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Nouvelle Cuisine-Changes in Registration of Internet Domain Names

Nancy K. Dennis

University of New Mexico General Library

Sandra K. Paul

SKP Associates

Albert Simmonds

R.R. Bowker

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"cybersquatting" — where hopeful entrepreneurs are buying up domain names similar to trademark or product names with the intention of selling or leasing them to the rightful trademark holder.

Nouvelle Cuisine

Changes in Registration of Internet Domain Names — Connect the Dots

by **Nancy K. Dennis** (Interim Director, Library Technology Dept., University of New Mexico General Library, Albuquerque, NM 87131-1466.);
phone: 505-277-2585. Fax 505-277-1788 <ndennis@unm.edu>

Recent articles in computing and Internet trade magazines have been reporting on a plan to add seven new generic top-level domain (gTLD) names to the familiar .net, .com, .org and to reorganize the registration process necessary to acquire domain names on the Internet.

The reorganization proposal from the **International Ad Hoc Committee**, a consortium of Internet governing groups, recommends adding:

.firm for businesses or firms

.store for businesses offering goods to purchase (retail services)

.web for entities emphasizing activities related the WWW

.rec for entities emphasizing recreation/entertainment activities

.info for entities providing information services

.nom for those wishing individual or personal nomenclature

.arts for entities emphasizing cultural and entertainment activities

The proposed changes to the registration process may raise a bit of a stir on the Internet, especially within the .com or commercial circles. (*Web Week*, February 17, 1997, p. 1 reports 733,502 .com domain names have been registered as of January, 1997.) Currently, all registration is managed by **Network Solutions, Inc.**, of Herndon, Virginia, which holds an exclusive contract with the **National Science Foundation**. According to an April, 1997 NSF announcement, that agreement will not be renewed. (For a more complete report see: <<http://www.news.com/News/Item/0,4,10003,00.html>>.)

The IAH Committee is proposing to expand the registration process to include 28 other companies from seven world regions to be named this year and to ANY company in 1998 that will agree to a set of strict rules of a shared centralized database. It is hoped that this will discourage "cybersquatting" (where hopeful entrepreneurs are buying up domain names similar to trademark or product names with the intention of selling or leasing them to the rightful trademark holder). It is also intended to relieve some of the demands on available names within .com and .net domains.

On May 1, 1997 a three-day conference at the Geneva International Conference Center was climaxed by over 80 organizations signing a Memorandum of Understanding in agreement with the proposed reorganization. **Vint Cerf**, now with MCI and considered by some to be the "father" of the Internet, has also endorsed this domain name restructuring. The new procedures are expected to be operational by the end of the year. For more on the subject check out the Committee's Web site: <<http://www.iahc.org>>.

For other restructuring proposals and press releases, check out the eDNS, or **Enhanced Domain Name Service** coalition at <<http://www.edns.com>> and the soon-to-be-replaced Network Solutions, Inc. proposal at <<http://www.netsol.com/papers/internet.html>>. Surprisingly, these sites make interesting reading. Valuable reminders, for those of us that spend most of our netting within the .edu domain. The projected growth in the global and commercial sectors is truly dramatic. 🐼

NB: See related article on page 67. — KS