

Hi all

I have attended the UA Days in Belgrade. I am taking the opportunity of a delay in my flight back to drop some notes.

The meeting was very interesting. We had a full house in the morning, with numbers decreasing in the afternoon. I don't know about the online participation. Please find the programme here: <https://uaday.rs/program/?lang=en> [uaday.rs]

The first panel was about multilingualism, Sally Costerton was among the speakers. It seems that the concept that the ultimate goal is multilingualism in the Internet is taking speed. To be noted that Anil Kumar Jain, UASG Chair, mentioned the four "pillars" among which there is no mention of the role of the user community. Interesting contribution by Leonid Todorov, arguing that we will have a stronger push to UA readiness from places and people that are more disadvantaged rather than from places and people that are better aware - in an intellectual way - about the need for equality of opportunities in internet access.

The second panel featured some registries that have been active in achieving results in term of UA readiness. I was the last speaker, and brought the point of view of the users, who are the most affected by lack of UA, making also a couple of examples. The good news is that my contribution was well received, the bad news is that I made the point that the user community should play a role - I argued that it should be the "fifth pillar" in the UA strategy - as users can put pressure on the providers that are not UA ready, proposing that we have a paradigm shift from "providers will graciously become UA compliant as a bonus for the users" to "users worldwide have the right to demand that all users have the same Internet experience regardless their language or script they use". The bad news is in the fact that I have proposed that the user community - and At-Large at the forefront - use their footprint in the wider community to build awareness of the user rights and produce pressure - also in collaboration with governments - to providers to be UA compliant. That means a call for action for At-Large.

In summary, we need to move from being spectators, waiting for things to happen, for the technical community to provide solutions, for providers to deploy UA-compliant services, to an active part of the community to demand and obtain the same level of service for all Internet users, regardless language, script, physical location, or other factors.

Cheers,
Roberto