

Proposal – Annotation

The paper set forth below outlines a proposed way devised by the U.S. Department of Commerce to improve technical management of the Internet Domain Name System. The proposal was published on the World Wide Web and subsequently in the *Federal Register*. Public comments on the proposal were accepted for a set period of time before the final recommendation was implemented.

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/domainname/dnsdrft.htm>

As you read through the proposal, consider the following questions.

- To whom is it addressed?
- Why have the sections been organized and compiled as they have?
- In what ways is it a persuasive document?
- In what ways is it merely an informative document?
- What recommendations would you make for reorganizing the document to improve readability?

A Proposal to Improve Technical Management of Internet Names and Addresses - Discussion Draft 1/30/98

The proposal is divided into a number of sections. You may notice that the hierarchy of the document is difficult to discern based on the header arrangement. We assume that the headings in bold and italic are the main (level 1) headings. Other interpretations are, of course, possible.

Front Matter

The beginning of the proposal functions as a kind of executive summary. Information is provided under the following three subheadings.

- **History** outlines the background and current state of affairs of Internet names and addresses.
- **The Need for Change** delineates a number of separate directions from which pressure for change had originated.
- **The Future Role of the U.S. Government in the DNS** outlines the Clinton Administration's role in the changes affecting the Internet.

Principles for a New System

The next section summarizes a series of discussions with stakeholders by outlining four agreed-upon principles that underlie the development of the new system.

The following passage, which is buried at the end of the Principles section, both summarizes and provides a transition to the proposal, and previews the content of the proposal.

In keeping with these principles, we divide the name and number functions into two groups, those that can be moved to a competitive system and those that should be coordinated. We then suggest the creation of a representative, not-for-profit corporation to manage the coordinated functions according to widely accepted objective criteria. We then suggest the steps necessary to move to competitive markets in those areas that can

be market driven. Finally, we suggest a transition plan to ensure that these changes occur in an orderly fashion that preserves the stability of the Internet.

The Proposal

The sections of the proposal are descriptive in nature. They explain what new or revamped aspects are required to implement the proposed naming system. Indirectly, in the course of describing these aspects, the following sections of the proposal imply how these each new feature should function.

- The Coordinated Functions – describes those functions of the naming system that should be coordinated by a public agency.
- The Competitive Functions – describes those functions of the naming system that should be handled competitively by businesses.
- The Creation of New gTLDs – describes how gTLDs (generic top-level domains) should be added to the system until a final decision can be made about how and by whom such domains should be added.
- The Trademark Dilemma – reviews the potential for trademark disputes in name allocation and recommends a way of handling them when they arise.
- The Intellectual Infrastructure Fund – describes how domain registration fees have been used in support of Internet development and briefly outlines future plans for these funds.

Transition

The final section of the document, titled “Transition,” outlines both general and specific steps for moving from the current to the proposed state of affairs.

Appendices

Two appendices outline proposed requirements for domain name registries and registrars, and suggestions for addressing trademark disputes.