

CODE: DEBUGGING THE GENDER GAP

Award-winning
documentary
sparks discussion

CODING: SIMPLY CHILD'S PLAY?

Why computer
programming is not
just for grownups

INSIDE A HACKATHON

Problem solving in a
collaborative format

CODE LIKE A GIRL

Ally Watson on growth,
success and becoming a startup



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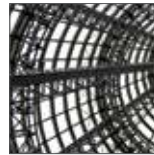
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Departments



Under the Microscope 6

A look at trends in and influences on ccTLD growth from Patrick Myles of NetKnowledge.com.au.



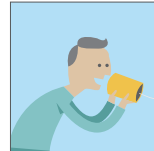
Governance & Policy 21

A look back at the final months of 2016 at auDA and plans for 2017.



.au Research and Surveys 7

Insights into Australians' use of social media from the 2016 .au survey.



Channel Talk 23

News and views from the .au retail channel. This edition: if you could change one thing about .au, what would it be?



Women in Technology 10

Introducing AusRegistry's newly-established Women in Technology working group and its plans for 2017.



Glossary 25

Abbreviations and definitions of key terms.



DNS & Security 19

Email scams are becoming more prolific and sophisticated. Craig McDonald from MailGuard discusses the risks and how to protect yourself.

Features



CODE: Debugging the gender gap 9

Insights from AusRegistry's screening of an award-winning documentary on the gender gap in coding and computer science.



Coding: simply child's play? 13

All over Australia, children as young as five are learning to code. We speak to the founders of Code the Future about the benefits of teaching coding to kids.



Inside a hacktathon 11

They're becoming synonymous with technology, coding and innovation. But what is a hackathon and how are they run?



Code like a girl 15

Ally Watson wanted to create a safe space for women technologists to meet and share ideas and knowledge. It's now a nationally-renowned startup showing no signs of stopping.

3,078,701

.au domain names

31st December 2016



Foreword



Welcome to *Behind the Dot*. In this edition we explore the diverse and ever-changing world of coding – and those who are leading the way in this field.

The demand for skilled coders and programmers in Australia is increasing and the field of coding and computer science has become a hot topic in the media in recent years.

Our cover story is an interview with Ally Watson, founder of Code Like a Girl – an organisation that hosts free events and workshops around Melbourne designed to encourage more women and girls to engage with technology and develop coding skills.

We've also delved deeper into the issue of teaching coding to children, speaking with non-profit organisation Code the Future, which teams schools with professional coders to run programming workshops and lessons for students. Co-founders Bec Spink and Will Egan share an interesting perspective on what it means to teach kids to code and why it's such a valuable skill to be exposed to at a young age.

In addition to this, we have taken look Inside a Hackathon to explain exactly what these popular tech events entail and what's on offer for attendees. Our DNS & Security segment contains an investigation of what it takes to run a domain name Registry.

Our coding edition also includes our inaugural Women in Technology segment, outlining AusRegistry's new Women in Technology working group and its first event; a screening of the award-winning documentary *CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap*. The film was insightful for all who attended the viewing and the Women in Technology group has a number of exciting plans for events and initiatives in 2017.

Finally, with this edition we're pleased to unveil the new-look cover for *Behind the Dot*. As our readership grows and the volume of content expands, we're reaching out into new industries and speaking with experts in a diverse range of subjects. It is important to us that this magazine grows and matures and this cover redesign is just one piece of that puzzle.

I am pleased to present *Behind the Dot* magazine. As always, we welcome your feedback and input on the magazine and thank you for reading.

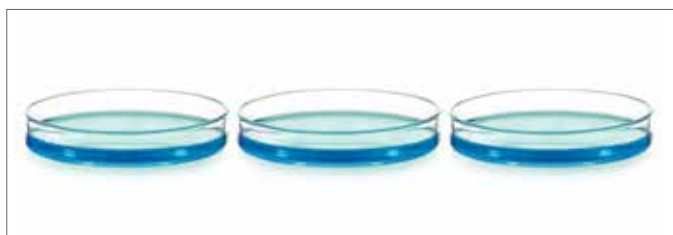
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'A' being particularly large and stylized.

Adrian Kinderis
CEO, AusRegistry



Under the microscope

By Patrick Myles – Net Knowledge



Growth in ccTLD's is influenced by two basic factors – the ratio of new domains created to the domains under management and the retention of existing domains over time. Global market trends in ccTLDs show that on average new domain sales are decreasing, which is natural with the growing size of domains under management. Conversely, retention (via renewals) is steady with a small increase – a trend of what many consider a 'mature' market. For several years, .au has had a lower retention rate¹ than comparable ccTLDs. However when comparing retention rates across different ccTLDs, it is generally worth comparing the creation rate as well.

Charts 1 and 2, to the left show the .au market position in two ways – firstly, annual renewals against the market average and secondly, market positions of TLDs in terms of new domains ratio (vertical) and renewal ratios (horizontal).

Studies in CENTR² show that on average, ccTLDs move from the top left (high proportional new domains, low renewals) to bottom right (low proportional new domains, higher renewals) as seen in chart 2. This shift could be driven by many factors, including age and size of the namespace. The chart is used as an estimation of relative maturity of a TLD amongst its peers. In this case, it shows that .au has a relatively higher new domain growth and relatively less renewals – also explaining the lower than average renewals in chart 1. It's expected that .au's position will move closer to the bottom right of the chart as most other developed ccTLDs have done.

It's worth noting there are other factors which have potential to affect the renewal curve in chart 1. They might be policy related such as the introduction of auto renewals or addition of one year registration terms, both of which are present in several ccTLDs but are still in progress for .au.

Positive correlations are also evident between the relative age of domains and their likelihood to be renewed. One could expect that as the trends outlined above continue, shifts in focus from new customer to existing will take place – after all, the older the domain is, the harder it has worked for the bottom line of a Registry.

For more information on Patrick Myles and his work visit www.netknowledge.com.au. ■

Notes: charts 1 and 2 courtesy of CENTR

¹ Methodology based on accepted methodology used in Europe (CENTR) to assess renewals. Calculation is made based on the difference of total domains in each period minus the new domains registered. It is often referred to as a 'retention rate'.

² CENTR: Council of European National Top-Level Domain Registries

Chart 1: Retention Ratio

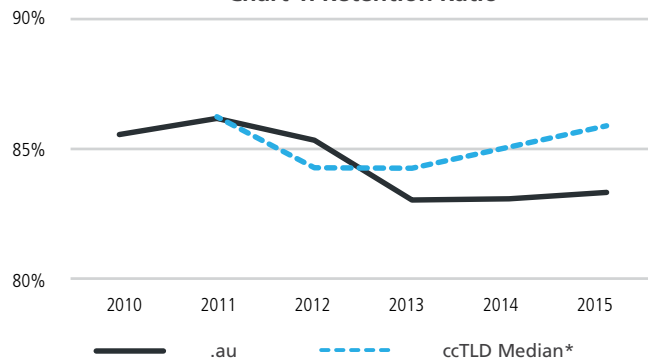


Chart 2: New vs Retained Domain Ratios

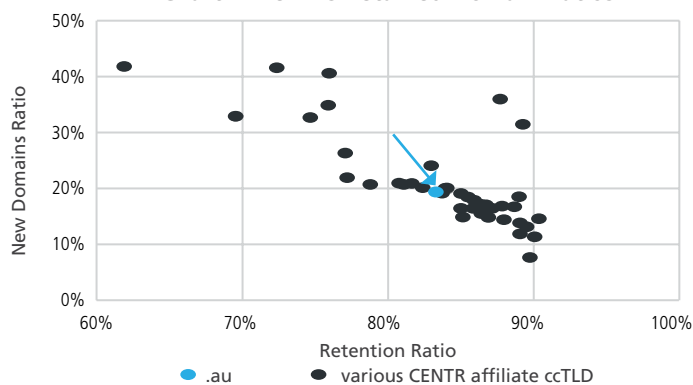


Chart 3: .au Domains Under Management

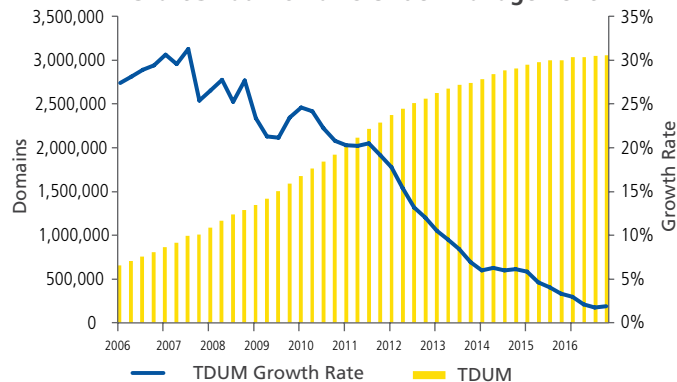
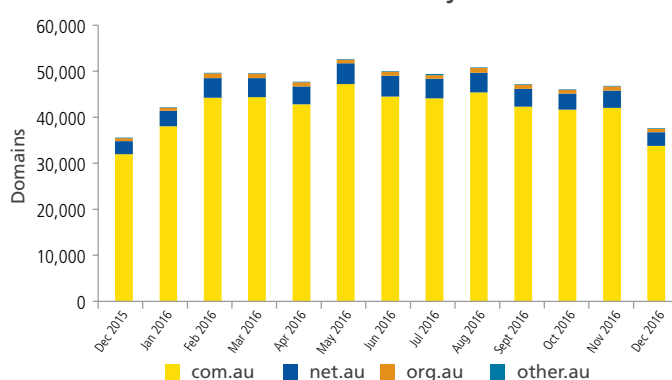


Chart 4: .au Monthly Creates





.au research and surveys

By Penelope Green – Senior Data Analyst, AusRegistry

The annual .au survey is designed to gauge Australian sentiment towards the .au namespace and examine how people interact with it. Edition 9 of *Behind the Dot* (Nov 2016) featured the main findings from 2016.

The following covers additional findings from the survey relating to social media use.

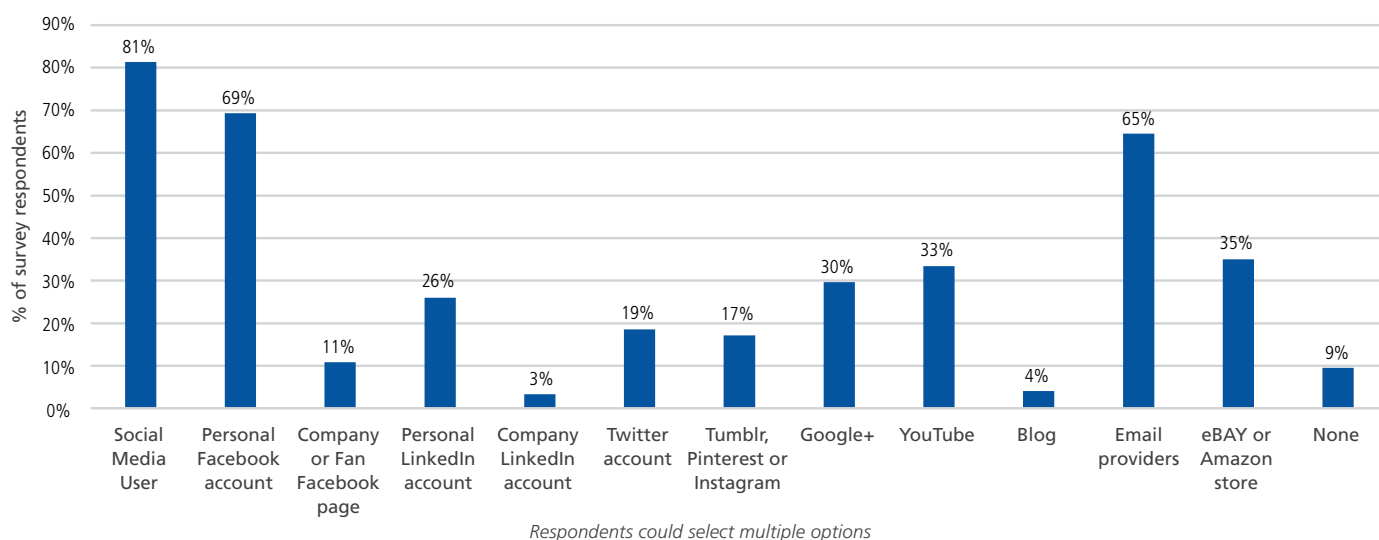
Of the 3,011 survey respondents, nationally representative in age, gender and state, 81 percent use social media – defined by use of Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn or their own blog.

Facebook was twice as popular as any of the other social media choices presented and rivalled only by email as a means of establishing an online presence.

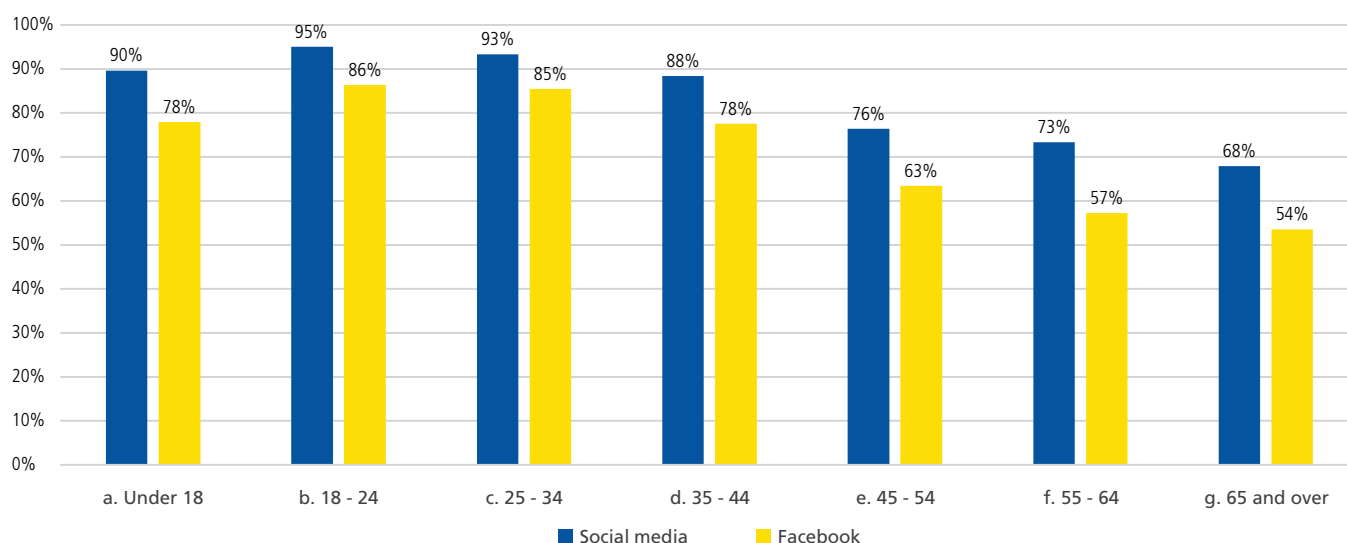
Social media appeals across all age groups with at least two-thirds of each group reporting some social media presence. However social media use does decline with age; over 90 percent of the under 35 groups use it but the take up drops to 68 percent over the age of 65.

95 percent of the 18 to 24 cohort use social media. They also have the highest Facebook use at 86 percent, higher than the 15 to 18 cohort, although the younger group had the highest use of YouTube. ■

Social Media Use



Social Media Usage by Age





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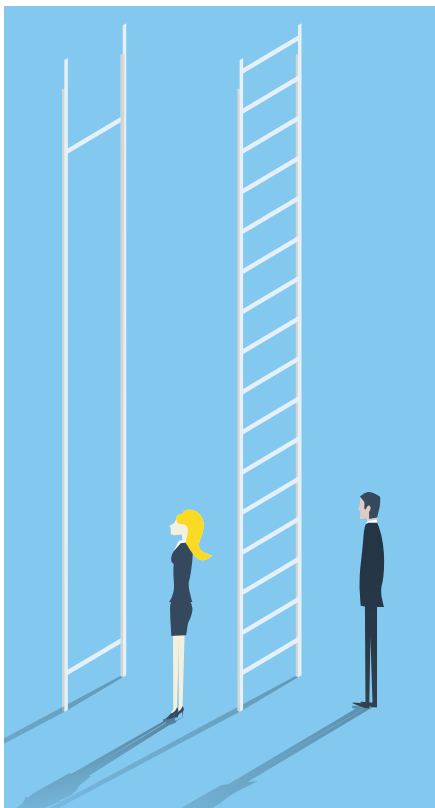
CODE:

<p>Debugging the Gender Gap</p>



By **Alison Coffa**
Marketing Communications
Coordinator, AusRegistry

In 2013, filmmaker Robin Hauser Reynolds' daughter called home from college to explain that she wanted to drop her computer science major. According to Ms Hauser Reynolds, "her confidence was shaken by being one of just two women in a class of 25, and by not having the resources to support her."



This phone call came in the midst of a flurry of media coverage of the importance of computer science knowledge for future employability and for the wider economy.

Inspired by this paradox – that there was a demand for diverse, skilled computer science workers but the industry seemingly discouraged or failed to support women – Ms Hauser Reynolds and producer Staci Hartman set out to create a film that explores the reasons behind the gender gap and the digital divide.

"For the most part, Silicon Valley availed itself to our inquisition, and with each interview – whether at Yelp, Facebook, Google, Twitter, Pinterest, Strava, Pandora, GitHub or Pivotal – we learned that the underlying currents which dissuaded women and people of colour from pursuing coding jobs and resulted in the dearth of minorities in tech, were systemic, pervasive, and complex. Mindsets, stereotypes, clogs in the educational pipeline, startup culture, lack of role models and sexism all play important roles in this mounting gender, ethnicity and economic issue.

Women in Technology at AusRegistry

AusRegistry's newly-established Women in Technology working group (AU WIT) hosted a screening of *CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap* for AusRegistry staff to provide a platform for discussion and sharing of experiences in this area.

The film gave an interesting and engaging perspective of the history of women's contribution to computer science, as well as some of the modern-day social and cultural factors contributing to the decline in female representation in the industry.

Explaining that women were considered the world's first computer programmers but often "written out of history", the film also looked at the impact that a lack of diversity can cause in innovative and inventive environments, when a range of perspectives and ideas are not included. One example that stuck with several team members at AusRegistry was that when seatbelts were first fitted into cars, a large number of women and children were injured or killed by them; as they were developed based on the average measurements and specifications of the automotive engineers who built them – all of whom were Caucasian men.

Those who attended AusRegistry's screening responded enthusiastically to the documentary, expressing surprise over some of the findings and commenting that it would start some important conversations both within AusRegistry and around how we as a company can contribute to combating this issue on a larger scale.

At the screening, the AU WIT also announced its plans for activities in 2017, which have been outlined in more detail on page 10 of *Behind the Dot*. ■



Women in technology

By Maggie Whitnall – Senior Client Services Manager, AusRegistry

AusRegistry's Women in Technology (WIT) group was formed in September 2016 to provide support and advancement for the female technologists of AusRegistry and the greater technical community. The group is dedicated to creating an inclusive culture, providing a safe space for all to flourish, and celebrating the achievements of our members.

AusRegistry's WIT group seeks to achieve these objectives by focussing on three main areas:



- **Advancement** – Provide support for career growth and development. Enrich and retain current employees.
- **Community** – Forming social networks to connect our women technologists.
- **Outreach** – Promote engagement in technology among women and girls outside of AusRegistry, by volunteering our time and resources and/or hosting and attending local tech events.

At the inaugural meeting, team members from AusRegistry met over breakfast to learn more about the Women in Technology program at Neustar (AusRegistry's parent

company), which has been running since 2015 across several US cities and to hear about opportunities to get involved. Importantly, participants were asked to provide feedback and suggestions on the most valuable initiatives for the group to undertake locally.

The response from the team was overwhelmingly in favour of adopting a number of initiatives throughout the year to promote the pillars of advancement, community and outreach. Based on the feedback, AusRegistry's WIT leaders developed a plan of initiatives for 2016/17, with a focus on up-skilling staff and creating opportunities for outreach within the local community, incorporating activities and programs for girls and young women considering careers in ICT fields.

Some of these initiatives include:

- **Advancement**
Additional training opportunities at AusRegistry (particularly in the tech realm) to support career growth and professional development.
- **Community**
Screening (at AusRegistry) the award-winning documentary CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap that explores the reasons for the gender gap in coding and the digital divide. It also highlights breakthrough efforts that are producing more diverse programmers and shows how the gender gap can be closed.
- **Outreach**
Girls in ICT Day – AusRegistry, supported by .au Domain Administration (auDA), hopes to partner with an established coding organisation to run a morning of coding and learning for school aged children.

AusRegistry's WIT group will continue to meet quarterly throughout the year to discuss outcomes, progress and upcoming initiatives. Each member is encouraged to take on a leadership roles with opportunities to lead meetings or events as well as collaborate with WIT colleagues across the globe to share knowledge and ideas. ■

Inside a Hackathon



By **George Pongas**
Sr Director of Product Management, AusRegistry

Whilst the term seems relatively new, hackathons have been around since 1999. In the world of technology that equates to a lifetime. A portmanteau of the words “hack” and “marathon” – ‘hack’ used to refer to collaborative programming – hackathons bring together likeminded technologists for short, intensive periods with the typical objective of creating innovative software (or in other instances for educational and social purposes).

Hackathons attract a range of enthusiasts from coders to graphic designers, entrepreneurs to project managers who singularly or in teams (sometimes competitively) work towards a specific goal depending on the focus of the organiser.

According to the Disruptor’s Handbook Big List of Hackathons in Australia, hackathons are incredibly popular with numerous events taking place every month. The types of hackathons listed are varied. Some are small community events whilst others are organised by large corporates and attended by thousands. Some hackathons run over a few hours, whilst others can last a week and are held simultaneously across the major cites of Australia.

Organisers of hackathons include small, medium or large enterprise, government departments and agencies, education providers and not-for-profits each seeking to innovate in a creative and highly productive way.

In a 2014 presentation ‘A Brief History of Hackathons’, hacker historian Jon Gottfried spoke to the origins of the hackathon. Gottfried credited the American hobbyist groups of the 1970s for inspiring the peer group, collaborative nature of hackathons. The most recognised hobbyist group in technology circles was the Homebrew Computer Club (1975-86), an informal group of technology enthusiasts, boasting membership from the likes of Apple Computer founders Stephen Wozniak and Steve Jobs.

However according to Gottfried, not until the introduction of standardised computer platforms and development environments did hackathons emerge.

In June 1999 the ‘hackathon’ name was used for the first time in a public forum. In fact it was used at two separate events within two weeks of each other. The first event was an OpenBSD hackathon of 10 people, in Alberta, Canada. A member posted to the OpenBSD mailing list inviting people to hack for a weekend (at someone’s house), to work on bugs and to close security holes in an open source project.

Two weeks later in California, Sun Microsystems ran a hackathon at a developer conference. It was the first competitive Hackathon to see who could build the best app using Java to communicate via infrared between two Palm Pilots!

The earlier forms of hackathons had a technical focus, primarily developer-led and were not associated with start-ups as many are today. The shift came around 2007 when the first ‘Startup Weekend’ was held in Boulder, Colorado. Startup Weekend brought together 70 entrepreneurs of wide-ranging skill sets, to try to create a startup in just 54 hours. The event has gone from strength to strength and is now held in 135 countries with the involvement of over 210,000 entrepreneurs.

Hackathons are now run by most sectors of the community wishing to innovate within their space including the areas of technology, arts, sport, entertainment, health, education and government. There are many examples of successful and productive hackathons held in Australia each year which have now become fixtures on the innovation and technology calendar.

The Australian Government, along with IBM, are the lead sponsors of GovHack. GovHack is an annual, 46-hour, competitive hackathon where participants (usually various combinations of entrepreneurs, developers, data analysts, engineers, creatives, academics, researchers and youth and civic enthusiasts) create working prototypes using open government data (data that can be freely used, re-used



and redistributed by anyone). First held in 2007, GovHack has grown to over 3,000 participants competing across 40 locations (in Australia and New Zealand) and submitting some 480 projects.

RHoK (Random Hacks of Kindness) is the largest and longest running social hackathon in Australia. It connects technologists to charities, community groups and social enterprises in order to produce practical, open source software to help solve social problems. Starting in 2011 in Melbourne, RHoK has helped over 50 charities and social enterprises find tech enabled solutions to pressing social problems.

So what is the future of hackathons? Interestingly, the future may be dependent upon a more deliberate effort to increase diversity, accessibility and inclusiveness amongst participants.

DubHacks is a 24-hour collegiate hackathon held at the University of Washington in Seattle. It believes technology has the power to spark positive social change in the community. A recent blog by its founder, Karan Goel, said that the focus of hackathons should be "on learning and networking rather than winning. The best hackathons should give students an opportunity to connect with other students of diverse backgrounds, help them interact with top companies and give them a place to be innovative....we're aiming to achieve a 50-50 female/male ratio of both attendees and mentors."

Goel went on to say that more effort would be focused on new comers and beginners who want to explore the field. "After talking to a lot of younger students we realized what they really needed was the right mentorship and resources.... We believe these first steps will set a new standard and begin a movement among hackathon organizers to practice, not just preach, inclusiveness." ■

References:

- disruptorshandbook.com/big-list-hackathons
- youtube.com/watch?v=Zr6VPAe9CKU
- startupweekend.org/
- govhack.org/
- rhokaustralia.org/
- dubhacks.co

In review

Hackathon:

MelbJVM Hack Night, September 2016

Attendee:

Bernie Schelberg, Software Engineer at Neustar Inc.

Why did you attend?

People attend hackathons for a variety of reasons. Personally I head along as a way to learn in a group environment: it's motivational. If you've made the effort to go you naturally want to complete what you came to do.

The MelbJVM Hack night was a great opportunity to explore new features of Java 9. It can be quite competitive if there's coding exercises. There was a projector showing how far through each participant was in the exercises so it creates a competitive environment, perhaps unintentionally, but that's not a bad thing.

What did you think?

In relative terms it was a smaller event, with 50 participants. Timewise it suited my needs, only running for the evening. I found the event extremely helpful in getting me up to speed with Java 9 as well as being able to bounce off others when necessary.

Like most hackathons it was a sponsored event and therefore it was a free to participate with food and drinks provided. I would certainly recommend it for those reasons.



Coding: simply child's play?



By **Alison Coffa**
Marketing Communications Coordinator, AusRegistry

In classrooms across Australia, hundreds of students are happily working away at a task that would frighten many adults: coding.

Brought out of the realm of extra-curricular activities and into every day teaching by the new national Digital Technologies Curriculum, coding is fast becoming a must-have skill and a favourite among students as young as five.

One organisation that has been ahead of the curve on this revolution is Melbourne-based startup Code the Future. The brainchild of teacher and assistant principal Bec Spink and entrepreneur and CMO Will Egan, the idea for Code the Future was born at a Startup Melbourne event in 2014.

Mr Egan had recently been assisting his younger sister with her Year 9 level IT homework, and realised how little had changed in the approach to technology education since he was at school.

"I spoke with some of my school mates who had also gone into software development and we came up with the idea of going back to the school to help out teaching modern programming languages."

The startup weekend provided an opportunity to roll out this idea on a larger scale.

"I joined a team focused on solving the problem of 'bringing tangible coding education' in to the classroom. This is where Bec Spink and I met – it was a perfect partnership of a teacher and a developer trying to solve this problem together."

Ms Spink explains that the pair bonded over a shared interest in bringing programming and coding concepts into the classroom in practical, enjoyable ways that were also deeply educational.

"All of my research into educational theory and how children learn is really underpinned by constructionist learning theories, which is very connected to programming. Throughout the Startup Melbourne weekend Will and I talked about how we could make this concept different to existing, already great organisations like Code Club Australia, and instead of being a purely extra-curricular activity, how we could try and embed it in teaching and learning and get teachers involved."

Code the Future pairs schools with professional programmers who volunteer their time to run coding workshops for students. The exact concepts taught vary from school to school depending on individual interests and needs, incorporating projects such as robotics clubs, app development and lunchtime coding clubs.

As the program has grown, Ms Spink describes the sense of achievement to see Code the Future project schools recognised for their work in digital technologies and becoming spokespeople for the way coding can be incorporated at school.

"We've just had two of our schools that had Code the Future volunteers, become finalists in the Victorian Schools Games and Apps Challenge. That was really exciting.

"In the same vein, in Education Week last year I was browsing through the speakers and there were three teachers from three schools involved, and all of them had Code the Future



Will Egan and Bec Spink receiving the 2016 ANZIA Innovation Award from auDA CEO Cameron Boardman (L) and InternetNZ Chief Executive Jordan Carter

volunteers working alongside them. I find out about kids or teachers who are being invited to speak about coding and share their experiences, and we know we've helped them get there."

With news that the new Australian National Curriculum could make coding a compulsory topic for schools, Ms Spink believes that some parents and even teachers have a misconception of what it actually means to introduce children to programming concepts.

"I've seen comments from some teachers saying they don't know how to code or how to teach it, and don't understand why kids need to know that. There are also some developers who've said that it's too technical and kids should just focus on the basic concepts like mathematics.

"But I think about educational theorists like Seymour Papert who came up with the constructionist learning theory, who talks about how when students are within a programming environment, the way they construct knowledge about every day concepts like maths, engineering and science is completely different to a traditional classroom environment. It allows them to make real connections, and to learn about concepts in context.

"If a student is actually in there building something and making something and they can see it in front of their eyes, they're going to learn about it much more effectively."

For Ms Spink, the potential misconception around children coding can sometimes stem from the already-ubiquitous nature of technology.

"I think some parents might hear about this and think 'I don't want my child to have too much screen time', but there's a complete difference between screen time as a consumer and screen time as a creator or a coder.

"Even looking at the Digital Technologies Curriculum, a lot of the early concepts can be taught 'unplugged', without actually using technology, because really all it is about is the thinking. It's getting kids to follow directions and solve problems and think differently about things."

She explains that the benefits of introducing programming concepts at an early age can be far-reaching and widely applicable, even outside a professional coding environment.

"We say we want all kids to learn to code, which is true, but that doesn't mean I want all kids to grow up to be a computer scientist. That just means I want them to have a deep level of knowledge about how our world works.

"Just like science and music and art and every other thing that kids learn these days, technology is a part of our world and I don't think it's okay any more for kids to just know how to use technology. They need to know how to understand it and use it as a building material.

"Sometimes too, kids aren't given enough credit for their ideas and for what they're capable of. And by empowering them to create with technology, we're also giving them a platform to be able to become entrepreneurs – and they don't have to be adults to do that."

The difference between children's approach to learning to code is clear, says Ms Spink. She notices how the lowered inhibitions and self-doubt of younger children allows them to approach new ideas fearlessly and learn new skills with less personal and social obstacles.

"You ask the Year 2 students at my school this year and every one of them will tell you they're a game developer, because they've been doing a unit on that this term.

"With kids, you just put a concept in front of them and they don't question, they just think 'I can do this'.

"We can even see some of that starting to disappear by Year 5 or 6, so the earlier we get in and expose them to it, the more likely it will just become second nature."

As the curriculum rolls out and the approach to coding in teaching develops, Ms Spink's ambition is that services like Code the Future are no longer necessary and instead these programs become the norm.

In the meanwhile however, Code the Future is expanding at a rapid rate.

"We've just employed a Community Officer and it's been great. We've been able to connect even more projects and get even more kids coding. What's next for us is just to keep continuing what we're doing, but on a grander scale." ■

For more information on Code the Future including how your organisation or school can get involved, visit codefuture.org or email the Community Officer at jarod@codefuture.org

code like a girl



By Maggie Whittnall
Senior Client Services
Manager, AusRegistry

Like all great stories Code Like a Girl is the culmination of happenstance, persistence and a desire to change the status quo.

Airdrie, Scotland may be an unlikely place to begin our story but it's in this small town near Glasgow where Ally Watson, founder of Code Like a Girl was born and raised.

"I grew up in a house full of women, three older sisters and a single mother. I guess at the time I couldn't have been aware of the influence that environment would have on my later years."

Conveying a refreshing, unaffected confidence Ms. Watson is young, passionate and hell-bent on making a difference in the technology sphere.

"I just fell into computer science. I had my heart set on art school but after two rejections I was at a loss. By the time I let go of my fashion design aspirations my application to university was fairly late. I was only able to choose from the leftover courses that no one wanted - welcome to computer science!"

With no prior experience Ms Watson felt well out of her depth. Not only was she battling the insecurities of a limited

knowledge of the curriculum but for the first time in her life Ms Watson was part of a minority.

"I'd always been part of very welcoming and usually female-orientated environments namely my family, friends and the art and design world. Despite being strong at maths I felt I was facing a type of tech snobbery. For at least six months it was very isolating."

With thoughts of dropping out or at least changing into something more familiar Ms Watson persevered with computer science. Fortunately the tides began to turn.

"Luckily for me I was introduced to interactive systems. Here was a world I understood. Interactive systems is all about understanding how people use technology, how and why they use certain programs and products. Finally my creative side became a strength. I realised that humans play a huge part in programming. There's so much psychology involved, why humans pick a particular button, why one layout is better than the other, the design element is so crucial to the user experience."

Ms Watson finally had a strength and it boosted her confidence. She felt like she fit in and contributed something her classmates didn't have. Ms Watson became better at programming and realised she had found her perfect career, allowing her to apply both her creative side as well as the analytical.



University however was still a world away from founding a highly recognised organisation focused on increasing the number of females in technology.

"I realised pretty early on that women were grossly underrepresented in computer science. For one thing there is a distinct lack of role models. When I was growing up I followed fashion and art and there were so many women who were influential in those spaces. I really loved Vivienne Westwood. But in technology we're still waiting for the next female Mark Zuckerberg!"

"I think it's so wonderful to see the likes of Karlie Kloss a supermodel; she's probably got millions of girls around the world following her on Instagram and she's promoting coding in such a positive way by starting Kode with Klossy (a coding summer camp for girls ages 13-18) and #KodewithKarlie (a scholarship program for teen girls). That's one way we can reach the young generation of girls today. It's great that people with such influence get behind the agenda to get more girls coding but we need so many more."

After four years working in Glasgow, Australia beckoned. Expecting to dive straight into a thriving tech scene and community of developers Ms Watson was confronted with a different experience.

"I moved to Australia just over two and half years ago and I knew I had to engage with the tech community



girls to study STEM subjects, Code Like a Girl particularly resonated with Melbourne locals.

"We've really struck a chord. I knew there were a few global initiatives around doing similar things. I just felt they weren't very active, I don't know whether that was because they weren't grassroots, Melbourne-based or just cookie cutters of a chapter from elsewhere. I just knew we had to be active and not hold one event and disappear."

Code Like a Girl has also resonated with the Australian and global media with coverage in Harper's Bazaar, Marie Claire, B&T, The Guardian, a slot on ABC Lateline, SBS – the list goes on.

"There's no coincidence that the positive response we've had has really a lot to do with the Australian Government's [National Innovation and Science] Agenda. Everyone is on board with this. It has now become very visible that more women in your workplace equals a successful business. Everyone is much more aware that women are the key to growing the economy."

The popularity of Code Like a Girl has meant some swift decision making and firm ideas about the future.

"One of the things I've been trying to work out this year is a revenue model that will help us grow because there's a massive demand for what we're doing. We have emails from girls in Brisbane, Adelaide and Sydney who are dying for us to do something in their city. It's very hard to take that leap when we're just getting enough funding to cover the events workshops we're currently doing."

Code Like a Girl's mission to offer free or low cost events and workshops is something Ms Watson is adamant about maintaining as they grow and expand.

"We didn't have a lot of money growing up. I'm very much aware of the barriers that families, especially bigger families, can face when their kids are young. I go to a lot of effort creating relationships with tech companies who have expressed interest in sponsoring Code Like a Girl. These companies then sponsor an event or pay for the workshops so we can offer them for free or at low cost. There are enough barriers in the space for women getting into technology and I don't want the cost of our events to be one of those barriers."

To aid and support Code Like A Girl's development and future direction Ms Watson is part of two programs, PWC's

straight away. In Scotland I was comfortable going to meetups. Meetups help developers keep ahead of the curve. It's a place to share knowledge and information about projects in a fun and sociable way. Building networks is also how people get jobs.

"So when I moved to Melbourne the first thing I did was look up [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) for tech meetups in the area. However when it came to the night of the event, I looked at the guest list, and I bailed! I didn't know anyone and being the only girl in the room again brought up feelings of anxiety. It's quite intimidating. So I didn't go and I missed months of usual meetups and the usual knowledge I would gain."

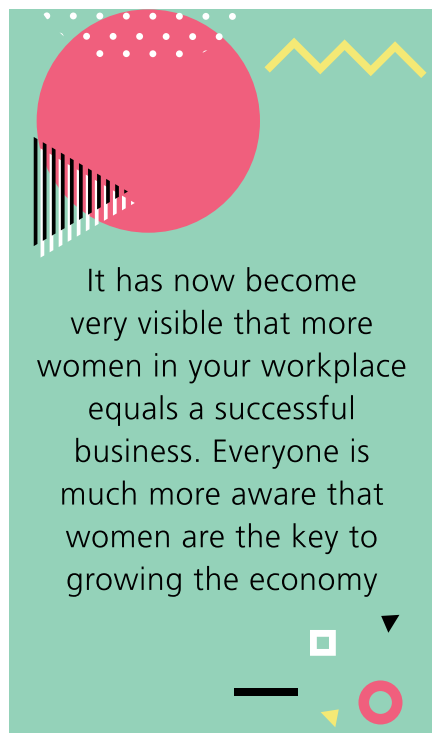
A little soul searching was required at this point. If someone such as herself with four years' experience in the industry and a computer science degree still lacked the confidence to turn up to meetup, what was it like for other girls who lacked confidence and experience?

"I decided I wanted to create a space for girls to meet and chat easily and openly. A place they could be vulnerable, a place that was fun and welcoming. I wanted to change things up because I felt terrible for any woman who wanted to go to tech meetups but felt they couldn't. So I started Code Like a Girl."

Fortunately Ms Watson had support from her boss and mentor at digital agency Deepend, Kath Blackham. They posted a meetup online and they sat back and waited. Expecting no more than eight RSVPs, they were shocked to receive 120 within weeks. A quick change of location and a new approach ensued.

"In light of the response I wanted to make a big deal of it – it was going to

be a proper launch party. So we got little tote bags made with Grace Hopper quotes on them, it was catered for, it was colourful and pretty - the opposite to what you'd imagine most tech events to be like!"



Hosting the first ever Code Like a Girl event quickly became the favourite thing Ms Watson had ever done. "I was hooked. I wanted to do more. I had such cool and big ideas. I quickly moved away from the term 'meetup' and called them 'events'. I felt the term 'meetup' was a bit too casual and that the effort and time going into the planning and organisation of the nights merited the rebrand."

One year on and nine events later Code Like a Girl is thriving. With various global organisations promoting women in technology and encouraging



21st Century Minds accelerator program and the Young Social Pioneers, a six-month incubator program from the Foundation of Young Australians.

"These two programs have been transformative. They are helping me take what was very ad-hoc and form a plan of action to turn it into a start-up. I'm hoping that by the start of 2017 we'll see Code Like a Girl mature from



a volunteer-led initiative into a start-up that can sustain itself, expand and scale across Australia.

"Next year we are hoping to start to implement some professional development workshops and maybe even provide consultancy. We've recognised that most tech companies sponsor the workshops because they want more diversity in their workplace, they want more girls to come through their recruitment pipeline."

Code Like a Girl now boasts 12 volunteers with a combined total of 100 years of technical experience.

"We're all girls working in tech with the majority of us either studying or graduating in computer science or IT related degrees. We have this amazing brains trust and we can help advise companies on the best strategies to get more girls through their recruitment

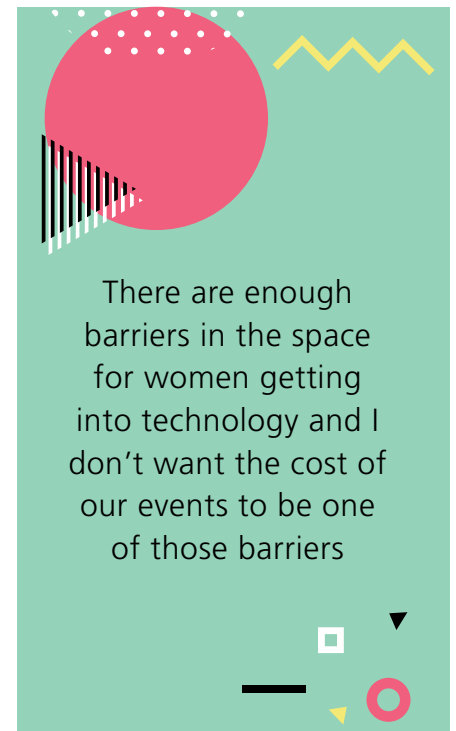
pipeline and to make sure they stay. Over 56 percent of women leave the tech industry midway through their careers which is double the rate of men and that's coming off a low base to start with."

Ms Watson is determined to make difference in the IT workforce, wanting Australia to be one of the first countries to turn low female numbers in tech around.

"We are really hoping to do a lot of research to find out how we can address these problems better. We aim to do a lot of capacity building within our team to be able to offer a variety of services because there's definitely a demand for it. Also, it's a revenue stream that aligns with our mission to keep our events and coding workshops free or at low cost. Maybe doing these new offerings will allow us to have a more sustainable revenue model. That's the future we're looking at."

"For girls who are hesitant about taking the leap remember I only started to enjoy computer science when I had peers. Socialisation plays a huge part in enjoying education and enjoying learning. When you start playing an instrument it can sound awful and can be disheartening. But when you form a band of other people who are also learning it can be really fun. It can be motivating and it can inspire you to keep learning, to get better. So form a study group get involved with a

few other beginners, keep each other motivated, keep checking in with each other and help each other with projects. I think that will really help anyone getting started and getting into tech." ■



Code Like a Girl is an organisation focused on increasing the number of females in technology, and provides girls with the tools, knowledge and support to enter and flourish in the world of coding. It has created and now runs a series of tech-focused events and workshops around Melbourne, bringing together tech talents and girls who are passionate about coding and technology to learn, connect and celebrate each other's achievements.

@codelikeagirlau
codelikeagirl.com.au



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DNS & security

By Craig McDonald – MailGuard



Today, one click can cost \$10,000. Are you prepared?

There's a good reason today's news is awash with cybercrime horror stories.

Cybercrime affects nine out of 10 Australian businesses, with an alarming six out of 10 SMBs going out of business within six months of a cyberattack, according to the Australian Government.

No business is immune. In December 2016, Russia's Central Bank revealed it had lost \$31 million at the hands of hackers.

Last month, Dan Tehan, the new Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Cyber Security, revealed how widespread the problem is. He was shocked to discover, during a chat at his home-town pub, that a local accountancy firm had been stripped of \$10,000 in a ransomware scam.

The worrying thing? A massive 91 percent of cyber threats arrive via email. And an alarming 25 percent of people click scam emails – which is how email threats quickly escalate from a personal problem to a potentially catastrophic business risk.

You've probably seen a malicious email. Australian inboxes are regularly targeted with phishing scams designed to look like they've come from a trusted company.

In December it was a fake ATO notice, which distributed malware to those curious enough to click the attached Word document purportedly containing personal information.

Australia Post is a regular phishing target, while banks such as ANZ are regular targets too. Cybercriminals trade off the trust these brands have built up with hundreds of thousands of Australians.

In the workplace, these threats are increasingly taking the form of spear-phishing. This is an email designed to look like it has come from someone you know – perhaps it's the Chief Financial Officer asking you to make an immediate payment. The idea is to dupe the recipient into performing a favour, often in the form of a transfer to a cybercriminals' bank account.

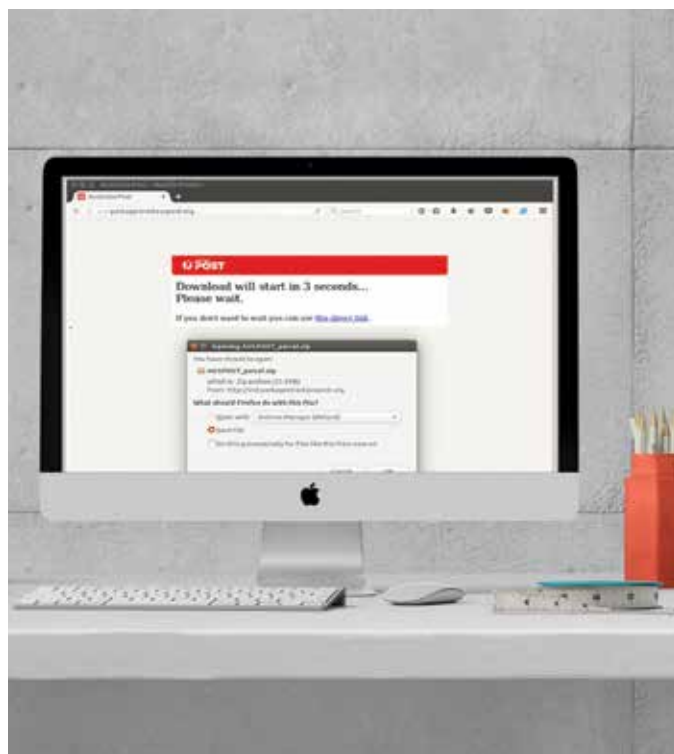
I won't fall for a scam. What's the risk?

While many scam emails are unsophisticated and immediately obvious, criminals are still making a living from email scams. Why?

The scammers usually include a link, which is where the danger lies. And a moment of curiosity can be enough for people to take the bait. Scams range from phishing, where users are taken to a fraudulent landing page to enter sensitive data, through to ransomware.

Clicking that link might enable malware that infiltrates your system, often without your knowledge. It might be months later that you discover your bank account is missing thousands of dollars.

Keylogging software – which covertly records your every keystroke – is a firm favourite of cybercriminals as it uncovers lucrative information such as banking log-ins and passwords.



Consider the havoc that could wreak on a business.

With one in four people known to click scam emails, education and awareness need to play a key role in cybersecurity.

What to look out for

Be wary of emails that try to represent a well-known brand but contain spelling and grammatical errors. Keep an eye out for abnormal or suspicious behaviour, language and requests.

Only click links from trusted senders. If an email has a link you don't recognise, take a closer look by hovering your mouse over it and checking the originating domain, and whether it matches the text in the email itself. Likewise, check the sending address to confirm it matches the purported sender. If it doesn't match, it is probably not legitimate, and clicking the link may expose you to malware including ransomware.

If an email directs you to supply your user name or password, be immediately suspicious. Chances are it's a phishing scam.

How to protect against email threats at home...

Don't click too fast

If you have any reason to be suspicious, don't click any link contained in an email.

Automate your security updates

Make sure your security applications are up to date. Automating them is the safest option, using cloud security where there is no software to install or updates to maintain.

Back up your files so you can't be held ransom

A live back-up can reduce some of the damage from ransomware attacks. While you will have to reinstall everything, it's far better than paying a criminal a ransom to get back your files and data.

... and in the office

Workplace security is too big a job for the IT department. It needs to be an all-in approach, including regular education. Here's where to start:

Invest in professional security

To prevent attacks hidden in the many emails landing in your inbox every day, consider a layered approach to your security. Traditional antivirus solutions stop most 'known' email scams. However, they often take a reactive approach, and are not specialised to manage new threats. You might still receive common email scams such as fake AGL and Telstra bills, parcel delivery scams impersonating DHL, eBay and Australia Post, fraudulent CEO emails, and dodgy invoice. To keep your business and employees safe, take a layered approach to security.

Don't overlook web threats

When your team members access private email accounts in their browser (such as with personal Hotmail or Gmail accounts), they expose your business to the same risks that come through your corporate email account. The same is true when they're browsing the web. An errant click on a malicious pop-up provides a new window for a ransomware that can take control of your network, lock down your data and bring your business to its knees. Consider web filtering to stop threats delivered through web browsers (such as Chrome, Firefox, Safari and IE).

Consider cyber insurance

If your business carries out any online activity, consider how much disruption your business could withstand. How would it cope with two weeks offline? What kind of measures are in place for protection? What else can you set up to mitigate the risks of ransomware? While cyber insurance can't prevent attacks, it might save the business from imploding if something happens. It can also help get you back up and running, and recoup some of the losses. ■

Craig McDonald is the founder and CEO of MailGuard, which protects networks from fast-breaking email-borne threats ranging from phishing to spear phishing, whaling and ransomware. MailGuard stops zero-day threats 2-48 hours ahead of the market.

Mail Guard was the winner of the 2016 ANZIA Security Award for initiatives that develop solutions to address security threats, provide a security-related service or product, or protect vulnerable groups online. These projects build trust and confidence in the online environment.

anzia.org.au/winners



Governance & policy

By Helen Hollins – General Manager Communications, auDA

The future of auDA, and the final months of the calendar year, in review

The close of 2016 saw auDA's new CEO, Cameron Boardman present his CEO report to the members, at the AGM in Sydney. He discussed the outcomes of a member engagement research project and his visions for the organisation. Cameron spoke of his plans to make auDA a more transparent organisation, offer greater benefit to stakeholders, ensure security is central to all efforts and his plans to position auDA as thought leaders in the Australian digital community.

Cameron also touched on auDA's plans to undertake a strategic review in early 2017 to develop key strategic drives for the organisation's future success, covering areas including: Cyber Security, Service Delivery – Core Function and Digital Community Engagement. Exciting times ahead in the next phase for auDA and the community it serves.

Prior to that, in October, the annual Australian Internet Governance Forum (auIGF) was held in Melbourne hosted by

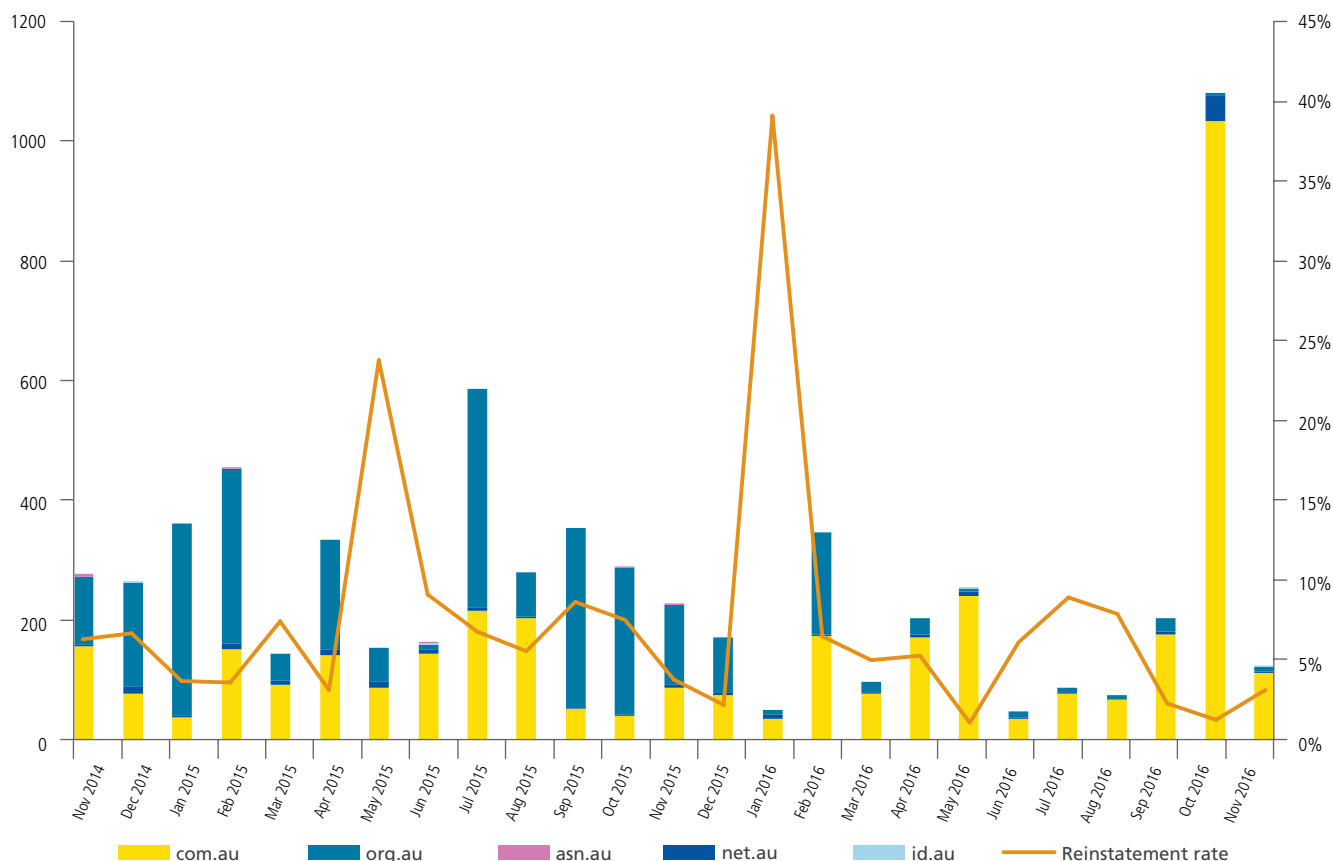
auDA, welcoming a wide range of attendees representing all facets of the Australian Internet community, from government and business entities to academics and general Internet users.

One of the more popular topics discussed was the plenary session 'Getting girls into STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths)', moderated by Dr Rowan Brookes of Monash University. The panel included Leonie Walsh (who recently joined the auDA Board, as an Independent Director), Associate Professor Catherine Lang, Renee Noble and Luan Heimlich. Dr Brookes wrote in a blog after the event;

"It doesn't matter if you are technically competent in STEM, there is a role for everybody to play to achieve gender equality. It might be encouraging a young girl to give STEM subjects a try in school, mentoring female university students, right through to even starting a new initiative. Once we remove the systemic barriers that currently exist more girls will continue to pursue STEM education and go on to forge their careers in STEM." We all agreed more can be done in this space and needs to be effectively measured. ■

.au Policy Deletes (and Reinstatement Rate)

When auDA or the Registrar of record deletes a domain name for breach of policy, the domain name is placed into "pending policy delete" status for 14 calendar days. The domain name can be reinstated during this period, if the registrant is able to correct their breach of policy. If not, then the domain name is purged from the Registry database at the end of the period.





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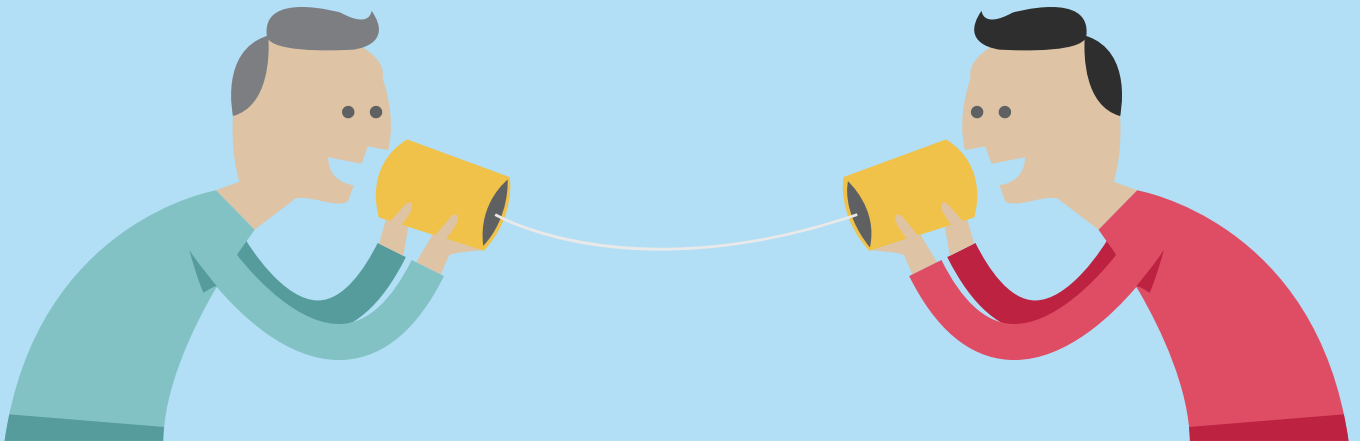


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Channel talk

“If you could change one thing about .au, what would it be?”



Fred Salem – Product Manager, Melbourne IT

I would scrap the fixed 2-year registration and renewal period of .au names and allow up to 10-year registrations in 2-year increments. As part of this I'd want to allow renewals at any time within the registration period, removing the 90 days prior to expiry restriction.

Registrants have always expressed that they feel limited when it comes to securing their domain name license, particularly for those that have a gTLD name that they can register and renew for 5 or 10 years.

Registrants' businesses depend on their domain names. Something as simple as their admin staff member taking leave at the wrong time can very easily lead to their domain name expiring and a business's website and email addresses failing, also impacting search ranking.

Axia Harrison – Account Manager, NetNames

There is much to like about the .au space and it is the most utilised TLD amongst my client base.

As part of my role I regularly assist my clients with in-depth analysis of their online presence, as well as identifying potential third party registrations which may be of concern to them.

gTLD and other select ccTLD spaces allow access to the root level zone file which

can be used to assist companies like NetNames to identify how their clients' brands and trademarks are being used; the .au space doesn't currently allow access to this information.

If I could change one thing about .au policy it would be to allow dissemination of the .au zone file to accredited Registrars, this would allow me to more effectively assist my clients in managing their brand within the .au TLD.

Nikki Scholes – Business Manager, NetFleet

Generally, I like the way .au operates. The registrants are protected and the industry is kept quite clean. One thing I would change is to increase security for Registrars, particularly those who drop catch.

When people hand-register domain names, the request is not processed until payment has been made. If renewal isn't paid the domain name expires and eventually drops. However, with drop catching it's not that straightforward. When someone places a bid on a domain name, the payment might not go through due to a credit card issue. In this case they can avoid paying the invoice but transfer the domain name to another Registrar, effectively stealing the domain name because they haven't paid for the drop catching service nor the 2-year registration fee. I don't think this is fair to domain name purchasers nor the drop catching Registrar.

Maddison Selleck – Business Development Manager, VentralP Australia

After three decades, .au is unsurprisingly considered one of the world's most successful ccTLDs. There's very little to desire in terms of changes to .au, however one common discussion is registration periods.

Thanks to stringent policies and procedures upheld by auDA, AusRegistry and its providers, the .au namespace is offered a number of protections against potentially fraudulent registrations whilst providing consumers peace of mind that they may move freely between Registrars without incurring additional fees. One limitation to consumer control over their domain registrations however is the enforced two-year registration period.

With direct .au registrations being made available to the public in the near future, I hope to see our namespace adopt a multi-year registration policy, providing consumers with the freedom to protect their online investments over an extended period of time and resulting in greater growth of the local industry as a whole. ■

Want to contribute to the next 'Channel Talk' feature?

Channel Talk compiled by Courtney Fabian and Lucian Popaly. To contribute to Channel Talk, please contact behindthedot@ausregistry.com.au.

An aerial photograph of a city street grid, likely New York City, showing various buildings, streets, and vehicles. A large green rectangular overlay is positioned in the upper left quadrant, containing white text. The left side of the image features a white geometric grid pattern.

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neustar

Glossary

Abbreviations

APNIC

Asia-Pacific Network Information Centre

APTLD

Asia-Pacific Top Level Domain Association

auDA

.au Domain Administration

auIGF

Australian Internet Governance Forum

AU WIT

Neustar Australia's Women in Technology group

ccTLD

Country Code Top Level Domain

CERT Australia

Computer Emergency Response Team Australia

DDoS

Distributed Denial of Service

DNS

Domain Name System

DNSSEC

Domain Name System Security Extensions

EPP

Extensible Provisioning Protocol

gTLD

Generic Top level Domain

IANA

Internet Assigned Numbers Authority

ICANN

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

ICT

Information and Communications Technology

IDN

Internationalised Domain Name

IP

Internet Protocol

TDUM

Total Domains Under Management

TLD

Top-Level Domain

WHOIS

A combined phrase to denote 'who is'

Definitions

Asia-Pacific Top Level Domain Association (APTLD)

APTLD is an organisation for ccTLD registries in Asia-Pacific region. APTLD was originally established in 1998, and in 2003 legally established in Malaysia. APTLD works as the forum of information exchange regarding technological and operational issues of domain name registries in Asia-Pacific region.

.au Domain Administration (auDA)

The policy authority and industry self-regulatory body for the .au domain space.

Australian Internet Governance Forum (auIGF)

Developed by auDA, the auIGF provides a unique opportunity for all who use the Internet in Australia to share ideas and experiences, discuss Internet-related policy, identify issues and engage with each other in a multi-stakeholder forum.

.auLOCKDOWN

.auLOCKDOWN a security measure for .au domain names that provides an added level of security for domain name Registrants. Domain names are locked at the Registry level, and changes are only possible through direct communication between the Registrar authorised contact and the Registry, by following a strict authentication process.

AusRegistry

The Registry Operator for the open 2LDs (com.au, net.au, org.au, asn.au, and id.au); the community geographic 2LDs (act.au, nsw.au, nt.au, qld.au, sa.au, tas.au, vic.au and wa.au); and two closed 2LDs (edu.au and gov.au).

Coding

Writing code (instructions) for a computer program.

Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD)

A TLD that is used to represent a country or external territory. Some examples of ccTLDs are '.uk' for the United Kingdom, and '.au' for Australia.

Computer Emergency Response Team Australia (CERT Australia)

CERT Australia (the CERT) is the national computer emergency response team.

Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS)

Distributed Denial of Service is an attempt to make an online service unavailable by overwhelming it with traffic from multiple sources.

Domain Name/Domain

An identification string that defines a realm of administrative autonomy, authority, or control on the Internet. Domain names are formed by the rules and procedures of the DNS. Any name registered in the DNS is a domain name.

Domain Name System (DNS)

A hierarchical distributed naming system for computers, services, or any resource connected to the Internet or a private network. It associates various information with domain names assigned to each of the participating entities. Most prominently, it translates easily memorised domain names to the numerical Internet Protocol (IP) addresses needed for the purpose of locating computer services and devices worldwide.

Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC)

Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) is a security extension that facilitates the digital signing of Internet communications, helping to ensure the integrity and authenticity of transmitted data.

EPP

Extensible Provisioning Protocol is a flexible protocol designed for allocating objects within technical registries over the Internet.

Hackathon

An event, typically lasting several days, in which a large number of people meet to engage in collaborative computer programming.

Internationalised Domain Name (IDN)

A domain name that includes characters from scripts other than the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet (a–z). An IDN can contain Latin letters with diacritical marks, or may consist of characters from non-Latin scripts.

Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA)

A department of ICANN, which oversees global Internet Protocol (IP) address allocation, autonomous system number allocation, root zone management in the DNS, media types, and other IP-related symbols and numbers.

Information and Communications Technology - ICT

ICT refers to technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications. It is similar to Information Technology (IT), but focuses primarily on communication technologies. This includes the Internet, wireless networks, cell phones, and other communication mediums.

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)

The global DNS administrator, formed in 1998, is a non-profit public-benefit corporation with global participants dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers.

Internet Protocol (IP) Address

An IP Address is the numerical address by which a location in the Internet is identified. Computers on the Internet use IP Addresses to route traffic and establish connections among themselves; people generally use the human-friendly names made possible by the Domain Name System.

Registrant

An entity or individual that holds a domain name licence.

Registrar

An entity that registers domain names for Registrants and in the case of the .au ccTLD, is accredited by auDA.

Registry

The registry comprises of a database of domain names registered in each 2LD and a public WHOIS service for looking up the identity of the registrant of a domain name.

Reseller

An entity appointed by accredited Registrars to increase the retail channel of .au domain names.

Second Level Domain (2LD)

The alphanumeric string before the dot and the TLD. AusRegistry is the Registry Operator for the open 2LDs (asn.au, com.au, id.au, net.au and org.au); the community geographic 2LDs (act.au, nsw.au, nt.au, qld.au, sa.au, tas.au, vic.au and wa.au); and two closed 2LDs (edu.au and gov.au).

WHOIS

WHOIS (a combined phrase to denote 'who is') is a query and response protocol that is standard within the Domain Name Industry for querying Registry databases to determine certain information about a particular Domain Name.

Total Domains Under Management (TDUM)

Total number of domain names registered in the namespace.

Zone

A portion of the namespace in the DNS for which administrative responsibility has been delegated.

Data References

Domain numbers in the APTLD region:

China - .cn

www1.cnnic.cn/IS/CNym/CNymtjxxcx

Indonesia - .id

<https://www.pandi.id/content/statistik>

Japan - .jp

jprs.co.jp/en/stat

Korea - .kr

isis.kisa.or.kr/eng

New Zealand - .nz

dnc.org.nz/content/2014-09_stats.html

Qatar - .qa

domains.qa/en

Singapore - .sg

www.nic.net.sg/page/registration-statistics

Malaysia - .my

www.mynic.my/en/statistics.php

Hong Kong - .hk

www.hkirc.hk/content.jsp?id=77#!/&in=/aboutHK/registration_statistics_hkirc.jsp

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The background features a word cloud of Australian domain names including .au, .com.au, .net.au, .org.au, .gov.au, .id.au, .asn.au, and .edu.au. A thick yellow curved line sweeps across the middle of the image.