Registars & users consultative committees

Minutes of the plenary session

17 October 2013

1. Attendees

Registrars: 12 (out of 43 members)

Business Domains	Fabien Riehl - *(Remote participation)*
Claranet	Sophie Pacave
Connection SAS	Jean-Benoît Richard
ELB Netissime	Thomas Thevenon - *(Remote participation)*
Gandi	Soraya Kara
Mailclub	Frédéric Guillemaut
Namebay	Eric Lantonnet
Nameshield	Eric Lantonnet
Orange	Sophie Jean-Gilles
Ordipat	Sylvie Destenave & Sébastien Hirel
OVH	Fabien Deflon - *(Remote participation)*
Renater	Elisabeth Gomes - *(Remote participation)*

Users: 8 (out of 30 members)

Legal entities	
ACFCI	Thierry Hinfray
Bibliothèque Nationale de France	Annick Le Follic
NetPublica	Guy Frankin - *(Remote participation)*
Individuals	
	Sébastien Bachollet
	Florian Maury
	Elisabeth Porteneuve
	Dammak Rafik - *(Remote participation)*
	David-Irving Tayer - *(Remote participation)*

Afnic

Fabien Betremieux, Program Manager, Product Manager
Pierre Bonis, Deputy CEO

Cédric Michel-Flandin, Key Account Manager
Julien Naillet, Communication & partnerships Manager
Virginie Navailles, Executive Assistant
Isabel Toutaud, Legal and Registration Policy
Mathieu Weill, CEO

Guest

Jean-Philippe Clément, ICT & Innovation Project Manager at the City of Paris

2. Agenda of the plenary session

✓ **Debate topics**
   o Registration policy: suggested amendments to the charter (multi-year registration, opening of 1 & 2 characters, etc.)

✓ **Information & updates**
   o gTLD: update on the program, onboarding, next steps
   o .FR promotion
   o 2014 action plan: strategic priorities
   o Valorization of activities: on-going projects
   o Market trends & update

3. Minutes

Mathieu Weill welcomes participants, announces the agenda and gives the highlights since the previous consultative committees. Afnic members elected the new Board of directors during the annual general meeting on 7 June 2013. Eric Lantonnet who represented Ascio and the registrars among the Board resigned during the summer so Afnic is still waiting for the appointment of a new representative. The Board set its program during its annual seminar on 17 September.

The French Council of state invalidated the legal framework of some of Afnic's former founding texts and policies, which makes the notification to the European Commission of the charter, policies and dispute resolution regulations compulsary. Afnic wants to take this opportunity to make a few amendments, which will be debated during the morning.

3.1. Debate topics

3.1.1. Registration policy: suggested amendments to the charter (multi-year registration, opening of 1 & 2 characters, etc.)

Isabel Toutaud reminds that French Council of state invalidated the PREDEC alternative dispute resolution procedure, the .FR naming charters, the Order and 2009 Convention appointing the .FR registry. It based its decision on the fact that those texts had not been notified to the European Commission. It also confirmed that, as a registry, Afnic has a public service mission. The invalidated texts were not in force anymore but the incompatibility with law reason could be applied to current texts, which are not notified either. On 5 September 2013, the Government published an enabling law to regularize the current legal framework via an Order to avoid the cancellation of the 2012 designation Order and the publication of a new bid. It also decided to notify all reference texts to the European Commission in October 2013.

The priority for Afnic is to prepare all texts to be notified, particularly the naming Charter by anticipating potential changes for the 2 to 3 years to come (opening of 1 & 2-caracter domain names, multi-year registrations, Registry Lock), the updated regulations of the SYRELI dispute resolution system and the regulations of the new alternative dispute resolution system (PARL experts) launched in partnership with the OMPI, the 3 policies on dispute resolution, publication and access to information on accreditation.

Isabel Toutaud details the amendments made by Afnic.

For the opening of 1 & 2-caracter domain names the policy has been partly approved by the registration policy committee of the Board in June 2013 but the opinion of the consultative committees is required regarding the terms that still need to be defined.

Afnic suggests setting 3 successive registration periods, each with its own regulations and prices: first a 3-month sunrise period at 75 euros per domain name, then a one-month sunrise and finally a general opening with a decreasing rate to be fixed to avoid rushes. Naming restrictions would only concern domain names composed of country codes of the French territory: fr.fr, re.fr, pm.fr, yt.fr, tf.fr, wf.fr, nc.fr, pf.fr, mf.fr, bl.fr, gp.fr, mq.fr, gf.fr and the co.fr domain name.

Multi-year registrations will be possible on EPP and the extranet for a period of 1 to 10 years with an explicit renewal operation allowing to change the registration length (without exceeding 10 years) and a new auto-renew operation for tacit renewals. Grace periods will last 5 days for Create, Transfer and Renew operations and 45 days for the auto-renew operation. The redemption grace period remains similar to the one of .FR and thus includes the possibility to restore the domain name during this period. All these new functionalities are already available on the .NEXT test bench.

Main functionalities for blocking sensitive domain names (Registry lock) are a complete locking of the domain name on all available operations (transfer, transmission, update, cancellation, explicit renewal), a double authentication by the registrar to allow a temporary unlocking of the domain name (the option with a double registry/holder authentication was

dismissed because it implies a strong link between the holder and the registry). The price is still to be defined.

The updated registration policies will include the regulations of the alternative dispute resolution system PARL experts (in partnership with the OMPI), the registration policy by establishment and the publication and access to information policy.

The position of registrars:

✓ Regarding the opening of 1 & 2-caracter domain names registrations, they are in favor of excluding the co.fr domain name

✓ They would like multi-year registrations to be launched as soon as possible since Afnic is technically ready. Not to lose any additional time, they suggest synchronizing the expected response time from the European Commission (3 months) with the period specified in the registration contract for the implementation of technical changes with direct impacts (announcement – 3 months – sending of technical specifications – 2 months).

✓ For Registry Lock, they recommend benchmarking the practices of other players and offer to help Afnic drafting the specifications listing possible actions, defining the terms, the implementation procedure, and an emergency system and setting the price, which should not exceed €200 (otherwise there will not be any demand). They approve of the double authentication by the registrar to keep the relationship with the end user.

The position of users:

✓ 1 & 2-caracter domain names are few so the sunrise rate should be high (prices between €500 and €750 are quoted. They think it would be clearer to have a single registration period for all with decreasing rates starting high to reach regular prices at the end of the period.

✓ They suggest aligning all domain names of a same portfolio on the calendar year to simplify management and operations.

✓ For Registry Lock, they are in favor of a double registry/holder authentication

3.2.   Information & updates

3.2.1. gTLD : update on the program, onboarding, next steps

Cédric Michel-Flandin reminds that Afnic is the technical partner of 17 new gTLDs: 5 geographic TLDs, 10 corporate TLDs and 2 generic TLDs. Only the geographic TLDs and 1 corporate TLD will be available to the public. .BZH should be launched during Q1 2014, .ALSACE and .CORSICA during H2 2014 and .AQUITAINE early in 2015. He presents .BZH's launch program (i.e. a 90-day sunrise period followed by competitive attribution), the terms of allocating and invoicing.

Afnic also accompanies registrars for the launch of new gTLDs: meetings were organized with new geographic TLDs project managers during the registrar Day in June 2013, a technical « onboarding » document has been published. Afnic also opened a testing platform ".NEXT" (EPP and Internet interface) and of a page with the following of technical evolutions, information on .NEXT releases and mutualized accreditation. Cédric asks for registrars' feedback on the .NEXT tolls they have tested.

Only ICANN accredited registrars will be able to sell the new TLDs. They will have to sign an agreement contract for all extensions, that will be invoiced separately.

Jean-Philippe Clément presents the .paris launch program. The City of Paris has launched a call for applications towards project managers for the registration of 100 pioneer domain names between 16 September and 16 December 2013. The opening is planned for H1 2014, with first a sunrise reserved to brands, before a general opening at the end of 2014.

3.2.2. Promotion of .FR

Afnic was present together with 15 registrars on 5 trade shows dedicated to entrepreneurship in Paris, Lille, Lyon and Nantes, for a total presence of 13 days. Afnic has been very active communicating before the events and during the trade shows hosting 3 or 4 mini-conferences per day and 10 workshops in total with 40 to 160 participants per workshop. The results are very positive: a real complementarity was created with registrars throughout the whole process, from the information phase to registrations, mutual knowledge of approaches and the place of the "domain name product" in the commercial offers of registrars. The operation will be renewed in 2014.

The strategic plan for the development of .FR was validated in August by Fleur Pellerin, Minister Delegate with responsibility for Small and Medium Enterprises, Innovation, and the Digital Economy. Priority targets are high-school and college students and SMEs. Campaigns must be adapted to their perceptions and uses of domain names. Afnic will launch a bid very soon to choose a communication consultancy.

A promotional campaign on Twitter towards students is mentioned, as well as a packaged offer including the hosting, the website and the domain name.

Pierre Bonis informs the committees that Afnic has subscribed to the Transition Numérique (Digital Transition) association and initiated talks with regional digital advisers, who are main contacts of SMEs.

3.2.3. 2014 action plan : strategic priorities

2014 strategic priorities are reaching the ISO 27001 security certification level and being recognized at the international level for resilience, launching the FSDI and financing it up to €2M per year as of 2015, maintaining the growth of .FR taking into account the 5% rate decrease in July 2014 and controlling costs. Launching the new TLDs successfully, both

technically and commercially and their reaching profitability in 2015 is another main objective, together the recognition of Afnic's operational excellence.

3.2.4. Valorization of activities: ongoing projects

Afnic's Board initiated reflections durind its seminar in September 2013 in order to Afnic's competencies and expertise and thus stregthen its position on markets where it currently operates and on prospective markets.

Afnic studies opportunities to develop new products and services in its core business of technical Registry operator (i.e. new services to gTLD clients, new clients during the 2nd round of application and externalization services professionalization services to registries in the context of mutualization and consolidation of the ccTLDs market) ; DNS management (supervision, DNS resilience and monotoring) ; registry operations (Internet of objects, ID and certification registry).

Registrars would like Afnic to remain in priority their provider and offer them software or monitoring solutions rather than selling services directly to users. Both registrars and users agree than Afnic would be legitimate and competent to manage ID access policies. Directory services are also suggested.

3.2.5. Market trends and update

The market has faced an important slowdown in 2013. In France, domain name creations are significantly linked to company creations that have been decreasing since January 2013. However .FR market share vs. .COM has been constantly growing since H2 2011. .FR growth remains positive but it is slowing down in percentage (from 18% in 2010 to less than 10% estimated in 2013).

Registrars ask if Afnic has started controls following accreditation and if the market update can be renewed at each meeting of the consultative committees.

The next meeting of the Consultative committees will take place in Paris on 6 March 2014 at 9:30 AM.