



IDN ccTLD Fast-Track And China



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- **The origination of IDN ccTLD Fast-track**
- Issue we meet from FT
- Community's needs
- Synchronized IDN ccTLD -- The solution

- IDN was first seen in Asia in late 1990s.
 - ✓ Unlike other continents in the world, Asia has the most diversified culture.
 - ✓ It composes of language communities like CJK, Malay, Tamil, Hindi, Arabic and etc.
- There is a huge population isn't English efficient in this area.
- When Internet came in Asia in early '90s, only very few people has the knowledge and language skills who can use it.

- At the first place, there weren't many multi-lingual online contents available.
- The idea of IDN was developed to help people who are non-English speaking be able to access the Internet in their own language.
 - ✓ In 1998, the idea of IDN was generated and many countries and regions in Asia started to research and develop those own language IDNs.
 - ✓ By 2000, IDN technology was getting mature and was implemented at the second level under several ccTLDs.
 - ✓ This timeline is in line with the multi-lingual online content booms in the region.

- But later, it became obvious that IDN only implemented in the second level wasn't good enough for the users.
 - ✓ People have to switch input methods while typing in a domain name, it's very inconvenient.
 - ✓ ASCII top level domains still don't make sense to many users and hard for them to spell.
- Thus, the voice for full IDN implementation was getting stronger. IDN communities start advocating IDN TLDs in ICANN since 2002.
- But ICANN wasn't swift enough to adopt changes.

- In 2005 Vancouver meeting, ICANN held an IDN workshop. In the meeting, China's representative proposed that ICANN should allow communities who are ready to offer to move ahead.
- In 2007 San Juan meeting, APTLD has submitted its statement to ICANN, to again reiterate this idea.
 - ✓ “ APTLD Position on Top Level Internationalised Domain Names”, June 21, 2007
- With ICANN communities' effort, this proposal turn into ICANN's IDN ccTLD Fast-track process.
 - ✓ This principle is inline with the natural of Internet's global development, which allows those communities who are ready to offer can move ahead to serve their users' needs, without interfered with late comers.
 - ✓ The limited introduction will start serving needs and leave room for future growth.

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- China itself had started its IDN R&D since 1998, one of the first NICs to offer IDN services. China is also a strong advocator for IDN developments.
 - ✓ Currently, there are 400 million Internet users who are using Chinese as primary language, which makes Chinese the second most-used language on the Internet.
- Over the years, China jointly with other countries and regions, has developed technical standards and administrative policies for Chinese IDNs.
 - ✓ RFC 3742, RFC 4713 and etc.
- When ICANN started the Fast-track policy development process, China gladly sent in representative to join the WG to contribute its experiences.

- When ICANN finally opened IDN ccTLD Fast-track application on Nov. 16th 2009, China has submitted its application for Simplified and Traditional Chinese “.China”.
 - ✓ This was widely supported by the local community. Representatives from well known organizations such as Microsoft, Baidu, Alibaba, Firefox, Opera, Xinhua Net, People's Daily and etc. were presented in the submission ceremony.



- On Jan 22nd, 2010, ICANN released the first group of the IDN ccTLD applications that passed the Fast-track String Evaluation. China's application was not among the four.
- China has kept close communication with ICANN to uncover the issue that was holding China back.
- It was identified that although no security and stability issues related to China's application, there was a glitch in FT implementation plan, which was unable to accommodate the simultaneous delegation of Simplified and Traditional .China.

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➤ What's special about Chinese?

- ✓ With the natural evolvement of Chinese language, some of the same character take on different orthographies, known as Simplified and Traditional Chinese.
- ✓ The different forms (the SIGNIFYING) represent the same object (the SIGNIFIED).
- ✓ People from different regions and among different age groups will use simplified or traditional depend upon their preferences. Some people even use both according to the occasions.

Examples:

“清华大学.中国” = “清華大學.中國”

➤ What's special about Chinese?

- ✓ However, while both characters mean the same thing, their Punycodes are different.
- ✓ It means two separate strings in the Root.

Examples:

“清华大学.中国” : xn--xkRy9Kk1Bz66a.xn--fiqs8S

“清華大學.中國” : xn--psSu7C921AfvU.xn--fiQz9S

- The policy glitch in FT, only permits one string delegated to China, these will imposes risks on:
 - ✓ Arbitrarily changing the Chinese culture and tradition.
 - ✓ Causes user confusion among different user groups.
 - ✓ Greatly reduces the benefit of having Chinese IDNs.

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- After the close communication between Chinese community and ICANN, ICANN has truly realized the importance of simultaneously delegation for both Simplified and Traditional Chinese TLDs.
- In Nairobi meeting, ICANN Board had formed a specialized WG, the Equivalent Strings-WG to address the issue. As outcomes of this WG, the ICANN board resolved:
 - ...to address instances in the fast track process where more than one official language or script exists within a country or territory and where requests are for multiple corresponding strings that are considered equivalent so that users of the community accessing domains under all versions of the string expect that each of them will resolve to the same address...
 - ...
 - ...the ES-WG determined that developing a formal procedure to accept IDN ccTLD fast track requests for synchronized IDN ccTLD strings is appropriate and solves a real problem for the people in the community ICANN is seeking to serve by launching IDN ccTLDs;
 - ...
 - ... CEO is directed to have prepared an ES implementation plan for the fast track evaluation of synchronized IDN ccTLDs using the ES-WG's principles as a framework.

- On March 22nd, under the joint effort of ICANN's board, staff and the community, ICANN release the proposed implementation plan for Synchronized IDN ccTLDs. The Plan requires:
 - ✓ request for synchronized IDN ccTLDs must:
 1. have completed the String Evaluation step in the Fast Track Process.
 2. must solve a significant problem for the communities that use the scripts
 3. must have adequate and verifiable procedures to enable convergence at every level of the synchronized IDN ccTLDs, and to take immediate steps to remove any divergence that might occur.
 4. If an improved technical standard for the delegation and management of synchronized IDN ccTLDs is established, and is applicable for such delegations, then IDN ccTLD managers will migrate to that standard in a safe, stable, and timely manner.

- To clarify misunderstandings, ICANN has published a set of FAQ for the Plan, and will hold two webinars to give answers interactively.
- ICANN announced that applications from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan have passed the Fast-track string evaluation on March 22nd and 23rd.
- China and Taiwan's applications are subject to Synchronized IDN ccTLD evaluation. If they pass the evaluation, they are projected to be in the root after the Brussel meeting.



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