



THE ICANN GNSO “Business Constituency” 2010



Photography © Michelle Chaplow

ICANN Board's public comment fora and public Board meetings are critical parts of business interaction.

What is the Business Constituency?

The Business Constituency (BC) is the voice of commercial Internet users within ICANN – the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers. ICANN is a global body with responsibility for certain policies that relate to the domain name system (DNS). Domain names are the names consumers and businesses rely upon to find websites for legitimate products and services on the Internet.

Do Business users make a difference?

A strong business presence in ICANN is critically important. The voice of business – as a user of the Internet and the DNS – needs to be heard.





ICANN Board and GAC chairman at a BC outreach event



BC members present a policy paper at an ICANN meeting

Who are the Members?

The Business Constituency includes businesses – from large multi national corporations to micro enterprises, and associations representing businesses of all kinds, including business customers of domain names and other services related to electronic commerce.

2010 BC Executive Committee

Chair: Marilyn Cade

Vice Chair Policy Coordination: Steve DelBianco

Vice Chair Finance & Operations: Chris Chaplow

GNSO Representatives: Zahid Jamil & Mike Rodenbaugh

CSG Representative: Sarah Deutsch

Why should we join the Business Constituency?

Do you believe the private sector should continue to have a voice at ICANN to guide and influence ICANN policy and activities?

There is a real threat, without the voice of business users, that certain functions now performed by ICANN related to governance of domain names and IP addressing could be taken over by governments or become more 'intergovernmental' in their functioning or decision making. Any change from the private sector led, multi-stakeholder governance model embodied within ICANN could lead to a dramatic slowing down in decision making, and limit the voice of the commercial sector that has built and operates the Internet.

Are you involved in e-commerce and delivering online services or applications to users?

All BC users are interested in ensuring a stable, reliable and resilient Internet and e-commerce platform for business. You can contribute to this through participating in ICANN, helping to make ICANN more effective and improving its accountability and transparency. Business users rely on a stable and secure Internet and ecommerce experience, one that serves their users and customers on a global basis. Through your participation in ICANN, and in the Business Constituency, your company will make a difference on behalf of business.

Do you use a web site for your business?

We all recognize that the world wants to be online.

Domain names and IP addresses are part of ICANN's core coordination functions. For instance, it is ICANN that selects the top level names, such as .info, .biz, .eu, .jobs and .travel. ICANN is engaged in an imminent and major expansion of the top level generic space (for example, .eco or .music), and is introducing internationalized [non-Latin script] domain names. Both these changes portend a dramatic shift in how the DNS works, and both will have profound implications for business users and the customers they serve. The BC is a critical player in determining the rules for the expansion that is planned.

Do you ever need to find out who owns a domain name?

ICANN is currently debating funding to study the accuracy of the databases that provide information on who owns various domain names (known as the "WHOIS" databases). ICANN's Compliance team is investigating abuses and failures by domain name registrants and registrars to provide accurate WHOIS information. Information about who registers a domain name is a critical part of how businesses deal with fraud and abuse in the DNS. These issues affect businesses of all sizes, along with law enforcement, all of whom require open and accurate WHOIS information. The BC takes a rational and balanced approach to dealing with WHOIS issues; our voice provides an informed view on why WHOIS matters.

Have you had problems transferring a domain name?

The BC recently participated in discussions to introduce a streamlined procedure for users to transfer their business from one registrar to another.



BC meeting addressed by Board member



BC member offers opinions at public meeting

Mission Statement

- The Constituency fully represents the views of the Internet business user community,
- ICANN policy positions are consistent with the development of business via an Internet that is stable, secure and reliable while promoting consumer confidence,
- ICANN policy positions derive from broad stakeholder participation in a common forum for suppliers and users.



Do you care about governance of the Internet overall?

ICANN's existence and its stable, predictable, and accountable functioning is critical to ensure that the Internet continues to be managed and coordinated by a private sector led multi-stakeholder approach. Helping to improve and strengthen ICANN helps business in its objectives to ensure the continued leadership of the private sector in overall Internet governance.

- Root scaling study – implications for business users.
- Restructuring of GNSO (a key policy-making body within ICANN representing various constituencies and interests, including business users).
- Board and other Committee Reviews.
- Contributing to the Nominating Committee Process at ICANN.
- Affirmation of Commitments Reviews – Accountability and Transparency.

GNSO gTLD Policy Issues

- Major expansion of the gTLD domain space to introduce large numbers of new gTLDs and the addition of Internationalized Domain names –non-Latin/ASCII TLDs.
- Updates and changes to Registry Agreements.
- The transfer and deletion of domain names.
- Bad faith use of domain names.
- The ability of businesses and law enforcement to use WHOIS data, and several important studies on WHOIS.
- A possible revision to the UDRP - the way a business can get back a domain name being used in bad faith.

How does the Business Constituency work?

- Regular physical meetings coincident with ICANN global meetings.
- Telephone conferences to build awareness, discuss key issues, and develop consensus on key issues.
- Frequent use of the BC e-mail list to learn about and debate issues.

If you answer yes to any of the above – and if you are willing to help to develop BC positions that can inform and guide ICANN's development of policy and its activities, join the Business Constituency. Membership is the way to ensure that the business voice and concerns are taken into account in ICANN.

Do Business users make a difference?

Your views matter: ICANN has over 20 active policy issues underway that affect business interests in a variety of ways, including new generic top level domain names ("gTLDs"), plus other critical public comments on issues regarding ICANN's stability and issues related to the stability of the Internet itself:

Governance of ICANN

- The mission and strategic plan of ICANN.
- ICANN's role in security and stability of the DNS and the Internet.



Elected councilor addresses the meeting



BC and Board members chat informally

How do members contribute?

BC members play critical roles by:

- Commenting on ICANN proposals for policy changes.
- Developing policy positions in the GNSO's Council.
- Input into ICANN public comment process
- Actively participating on the BC e-mail lists and attending BC conference calls.
- Becoming issue managers/Rapporteurs within BC on specific policy topics and guiding the development of BC positions.
- Working to develop policy recommendations for gTLD Policy via Working Groups by representing the BC's interests and views.
- Standing for leadership positions in ICANN bodies.
- Reaching out to others in business as "ambassadors" to raise awareness and increase business engagement in ICANN and in the Business Constituency itself.
- Acting as a liaison for information exchange and interaction on behalf of the Business Constituency with other GNSO constituencies.
- Interacting and speaking on behalf of business users concerns and views with Board and ICANN staff, and other stakeholders, such as the Governmental Advisory Committee.

Membership Categories

Category 1 Companies (which are not micro enterprises) or Associations spanning more than one ICANN region.

Category 2 Nationally focused associations or nationally based companies spanning one ICANN region.

Category 3 Micro enterprises defined as companies with both less than 10 employees and a turnover of less than €0.5 million:

Group Membership

The subsidiaries or national affiliates of organizations who are paid-up members in categories 1 or 2.

How to become a member?

Complete the application form which can be downloaded from the website www.bizconst.org or email info@bizconst.org

The "Business Constituency" is the common name of the "Comercial and Business Users Constituency" of the GNSO of ICANN, Marina del Rey, CA 90292-6601 USA

What members say about their BC membership:

"We view our BC membership as a strategic part of our business. We urge other companies and associations to join the Business Constituency and participate in the policy making process. We can't take the Internet for granted." **Ronald N. Andruff, RNA Partners, USA**

"Virtually all ICC members are directly or indirectly affected by ICANN's work, and the security, stability and consistent functioning of the domain name system is of high priority to them. ICANN's technical coordination role is integral to the acceleration of Internet penetration around the world, and the growth of the Information Society so vital for socio-economic development". **International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the world business organization, Paris**

"The World IT Services Alliance (WITSA) was a driving force behind the establishment of ICANN. The BC is our industry's main voice in ICANN." **WITSA, Global association**

"Interaction with the Internet business community." **Charles Shaban, TAGI, Jordan**

"ICANN policies keep the Internet a safe haven where consumers can continue to trust brands. The BC is our input to those policies." **Philip Sheppard, AIM, EU**

"The continued stability of the Internet is of critical importance to all of our members." **U.S. Council For International Business, USA**