



Media Release

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ACCAN voices concern over proposed changes to domain name system

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network ([ACCAN](#)) has written to the .au Domain Administration ([auDA](#)) Board to voice concerns over the proposed changes to the Australian domain name system. The auDA Names Policy Panel is proposing to introduce a .au environment without the need for .com, .net, .edu and so on. The proposed change will allow for domain names like “www.accan.au” to be registered.

Australia’s current domain name system is highly regarded and has strong public recognition. The proposed changes could have adverse effects on small businesses that rely on their website and domain name to attract business if other parties register and use similar domain names. It could also result in additional expenses incurred by small businesses that have to defensively register additional domain names to protect their businesses. The changes may be confusing to consumers as recognised domain names of businesses and organisations could change. ACCAN has previously voiced these concerns in two separate submissions in [June](#) and [September](#).

“ACCAN has consulted with a number of small businesses who have expressed concern over the proposed changes to Australian domain names,” said ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin. “There is a strong likelihood that small businesses will incur extra costs due to defensive registrations, not to mention the extra time and effort they’ll need to spend ensuring their domain name and business are protected.

“We are concerned that to date feedback on the changes has largely been from the domain name industry and the consultation has not adequately taken into account other perspectives such as those of small businesses. A lot of small businesses may not even be aware of the proposed changes,” said Ms Corbin.

There’s also the question of who gets priority access to the new .au domain names that have already been registered as .com.au, .org.au and so on. In the United Kingdom, .com domain name holders were given priority over other parties to purchase the new .uk domain names. If this approach is adopted in Australia it would be unfair to many small businesses.

“These issues need to be worked through before any change is made so that fair arrangements can be put in place that don’t disadvantage small businesses,” said Ms Corbin.

For more information, contact Luke Sutton on luke.sutton@accan.org.au or 0409 966 931. For the latest updates, follow ACCAN on [Twitter](#) or like us on [Facebook](#).

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The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia’s peak communications consumer organisation. The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.