

ICANN chief to leave at end of term

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President and chief executive officer of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), Rod Beckstrom, pictured June 20, announced he will not seek another term

The head of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the global body which manages the technical infrastructure of the Web, has announced he will not seek another term.

Rod Beckstrom, an American who took over as president and chief executive of [ICANN](#) in July 2009, said he will step down from the position when his term ends on July 1, 2012.

"I am incredibly proud of ICANN's achievements throughout my tenure," Beckstrom said in a statement.

"In two short years we have advanced this organization to a new level of professionalism and productivity, and turned it into a genuinely

multinational organization that will serve the world community long after my time here."

There have been a number of notable moves at ICANN during Beckstrom's tenure.

In September 2009, the United States loosened its control over ICANN, granting it greater autonomy and opening it up to international oversight.

A California-based non-profit corporation, ICANN manages the [Domain Name System](#) (DNS) that forms the technical backbone of the Web.

Since 1998, ICANN has operated under an agreement with the Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

During Beckstrom's term, ICANN also began introducing internationalized [domain names](#) that allow Internet users to access the Web using native scripts rather than only [Latin characters](#).

In June, ICANN agreed to expand the number of generic top-level domains such as .com, .net and .org..

Under the changes, businesses, for example, such as Apple, Toyota and BMW can apply for domain names ending in .apple, .toyota or .bmw.

ICANN has also been piloting the shift to Internet Protocol version 6, the next generation of Internet addresses designed to replace the dwindling pool of 4.3 billion unique identifiers in the original system.

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