

L. Communications with usTLD Users

NeuStar is committed to maintaining open lines of communication with usTLD users and creating appropriate mechanisms by which the public can suggest or recommend additional policies or procedures for the usTLD.

NeuStar recognizes the importance of managing and improving outreach and communication with locality-based usTLD users and to members of the United States Internet community. This cannot be a simple one-way communication. Instead, the usTLD Administrator must support a multi-stakeholder exchange of information and ideas to ensure that the usTLD is able to continually address the needs of the usTLD users while also meeting all usTLD policy requirements.

During the early years of NeuStar's tenure as usTLD Administrator, we established a usTLD Policy Council to serve as the mechanism by which the public at large could comment on and shape policy with respect to the usTLD. For a variety of reasons, NeuStar and the DoC recognized that the usTLD Policy Council was not as effective as hoped at shaping policy and, as such, the council became defunct in 2003. The group has never been officially decommissioned by the DoC. NeuStar believes that it is important to formally decommission the usTLD Policy Council. However, there must be an alternative communications methodology to allow NeuStar and usTLD users to exchange information and ideas, including those in the locality-based structure.

After exploring numerous options, NeuStar believes that the best solution involves the use of RSS Feeds and the creation of a usTLD Blog aimed at the dissemination of current events and news related to the usTLD space coupled with the establishment of an interactive usTLD Message Board. Our intent is to eliminate the policy council and replace it with a forum in which all usTLD registrants could participate, including a special section for the locality structure users. The usTLD Message Board would allow all usTLD registrants to post their ideas, comments, questions and concerns on anything related to the usTLD, including a special section for locality structure users.

General Requirements

NeuStar intends to implement a solution that is accessible, easy-to-use and effective in disseminating and receiving information of relevance to the usTLD.

usTLD Blog

A large number of public companies have established blogs to communicate to a large audience about news, events, etc. with respect to their companies. See <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/>, <http://csr.blogs.mcdonalds.com/default.asp>, <http://direct2dell.com/one2one/default.aspx>,

Highlights

- **NeuStar proposes to establish a usTLD blog to disseminate information regarding the usTLD to the community.**
- **A usTLD message board will be established to collect information and suggestions from the usTLD users.**
- **In addition, RSS feed technology will be utilized to make it easier for usTLD users to receive updates on the operations and policies of the usTLD.**

<http://www.orablogs.com/orablogs/>. It is estimated that 40% of all fortune 500 companies have blogs.

With respect to the usTLD Blog, we envision that a limited number of key individuals at NeuStar would be authorized to post short entries regarding news and information about the usTLD, including the usTLD locality-based structure. After registering as a user, readers of the blog will be allowed to comment on the entries. In order to register, users must be listed as the registrant of a usTLD domain name (or usTLD locality name). Once we have authenticated that the user is in fact a usTLD domain name registrant, he or she will be provided a user name and an initial password. This username/password will also permit access to the usTLD Message Board.

NeuStar anticipates that posts in the usTLD Blog will include a variety of topics such as:

- usTLD websites in use
- FAQ answers
- Customer Support issues
- new services in the usTLD
- events
- other announcements

NeuStar proposes that four senior members of the usTLD Team serve as a "Core Team" for the usTLD Blog. The Core Team will include Eric Brown, Keith Drazek, John Spengler and Jeff Neuman. (Brief bios and resumes on each of these individuals have been included in Section A of this proposal). Each of these individuals must review and approve every post before a post to the blog may be made. NeuStar will work with the DoC to develop standard processes to ensure that relevant information is released in an appropriate manner and timeframe.

Registered usTLD users will have the ability to comment on each of the posts. NeuStar will serve as Board Administrator and will establish a strict terms of use for the boards. We will collaborate with the DoC to ensure that the terms of use are in accordance with usTLD expectations and objectives. NeuStar will remove any post that violates the terms of use. Although NeuStar will review the posts for the use of profanity, and for violations of the terms of use, we will not edit any posts. In addition, as a "publisher" of materials on the usTLD Blog (and the usTLD Message Board), NeuStar will have to respond to notices of violations of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and possible remove any offending posts.

usTLD Message Board

In order to establish open communication with users of the usTLD, NeuStar will establish a usTLD Message Board as a mechanism for policy suggestion and development.

As with the usTLD Blog, only registered users will be allowed to post information to the message board. Members of the Core Team will monitor the discussions on the message board and will respond to legitimate questions when appropriate. Such responses will carry along with it a special designation so that the public will know in fact that the post is coming from an official NeuStar representative.

As with the blog, we will not edit posts and will only take down posts that have been determined to violate the terms of use. NeuStar will also implement a simple method to allow anyone to report a case of abuse or violation of the terms of use.

NeuStar will actively monitor and participate in discussions on the usTLD Message Board and will collect any relevant and/or constructive policy ideas for consideration.

We view both the usTLD Blog and Message Board as key outreach tools to help promote awareness and consumer involvement in the development and refinement of usTLD policies and procedures, particularly in the usTLD locality-based structure.

RSS Feeds

Technology for easily communicating information in an efficient and machine readable format has progressed significantly in recent years. One such technology is RSS (Really Simple Syndication). RSS is a mechanism to provide a continuous feed of information. Users read RSS content by using software called "feed readers" or "aggregators." The user subscribes to the RSS feed, and their client software then periodically checks the feed for new or updated information.

To manage the ever growing communications between the usTLD Administrator and the Registrars and Delegated Managers, we are proposing to create an RSS feed to provide registrars with information related to unplanned outages or other registry events. In addition, separate RSS Feeds will be available to all usTLD users to receive updates to the information contained on the usTLD Blog and usTLD Message Board.

The RSS feeds would not replace our normal email announcements or mechanisms to communicate with Customer Support; rather they will be alternative methods for usTLD users to receive important messages regarding the operations and policies of the usTLD.