



# ICANN Registry Request Service

Ticket ID: J2E8S-5E6W1

Registry Name: Sohu.com Limited (.sohu)

gTLD: .SOHU

Status: ICANN Review

Status Date: 2014-07-11 21:51:27

Print Date: 2014-07-11 21:52:21

## Proposed Service

Name of Proposed Service:

*IDN Request*

Technical description of Proposed Service:

*The ".SOHU" TLD is applying to add Chinese IDN services to RA. ".SOHU" supports the registration of IDN labels. The Registry Operator shall fully follow the latest IDN Implementation Guidelines V3.0 (<http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/idn-guidelines-02sep11-en.htm>) released by ICANN in the formulation of IDN policies and development of technical systems, and shall strictly comply with specifications of IETF protocols on IDNs in applications.*

## Consultation

Please describe with specificity your consultations with the community, experts and or others. What were the quantity, nature and content of the consultations?:

*We have investigated that nearly 90% of the signed New gTLDs registries provide IDN services to meet various domain needs of different language communities. All Chinese IDN TLDs provide Chinese IDN service. By the end of 2013, the number of Chinese Internet users has exceeded 600 million. Chinese domain names will be more exercisable for Chinese Internet users. Since .SOHU is a TLD based in Chinese community, based on the findings above; the Chinese IDN services are important and essential to the whole Chinese Internet Community and Registry.*

a. If the registry is a sponsored TLD, what were the nature and content of these consultations with the sponsored TLD community?:

*.SOHU is not a sponsored TLD.*

b. Were consultations with gTLD registrars or the registrar constituency appropriate? Which registrars were consulted? What were the nature and content of the consultation?:

*.SOHU Registry has not established cooperation with any registrar. According to current market environment, all Chinese*



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*registrars can provide Chinese IDN SLD registration services. Some registrars overseas are also able to provide relevant services.*

c. Were consultations with other constituency groups appropriate? Which groups were consulted? What were the nature and content of these consultations?:

*.SOHU registry has communicated with members of NTAG, registry stake holders and New gTLD applicant members about IDN service, nearly 90% registries provide IDN service. According to the communications with members in the industry, IDN service is necessary for a community that English is not the native language. IDN SLDs will increase the registration and optimize Internet user experience.*

d. Were consultations with end users appropriate? Which groups were consulted? What were the nature and content of these consultations?:

*According to reports concerning Internet users distributions divided by native languages, 63.5% Internet users speak language other than English as their native language; 43% Internet users don't speak English at all. Therefore, to some Internet users, using English to search the Internet can be inconvenient. Community with Chinese as the native language is the biggest in the world in terms of population. By the end of 2013, the number of Chinese Internet users has exceeded 600 million. The Chinese IDN service will better serve the Chinese speaking community and facilitate Internet development in China.*

e. Who would endorse the introduction of this service? What were the nature and content of these consultations?:

*All Chinese Internet users shall endorse the introduction of this service since it will make the use of Internet easier. Besides, Chinese SLD will increase registrations, registrars will also be supportive.*

f. Who would object the introduction of this service? What were(or would be) the nature and content of these consultations?:

*Since most of registries are providing IDN service, so far as we have concerned, no one will object the introduction of this service.*

## Timeline

Please describe the timeline for implementation of the proposed new registry service:



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.SOHU Registry are now preparing for adding IDN service. Once it is approved by ICANN, we shall conduct tests. After the service provision is secure and stable, we shall provide the IDN service.

## Business Description

Describe how the Proposed Service will be offered:

.SOHU REGISTRY determines characters allowed to be registered in the Unicode Character Set according to the "inclusion-based approach" principle (RFC 4690). The code points that are not explicitly permitted by the Registry are prohibited. IDN labels may only contain the following characters and their combinations: English letters (a-z, case insensitive), numbers (0-9), Chinese characters (the Chinese characters allowed to be registered in IDN), and hyphen (-). IDN label should contain at least one Chinese character (characters in either Chinese Simplified or Chinese Traditional are OK. For details, see description of TLD string.) The TLD applications described in this Application Guidebook will utilize .SOHU REGISTRY, whose IDN code table uses .CN Chinese IDN Table ([http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/cn\\_zh-cn\\_4.0.html](http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/cn_zh-cn_4.0.html)) and. Code points that are not allowed as described in IDNA 2008 are prohibited for registrations. Hyphen cannot be in the first and last digits and two consecutive hyphens are not allowed. Restriction on domain length: IDN label should not exceed 63 bytes after the encoding of Punycode (RFC 3492 and RFC 5891). The SRS supports bundling of variants as specify in RFC 3743. The handling of variants are based on the following principles: a) Each IDN string must be associated with one language b) All U-label code point of the IDN string must be verify against "the CDNC tables" as specify in [http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/cn\\_zh-cn\\_4.0.html](http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/cn_zh-cn_4.0.html) and [http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/tw\\_zh-tw\\_4.0.html](http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/tw_zh-tw_4.0.html) c) All variants of the IDN string will be generated using RFC 3743 algorithm with the CDNC IDN tables and will be reserved. d) The all-Simplified Chinese (SC) and all-Traditional Chinese (TC) variants of the IDN string shall be the Preferred Variant and will be resolvable. (See below). e) All variants of the IDN string will be bundled into an IDL Bundle. The algorithm to generates of Preferred Variants is specify in RFC 3743 Section 3.2.3 Step 3.2A. The all-Simplified Chinese(SC) variant are generated using [http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/cn\\_zh-cn\\_4.0.html](http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/cn_zh-cn_4.0.html) And the all-Traditional Chinese(SC) variant are generated using [http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/tw\\_zh-tw\\_4.0.html](http://www.iana.org/domains/idn-tables/tables/tw_zh-tw_4.0.html) The algorithm to generate reserved variants is specifies in RFC 3743 Section 3.2.3 Step 6 using a combined CDNC table. "Once a registrant registers a Chinese domain name, all variant labels will be blocked from registration. Only the original registered label can be queried via Whois." If the original registered IDN label is deleted, its variant labels will be unblocked. If the original registered IDN label expires, its variant labels will be unblocked.

Describe quality assurance plan or testing of Proposed Service:

.SOHU will regularly monitor the operations of IDN services, including: 1. Regularly collects and analyzes the frequency,



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*quantity, and contents of created, updated, and deleted IDNs, and collects and analyzes IDN resolution volume, to grasp the actual operation status of IDN services.\r\n2. Regularly scans, collects and analyzes attacks against IDNs through technical means to provide basis for technical protection and policy protection.\r\n3. Tracks the support of mainstream browsers for IDNs and helps promoting their support for IDNs.\r\n\r\n*

Please list any relevant RFCs or White Papers on the proposed service and explain how those papers are relevant.:

*.SOHU REGISTRY strictly complies with IDNA 2008 and supports RFC 3743, RFC 5890, RFC 5891, RFC 5892, RFC 5893, and RFC 5894. RFC 3743 is a guideline for IDN registration and administration for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. In the process of formulating "\.SOHU" IDN registry policies, the Registry Operator shall take into account the main concepts and suggested measures defined in RFC 3743, while the finally adopted and publicized registry policy should conform to constraints stated in the document.\r\n*

## Contractual Provisions

List the relevant contractual provisions impacted by the Proposed Service:

*Exhibit A, Approved Services\r\n*

What effect, if any, will the Proposed Service have on the reporting of data to ICANN:

*The proposed service will have some effect on the deposit data to data escrow agent. The number of IDN domain names will vary from zero to actual quantity. No other effect has been foreseen.\r\n*

What effect, if any, will the Proposed Service have on the Whois?:

*Not essential effects will the IDN service have on the Whois. \r\nInternet users can use the original IDN string to search Whois information; in the meantime, Internet users can also use A-labels of IDN string to search Whois information.\r\n\r\n*

## Contract Amendments

Please describe or provide the necessary contractual amendments for the proposed service:



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1. Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs)  
Registry Operator may offer registration of IDNs at the second and lower levels provided that Registry Operator complies with the following requirements:  
1.1. Registry Operator must offer Registrars support for handling IDN registrations in EPP.  
1.2. Registry Operator must handle variant IDNs as follows:  
1.2.1. By default variant IDNs (as defined in the Registry Operator's IDN tables and IDN Registration Rules) must be blocked from registration.  
1.2.2. Variant IDNs may be activated when requested by the sponsoring Registrar of the canonical name as described in the IDN Tables and IDN Registration Rules.  
1.2.3. Active variant IDNs must be provisioned in the TLD's DNS zone file as zone cuts using the same NS resource records as the canonical name.  
1.3. Registry Operator may offer registration of IDNs in the following languages/scripts (IDN Tables and IDN Registration Rules will be published by the Registry Operator as specified in the ICANN IDN Implementation Guidelines).

## Benefits of Service

Describe the benefits of the Proposed Service:

IDN SLD services will better meet the requirements of the whole Chinese Internet community of domain names. In the meantime, the proposed service will also increase the registration volume.

## Competition

Do you believe your proposed new Registry Service would have any positive or negative effects on competition? If so, please explain.:

A significant and easy to remember ".SOHU" IDN domain is an eye-catching advertisement for any business operating in today's Chinese speaking Internet environment, ultimately limiting opportunity costs associated with using English or ASCII domain names that Chinese users have difficulty with, and increasing organizations promotion and online marketing effectiveness and accuracy towards Chinese speaking Internet users. Therefore, the Chinese IDN SLD services would have positive effect on competition. The IDN services will increase the registration volume. IDN service of .SOHU will also increase the diversity of IDN SLDs market.

How would you define the markets in which your proposed Registry Service would compete?:

The current existing generic top level domains such as .com, .net etc. are providing IDN services. The ccTLD .cn is also providing Chinese IDN service. .SOHU registry intends to provide IDN service to catch up with other registries and provide better and more complete services to the Internet community.

What companies/entities provide services or products that are similar in substance or effect to your proposed



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Registry Service?:

*As stated above, 90% registries are providing IDN service such as .com and .net. In China, ccTLD .cn and other newly signed TLDs are also providing IDN services.\r\n*

In view of your status as a registry operator, would the introduction of your proposed Registry Service potentially impair the ability of other companies/entities that provide similar products or services to compete?:

*Our proposed service would not impair the ability of other companies/entities.\r\n*

Do you propose to work with a vendor or contractor to provide the proposed Registry Service? If so, what is the name of the vendor/contractor, and describe the nature of the services the vendor/contractor would provide.:

*The IDN SLD registration services will be provided by ICANN accredited registrars and their resellers to the end users.\r\n*

Have you communicated with any of the entities whose products or services might be affected by the introduction of your proposed Registry Service? If so, please describe the communications.:

*We have communicated with members of NTAG, registry stake holders and New gTLD applicant members, none of them has expressed concerns caused by our proposes service.\r\n*

Do you have any documents that address the possible effects on competition of your proposed Registry Service? If so, please submit them with your application. (ICANN will keep the documents confidential).:

*N/A\r\n*

## Security and Stability

Does the proposed service alter the storage and input of Registry Data?:

*The IDN service will barely alter the storage and input of Registry Data since IDN strings will just take up a little larger byte space.\r\n*

Please explain how the proposed service will affect the throughput, response time, consistency or coherence of



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reponses to Internet servers or end systems:

*There is very tiny effect on these topics. Chinese Characters' ASCII label (Punycode) may be a little longer than ASC II domain labels.\r\n*

Have technical concerns been raised about the proposed service, and if so, how do you intend to address those concerns?:

*IDN Pictographic string may cause network phishing. We will analyze IDN SLD registrations regularly so that we can identify potential issues in time and solve it.\r\n*

## Other Issues

Are there any Intellectual Property considerations raised by the Proposed Service:

*The IDN domain names may match trademark records in the Trademark Clearinghouse. \r\n\r\nSOHU registry shall comply with all ICANN relevant policies such as RMP, UDRP and URS to provide intellectual rights protections for relevant individuals or entities.\r\n\r\n\r\n\r\n*

Does the proposed service contain intellectual property exclusive to your gTLD registry?:

*No. Our proposed service does not contain intellectual property exclusive to our gTLD registry.\r\n\r\n\r\n*

List Disclaimers provided to potential customers regarding the Proposed Service:

*As soon as the proposed service is approved by ICANN, we shall put up IDN service notices on registry website to inform the Internet community. \r\n\r\n\r\n*

Any other relevant information to include with this request:

*N/A\r\n\r\n\r\n*