

How ICANN will process applications if many are received

Introduction

The New gTLD Program is unique in its global scope and its mission to open the domain name space to competition and choice. ICANN plans for rigorous evaluation of multiple criteria regardless of how many applications will be received. In addition, ICANN is committed to measured delegation rates so that any impacts on root zone operations can be easily monitored. This creates an unusual problem because there is no upper limit on the number of applications that can be received. To solve that issue, ICANN has built the New gTLD Program so that approximately 500 applications will be evaluated at a time. If significantly more than that are received, a plan is devised to divide the applications into sets of roughly 500. This is often referred to as the “batching process.”

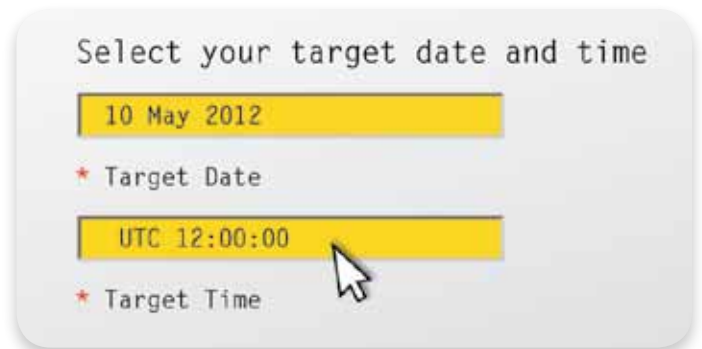
If batching is required, a secondary time stamp process will be employed to establish the batches. (Batching priority will not be given to an application based on the time at which the application was submitted to ICANN, nor will batching priority be established based on a random selection method.) This process will require applicants to obtain a time-stamp through a designated process which will occur after the close of the application submission period.

Why this process?

Determining what process to use in dividing applicants into batches was a challenge. Some obvious solutions were considered but ultimately rejected because they had other negative impacts. For example, processing applications based on a first come, first serve basis might encourage speed (instead of quality) in submitting applications.

How does it work?

The batching process is activated if significantly more than 500 applications are received. Each applicant will be notified to register into an online system to set a future time target. The ability of applicants to “hit” that target at the selected time will be used to determine which applications are placed into the first, or subsequent batches.



Select your target date and time

10 May 2012

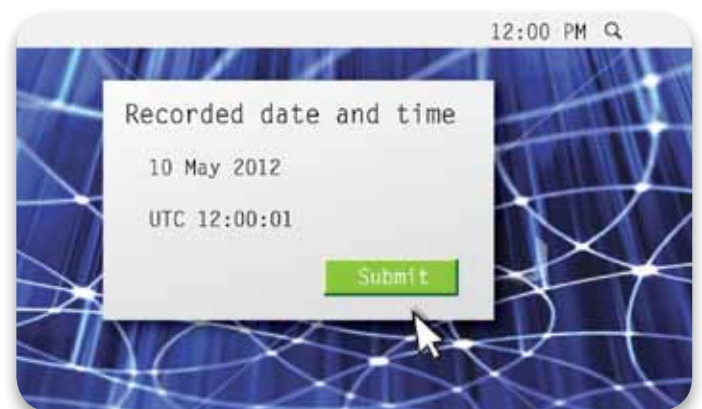
* Target Date

UTC 12:00:00

* Target Time

A mouse cursor is pointing at the 'UTC 12:00:00' field.

Next, applicants will return to the online system on that day and time and try to hit submit as close as they can to their target time. It's kind of like a game of digital archery. First you set the target, then you try to hit it with as much accuracy as you can.



12:00 PM

Recorded date and time

10 May 2012

UTC 12:00:01

Submit

A mouse cursor is pointing at the 'Submit' button.

These two times (i.e., the target time and recorded time) are compared, and the absolute difference between the two is an applicant's score in the target

time variance. This is the number that will be used to determine placement within a batch.

In the example above, the target time is 12:00:00 and the actual time the target was hit is 12:00:01. That means the secondary time stamp is 00.00.01. Secondary time stamp numbers are absolute, which means that there are no negative numbers. An applicant who submitted the final entry 00:00:01 before the target time will have the same time stamp as one who submitted 00:00:01 after the target time.



Batch 1			
Applicant	1:	00:00:01	Applicant
Applicant	2:	00:00:02	Applicant
Applicant	3:	00:00:02	Applicant
Applicant	4:	00:00:03	Applicant
Applicant	5:	00:00:05	Applicant
Applicant	6:	00:00:10	Applicant
Applicant		00:00:14	Applicant

Ensuring Geographic Diversity

The New gTLD Program was established to bring more competition and choice into the domain name market, and geographic diversity is an important part of that effort. To ensure that no one part of the globe dominates the first batch, and to mitigate against any differences in response times depending on where the nearest Internet server is, ICANN will group applicants into geographic regions first and then by secondary time stamp.

Batches will be created using a proportional model to ensure equal geographic representation as well as reflect the results of the secondary time stamp process.

Opting Out

Some applicants have no preference as to when their applications are processed. These applicants still must register in the online system to get a secondary time stamp, but when they do so, they can indicate they are “opting out.” This means that their application will be placed in a batch after all the others who “opt in” are placed.

Multiple Applications for Similar Domain Name Extensions

To ensure stability and security of the domain name system, each domain name extension, or “string,” must be unique. In the event that more than one organization applies for the same or similar top-level domain, all applications for those contending strings will be placed into the earliest batch designated. For example, if one contending applicant is selected in the first batch and the other contending application is selected in the second batch, both applications will be placed in the earlier batch. This will help ensure that one application is not unnecessarily held up by another.

¹ More information on ICANN’s geographic regions is at <http://archive.icann.org/en/meetings/montreal/geo-regions-topic.htm>