



**BARCELONA:** A visitor checks his phone at the Mobile World Congress. —AP

## PUSH FOR WEB ADDRESSES IN ERA OF SEARCH, APPS

**BARCELONA:** In the early days, you typed in a domain name address to reach a website. Then came the ability to reach websites directly through a search engine. The mobile era brought us phone apps for accessing services without either. Yet the organization in charge of Internet addresses is pushing a major expansion in domain name suffixes. At least 160 suffixes have been added since October to join the ranks of ".com," ".org" and scores of country-specific ones such as ".uk" for the United Kingdom. Hundreds of other proposals are being reviewed. Why bother in this mobile-heavy era? "Finding what you need on the Web will take many paths," said Fadi Chehade, head of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, or ICANN.

Even if you're using search, domain names might make search engines smarter, Chehade said in an interview at the Mobile World Congress wireless show, which ended Thursday in Barcelona, Spain. For instance, a search engine might be able to classify something as a dating site because it carries the suffix ".dating." Before, it would have to infer from text on the site, and search results might inadvertently include general discussions on dating.

Likewise, a search engine might favor restaurants ending in ".berlin" when you're looking for food options there, rather than bloggers discussing what they ate during visits to Berlin. He said domain names will also be useful for marketing and branding: An Internet address is easier to include on a business card or advertisement.

Companies can give different services distinctive addresses, such as "sales.samsung" and "repairs.samsung," so that customers don't have to hunt for that on the main website. Neighborhoods can form around suffixes such as ".berlin" and ".tokyo." Restaurants, florists and transit systems would use city suffixes rather than a generic ".com." There are so many sites already under ".com" that getting an easy-to-remember name is difficult. With some of the new ones, congestion isn't a problem.

There have been nearly 2,000 proposals for new domain names, though about 150 have been withdrawn for various reasons. More than 1,000 have been approved and are either in the system already or are awaiting signed contracts between their backers and ICANN. More than 600 are being held up because of multiple bids for the same suffix.

The ones in the system include ".dating," ".berlin" and ".tokyo." Samsung's new suffix is in Korean, one of 18 additions to use non-English characters. Others include ".cab," ".ceo," ".dance," ".futbol," ".mango" and ".sexy." Chehade said websites using these suffixes could start appearing in April. Jay Sullivan, chief operating officer of the group behind the Firefox Web browser and operating system for phones, said the new suffixes might push even more people to search.

Right now, he said, people can often guess whether a site ends in ".com" (if it's a business) or ".org" (if it's a non-profit organization). With lots more to choose from, he said, it will be harder to guess and easier to use a search engine. Greg Sullivan, marketing director for Microsoft's Windows Phone business, said people have indeed gravitated toward search and apps when using phones. But he said there will always be a need for domain names because some companies have built businesses around the moniker. He said phones will adapt as their users adapt. —AP

# UK, US SPIES STORED MILLIONS OF YAHOO WEB-CAMERA IMAGES

## YAHOO OUTRAGED AT SURVEILLANCE

**WASHINGTON:** US senators said British and US spy agencies showed a "breath-taking lack of respect" for privacy after reports they had intercepted and stored images from webcams used by millions of Yahoo users. Files from Britain's communications spy agency GCHQ leaked by former US National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden revealed how the Optic Nerve program collected still images of webcam chats regardless of whether individual users were suspects or not, the Guardian newspaper reported.

In one six-month period in 2008, the British spy agency collected webcam imagery from more than 1.8 million Yahoo user accounts around the world, the Guardian said. The data collected, which was available to NSA analysts through routine information sharing, contained a significant amount of sexual content. "We are extremely troubled by today's press report that a very large number of individuals-including law-abiding Americans-may have had private videos of themselves and their families intercepted and stored without any suspicion of wrongdoing," Democratic

US Senators Ron Wyden, Mark Udall and Martin Heinrich said in a joint statement.

"If this report is accurate, it would show a breathtaking lack of respect for the privacy and civil liberties of law-abiding citizens." They promised to investigate the activity as part of an ongoing comprehensive review of surveillance programs, with close scrutiny to any role US agencies may have played. "It is becoming clearer and clearer that more needs to be done to ensure that 'foreign' intelligence collection does not intrude unnecessarily on the rights of law-abiding people or needlessly undermine the competitiveness of America's leading industries," the senators added.

Yahoo, which was apparently chosen because its webcam system was known to be used by GCHQ targets, expressed outrage at the reported surveillance. "We were not aware of nor would we condone this reported activity," a spokeswoman for the US technology firm told AFP in an email statement. "This report, if true, represents a whole new level of violation of our users' privacy that is completely unacceptable. "We

are committed to preserving our users' trust and security and continue our efforts to expand encryption across all of our services."

Leaked GCHQ documents from 2008 to 2010 explicitly refer to the surveillance program, although the Guardian said later information suggested it was still active in 2012. The data was used for experiments in automated facial recognition, as well as to monitor existing GCHQ targets and discover new ones, the British paper said.

The program reportedly saved one image every five minutes from a webcam user's feed, partly to comply with human rights legislation and partly to cut down the sheer amount of data being collected. GCHQ analysts were able to search the metadata, such as location and length of webcam chat, and they could view the actual images where the username was similar to a surveillance target. In a statement to the Guardian, GCHQ said all of its work was "carried out in accordance with a strict legal and policy framework which ensures that our activities are authorized, necessary and proportionate". —AFP

# FACEBOOK, TWITTER RIVALRY HEATS UP

**NEW YORK:** Facebook has been on a year-long push to persuade television networks it is vital to the success of their programming. CEO Mark Zuckerberg wants networks to treat Facebook as a cornerstone of their marketing campaigns, spending money earmarked for radio or magazine advertisements on it instead. And his social network has made headway by showing networks compelling data to prove it can increase viewership of a new show.

"We see TV networks embracing us in ways they didn't 6 months ago," David Lawenda, Facebook's head of U.S. advertising sales, told TheWrap at Digital Entertainment World last week. "They are already eager to place big investments around the fall season. We've proven results." Lawenda, who joined Facebook after more than two decades working in television, has a favorite example: the "White Queen," a Starz show that debuted last year. Starz and Facebook collaborated on a marketing campaign, pushing trailers and images toward specific audiences Starz thought would be most likely to tune in - principally women between the ages of 25 and 54.

The ads, which reached 41 percent of US females between the ages of 25 and 54, increased awareness by 25 points and prompted 9 percent more people to tune in, according to Starz. "It was a shock to a lot of us," network digital-marketing executive Erin Dwyer told TheWrap. "We didn't know Facebook could deliver those kinds of numbers."

Those kinds of case studies have fueled Facebook's courtship of TV ad money, giving Lawenda hard data to prove networks can spend less for more efficient targeting of potential viewers. Facebook also wants to persuade the networks that viewers are on the social network while they watch their favorite shows, partnering with Fox recently to host live stats about voting on "American Idol." That brings it into direct conflict with Twitter,

which has already established itself as a popular platform for talking about TV as shows air. The Palo Alto-based company has partnered with Nielsen to measure how much conversation occurs around shows as they air, and most TV networks encourage their talent to tweet during shows.

For its part, Facebook has partnered with SecondSync, an analytics company, to document the extensive use of Facebook during shows as they are originally aired. "The fact that people talk about TV on Facebook has never been in doubt," SecondSync found in a study. "However, it has often been assumed that TV-related Facebook interactions happen outside the show airing and not in real-time. Our analysis challenges this assumption."

How much conversation takes place on Facebook relative to Twitter remains up for debate. Facebook argues it has far more than anywhere else, but that's if you count by number of interactions - and every "like" on a particular comment about TV would fit into that box. If you just look at comments, the numbers are much closer, and as those close to Twitter point out, metrics are comparable - even though Twitter is a fraction of the size.

"I've always thought there was an intense amount of competition between Facebook and Twitter, but in the early days the platforms weren't as well defined and the competition was more nebulous," Gartner analyst Brian Blau told TheWrap. "Today the competition is different. They are clearly staking out similar territories and going after the same type of advertisers."

Twitter loves to trumpet how much conversation happens during live events since conversation during a show demonstrates an engaged audience. But monetizing that audience is more important than volume of chatter, and Twitter is ahead of Facebook in targeting networks. The two camps now share advertising revenue generated through Twitter's Amplify program, which helps adver-

tisers synchronize advertisements on television and Twitter to broaden the message. Lori Schwartz, a former executive at McCann who consults with myriad TV networks, pointed to Twitter's Amplify deal as one of many examples where Facebook is late to the game.

"They have been really strategic, earlier than Facebook has, in saying, 'We know we're part of your social media strategy and we can also be part of your reporting revenue,'" Schwartz told TheWrap. "Facebook is important, but Twitter has gotten so far ahead in audience development, which is more important than during the show engagement."

Live engagement is central to Twitter's TV strategy, which emphasizes its public nature, but Facebook has an advantage in the user data it gathers based on profiles and private conversations. The two companies satisfy different needs.

Though the social media rivals are still targeting many of the same potential advertisers, it is not a zero sum game: More spending on Facebook can help Twitter - and vice versa. Both are trying to convince networks that social media is a more effective means of reaching new viewers than print, billboards or, yes, television. They have more data on potential viewers than almost anyone, and they can target them effectively.

Starz, for instance, spent 57 percent more money marketing on social media in 2013 than 2012. That expenditure is expected to grow in 2014. TV networks are adjusting their ad dollars to better target potential viewers across an increasingly fragmented media landscape where social media is only growing in popularity. "They have no choice," Gartner's Blau said. "Advertisers are slowly moving out of this mode where they are throwing money against the wall and hopefully it works out for them. They want to target users they know will be interested." Or, as Schwartz put it, "the smart person right now plays everywhere." —Reuters