 Do you believe there are sufficient differences which can be clearly defined between an ISP and Network Provider? If you believe the domain should be restricted to some definition, should this be inclusive of both an ISP and Network Provider, or one of them?

I think it is possible and indeed common to be both an ISP and a network provider. The domain should be inclusive of both.

9 What general option do you favour, and why?

- a. Close .net.uk completely to new registrations.
- b. Restrict .net.uk for some definition of ISP/network operator with strict eligibility criteria.
- c. Open .net.uk with a charter to indicate its suggested use for ISPs/network operators but without a restriction enforcing such a recommendation.
- d. Open .net.uk with no specific charter (everyone is encouraged to register)
- e. Another option. (please explain)

Ideally there would be something between (b) and (c). The present rules disallow perfectly sensible and reasonable usage of '.net.uk'. Unfortunately (b) is too restrictive and (c) too open.

10 If you believe there should be a restriction of some kind, how should this be structured? (see previous page for some ideas).

I'd be tempted to open up usage of '.net.uk' domains to any Nominet tag holders, and make respecting the intended usage of '.net.uk' a condition of being a tag holder. It is the association of .net.uk with provision of network services and infrastructure that is the key.

11 If there is a restriction on the registrant, do you believe that the rules for “.net.uk” should require some kind of presence in the UK?

Yes, though this could be virtual presence using pricing in sterling and UK telephone numbers.

12 If registration of ".net.uk" domains is restricted to a specific type of organisation, should its use (e.g. subdomains, e-mail addresses, etc.) also be restricted [for names registered under such rules]?

Yes.

13 If the .net.uk SLD is opened up for registration with no or very limited controls, would the benefits of more registrations be defeated by any problems such as more defensive/duplicate registrations?

I do not see more registrations being a benefit in itself. Opening '.net.uk' and also damaging to the entire UK SLD structure.

Graham Johnson, February 2006.