



Draft Final Report of the 2023 Africa Domain Name Industry Study: AFRALO response to public comment discussion

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Draft Final Report of the 2023 Africa Domain Name Industry Study
AFRALO Discussion



Domain Name Industry study

Commissioned to

- Highlight the strengths and weaknesses in the Domain Name Service (DNS) industry sector in Africa,
- Develop recommendations on how to advance the industry to take better advantage of the opportunities available and address identified challenges;
- Develop a Trial Observatory to demonstrate the potential for continuously monitoring the status and growth of the DNS Industry in Africa.



Domain Name Industry study:

What questions do we need to answer?

- Does the study identify and define the strengths and weaknesses in Africa's Domain Name System (DNS) industry ecosystem?
- Does the study develop recommendations to advance the industry and bring it closer to realizing its full potential?
- Does the study document relevant data and provide further analytical findings?



Domain Name Industry study:

How was the information required to fulfil the objectives of the study obtained?

- Online survey,
- Zone file analysis of country code and generic top-level domain (ccTLD and gTLD) registries,
- Extracts from Registrar's and domain monitoring services' databases and extensive desktop research.
- Research team insights



Domain Name Industry study

Targeted Groups

- seven different questionnaires for identified target groups (Registry, Registrar, Registrant, Regulator, Reseller, IXP Manager and Data Centre Manager).
- A response rate of 22% was received - a total of 308 questionnaires were completed by 209 targeted respondents, some completed more than one questionnaire. Responses were received from all six identified stakeholder groups, all six AFRINIC regions and all six language groups.



Conclusions and Recommendations: (P.167)

The two key recommendations:

- There is a strong need to simplify, automate and expedite domain registration processes.
- Many countries need to lower the cost of ccTLD registration - the average registration cost is \$101 for an African ccTLD domain compared to about \$10 for a .COM domain. An ideal price would be between \$5- \$10.



AFRALO Suggested Comments

5.1.3 The influence of politics on telecommunications and the Internet

- The study's internal analysis proposes a compelling association between Internet freedom and the volume of registered domain names.
- Examining a more extensive dataset derived from Freedom House's 2023 "Freedom on the net" rankings, not limited to the African region, we find that this conclusion doesn't hold true. Notably, top level domains such as .ru, .cn, and .br, rank among the top 10 ccTLDs in terms of reported domain names, contradicting the study's deduction. Two of the ccTLDs are categorized by the Freedom House report as "not free," while the third is identified as "partly free."
- The team's deduction and visual aids rely only on the freedom House report. Therefore, we are unable to discern a consistent correlation between Internet freedom and the quantity of registered domain names.



AFRALO Suggested Comments

5.9 The user experience

Figures 5-12, representing the “3R” model, does not depict any registrars, it only shows the registrant, reseller, and the registry just as the 2R model.



AFRALO Suggested Comments

5.9.8 Barriers to growth in the DNS industry

- The distribution of the mean responses provided by the report suggests that price emerges as the most significant barrier to buying domain names, surpassing challenges like low Internet penetration and convenient payment mechanisms.
- The report implies that reducing DNS prices could boost domain name registrations.
- Our interpretation of the data suggests that a reduction in prices may result in increased registrations only if it is part of a broader strategy that includes infrastructure development, easier payment methods, awareness campaigns and supportive regulatory frameworks.
- It's crucial to recognize that the connection between domain name prices, income and inflation rates significantly influences domain registrations, presenting correlations with various other factors such as education, gender, age and other elements.



AFRALO Suggested Comments

Section 6: Analysis of Domain Name uptake across the continent

- While we overall agree with the presented success index we observe that the pricing should be correlated with additional economic variables such as currency devaluation, inflation rates and income.



AFRALO Suggested Comments

Section 7: Summary of Best Practice Recommendations for Registries

Although we generally endorse the presented best practices, we refrain from endorsing a specific price range. As previously mentioned on a local scale the price of a domain name is linked to various economic factors encompassing inflation rates, exchange rates and economic levels.



AFRALO Suggested Comments

the DNS Observatory

We express our support to the creation of the DNS Observatory in Africa. The Observatory has the potential of being a valuable tool to gauge the expansion of the domain name industry in the region and recognize its evolving trends.

<https://observatory.dnsstudy.africa/>

Thank you



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