The Tunisian experience in managing Arabic Domain Names

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Introduction

• ATI was founded in early 1996

• National Operator of Internet Services and Solutions.

• Provides Internet access and services for institutions and organisations.

• Administrates the country’s link and backbone.

• Manages the IP ressources.

• Organises seminars and trainings for Internet community.
Introduction

- Manages the ccTLD (.tn)
- Develops Internet strategies, new applications and services in Tunisia.
  - E-commerce
  - E-government
  - E-learning
  - IPv6
  - Arabic Domain Names ....
Figures

- Population of Arab world is about 300 millions.
- Only 9 millions are using Internet (3%)
- 99% of Arab Internet Users were at least french or english speakers (on 1995), only 55% on 2001.
- Women represents only 4% of Arab Internet Users (42% in Europe)
- Arabic is the sixth spoken language in the world but it doesn’t appear on the Top 10 of common used languages on Internet.
Why Arabic Domain Names?

- Latin languages cannot represent Arabic characters.
- Preserve Arabic entity.
- Make NTIC affordable for Arabic only speaking people.
- Make Internet affordable for little Arabic children in their mother tongue.
Why Arabic Domain Names?

- Participate in bridging the digital divide.
- Encourage Arab users to widely use Internet.
- Boost electronic applications use: e-commerce, e-learning, e-government…
- Encourage Arabic content on web sites.
- Offer to the well-known Arabic entities to keep using their Arabic names on Internet.
The Arabic Internet Names Consortium

• AINC was founded in 30 April 2001

• The Arabic Internet Names Consortium mission is to teaches, communicates, innovates, generates wealth, governs, does business, rule-makes and progresses in all walks of life through the use of digital technology. It is an entity that has a digital nervous system, which provides the unlimited knowledge management resources for further progress and knowledge creation.
The Arabic Internet Names Consortium

10 Committees was set up:

- Technical Committee
- Policies Committee
- Arab Government Relations Committee
- Events Committee
- Membership Committee
- International Relations Committee
- Linguistic Committee
- Financial, Administrative & Legal Committee
- ccTLD Committee
- ABLINC Committee
Arabic Domain Names Project

• Tunisian Internet Agency was involved in the process of setting up arabic domain names since August 2000
• A project paper was prepared and approved by the government.
• 2 committees were set up (technical and linguistic) collaborating in closer manner with the AINC committees.
• Many universities and research centers participated in setting up a solution for using arabic domain names.
Arabic Domain Names Project

• Tunisia hosted the third annual AINC meeting on April 2002.

• ATI has set up a technical solution for resolving arabic domain names on November 2002.

• The solution offered a resolution of domain names by using a plug-in application.

• The application was launched for test in January 2003. Many ISPs were involved in this process.
• A new upgraded version of the application was launched on November 2003.

• About 30 Tunisian Arabic domain names are by now used in Tunisia only.

• The technical team is now studying the implementation of other services (e-mail, ftp, etc.).
Arabic Domain Names Project

• A project paper was prepared and sent to the world bank to finance this project in collaboration with ATI.

• The purpose of the project is the implementation, the deployment and the standardization of the solution in coordination with MINC, AINC and other international organisations.
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