

Domain Names Outside NYU.EDU

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Purpose

As uses of the Internet continue to evolve, there will be increasing desires within the university community for computers, electronic mail addresses, and URLs to have names distinct from the "nyu.edu" domain name space, that is, non-nyu.edu addresses.

This statement describes New York University's policy for the creation, management, and appropriate use of non-nyu.edu Internet domain names for computing resources located within university-operated facilities. It establishes a framework for identifying and satisfying legitimate requests of this nature within the context of the educational and research missions of the university.

Policy

Names outside the nyu.edu domain name space may be obtained under specific and limited circumstances. Acceptable requests will be for NYU-affiliated activities which have purposes consistent with the mission of the university. However, non-NYU names will not be assigned for pure New York University educational or research activities, nor for private business or other commercial ventures.

Responsibility for approving requests is vested in New York University's Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO), under the authority of the Office of the Provost. As an operational matter, the CITO delegates responsibility for executing the policy outlined in this document to the NYU Webmaster, the NYU-NET Network Operations Center (NOC), and School of Medicine Chief Information Officer.

New York University's Webmaster, in consultation with authorities in the unit of the requesting party and the NYU NOC will gauge the acceptability of each request. Webmaster is the university's official entity for coordinating Internet-based information services, and the NYU NOC is the sole authority for Internet naming and numbering of all computers and other network-attached devices located within university facilities.

Application to webteam@nyu.edu is the only permitted avenue for requesting a network name outside the nyu.edu name space. Domain names are officially assigned and registered with an Internet naming authority above the level of NYU; requests for this service must be performed by the NYU NOC itself on behalf of the requesting party.

In a case where it is proposed to move an existing domain from another organization to New York University, application must be made to webteam@nyu.edu in accord with the approach described in this statement.

The NOC will apply for domain creation with the InterNIC, and NOC staff will be listed as administrative and technical contacts. The requesting party will bear the registration cost, and will be listed as the billing contact. The NOC will provide primary and secondary name service for the domain.

Under no circumstance may individuals directly arrange non-nyu.edu names for computing resources attached to NYU-NET by application to ISPs or other Internet naming authorities outside the university.

The requesting party will be held liable for any misuse of computers within the requested domain, and for any violation of university acceptable-use policies, government regulations, or laws; such violations may be cause for discontinuation of support for the domain.

Background

Identification of resources on the Internet is based on a hierarchical naming scheme. For example, educational institutions in the United States use computer names ending with "edu", and the officially assigned Internet domain name for computers at NYU is "nyu.edu". NYU computers are thus named "x.nyu.edu". The central World-Wide Web server at NYU is "www.nyu.edu". Many additional subdivisions are commonly used; for example, the WWW server at the NYU School of Medicine is "www.med.nyu.edu".

Electronic mail addresses are similar, and a person's email address might be of the form: xyz@nyu.edu or xyz@is.nyu.edu. World-Wide Web URLs show another variation: for example <http://www.nyu.edu/its/pubs/connect/> indicates a page on the central WWW server.

The Internet has flourished as a scalable and manageable repository of information by virtue of this hierarchical arrangement which reflects the provenance of computer systems and of documents located on them, as well as the affiliation of people within organizations.

Sometimes, however, a subgroup within an organization may wish to use an Internet address distinct from the normal, institution-oriented naming described above. For example, if there were an NYU group studying the "Big Bang", its members might like to have email addresses of the form xyz@mail.bigbang.org and a WWW server with URLs like <http://www.bigbang.org>. They may wish to accomplish this using NYU computers attached to NYU-NET where, as a rule, all computer names end with 'nyu.edu'.

The way to accomplish such naming is for a new domain, "bigbang.org", to be officially registered with the Internet naming authorities outside of NYU, and for individual machines to then be named "x.bigbang.org" within that new domain.

Concerns

Use of non-nyu.edu domain names can potentially present the university with serious management issues. For example, their use increases the complexity of DNS support and may make investigation and response to security incidents more difficult.

Such domain names will presumably be sought in order to attract Internet users to resources on machines within NYU, which implies an increase in utilization of NYU-NET's link to the Internet as well as bandwidth within the university (across our backbone network and on the local network where such machines are attached). But since our Internet link and internal local networks have finite capacities shared by the entire university community, it is desirable to have advanced warning and an opportunity to discuss potentially high-volume sites in advance. Another potential area for discussion would be any special access restrictions needed for a specific domain. Centralized university management of domain registrations will permit such consultation.

In the event of a security incident - for example a network-based attack directed at non-nyu.edu computers located on campus - it is possible for all or a large part of NYU-NET to be adversely affected. Management of domain registrations and provision of DNS service on a centralized basis will allow quick detection and counter-measures in such a situation. The task of dealing with external network authorities such as service providers and Internet carriers will also be greatly facilitated by having NOC staff in an authoritative position with respect to the domain.

If a domain registrant leaves the university, it will typically be desirable to remove the registration in a timely fashion. Otherwise, for example, we would be unable to re-use Internet addresses associated with the registration. This goal can best be met by close coordination between domain registrants and the NOC.

There may also be liability issues to consider; the university (to some extent the NOC, to some extent the Office of Legal Counsel) is responsible for "nyu.edu" affairs. It is unclear how incident-response relating to non-nyu.edu computers would be handled, and who might be liable in the event of a security incident.

In addition, use of non-nyu.edu domains disassociates activities conducted at the university from the university itself, by virtue of not using the immediately recognizable 'nyu.edu' name; this practice does not lead to a greater sense of community within the university.

Finally, any domain name request must be considered with regard to intellectual property, since owners of trademarks are aggressively battling with people who register domain names that resemble or replicate a trademark in the commercial world; therefore, domain name requests need to be vetted before they can be registered.

Eligibility

Faculty and full-time administrators/staff of the university may apply to Webmaster for a non-nyu.edu domain name. Students of the university are not eligible for this service.

Appropriate Use

An application for a non-nyu.edu domain name will be considered if accompanied by a persuasive explanation of how its use is valuable and consistent with the educational and research mission of the university, thereby justifying the NOC's effort to assign and manage the new name space.

Alternatives

A non-nyu.edu domain name may not be the only acceptable way to obtain a desirable, distinguishing Internet address. Webmaster can discuss various alternatives within the nyu.edu name space. Following the example given above, a URL such as <http://bigbang.nyu.edu> or <http://www.nyu.edu/bigbang> might be possible and in many cases will be encouraged.

Process

Application may be made via email to webteam@nyu.edu; at the School of Medicine, applications should be made to noc@med.nyu.edu. Requesters should include information as to their unit, school, department within the university as well as a full description of the purposes for which they desire a non-nyu.edu domain name. Any machines to be given such a name must be identified.

It should be noted that Internet domain name registration carries with it an initial fee of approximately \$75, covering two years of use; a \$30 annual renewal fee is required thereafter. It will necessary to confirm, on an annual basis, that each newly created domain name is still desired and is in use.

Additional Information

To obtain additional information, send email to noc@nyu.edu.

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