

UA EAI WG Meeting

06 August 2024

Attendees

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mark Svancarek | Kunle Olorundare |
| Abdalmonem Galila | Ernest Mafuta Katoka |
| Jim DeLaHunt | Prince Andrew Livingstone Zutah |
| John Levine | Seda Akbulut |
| Nosipho Nandipha Ntsaluba | |

Meeting Agenda:

1. Welcome and roll call
2. Track works in progress on work item: [Make it easier to experiment with self-hosted working EAI systems](#) - By John Levine
3. Continue working on the EAI Self-Certification Program - [Plan Document](#)

| # | Task | Description | Timeline |
|----|---|--|-----------|
| E5 | EAI Self-Certification Program | Part of the EAI WG's 5-year Action Plan. The majority of the WG's time over the next 5 years is connected to an end to end self certification program | 2025-2029 |
| E6 | Create resources and protocol for rapid community updates to EAI-specific sub-sites | Create resources similar to ICANNWiki. Also requires policy support from ICANN. | 2025-2026 |
| E7 | Write and Publish Q+A for Technical community questions from Stackoverflow, UASG blog for answers (in simple text) | As the desired impact was not achieved in FY23, we need to do this in a different way (example: for the findability of the answers, more HTML content is needed than PDF on uasg.tech) | 2025-2026 |
| E8 | Identify and publicize reference customers and providers | | 2027-2029 |
| E9 | Improve support of globally inclusive email addresses by engaging market share leaders (not limited to email service providers) | Inspired by successful UASG meetings in Shenzhen and Guangzhou (QQ and Tencent) in January 2018 | 2025-2027 |

Meeting recording: [Link](#) ; Passcode: BW%7?79K?P

Meeting Notes

Agenda#2

John Levine reported on the progress of developing scripts to simplify EAI self-host experimentation:

- **Initial challenges:** While the overall process is working as expected, there have been some unexpected complexities, particularly related to system configuration variations.
- **Script functionality:** The script installs necessary software (Postfix, SpamAssassin, OpenDKIM, Dovecot) and configures them automatically in many cases.
- **Configuration variations:** John encountered differences between Debian installations, [requiring additional configuration steps to ensure proper functionality](#).
- **Domain name issues:** In some cases, the system's domain name was incorrect, [necessitating manual adjustments](#).
- **User-friendliness:** John is working to make the scripts more user-friendly, especially for non-experts, by providing guidance and options for common configuration scenarios.
- **SSH access:** [The script will include instructions for using Secure Shell \(SSH\) on Windows machines, as it's not a standard feature.](#)
- **Hosting provider restrictions:** John noted that many hosting providers have strict anti-spam measures, and the script will [provide advice on choosing more suitable providers](#).
- **Timeline:** John expects to have a working prototype available for testing by the end of the month.

Overall, the project is progressing well, with John addressing the challenges and aiming to provide a valuable tool for EAI experimentation.

Mark inquired about the variability in Debian distributions. John explained that the differences arise from how various hosting providers

set up their Debian-based systems. For example, some providers pre-configure user accounts and SSH keys, while others require manual setup. These variations, although not substantial, can be frustrating and necessitate additional configuration steps in the automation script. John would try this on Azure.

Jim asked whether it would be easier to find a suitable server for deployment for an IT person. John explained the potential challenges of deploying the system within organizations:

- **Organizational policies:** The feasibility of deployment depends largely on the organization's policies and supported technologies.
- **Resource availability:** Some organizations may have difficulty allocating resources for a new project, even if it aligns with their goals.
- **Cloud-based alternatives:** John suggested that using a cloud-based VPS could be a more cost-effective and flexible option for many organizations.
- **Deployment obstacles:** The ultimate success of deployment will depend on factors beyond the script, such as the organization's ability to find a suitable server and overcome internal administrative hurdles.

Overall, while the script provides a valuable tool, organizations may encounter challenges in integrating it into their existing infrastructure and processes.

Abdalmonem suggested making things easier with installing the TRAN file in one shot at the time of configurations to set up the server without requiring the IT person to do many things. The TRAN file will allow us to skip any issues.

John explained in detail that in fact the script installs all the packages it needs when you run the setup script. And then it asks what's the domain name and what the email addresses are. And then it moves to DNS records for the IT person to install. So basically once you run

through the script and do the DNS changes it tells you that you should have a running mail server.

Abdalmonem added that there may still be an issue because some common line interfaces for the operating systems couldn't accept unicode domain names for the mail server name. He said that [Ubuntu, 2024.0 2 accepts domain names in Arabic for the utilities of the DNS](#). But others don't.

[John mentioned that he tried some Chinese names on Debian and Ubuntu, and they seem to work. But he should also check with Arabic to make sure that works too.](#)

Jim asked what the handoff process is, meaning once the community or WG members test the system, how quickly can issues be resolved? Will there be ongoing support after initial testing?

John shared that the contract does not provide for support. On the other hand, he is going to put it up on Github so anyone can play with it. [If people come up with small problems that John can fix easily, he'll just do it in his own repo. He suggested making a copy of his repo for the long run.](#)

Mark asked the Github link for ICANN. Seda shared: <https://github.com/icann/ua-code-samples>

Abdalmonem suggested making a Stackoverflow channel for ICANN and to add John Levine's update with this work, and answer the questions from there about Universal Acceptance and our repo on Github. He suggested giving links from our Github to StackExchange and vice versa.

[Abdalmonem shared that in his early journey on UA, he asked a question about UA and still he did not get a response.](#)

Agenda#3

Mark explained briefly that the self certification program is a pretty

broad collection of tasks and deliverables that make it easier for people to self-certify.

Seda shared that some of the actions listed on the [additional document](#) about the self-certification program has no timeline. For the 5-year plan document, the WG should finalize the timeline for all the actions. Mark added that there are some speculative things with the program and we are at the beginning stage with many UASG organizational changes. Lack of the timeline for some sub tasks may not have a big impact on the overall program timeline. In case it is necessary, it could be added, but at this stage it is pointless. As we go further with the plan the WG will definitely add reliable dates. It was decided not to take action at the moment unless we receive any feedback.

AOB

Explainer Video on Email Configuration.

Jim raised his concern about the Explainer Video that does not seem to consider the EAI Self-Certification program much in its coverage. He emphasized the significance of EAI self-certification levels for buyers and vendors. [Jim said that there was not sufficient mention of EAI self-certification in the script and he wrote a comment saying that the entire second half of the script should be thrown out, instead it should be replaced with something about the self-certification labels, and how buyers should rely on it and ask for the self-certification level of what they want to buy, and vendors should figure out self-certify themselves and advertise their certification levels in line with how we've been saying the program should be used. Such details are more important than what each level indicates. However, Jim got a reply back from the vendor to that comment, saying it's too late and they can't change the script.](#) Perhaps the EAI WG should conduct a roadshow within UASG to inform other groups about their priorities and the self-certification program. This includes presentations to all working groups and the coordinating group.

Mark agreed with Jim on the importance of the program which he presented to the whole community and UASG three times a year.

Seda shared that EAI self-certification guide is already listed in the SOW for the explainer videos and to some extent it is included in the video. She will reach out to the vendor to ensure what can be done.

Abdalmonem drew attention to the audience and said the definitions should be selected based on the audience, which should be the technical audience for the EAI video. To him, this definition is more for the general audience: “Universal Acceptance is a foundational requirement for a truly multilingual Internet, one in which users around the world can navigate entirely in local languages and can send and receive emails with internationalized email addresses.)”. It seemed ok to Mark.

Seda shared that the vendor is currently working on the feedback received and it may be late for some of the changes, but she will take the EAI WG input to see if the vendor can accommodate.

Nosipho asked for the translations of the video. Seda shared that there will be subtitles in 5 UN Languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish).

AOB:

John Levine suggested an interesting book about Chinese typing worth reading.

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/550748/kingdom-of-characters-pulitzer-prize-finalist-by-jing-tsu/>

Agenda for the next meeting defined as:

- Continue working on the EAI Self-Certification Program - [Plan Document](#)

Next meeting: Tuesday 27 August 2024 at 13:00 UTC

Action items

| No. | Action Item | Owner |
|-----|--|--------------|
| 1 | Add the Self Certification Plan Document link to community wiki page | Staff |
| 2 | Consider responding questions about UA on the Stackoverflow | WG |
| 3 | Consider creating an active account for ICANN/UASG to respond to UA questions on Stackoverflow | Staff |
| 4 | Add the new repo John Levine to create to ICANN Github, and give a link from Stackoverflow | John/Staff |
| 5 | Include the EAI Self Certification Guide context in the explainer video2 | Staff/Vendor |