

Get involved or lose your .uk domains

Did you know .uk domain names are coming in 2014?

“Opt in scheme for equivalent .uk”

Owners of a Million or more .co.uk domains will *not* apply for new .uk, as they will not know about it.

“Oldest registration gets first chance”

Up to 250,000 .co.uk domain holders will not be able to obtain the equivalent .uk under the current proposal including:

Hotmail.co.uk Dreams.co.uk Windows.co.uk Food.co.uk
Sky.co.uk ee.co.uk audible.co.uk freelancer.co.uk
independent.co.uk gap.co.uk instyle.co.uk Art.co.uk
DayNurseries.co.uk Unwins.co.uk ITS.co.uk Adams.co.uk
Bes.co.uk FlowersDirect.co.uk Custard.co.uk Build.co.uk
TopMail.co.uk TheBelfry.co.uk Benedict.co.uk Smiles.co.uk
Tamba.co.uk Pims.co.uk Planet.co.uk Prospects.co.uk
PaydayLoans.co.uk PopupStands.co.uk oba.co.uk
RadioCity.co.uk Alli.co.uk

to name but a few.

New .uk domain will cost over 100% more than .co.uk and owner will still keep paying for the .co.uk renewals to protect website.

Confidence in trusted extensions like .co.uk, .org.uk, .sch.uk etc. will be eroded by claims .uk is more secure.

Security nightmare with different owners of .co.uk and .uk: phishing attacks, misdirected email, scams, cyber-squatting, blackmail and fraud.

By Stephen Wilde August 2013

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Summary Viewpoint

Nominet the UK domain registrar authority are trying to introduce a new domain name extension .uk (e.g. ibm.uk) in 2014. The details of the proposal have *not* been widely publicised.

Anybody will eventually be able to register a UK domain without the name suffix '.co.' or '.org.' simply stating the .uk part: so YourBusiness.uk and sales@YourBusiness.uk.

Under the proposal the oldest continually registered domain name will be able to claim the equivalent .uk domain. This is an "opt in" system so they would have to know about it, understand the consequences of not taking up the right to the name and act in time in the prescribed way.

Owners of a Million or more .co.uk domains are unlikely to end up with the equivalent .uk domain due to the current proposal.

The many security issues of confusingly similar names ending in .uk and .co.uk will create a cyber-criminal's paradise and a cyber-squatter's dream come true, if the .uk proposal goes ahead in its current form.

The proposal simply does not deal with the collateral damage caused to the existing UK domain name system and owners of UK domains by its intended introduction of the new .uk domain name extension.

Currently there is an online consultation, which Nominet hope will give them the mandate to launch .uk in its preferred way.

I would urge you to read this document and then complete the consultation feedback now [online](#) or via [editable pdf](#) at bottom of page.

Please ensure as many people are made aware of the .uk proposal as possible.

Consultation closes on 23rd September 2013.

Please contact me with any questions or comments on this document at Stephen@YourUK.org.uk.

Background on .uk domain extension

A domain name ending with just .uk e.g. Dreams.uk is a domain extension at the second level, whereas one ending with .co.uk (e.g. Windows.co.uk) is a third level domain name.

Domain name extensions are varied and some examples are:

Global (gTLD) : .com .net .info .org .biz

Country (ccTLD): .de .us .es .it .ru .co.nz .fr .ie .co

Area (Geo TLD): .eu .asia

Others: .uk.com .me .mobi .xxx .pro .tel .travel .fm

Soon, through the governing body of the internet naming system ICANN there will be another 1,000 new domain extensions launched in 2014, some for brand protection such as .nike .bbc others for areas such as .wales, whilst some are speculative and will be made available to a worldwide audience such as .shop.

The UK namespace was originally set up and maintained by [UK Naming Committee](#) and in 1996 Nominet was formed as a not-for-profit limited company with the main aim of administering domains ending with .uk whilst having the public interest as its core value.

The UK domain naming system was set up using the third level model (e.g. .org.uk and .co.uk, etc.) whereas the majority of the world registered at the second level: an example would be .de for Germany as they don't use .co.de or .org.de etc. at present but a domain owner has launched .com.de.

Nominet decided to leave the system as it was in 1996 even though there were very few registered domains on the UK register compared to over 10,000,000 now.

In 2004, Nominet seriously looked at launching .uk and had a panel of experts, Nominet's Policy Advisory Board (PAB), look at the situation. Here are some extracts from the report:

- “The negative effects revolve around the fact that there is an existing structure:
- Companies have invested money in building brands around .co.uk names.
- People have come to understand and trust the meaning of SLDs and the structure itself.
- Companies might take the introduction of a change as an opportunity to switch to another domain such as .eu or .com.
- The main negative, which is the standard argument against all change, is that the change itself will cause confusion and cost. This argument requires careful consideration.”

This 2004 document was considered by industry experts who voted 11-0 not to proceed with the .uk extension.

The world is now a different place and a lot of change has happened to the internet since 2004, with three times the number of UK domains and .co.uk engrained into people's minds. However those warnings together with many more should be brought to the attention of those participating in the current consultation.

In October 2012 without any warning or prior open discussion or debate with the UK domain stakeholders or community, Nominet decided that launching a new extension.uk could be a whole new better and more secure namespace for British business and offered to auction off the .uk names to the highest bidders. They didn't let a lot of people know about their proposal.

For a summary of the [feedback](#) responses to the last .uk consultation, read the 80 page report plus the Nomensa response [analysis](#) of the last .uk consultation in a 77 page report.

In addition, for full background you may wish to read Edwin Hayward's important 26 page [Position paper](#) about Nominet's previous .uk proposal and my own 34 page report [.uk understanding the consequences](#) on that subject.

There were thankfully enough sane people to advise Nominet that their previous plans for launching .uk were totally flawed. That .uk should not be introduced as a new namespace as planned and that existing registrants of .co.uk domains should be given the .uk equivalent domains. In addition security should be looked at with a view to improving it over the whole of the UK namespace not just one extension. The fundamental idea that the new .uk was for only UK residents and companies had to be withdrawn, when it was pointed out that policy contravened EU law on restriction of trade.

The release mechanism for .uk in the current proposal was not supported by one single person or organization, according to the summaries of previous consultation feedback, although a significant number of respondents supported and suggested the alternative of grandfathering rights of .uk to .co.uk owners.

Current Nominet .uk Proposal

According to the Nominet [blog](#) by the CEO Lesley Cowley on 15th July 2013:

Nominet .uk proposal would be the biggest change to the .uk namespace since it began

The details of the current .uk proposal and consultation forms can be found at the Nominet website, but be careful: you have to read all the documents to get the full details, including the questions and answers page, see “sources” section at end of this report for the various links.

Unfortunately, Nominet have not made the .uk proposal easy to find on their website. It is spread over several documents which need to be put together to get the full details of what they want to happen and why.

A potted summary of the .uk proposal is:

1. Enhanced checks on data supplied for all registrations. The process would ensure that the named individual resides, or the named business trades, at the specified address. This aims to enhance consumer trust in the registration process and the data on record. Information on any registrations to businesses would be displayed in the [‘WHOIS’](#) - the database of registrants for all domains.
2. For registrants not based in the UK, a UK ‘address for service’ would be required. This would also be displayed in the WHOIS.
3. A ‘right of first refusal’ would give registrants of existing .uk domain names at the third level (e.g. .co.uk, .me.uk, .org.uk, etc.) the opportunity to secure the corresponding registration at the second level. In the event of two competing claims, the oldest current, continuous registration would be given priority. The proposal is to run the right of first refusal for a six month period from launch. *Note:* .net.uk added later after a question was raised and .sch.uk was removed when it was pointed out they don’t allow third level domains.
4. Domains not covered by a right of first refusal would be available to register from launch on a first-come, first-served, basis.
5. A competitive price point, with a proposed wholesale fee of £5.50 per year or £4.50 per year for multi-year registrations. Currently £2.50 per year for multi-year registrations for .co.uk.
6. Many bodies currently using .gov.uk domains will no longer be able to do so under the Government Digital Transformation Programme, which will consolidate the domains under gov.uk. Nominet propose to reserve the [affected domains](#) (using 1 July 2013 as the cut-off date for registrations).
7. A commitment to offer services to improve security across the whole .uk namespace.

Importantly, what is *not* said about .uk?

If .uk is introduced in the way Nominet propose, there are unforeseen and damaging consequences that are likely to happen:

.co.uk not getting equivalent .uk

Due to point 3 of the proposal, “the first right of refusal” being an “opt in”, rather than all domain owners automatically being given the equivalent domain:

Millions of .co.uk owners with built up business will find that as they did not know anything about .uk they will miss out even if Nominet have given them rights. Many will not understand the .uk release mechanism or dismiss the intended .uk notice as spam and their equivalent domain name with a .uk extension will simply be owned by somebody else, who does understand the value of the .uk domain.

The unowned .uk domain may set up in competition with them

- or be used to sell them the .uk name at some exorbitant amount

- or be used by cyber criminals

- or be a parked page which confuses the consumer as to whether you are still in business so they look for a competitor

Point 6 “reserving names for government” opens the door for other extensions such as .ac.uk for academic domains to put forward the case for them being a special case and having names reserved for them as well.

In the small print it states .com.uk will be reserved for Nominet and so maybe launched later as a new extension just as the German owner have done with .com.de. If this happens it will further dilute the attractiveness of .co.uk - the prime UK domain tld which is currently 93% of all UK domains registered.

There are also difficulties that Nominet has identified in that pre August 1996 there is no official registration date on the Whois: so for older valuable domains it will not be clear who is the oldest registered domain. This is also applicable to a few thousand domains which are registered on the same day as the Whois does not show the time of day of the registration.

Point 3 of the proposal “going to the oldest current continuous registration” means that .uk will not go to the .co.uk owners:

Up to 250,000 businesses may find they do not have the right to their equivalent .uk domain, due to the way Nominet intend to allocate rights to the domain, namely .org.uk, .net.uk, .ltd.uk, .plc.uk and .me.uk owners.

Source: Nominet’s figure of 500,000 identical UK domain strings.

.co.uk not getting equivalent .uk (continued)

Examples of .co.uk owners who will lose out in **not** getting the equivalent .uk under the proposal are:

Hotmail.uk will go to the owner of Hotmail.org.uk
not the owner of Hotmail.co.uk the email provider.

Dreams.uk will go to the owner of Dreams.org.uk
not the owner of Dreams.co.uk the bed people who use their own UK factory.

Windows.uk will go to the owner of Windows.me.uk
not the owner of Windows.co.uk who is Microsoft.

Food.uk will go to the Food Standards Agency under a specific clause added by Nominet: even though Nominet have not asked if the Food Standard Agency want it rather than the owner of Food.co.uk.

Sky.uk will go the owner of Sky.net.uk
not the owner of Sky.co.uk the broadcaster.

ee.uk will go to the owner of ee.me.uk
not the owner of ee.co.uk the telecommunications company who spent a reputed £100,000,00 on the new ee.co.uk (Everything Everywhere brand)

audible.uk will go to the owner of audible.org.uk
not the owner of audible.co.uk operated by Amazon for 80,000 books

freelancer.uk will go to the owner of freelancer.me.uk
not the owner of freelancer.co.uk who has posted £750,000,000 of projects

independent.uk will go to independent.gov.uk under a specific clause added by Nominet: even though Nominet have not asked if the Agency want it rather than the owner of independent co.uk, the national newspaper.

gap.uk will go to the owner of gap.org.uk
not the owner of gap.co.uk who employ thousands of people in the UK in its clothes business and distribution centre

instyle.uk will go to the owner of instyle.org.uk
not the owner of instyle.co.uk who operate the ultimate online guide for women who love fashion, beauty and celebrity

Art.uk will go to the owner of Art.org.uk
not the owner of Art.co.uk the online poster business

.co.uk not getting equivalent .uk (continued)

DayNurseries.uk will go to the owner of DayNurseries.me.uk

not the owner of DayNurseries.co.uk the established and trusted provider of Day nursery information

Unwins.uk will go to the owner of Unwins.org.uk

not the owner of Unwins.co.uk the established seed, bulb and garden provider

ITS.uk will go to the owner of its.org.uk

not the owner of ITS.co.uk the tool provider established in 1979, with over 4,000 products on sale

Adams.uk will go to the owner of Adams.org.uk

not the owner of Adams.co.uk the children's clothes company

Bes.uk will go to the owner of bes.org.uk

not the owner of Bes.co.uk the 30 year established gas and plumber supplier

FlowersDirect.uk will go to the owner of FlowersDirect.org.uk

not the owner FlowersDirect.co.uk the online presence of interflora UK

Custard.uk will go to the owner of Custard.me.uk

not the owner of Custard.co.uk the SEO and PPC specialists

Build.uk will go to the owner of Build.me.uk

not the owner of Build.co.uk the UK's no. 1 construction directory

TopMail.uk will go to the owner of TopMail.me.uk

not the owner of TopMail.co.uk the secure email provider

TheBelfry.uk will go to the owner of TheBelfry.me.uk

not the owner of TheBelfry.co.uk the home of the Ryder Cup European victory of 2002 and a great UK golf course

Benedict.uk will go to the owner of Benedict.org.uk

not the owner of Benedict.co.uk the SEO consultants

The list could go on with cases such as Smiles.co.uk, tamba.co.uk, Pims.co.uk, Planet.co.uk, Prospects.co.uk, PopupStands.co.uk, DestinationFlorida.co.uk, PaydayLoans.co.uk, oba.co.uk, RadioCity.co.uk and Alli.co.uk to name but a few more.

Nominet have got it wrong the .uk *should* automatically always go to the .co.uk owner for no cost, as it will cost Nominet nothing to adopt that approach.

.co.uk not getting equivalent .uk (continued)

Remember the main losers will be the .co.uk owners who do not even know .uk is available and will lose out to those that know how to register a domain via sophisticated code in less than 1 second from when the .uk is made available, as they know how valuable that .uk domain is.

As they have not linked ownership of .co.uk and .uk:

Many .uk domains will start off owned by domain investors, some of whom will sell off the either the .uk or the .co.uk and so create more different ownerships of .uk and .co.uk which will lead to problems later on. Up to 25% of the UK registry is in the hands of domain investors.

After .uk is introduced tens of thousands of businesses per year who obtained the .uk for protection, will forget to renew the .co.uk or .uk domain as it is not used and it will then fall into the hands of somebody else.

Nominet has not yet issued advice to .co.uk owners about taking up .uk, but you can see the current advice to new UK owners at agreatplacetobe.co.uk tip no.6 "Protect your name: If you can, register several similar domain names. For example, if you have 'yourname.me.uk' you could register 'yourname.co.uk' and 'yourname.org.uk' so no-one else can come in later and capitalise on your success."

Confidence over time may be lost in businesses that maintain .co.uk and do not move over to .uk. So, they will suffer commercially in the long term if they do not obtain the equivalent .uk.

Future restrictions about future additional third level domains

Although Nominet have reserved .com.uk for future use the current proposal prevents other extensions such as .shop.uk, .app.uk, .xxx.uk, u16.uk, .info.uk, .cornwall.uk from being introduced which would increase the number of UK domains available for specific purposes.

Cost of verifying and monitoring UK address for service

The legal benefit of having a UK address for service for a UK domain should be published as it may not serve any legal purpose.

It is likely that they will use the services of the registrar or other third party to provide an address so adding to the cost of ownership with no benefit to anybody.

Surely the cost of any address verification should be borne by each registrant not charged per domain as proposed. This would mean owners of multiple domains subsidizing owners of a single domain.

Costs to Business

Nominet at a recent meeting were asked about their changing to .uk and they confirmed that was the most likely outcome: they would move from Nominet.org.uk to Nominet.uk, if their proposal went ahead. When asked had they had costed out re-branding, they stated no: maybe that is because they have £7,000,000 in the bank and investments worth over £30,000,000 according to their last 2012 audited accounts.

Organizations that move over to .uk will incur huge re-branding expenses which will cost the economy billions for little or no benefit.

Moving domain names, even from .co.uk to .uk, can be very disruptive to search engine rankings, which many businesses will not understand. They will find out to their cost the damage that can be done to traffic, search engine rankings and lost links. No real help is provided by Nominet to prevent businesses from falling into this expensive trap.

Nominet will not release the figures, but as a typical business may register hyphen version, multiple trade names, brand names, keyword names, company name, plural and misspellings of its name, it may be that a SME may have up to 20 domains. To simply protect itself by acquiring the equivalent .uk domains will cost over £500 over the next 5 years in renewal fees alone.

What will the UK namespace become?

There is no clear plan from Nominet to show what the naming extension system will mean, apart from a bland statement to support all current extensions.

Confusion will reign over what the different UK domain extensions mean compared to the order we have at present with .co.uk (commercial), .org.uk (not for profit), .me.uk (personal), .gov.uk (UK government), .ac.uk (education), .sch.uk (schools), .ltd.uk (limited companies), .plc.uk (plc company), .police.uk (police), .nhs.uk (NHS). What will .uk actually mean?

Confidence in UK domains may be lost by the consumer due to the way Nominet has handled the introduction, which may affect existing registrants in all sorts of ways. With the introduction of several hundred new domain extensions, such as .london, .shop, etc. any loss of confidence could not happen at a worse time. Nominet will not issue .london.uk as it would be too similar to .london and cause confusion.

It will be harder to find a new .uk domain if everybody wants the .uk: whereas before certain organizations used different extensions such as .org.uk.

Nominet states it will support .org.uk as the not-for-profit domain, yet they are planning to move from .org.uk to Nominet.uk. What sort of support is that showing for .org.uk?

Security in the UK namespace

The similarity between greathotels.co.uk and greathotels.uk will create confusion. A large number of companies will own both and so in the minds of internet users they will become interchangeable but as that will not always be the case, confusion and the possibility of scams, phishing and other cyber-crimes will be common place, so undermining the whole of the UK namespace.

There will also be a wave of cyber crime based on the domain name, which has already started. Registrations have been made for capturing type in and email mistakes e.g. argosco.uk would capture traffic incorrectly for argos.co.uk. Such mistakes would happen. Certain people have started to register <yourbusiness>co.co.uk to be entitled to the equivalent <yourbusiness>co.uk when they launch in 2014.

The idea that a verified address in the Whois is going to improve safety is wrong. There is a large proportion of address information withheld as the UK domain owner can “opt out” from having their data shown on a Whois and they often do so. Nominet does not currently police that policy; it is not going to improve safety, if the address is not shown always.

If any of the above alarms you, please get involved and complete the [Nominet consultation](#).

Nominet's actions *and* lack of action on .uk

Nominet has launched its .uk proposal with a press release, several documents, a blog page, an email to those registrars on the nom-announce list and held 2 round table meetings in London and plan one at Glasgow. Also held a round table at Durban South Africa, no details of debate are known. There is an online and offline consultation form that can be completed to provide your views on the proposal.

Nominet's current attempt plan to introduce .uk is lacking on:

1. Previous feedback on .uk clearly showed no mass of support for the introduction of .uk.
2. The current proposal is based on prior feedback. However, the structure of the previous consultation was specific to the .uk plan and did not ask the questions or solicit opinion on what is best for the UK namespace: or thoughts, problems or alternative plans; so the process is flawed.
3. The previous summary of feedback specifically stated it omitted ideas for developing the UK namespace and only dealt with the specific proposal and when taken with point 2, this is bordering on negligence or deliberately misleading.
4. Nominet are not being transparent when asked valid questions about .uk, so nobody can make a fully informed decision.
5. Nominet are providing misleading information and exaggerated information, such as the 500,000 duplicate domain strings.
6. Nominet are not acting in the best interests of the existing UK registrant stakeholders.
7. Nominet's plan is overly-complicated and costly to implement.
8. Nominet's plan will create problems for years / decades.
9. Nominet have not made the case for the need and benefits of .uk and refuse to do so.
10. Nominet may itself share enormous bonuses possibly millions of £'s.
11. Nominet are expanding their role in the UK internet without a mandate. Nominet was also successful in being selected by five brands; the BBC, Bentley, Comcast, Xfinity and Telecity as a registry services provider for their new gTLD applications. Plus running .wales and .cmyru.
12. Nominet refuse to obtain a broader viewpoint of UK stakeholders.
13. Nominet are still promoting .co.uk with monies to the big registrars and currently have a campaign aimed at encouraging .co.uk owners to pay renewal in advance for the next 10 years, with no mention of the possibility of .uk being introduced in 2014.
14. Nominet refuse to email existing registrants about the proposal although in their own words ".uk would be the biggest change to the .uk namespace since it began".
15. Nominet did not email all their UK registrars about the .uk proposal.
16. The feedback is not published online as the consultation progresses as is the case with the current New Zealand consultation on whether they should introduce .nz.
17. Nominet did not contact all respondents to the previous .uk consultation advising them a new .uk proposal has been put forward.
18. Nominet has not produced any adverts online or offline promoting participation in the consultation.
19. They have not contacted the owners of domains affected by the proposal to withhold domains for government departments.
20. Nominet have not put any notification on their website agreatplacetobe.co.uk about .uk.
21. Nominet have removed the ability to send them an email with your views or questions about .uk which was available as an option during the previous .uk consultation.

Nominet's reasons and justification for .uk

The reason given by Nominet why .uk is needed now is to combat the threat as they see it from the arrival of 1,000 new ICANN domain name extensions. Although it is refreshing to see what I believe is a genuine reason; I'm disappointed that Nominet was not so honest in its previous consultation in October 2012 when it stated the reason why we needed .uk was "anecdotal demand for .uk"; as I suspect that the reason given now was also the reason then. So trust in Nominet's ability to tell the truth and be transparent is damaged, and Nominet has to be questioned more thoroughly in other in other areas.

Nominet despite being asked for the research they say underpins their decisions will not release the documents for all stakeholders to get the full picture.

There is a mix of issues raised but none are real justification for .uk:

"Maintain the relevance of the .uk name space in a rapidly developing market..." The UK namespace is still relevant without .uk; and it is understood and works; it has seen off .eu .co .xxx and numerous other new tld's, and it will continue to do so.

"Provide additional choice for registrants in the .uk space and meet market demand.." Yet the growth of UK names is falling and will soon be in negative territory. Introducing .uk domains will surely increase the number of UK domains but it does not mean you are fulfilling a demand for UK domains which is clearly falling and can be met within the existing structure that has been in place successfully for over 20 years. It has only been anecdotally shown there is a demand for .uk; and when a Nominet survey was done to show .uk demand, it was misused as it linked security to the question and the survey was never made public.

"Progress Nominet's commercial development..." Remember that Nominet is a not for profit organization and that although some degree of commercial awareness is responsible an excessive effort towards this aim is against its real purpose.

"keeping UK relevant" what is that meant to mean?

In the Nominet blog this is the best excuse why no justification or proof .uk is wanted or required: "Our consultation is not a vehicle for us to put forward a business case."

Unanswered Questions about .uk raised with Nominet

I have raised several questions about the .uk proposal with Nominet via email and the round table meeting, I attended in London. However, although Nominet said it realized it needed to be more transparent in the .uk process and would make every effort to do so, it has not succeeded and the questions go unanswered.

I have been advised the questions fall outside the scope of the consultation and I was referred to the Nominet blog and the various documents that make up the proposal, suggesting that the answers I was seeking were there.

On reading the Blog "A Time for Change" by CEO Lesley Cowley 15th July 2013, almost every sentence in the blog post begs a question or a comment, so I posted comments (26/29 July), all of which were accepted, but only the first one was made public and displayed. Nominet have refused to publish my other questions posted and those of at least 4 other people who also posted comments. I have repeatedly asked Nominet for responses but to date have not had a reply with answers from Nominet. UPDATE : 10/09/13 the comments have now been added to the blog.

For a full list of the questions, I have created a separate document "Questions asked to Nominet regarding the .uk proposal" which can be downloaded at www.YourUk.org.uk or now see the Blog, with the answers given.

Here are some of the questions areas that are still un-answered, which may provide you with an insight:

1. Please publish the research and independent reports that back up Nominet claims.
2. Why don't the non-government departments you are reserving .uk names for simply migrate to .org.uk domains, as they are not-for-profit organizations?
3. Are Nominet still relying on an internal legal opinion about contacting the registrants by email from the last .uk proposal? Or as the second proposal is so different did you obtain an external legal opinion about the legality of sending out emails to all UK domain registrants about the new .uk consultation?
4. How will a greatplacetobe.co.uk market .uk compared to .co.uk?
5. If .uk is introduced, why will not Nominet support .org.uk by staying as Nominet.org.uk and avoid costly rebranding costs changing to Nominet.uk?
6. Please provide statistics and projections on how many UK domains will be affected?
7. Please provide justification of why there is a cost at all for .uk, as currently Nominet creates a healthy surplus of £6 million p.a. and there are limited costs in adding .uk?
8. Why have you not made available a specific tool to allow UK registrants to check if they are the oldest continually registered domain and hence eligible for the .uk?

9. Why is it so difficult to find the .uk proposal on the Nominet website?
10. How close did we come to having the previous version of .uk being adopted?
Please provide the details of the director's vote that decided not to proceed with the last .uk proposal.
11. How much money will be spent in marketing support for .uk to the main UK registrars?
12. Will there be any changes in the DRS dispute system to cope with the inevitable flood of claims of .co.uk owners who did not get the equivalent .uk?
13. Will Nominet send out only 1 email notice about .uk to registrants as more than that may considered to be spam selling a new product?
14. Has Nominet received a legal opinion that requiring a UK address is not against EU laws that prevent barriers to entry in trading in member states?
15. If the address of .uk owner is verified and sold as more secure, will it not devalue the confidence in .co.uk and .org.uk that don't have that feature?
16. Why not use .net.uk to increase the number of new strings available in the UK namespace?
17. When does Nominet intend to introduce .com.uk domains for sale, as it is specifically reserving it for its future use?
18. When are Nominet going to update their Whois for the public to show date for registration for pre-1996 domains, the dates are shown on DAC system for registrars, also when will the time of day of the registration be added to avoid disputes on same day registrations?
19. Why have Nominet not made more effort to involve a wider variety of UK stakeholders in the .uk consultation, at the round table meetings held there have only been about 10 organizations represented that are not directly related to the domain industry.
20. Maybe you have a question for Nominet?

Alternative Proposal for .uk

To meet the aims of Nominet of:

- Keeping the UK namespace relevant
- Help the UK digital economy grow
- Introduce .uk in a fair and cost effective way
- Looking after the interests of current UK domain registrants
- Keep the UK namespace as free from cyber-crime as possible

An alternative solution is to provide all .co.uk owners with the equivalent .uk for free.

The two identical domains with .co.uk and .uk extensions would be linked as one at the registry level, so you cannot have two separate websites or two separate owners.

At the registry level code would ensure that if a user typed in .co.uk they would be directed to .uk or .co.uk websites and email addresses and vice versa for .uk references.

This would be cheap to implement and no cost would need to be passed on to the .co.uk owners.

The .co.uk owners could move to .uk when and if it suited them.

The use of all extensions of UK domain names e.g. .org.uk could still be explained and confidence maintained in the extension.

All .org.uk and .me.uk sites would operate as they do now and so would not lose anything.

Adding .uk will not increase the number of quality domains, it will shift over time from .co.uk to .uk, so to increase the availability of new UK domains, it would be an easy and effective solution to open up .net.uk extension to all comers as an open tld for any purpose, with safeguards added to prevent abuse. The .uk space eventually mirroring the .co.uk space, so no new domains.

This would also allow the addition of future new UK domain extensions to be launched if required such as .info.uk if it was proven that there was a genuine need for more UK domain names. Provided that the new UK domain names would only be introduced in a considered way which takes account of the existing UK registrants.

As a safeguard as the matter of .uk is so important, there should be a study on the effects of the linking on how existing registrants and consumers would act. In addition a debate should be encouraged on the issues before a final proposal to introduce the .uk be drawn up.

Conclusion on .uk

In 2012 Nominet's .uk proposal was ill thought out, naive and plainly wrong in viewing .uk as a new namespace despite a 20+ year established system. Trying to wrap Security for the new improved .uk would have made all existing .co.uk and .org.uk second-rate sites overnight. Plus the auction model to generate £50,000,000+ for Nominet was obviously not well received. All so wrong, in fact, nothing apart from a UK address for overseas registrants appears in the current .uk proposal.

Yet, from the previous consultation we don't know how close the Directors' vote was in passing that .uk to be introduced, despite the massive opposition, as Nominet will not make public the voting records on that important point. Why?

The current .uk proposal tries to rewrite history by providing the oldest registrant the domain if they claim it. To claim it you have to know about it and understand the consequences, which the majority of .co.uk owners do not. It will be expensive to administer and to resolve the many inevitable disputes. But the main problem with the current proposal is it is a cyber-criminal's and cyber squatter's dream come true and could possibly confuse consumers undermining the whole of the UK namespace.

Don't get sucked into thinking "grandfathering rights of .co.uk to .uk" is the solution as this again has the drawback of needing to be claimed; and as there will be different ownership of .co.uk and .uk the problems will still be present only on a smaller scale.

The alternative is to 100% link ownership of .uk and .co.uk for no cost to the owner which is a viable cost-effective, practical and fair solution, that I hope you will recommend Nominet looks at:

- The ownership can never to split into 2 separate domains
- Automatic resolve to .uk and .co.uk version at registry level
- .uk can be used by those that want to as can those that want to stay with .co.uk
- Can move to .uk from .co.uk when and if it suits
- No opt in option so no expensive communication to 10,000,000 UK domains and the 60 million UK consumers to explain a complex system
- .org.uk and other 3rd level domains remain in place with no confusion on purpose
- No sub domain selling of .uk (due to reasons currently stated)
- Lowest cost to implement
- Quick to implement
- Long term solution
- Easy to explain at agreatplacetobe.co.uk
- Majority of serious .org.uk registrants own the equivalent .co.uk and so will have .uk if they require it
- No losers (.org.uk owners still have domain as is and it will work as it does now)

The only other alternative not explored is "no .uk" at all, which always an option, especially as Nominet has not made a business case for .uk and refuse to engage in a debate on the subject.

The choice is yours, but please get involved and let Nominet know your views, whatever they maybe via the Nominet Consultation.

Please contact me with any questions or comments on this document at Stephen@YourUK.org.uk.

What to do Next?

Please complete the Nominet consultation feedback [now](#).

If you did not find about .uk proposal from Nominet and that concerns you, you might want to consider adding that point to your response in the consultation.

Due to the importance of the subject and the fact that Nominet are making little effort to let people know about their proposal, please ensure as many people are made aware of the Nominet .uk proposal as possible by Tweeting, Facebook, linked in, trade associations, email or a link to this document at YourUk.org.uk.

Or link to other important articles regarding the .uk proposal such as:

Splash Web a performance marketing company for small and medium size enterprises [informative view](#) of the second level UK proposal. They are a Nominet member.

Alex Bligh a founder and non-exec director of Nominet for 11 years, his blog where he shares his [feedback form](#) on the .uk proposal, a very articulate, stimulating and interesting read.

Consultation closes on 23rd September 2013.

If you have any questions or comments about this document, I can be contacted at Stephen@YourUK.org.uk.

Sources of information and links

Background on internet names:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_name

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/.uk>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nominet_UK

Media Coverage of .uk:

<http://www.mydomainnames.co.uk/articles.html>

Information Sites / Articles / Blogs about current .uk proposal:

<http://www.notagreatplacetobe.org.uk/>

<http://splashweb.co.uk/directuk/>

<http://blog.alex.org.uk/>

<http://www.webmastering.co.uk/domain-names/nominet-uk-domains-all-about-money/>

<http://www.webmastering.co.uk/domain-names/nominet-consultations-uk-and-wales/>

.uk checker:

<http://dotukwinner.com/> for Bulk checker <http://dotukwinner.com/bulkchecker.php>

The Wayback machine <http://archive.org/web/web.php>

Previous .uk Proposal:

Edwin Hayward 26 page Position Paper about Nominet previous .uk proposal:

<http://www.mydomainnames.co.uk/ukpositionpaper.pdf>

General background on prior .uk

<http://www.mydomainnames.co.uk/>

My 34 page report 'uk understanding the consequences' on previous .uk proposal:

<http://www.ukproposal.org.uk/What%20is%20wrong%20with%20the%20Nominet%20uk%20Proposal.pdf>

.nz consultation

http://dnc.org.nz/second_level_proposal_c1

Sources of information and links (continued)

Nominet links:

Nominet on current proposal:

Basic introduction: <http://www.nominet.org.uk/news/latest/proposals-new-policy-second-level-domain-registrations>

Press release: <http://www.nominet.org.uk/news/press-releases/nominet-proposes-new-policy-second-level-domain-registrations>

Details of the consultation: <http://www.nominet.org.uk/how-participate/policy-development/current-policy-discussions-and-consultations/registration-second>

Consultation document:

http://www.nominet.org.uk/sites/default/files/ConsultationOnSecondLevelDomainRegistrationInUK_4.pdf

Background document:

http://www.nominet.org.uk/sites/default/files/SecondLevelDomainRegistrationInUKBackgroundAndFurtherDetail_5.pdf

June Nominet Board communiqué:

<http://www.nominet.org.uk/sites/default/files/Communique-June2013.pdf>

Consultation form: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1276711/Nominet-Consultation-for-registration-at-the-second-level>

Consultation editable form:

<http://www.nominet.org.uk/sites/default/files/secondleveldomainregistrationukeditablepdf.pdf>

Questions & Answers: <http://www.nominet.org.uk/how-participate/policy-development/current-policy-discussions-and-consultations/SLDR-qanda>

Blog article : <http://www.nominet.org.uk/news/blog/time-change>

Tweet feed: <https://twitter.com/nominet>

Nominet last accounts 30-09-2012 : <http://www.nominet.org.uk/sites/default/files/Report-and-Accounts2012.pdf>

.uk Brand toolkit

<http://registrars.nominet.org.uk/marketing-tools-and-events/branding-toolkits>

Nominet summary of feedback from 2012 .uk consultation (80 pages):

http://www.nominet.org.uk/sites/default/files/SummaryofdirectukFeedback_1.pdf

Nomensa response analysis of the 2012 .uk consultation in a 77 page report:

<http://www.nominet.org.uk/sites/default/files/NomensaAnalysisFinal.pdf>

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