

Demystifying Universal Acceptance: What does a multilingual Internet look like?

Part 2: Understanding Universal Acceptance

AccessPlus

2021 Webinar Series

Part 2 of 5: Understanding Universal Acceptance

Thursday, 29 July 2021 at 15:00 UTC (18:00 EAT)

Moderator:
Bob Ochieng
ICANN

Dr. Ajay Data
UASG

Maria Kolesnikova
UASG

Yaovi Atohoun
ICANN

Partners:

ICANN | moz://a | Internet Society Uganda Chapter | MINISTRY OF ICT & NATIONAL GUIDANCE | NITA UGANDA

#UniversalAcceptance | #multilingualInternet | #UA4all

Expected outcomes (Questions/discussion points)

At the end of this session, participants got an understanding of:

- What Universal Acceptance is?
- Why Universal acceptance matters?
- Level of UA readiness across the various regions.
- Impact of UA to organisations/companies.
- Strategies for ensuring that Universal Acceptance is adopted.

On 28 July 2021, AccessPlus in collaboration with partners organized the second part of the Universal Acceptance Webinar series which had 3 speakers and 37 participants from across the world. The Discussants focused on the topic “**Understanding Universal Acceptance**”. The session was moderated by **Bob Ochieng**, Senior Manager, Stakeholder Engagement - Eastern & Southern Africa, ICANN, and led by **Esther Patricia Akello**, AccessPlus.

Introducing Universal Acceptance (UA), **Dr. Ajay Data** (Chair of the Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG)) mentioned that the topic is linked with domain names and email addresses. He shared some Domain Name System (DNS) statistics, highlighting that there are over 1,200 active top-level domains (TLDs) including domains in different scripts and those that are longer than four characters. He stated that achieving UA ensures that every person has the ability to navigate and communicate on the Internet using their chosen domain name and email address that best aligns with their interests, business, culture, language and script. Additionally, Dr. Data noted that UA aims to have all domain names and email addresses working correctly in all software applications, i.e. achieve these five pillars: accept, validate, process, store and display.

Maria Kolesnikova (Chair, Communications Working Group, UASG) noted that different stakeholders are involved in achieving UA including: software vendors, whose services now support multiple scripts, email service providers, hosting providers, governments who can support such systems on their servers, and academia who can provide information to students who go to the labour markets, among others. Highlighting the engagement strategy of the UASG, she shared a map indicating current locations of UA Ambassadors and UA Local Initiatives around the globe. She emphasised the need for engaging local persons who know their markets, speak the same language, know which stakeholder groups are in their regions, biggest players and who can influence their markets. UA Ambassadors are enthusiasts involved in capacity building, training, technical support on the ground, and building dialogues with players and decision-makers. She concluded by inviting participants to join one of the UASG working groups.

Yaovi Atohoun (Director, Stakeholder Engagement & Operations for Africa, ICANN), shared the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) structure, which includes the ICANN Board, Staff and Community. He talked about the ICANN Strategic Plan for 2021-2025, which highlights UA as a focus area for ICANN. He invited participants to test if their email services support Email Address Internationalization (EAI) by using this service <https://uasg.tech/eai-check/>. Participants shared results from their tests, indicating both cases of supporting EAI and not.

Sarmad Hussein (Senior Director IDN & UA Programs, ICANN) highlighted that achieving UA requires multiple stakeholders ensuring that their systems and email providers are UA ready. He noted that ICANN has also been working on ensuring that all systems are UA-ready.

Please watch [the recording](#) for details.

We appreciate the support from our partners: Mozilla, Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), Internet Society Uganda Chapter, Ministry of ICT and National Guidance (MoICT&NG) in Uganda and the National Information Technology Authority - Uganda (NITA-U).

The next webinar is scheduled for 26 Aug 2021 at 15:00 UTC. [Registration](#) is open for the series. Persons who registered for the previous webinar do not have to register again. We look forward to engaging with you again!

Written by Sarah Kiden, with contributions from Innocent Adriko, Esther Patricia Akello, Lillian Achom and Consolate Gabriella Wangwe.