

Registrar and User Consultative Committee Meetings

Minutes of the plenary meeting

03/29/2018

afnic

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1. Attendees

Registrars: 9 (out of 39 members)

DATAXY	Dulac	Bernard	Remote
DOMAINOO	DESSENS	Emilie	
DOMRAIDER	COLOMBET	Tristan	
GANDI	GILBERT	Orianne	Remote
NORDNET	Jung	Scott	
NORDNET	ENGRAND	Sophie	Remote
ORANGE	Jean-Gilles	Sophie	
OVH	CARRANCA	Suzanne	Remote
SAFEBRANDS	GUILLEMAUT	Frédéric	
SFR	POUSSIN	Sylvie	

Users, individuals and corporate entities: 7 (out of 37 members)

ASSOCIATION E-SENIORS	BACHOLLET	Anne-Marie	
	BACHOLLET	Sébastien	
	CAMUS	Matthieu	Remote
NEOCAMINO	GALATI	Michèle	
	LOUIS	Benjamin	
	PORTENEUVE	Elisabeth	
FFB	VUILLEMIN	Clément	

Afnic

AFNIC	BENYELLES	Lotfi
AFNIC	BERTHELOT	Marie
AFNIC	BONIS	Pierre
AFNIC	BOULVARD	Nathalie
AFNIC	CANAC	Sophie
AFNIC	CAPLAIN	Linda
AFNIC	DAMILAVILLE	Loïc
AFNIC	DAVOUST	Clémence
AFNIC	FRAPY	Agnès
AFNIC	GEORGELIN	Marianne
AFNIC	MASSE	Régis
AFNIC	TURBAT	Emilie

2. Agenda

09:15 Welcome and Networking

10:00 News update

10:15 Presentation of items for discussion in the committees:

- ✓ *The operational working group (OWG) "Improving the purchase clickstream of a future registrant"*
How to guide registrants in their choice of registrar and service offerings via Afnic interfaces
- ✓ *2018 roadmap for developments of Afnic products and services*

11:15 Coffee / tea break

11:30 Individual Consultative Committee meetings

12:30 to 14:00 Lunch and networking

14:00 Feedback reports from the Consultative Committees

15:00 Presentation of information updates and discussions with members

- ✓ *The Avenir Project*
- ✓ *The GDPR*

Coffee / tea break

- ✓ *Feedback on the Study on motivations for the uses of domain names*
- ✓ *Market trends in domain names*

17:00 End of meeting

3. Minutes

3.1. Welcome

Pierre Bonis introduced the session by recalling the items on the agenda.

The three trustees present, Sébastien Bachollet and Benjamin Louis (elected by the user members) and Eric Lantonnet (elected by the registrar members) also welcomed the participants and reminded them that they were at their disposal.

3.2. News update

Pierre Bonis indicated that new members had joined the association in 2018: 4 individual users, 2 corporate users and 1 member of the International College (DRC Congo).

He then recalled that 2018 was an election year within the association, and that voters had to have been members for at least 6 months. The members of the colleges had to elect 1 Registrars' representative (end of the mandate of Tristan Colombet) and 1 Users' representative (end of the mandate of Benjamin Louis) at the GA of 8 June.

Candidates had until 16 April at 6 pm to submit their application including their policy statement and their declaration of interest. The final list of candidates would be published on 18 May after the Application Validation Committee has considered their admissibility.

Pierre Bonis underlined the fact that Afnic needed the involvement of its members to move forward and continue the dialogue between the different member colleges.

Sébastien Bachollet adds that he had been nominated as a member of the validation committee, his mandate had not been renewed this year because ran for another 2 years.

Following the previous consultation committee meetings in October, the articles of association had been amended at the General Meeting of 8 February 2018, validating the fact that Afnic employees could no longer be both salaried employees and members of Afnic, and therefore could not join the association.

Pierre Bonis informed the attendees of the disappearance of Stéphane Van Gelder, who had been an Afnic trustee from 2004 to 2010.

3.3. Discussion items

NB The answers to questions from members on discussion items are not included in this report. They will be subject to a separate report after analysis by Afnic teams.

3.3.1. The operational working group (OWG) "Improving the purchase clickstream of a future registrant"

How to guide registrants in their choice of registrar and service offerings via Afnic interfaces

Pierre Bonis reminded the meeting that an Operational Working Group (OWG) was a think tank or action group that involved members of the association for which decisions were to be made.

Emilie Turbat presented the project which took place in two stages:

- Publication of a new registrar directory on the new Afnic website
- Analysis with the members to facilitate the conversion towards registrars => A call for volunteers for a new OWG was launched

The new registrar directory would include filters (checkboxes for the time being) so that users could choose their registrar based on their requirements with respect to the services on offer in addition to domain names and their user profiles (SME, individual, etc.).

In the selection criteria, in addition to services of the type email, hosting and/or website creation, etc., Afnic products distributed by the registrars could also be found:

- Fr-Lock: registry lock at the registry level (locking and securing of the domain name at the registry level).
- Fr-Watch: string monitoring, a service that provides the number of DNS queries for existing or non-existent domain names.

FR-Rush, the server that was set up for the business of recovering expired domain names was not on offer in the directory because it was not intended for users.

Afnic customer relationship officers had asked all of the registrars to fill out a data update form that would be visible in the future directory.

The next step was therefore to think together to go further and decide

- How to guide registrants in their choice of registrar.
- The objective was to ensure that registrants who visit Afnic's website to find out the availability of a domain name then convert their intention into a purchase with a registrar
- A further objective was to ensure that the leads generated by Afnic sites were properly converted into domain name creations with registrars...

The question was asked whether there were other issues in addition to those already identified.

Pierre Bonis added that the goal of the working group was to simplify the registration of a domain name, but users did not buy just a domain name, they bought additional services. As Afnic was increasingly user-focused, it was necessary to improve the purchasing process and the transfer from Afnic to the registrars. To do so, Afnic needed information on user expectations and feedback from registrars in this working group.

Registrars' position:

The registrars were satisfied that through the directory Afnic would facilitate the purchasing process. They recommended a smooth clickstream on the Afnic website from the search for a domain name to the directory.

They noted that, in order to treat registrars fairly, search results had to be ordered randomly.

With regard to the content of the directory, there was heated discussion between the registrars about the relevance or not of detailing the services each offered in the directory. No consensus was reached on this specific point.

Registrars asked if it would be possible to indicate the other extensions managed by a given registrar (whether they were managed by Afnic or not).

Users' position:

With regard to the registrar directory, the users suggested that the search engine work with filters rather than checkboxes to facilitate user searches based on their service requirements.

The type of relationship possible with the registrar should be added to the selection criteria: only a web interface, or a human contact possible; an easy interface or one that required IT know-how.

The other selection criteria that could be useful were the gTLDs managed by Afnic, the registrar's ICANN accreditation, certificates, ISO, DNS quality, etc.

Users also wanted optimization of the user experience by putting the registrar search engine on the same page as the response to the domain name availability search. A further feature could be a simultaneous search for the availability of more names, with multiple replies in table format to that it could be easily exported to their mailbox.

Pierre Bonis summarized the proposals and requests to be studied:

Regarding the directory, the approach chosen was to allow registrants to have useful information allowing them to register domain names. A list of registrars with just the URL was useless and not a satisfactory solution. Efforts to promote the .fr must be followed by information capable of converting searches into purchases.

Initially the list of registrars was that of .fr registrars as they were Afnic accredited. Displaying information on the gTLDs managed by Afnic was possible but not on other extensions such as .com, .org ... The issue concerning the display of a registrar's ICANN accreditation needed to be studied.

Registrar members added the following remarks:

- Showing ICANN accreditations could be discriminating and could divide registrars.
- A search by filters would allow registrants to find the registrar that met their needs. This would allow registrars to have calls from qualified clients.

User members added the following comments:

- Displaying the gTLDs managed by Afnic in the directory would generate turnover for Afnic.
- The important thing was "the right information for the user" and the information process = the purchasing process. The Directory formed part of the answer that would allow registrants to make a well-based choice of registrar.

Pierre Bonis concluded the topic by reminding members that participating in the OWG ensured that their requests would be taken into account.

3.3.2.2018 roadmap for developments of Afnic products and services

Marie Berthelot presented the schedule for the forthcoming releases.

Afnic had taken into account the registrars' feedback to limit service cuts by changing from 4 to 3 releases. They would take place in April (T1), June (T2) and November (T3).

Developments of Afnic's products and services:

- BOA (BAck-Office Afnic) home page (for registry customers and internal users of Afnic). In T1.

- Syreli: interface with which to file complaints. Improvement of the internal platform and the search engine for users. In T2.
- GDPR: make anonymous the personal data of the gTLD Whois, allow users to contact registrants by means of a form and allow anonymity to be waived. Activated for the GDPR in May.
- Developments of the web interface:
 - New member area (online membership, online renewal, change of contacts, consultation of members' documents, members' agenda).
 - New registrar directory: simple and advanced search. The OWG should result in a new feature to enable the conversion of a user purchase. In parallel, analysis of what the European and global counterparts had done (good practices for this conversion of purchases presented in the OWG).
- Security improvements:
 - EPP Certificates (planned for T1) and Whitelist: upload via the registrar extranet of certificates and IP addresses.
 - To secure this point, implementation of dual authentication (in T2), multi-user management by registrars and autonomous management of passwords.
- Problem of the complexity of cascade deletions (an irritating factor fed back for several years in the registrar survey). Decision to take as a model the gTLD format, i.e. modification of the host management in order to delete the domain name affected. Scheduled for T3.
- Improvement of FR-Lock: service open 24/7, increase in of the number of contacts (from 3 to 10), creation of batch requests, process automation, upgrade of the extranet display (ergonomics). Scheduled for T3.
- EPP status changes: on the gTLD model, make it possible to modify the EPP status for the .fr. EPP status management in the .fr and EPP status management for clients. This could only be done one by one and not as a batch. Scheduled for T3.

Régis Massé concluded by presenting the summary overview that included all the improvements for each type of Afnic customer.

- Registrars: Registrar Directory, EPP and IP Certificate Management via Extranet, Extranet Secure Access, Host Objects, FR Lock, EPP Status.
- Registries: BOA dashboard, GDPR: Anonymous Whois gTLDs
- Users: Syreli: Search engine, GDPR: Anonymous Whois gTLDs, Registrar Directory, FR Lock
- Members : Members Area

Registrars' position:

Registrars' feedback on the roadmap for the proposed features was highly positive.

Regarding FR Lock, to develop the use, would it be possible to have a decreasing tariff for registrars who do a lot of locks? Another idea would be to offer 1 lock per year to each registrar to let users learn about the product and serve as an example / showcase on the registrar's own domain for example

Regarding requests for identity disclosures: Would it be possible to warn registrants when there has been a request to disclose their identity; if not, those requests that have been rejected.

What about the French overseas extensions?

Could Afnic provide a good practice guide for registrars on the GDPR issue? Over and above the .fr.

Would it be possible to add domain DNS statistics in the open data? If not, in an Afnic commercial offer not limited to a selection of domains such as the current FRWatch offer.

Finally the registrars wanted to remind Afnic that it must not compete with them. A specific example of a page that should be deleted: <https://www.afnic.fr/fr/produits-et-services/afnic-conseil/gestion-securisee-de-portefeuille-de-nom-de-domaine-2.html>

Users' position:

The planned changes in the BOA meet the demand.

Users would like attention to be given to ICANN's decision regarding the GDPR, so that Afnic's position (for gTLDs) was no more stringent than ICANN's.

Users would have liked to see the pages of the future Member area of the website.

Regarding FR-Lock there was no comment on the price.

Finally, more time should be allowed for discussions in separate consultative committee meetings.

Pierre Bonis summarized the opinions and expectations of members on this topic and provided some additional information.

For the FR Lock, the idea put forward by the registrars would be examined in greater depth.

Identity disclosure was a complex subject. Even if Afnic provided information that there had been a request, it would not give the name of the applicant for the disclosure. Afnic would look at what was legally possible.

With regard to the French overseas extensions, there had been a decline in inventory following the domain names purchased by non-eligible Chinese domainers. The market was rather flat. Afnic did not campaign or promote the extensions because Afnic was not officially designated as the registry for the overseas extensions. Afnic operated the extensions to render service. In addition, certain overseas extensions were managed by others (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guyana, etc.) without being designated by the State either.

Afnic noted that DNS statistics were the only subject of interest in the FR Watch product. Work was underway on the data platform and should provide information for customers as early as next year.

Perhaps the page of the afnic.fr website was misnamed. It concerned a security audit of a domain name through Zonemaster. This fell within the remit of the registry. The page would not be deleted but Afnic would change the way Zonemaster was presented.

Finally with regard to the GDPR, there was little risk that Afnic would be left with more constraints than ICANN. Nobody had ever asked Afnic to de-identify legal entities; and it would result in registries managing identity disclosures on 70% of their stock.

Pierre Bonis thanked all the members for the quality of the feedback.

3.4. Information update

3.4.1. The Avenir Project

Régis Massé presented the AVENIR 2018-2020 program.

Issues and requirements of the Avenir program:

- Offer our registry and registrar clients solutions that were upgradable, efficient and at the best price.
- Be competitive at the next ICANN round in 2020.
- Have a proven solution for the .fr at the end of 2020, to avoid the risk of exploitation caused by the migration with the approach of the future call for tenders in 2022.
- Be able to offer a standard, packaged registry management solution, for example to African registries in 2020 as part of the "Transition" technical registry operator (TRO) service offering.

The **goals** of the program were to:

- Reduce the costs of the Registry System and its operational use by 40% in three years.
- Respond to market developments by improving the flexibility of the roadmap and reducing delivery times by 30% in three years.
- Strengthen the resilience of the system and its capacity for growth, both in terms of its architecture and in its adaptability to the requirements and expectations of our ecosystem (Security, GDPR, NIS, etc.).

The **organizational options** for carrying out this program were to:

- Assign resources on the development of the AVENIR program while continuing to deliver features on the current system (.fr and gTLDs).
- Have a specific in-house project manager.
- With regard to the distribution of resources:
 - Develop business components by the in-house teams (to maintain in-house knowledge, have contributions with high added value by the teams and stimulate motivation in the project).
 - Develop interface layers by external resources supervised by in-house business experts.

The **technological options**:

- JAVA would be the majority programming language (except for DNS publication).
- It was also planned to switch from Oracle to PostgreSQL, which had already been implemented by peers.
- Security would be addressed as of the design phase to ensure the high resilience of the system.

The **architecture** would be modular and scalable with a standard system to which would be added specific components according to the types of customers.

The standard system:

- Would have all the essential features for managing a registry of domain names.
- Would meet the compliance, service level, and security requirements for a registry.
- Would comply with the "First come, first served" rule

The extended systems (.fr, gTLDs and ccTLDs):

- Would provide all the additional modular features that complement the standard system.
- Would offer complementary services (dashboards, monitoring systems, high scalability, etc.).

The first milestone of the Avenir program was the **Minimum Viable Product (MVP)**

- The functional skeleton of our new registry solution:
 - Technical components: PostgreSQL database, communication bus and service layer integrating minimal operations around a domain name (availability check, create and delete operations), EPP server, minimal Whois server.
 - Actual end-to-end capability: simulation of the registration of a domain name.
- The first tangible deliverable would validate a series of technical points in the program.
- It would be possible to slightly extend the scope depending on the progress in agile developments.

The **provisional timetable** over three years was as follows:

- January 2018: launch of the program.
- September 2018: delivery of the Minimum Viable Product (MVP)
- June 2019: delivery of a 1st TLD under the standard system
- June 2020: delivery of TLDs under standard and extended systems.
- November 2020: delivery of the .fr
- December 31, 2020: closure of the program.

For 2018, [work groups](#) had been set up to specify:

- the detailed functional specifications (ISD / Marketing and Commercial Dept. / Purchasing and Finance Department)
- upgrade of the data model (ISD / Registry Policy)
- upgrade of software architectures (ISD)
- upgrade of hardware architectures (ISD)
- upgrade of methods and tools (ISD)

The in-house [resources](#) allocated to the project are not only part of the ISD:

- A motivated team to meet the challenge:
 - 1 Project Manager and 1 Scrum Master.
 - 3 Product Owners for links with stakeholders.
 - 7 experienced developers in the business areas (design and development)
 - 4 testers (manual and automatic tests)
 - 5 IT technical architects for the infrastructure and security component.
- Strengthening development teams through external resources.
- A high level of involvement by the other Departments:
 - 1 Data Processing & Freedom Correspondent (DPO) to provide expertise on IT & Freedom / GDPR components.
 - 1 Security Manager (ISSM) to provide expertise on Security and NIS aspects.
 - 2 Data Lab experts to participate in modelling the data model and upgrading the Business Intelligence tools.
 - 2 Registry solutions marketing managers as well as 4 customer relationship officers to speak for registry and registrar clients.
 - The Purchasing and Finance Department to work on billing aspects.
 - The Communication department.

Pierre Bonis concluded by stating that the program was the largest project Afnic had undertaken in the previous 10 years and that information on its progress would be given regularly to members. The old system would continue to be developed during this period.

3.4.2. The GDPR

Marianne Georgelin and Nathalie Boulevard explained that Afnic was updating all of the documents impacted by the GDPR:

Existing documents:

- The accreditation application package (May 25, 2018)
- The registration contract (December 1, 2017)
- The Naming Policy (April 25, 2018)
- The policy on publication and access to information and domain name registration systems (April 25, 2018)

Plus the creation of a new specific information document on the processing of personal data by Afnic (May 25, 2018).

FAQ overview

In December 2017, Afnic published the [Registration Contract for the .fr TLD effective as of May 25, 2018](#), the date of actual implementation of the GDPR. The contract incorporated the provisions relating to the GDPR as described during the Consultative Committee meeting on October 12, 2017

Afnic had invited the registrars to two webinars on Tuesday, January 16 and Thursday, February 15 so that they could ask any questions about the impact of the GDPR on the contractual documents for the .fr, and, more broadly, the impact of the GDPR on their relations with Afnic

The FAQ contained all the questions asked inside and outside the two webinars, together with the answers provided by Afnic.

The FAQ was available on the Afnic website.

Some questions were asked by members. The answers given during the session are indicated below.

- The document produced by Afnic allows Afnic and the registrars to meet the obligation to inform registrants about whose data are processed.
- Individuals may request the publication of their data if they wish, but they must be left the right to change their minds later. De-identification applies by default.
- Regarding the personal data of corporations, de-identification was not possible.
- With regard to the diversity of the rules that apply according to the registries and that "complicate" the management of registrars, the application of the GDPR would lead to harmonization. The standard now was the .fr standard.
- Registration rules had evolved over time, registrars could clean up their databases and paper records of all the data that were previously required to register an .fr and which henceforth were no longer useful.
- All documents and meetings were proof of accountability. The advice that could be given was first to make sure what was visible such as the website was compliant, and handle requests quickly to avoid escalation and an inspection.

3.4.3. Study on the motivations for purchases of domain names

Lotfi Benyelles presented the results of this qualitative and quantitative study on the motivations for the purchase of a domain name, the uses made of it and the profiles of .fr registrants, which was conducted in December 2017 further to an operational working group (OWG) meeting.

Its purpose was to get to know our market and the users of domain names better.

The questionnaire was sent to 2150 people. 180 people responded, all from the Afnic sample. The high representativeness of .fr registrants prevents any conclusions from being drawn about the representativeness of the persons polled.

Overview:

- The study essentially provided indications on the motivations for registrants' choices to purchase and retain a domain name
- It confirmed the high level of satisfaction of registrants with regard to the domain name and the .fr
- The domain name was a long-term choice and an asset for a registrant
- The study confirmed the relevance of the choices made by Afnic in terms of promotion focusing on VSBs / SMEs

Pierre Bonis concluded by explaining that if the results of the study had no statistical value, it might be useful to use some of the data when talking about the .fr and domain names. The figures could be used to confirm marketing positioning, "brand", "craft and trade sector" etc.

3.4.4. Market trends in domain names

Loic Damilaville presented the trends in the domain name market.

3.5. Conclusion

The users' and registrars' consultative committee meetings ended at 17:15.

The schedule for upcoming meetings of the association was provided, as indicated below:

Date	Event	Venue
Thursday, May 17	Afnic Forum	Paris
Friday, June 8	Annual General Meeting Annual dinner	Paris
Monday, July 9	Afnic Scientific Council Open Day	Paris
Friday, October 12	Registrar and User Consultative Committee Meetings	?