

APTLD86 Recap: ccTLD Trends and Takeaways

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WhoisXML API is honored to have been represented at the recent APTLD86 conference, the 86th members meeting of the Asia Pacific Top Level Domain (APTLD) Association. Held on 17–20 September 2024 in Da Nang, Vietnam, the event took on a hybrid format, with 110 participants on-site and 50 others online.

Our Head of APAC and Global Partnership, [Ching Chao](#), participated in the conference and shared in-depth insights into DNS abuse, contributing to the discussions and knowledge exchange among the APTLD members.

In this post, we'll share some of the most notable takeaways from the APTLD86 conference.

Brand Impersonation and Domain Blocking

One of the special talks on the second day of APTLD86 was by Tony Kirsch, Commercial Director of Brand Safety Alliance. Brand Safety Alliance is a collaborative initiative that aims to enhance the protection of brand identity online. In his talk, Kirsch discussed GlobalBlock, a service that helps address online brand infringement and domain impersonation to secure intellectual property.

Registries can significantly strengthen their brand protection efforts by adopting GlobalBlock. The service helps proactively mitigate abuse, allowing registries to demonstrate their commitment to safeguarding intellectual property and maintaining a positive online reputation.

The Brand Safety Alliance's efforts to enhance brand protection align closely with our commitment to promoting a safer online environment. WhoisXML API has been actively advocating this goal, regularly investigating [brand impersonation](#), particularly in relation to cybersquatting and phishing scams.

ccTLD Milestones

The APTLD86 conference also provided a platform for several ccTLD registries to share their history and development. Among the highlights were the post-Soviet domains .by, .kz, and .am, among others, which marked their 30th anniversary this year.

For one, board members of the Internet Society, a nonprofit advocacy organization, represented Armenia's .am domain and presented an overview of the strategies that have contributed to the success and growth of .am in the past three decades. Their insights offered valuable perspectives on the challenges and opportunities post-Soviet ccTLDs face.

DNS Abuse Mitigation

Our very own Ching Chao was one of the moderators of the session “Technical Means to Mitigate DNS Abuse,” where he specifically talked about internationalized domain names (IDNs).

Drawing from the white paper “[Early Homograph Threat Detection: A DNS Study of IDNs and Native-Language Characters](#),” Chao provided a comprehensive analysis of fully qualified domain names (FQDNs) containing native-language characters. He pinpointed the domains' presence across registries, TLDs, and registrars and their online activities based on passive DNS data.

Chao's presentation culminated in a detailed discussion of technical methods for studying suspicious FQDNs and IDNs identified as indicators of compromise (IoCs). He emphasized the importance of analyzing homograph clusters, groups of similar-looking IDNs that can be used for malicious purposes.

ccTLD's Ability to Help with Child Sexual Abuse

The ability of ccTLDs to play a vital role in mitigating Child Sexual Abuse Materials (CSAM) was also a key topic at the APTLD86 conference. Jon Nevett, CEO of the Public Interest Registry, shared valuable insights on how ccTLD registries can contribute to this vital cause.

By leveraging their unique position within the domain name ecosystem, ccTLD registries can implement measures to identify and disrupt the distribution of CSAM. This can include collaborating with law enforcement agencies, implementing robust abuse reporting mechanisms, and supporting initiatives to raise awareness about the dangers of CSAM.

Nevett's remarks resonated deeply with WhoisXML API, given our [collaboration with the National Child Protection Task Force \(NCPTF\)](#), an organization dedicated to making the world safer for

children by helping law enforcement agencies solve child exploitation and human trafficking cases.

APTLD86 was jam-packed with enlightening sessions on cybersecurity, Internet safety, artificial intelligence (AI), and ccTLD marketing. We look forward to APTLD87, which will take place on 10–13 February 2025 in Hong Kong S.A.R. For more information about APTLD initiatives, visit their website <https://aptld.org/>.

About WhoisXML API

WhoisXML API has been aggregating domain data across thousands of gTLDs and ccTLDs for more than a decade now. Our extensive network of partnerships with leading domain data providers, including registries, registrars, and ISPs, ensures that we deliver comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date domain, IP, and DNS intelligence. We'll continue to foster new collaborations to make the Internet safer and more transparent.

We have earned recognition as an Inc. 5000 honoree and one of the Financial Times Top Fastest-Growing Companies for several years now. Our robust cyber intelligence solutions are trusted by more than 52,000 users, including Fortune 500 companies, top-tier security firms, and organizations spanning diverse industries.