Arabic Domain Names Pilot Project

Communication and Information Technology Commission
Saudi Network Information Center
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

ISOC ccTLD Workshop – 11/2007 Jordan
Agenda

- About Saudi NIC.
- Arabic Domain Names
- ADNPP Introduction
- ADN Pilot Project.
- ADN Plug-in Examples.
About Saudi NIC

- A non-profit entity that is operated by Communication and Information Technology Commission (CITC)

- In charge of administering the domain name space under (.sa) since 1995

- Mission Statement:

  to provide an equitable, just and competent technical and administrative management of domain name registrations for Internet community in Saudi Arabia.
About Saudi NIC: Sub Domains

- **com.sa**: Dedicated only for entities that provide **commercial services**
- **edu.sa**: Dedicated only for **educational and training institutions**
- **sch.sa**: Dedicated only for all types of **schools**
- **med.sa**: Dedicated only for entities that provide **health** services.
- **gov.sa**: Dedicated only for **Governmental** entities
- **net.sa**: Dedicated only for entities that provide **Internet-related** services
- **org.sa**: Dedicated only for **non-profit** organizations.
- **pub.sa**: Dedicated only for **individuals** (including personal names)
About Saudi NIC: Registration Procedure

Domain availability
Checking the availability of the domain name using our (whois) service.

Hosting
Setting up the DNS server then testing them using the tools available on our website.

Request submission
Filling up and sending the registration form available on our website.

Official documents
Sending the registration request letter and necessary official documents.

::isa::
Total number of registered domain names per year by the end of 2006, there are 12,113 active domain
About Saudi NIC: Statistics (cont)

- Total number of registered domain names per sub-domain by the end of 2006

![Pie chart showing the distribution of registered domain names by sub-domain. COM accounts for 79%, edu for 6%, net for 3%, gov for 2%, org for 1%, med for 1%, and sch for 1%.]
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ADN Introduction: What is the problem?

- Current ASCII-based DNs are incapable of representing Arabic characters
- Difficulty to reach Arabic sites using English DNs (pronunciation & spelling problems)
- Full Arabic DNs will encourage Arab users to widely use the Internet
ADN Introduction: Internet in the Arab World

- Statistics
  - Population of Arab world: 275 B (5% of world population)
  - Arab Internet users represent 0.9 % of world users
  - Less than 10% who can speak English in the Arab world

- Obstacles facing Internet use
  - Low level of telecommunication infrastructure
  - Lack of adequate regulations
  - High cost
  - Computer Illiteracy
  - Language barrier
    - Contents
    - Tools and applications
    - Domain names
ADN Introduction: Why do we need ADN?

- Arabic language differs from Latin-based languages.

- Some proposed solutions, e.g. (ICANN IDN): mixing two scripts: نطاق com.sa.
  - Does not solve the problem since the user will have to write in two different languages (left-to-right and right-to-left)
ADN Introduction: Arabic Language Characteristics

- Consists of 28 characters.
- Writing direction from Right-to-Left.
- Diacritics are used for pronunciations which lead to different meanings as well.
- Two sets of numerals are used (Arabic and Arabic-Indic):
  - 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
  - 0، 1، 2، 3، 4، 5، 6، 7، 8، 9
- Abbreviation is not common
- ...
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ANDPP stands to **Arabic Domain Name Pilot Project**.

- Implementing a test bed for Arabic domain names (ADN) in the Arab world.
- This will allow all Arab countries to early experience the use of Arabic domain names:
  - identify their needs.
  - agree on standards.
  - locate possible problems.
  - and develop required tools and policies.
- The project is not commercial and had been initiated by a non profit organizations.
- **ADNPP works under the supervision of the Arab League**.
ADNPP Introduction: The Goals

- Establish and implement Arabic domain names.
- Increase the Internet use in the Arab world by making the Internet easier to use for native Arabic speakers.
- Gain experience and knowledge of using Arabic domain names and share it with the Internet community.
- Test the implantations of Arabic domain names based on the guidelines drafted by the “Arabic Team for Domain Names”.
- Develop necessary tools required for Arabic domain names and DNS.
ADNPP Introduction: The Current Participants

✓ United Arab Emirates
✓ Saudi Arabia
✓ Qatar
✓ Oman
✓ Palestine
✓ Egypt
✓ Tunisia
✓ Syria
✓ Jordan
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- ADN Plug-in Examples.
The ADN project passed on two stages.

Stages divided depend on the technical solution.

First stage is: Distribute the ADN zone file on the all Arab ISPs who want to participate in the pilot project.

Seconds stage is: develop client tool and plugs-in to does the converting the ADN to IDN.
ADN Project Results

- Distribute the ADN zone file on the all Arab ISPs who want to participate in the pilot project.

- Advantage:
  - No needs to client processing.

- Disadvantage
  - Difficult to coordinate and make every ISP to join the project so users can reach ADN.
  - Some ISPs lack technical experiences to work with IDN.
  - MS browser IE (Ver. 6 or less) does not support IDN.
  - The proxies problems.
  - Restricted to Saudi Arabia.
Developed browser plug-in to convert the ADN (دليل.الأردن) to (IDN (xn--ugb6bax.adn.jo)).

The plug-in developed to MS IE 6, IE7 and FireFox.
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ADN Examples: IE6
ADN Examples: IE7
ADN Examples: FireFox
Comments or Question
Thank you
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- Mohammed Alhamed, mhamed@citc.gov.sa
- Bander Al-Thakafi, bthakafi@citc.gov.sa