

# The ICANN GNSO “Business Constituency”



## **ICANN Business Constituency (BC) Comment on [Draft North America Engagement Plan \(FY26 - FY30\)](#)**

**28-Aug-2025**

### **Background**

This document provides input from the ICANN Business Constituency (BC), from the perspective of business users and registrants. We advocate for an ICANN policy that:

1. promotes end-user confidence because it is a safe place to conduct business
2. is competitive in the supply of registry and registrar and related services
3. is technically stable, secure and reliable.

### **GENERAL COMMENT**

This comment is directed to the FY26-30 North America Engagement Plan. The Plan has valuable objectives, and the BC supports well developed plans that can achieve these goals. We believe there are many initiatives to build and maintain participation within the multi-stakeholder model. We urge ICANN to ensure these efforts directly benefit businesses, users, and brand owners by focusing on three key areas:

1. Brand protection: Develop initiatives that enhance brand security and combat online infringement.
2. Strong policy voice: Create opportunities for businesses and brand owners to have a meaningful say in policy development.
3. Effective use of UA and new gTLD opportunities: Promote Universal Acceptance and explore new gTLD opportunities that will help businesses and brand owners succeed.

Specifically, brand owners in the Business Constituency recommend active engagement and focus on:

1. Strategic Goal 1.1: Multistakeholder Model & Representation:
  - a. Opportunity: Inclusive stakeholder engagement, including business, is positive for the Business Constituency’s influence.
  - b. Action: Ensure ICANN’s narrative highlights the value proposition for brand owners to attract and retain active members. While this goal seeks to maintain balanced engagement across all stakeholder groups, it suggests increased focus on academia. We encourage emphasis on the business community, particularly small to medium enterprises that are under-represented within the Business Constituency and elsewhere within ICANN.
2. Strategic Goal 1.2: Policy Development Agility:

- a. Opportunity: Efficient, responsive policy development is key to addressing market needs and emerging threats.
  - b. Action: Engage in evaluations to improve participation, advocating for transparent and accessible processes for business input.
- 3. Strategic Goal 1.3: Expand strategic alliances:
  - a. Identifying like-minded organizations at the local level has been successful when attracting new interest in the Global South. The BC has held numerous outreach events that have resulted in increased membership in our constituency. While these are generally enabled through CROP funding, we recommend hosting an 'ICANN night' where a cross section of stakeholders can collaborate and learn about the mission and benefits of ICANN. ICANN could assist by developing an event template and educational materials.
- 4. Strategic Goal 2.1: New gTLD Program & Brand Protection:
  - a. Opportunity: Awareness of the next round is vital for branding and defensive registrations.
  - b. Concern: The plan lacks explicit mechanisms for brand protection, IP rights, and abuse mitigation within new gTLDs, which are significant issues for businesses given the associated costs and other risks.
  - c. Action: Advocate for engagement and education on brand protection strategies, monitoring, and dispute resolution.
- 5. Strategic Goal 2.2: Universal Acceptance (UA):
  - a. Opportunity: UA is crucial for global brand accessibility across all domain extensions. Immigration to North America has resulted in emerging communities that want and need to reflect their cultures and languages. These would likely be willing participants in exploring the benefits of developing a UA web presence.
  - b. Action: Participate in the UA Expert Working Group to ensure brand portfolio needs (including IDNs) are considered.
- 6. Strategic Goal 3.1: Stability and Security:
  - a. Opportunity: A secure and stable DNS is fundamental for brand operations.
  - b. Action: Ensure security discussions include impacts on brand reputation, consumer trust, and enforcement mechanisms, not just technical aspects. In addition, new partnerships can emerge by engaging with cybersecurity departments within companies that don't participate in ICANN – all of which are concerned about hacking and ransomware.

Overall: The plan provides a solid framework. Our role is to ensure its execution directly benefits brand owners through focused initiatives on brand protection, strong policy voice, and effective use of UA and new gTLD opportunities.