

Africa internet opportunity abounds

The ZA Central Registry's (ZACR's) commitment to deeper African internet engagement continues with its sponsorship of the Africa Internet Summit (AIS) of the African Internet Operators Group (AfNOG).



Taking place this week in Gaborone, Botswana until 10 June 2016, the AIS comprises a series of workshops and meetings and is hosted by the Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) and supported by the Internet Society.

This annual summit attracts internationally-renowned experts and speakers. African technical organisations such as AfNOG, AFRINIC, AfREN, AfricaCERT, AfTLD-AROC, ISOC Africa, AfrICANN, AfGWG and others meet at AIS to share Internet best practices.

AIS aims at meeting the ever-changing needs of the ICT Industry and includes core IP engineering and real-world integration and impact of IP Technologies. Sessions include technical and business aspects of the internet such as capacity-building, infrastructure, security, policy, content and names, internet numbers and research.

ZACR has a long history of Africa-wide ICT engagement and support for African ccTLDs that is aimed at creating a worldwide web where Africans feel at home. This includes ZACR's attendance at ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) meetings on the African continent; its creation of an African Internet development fund; and its

sponsorship of the Southern Africa Internet Governance Forum (SAIGF), for example.

Possibly the greatest expression of ZACR's strong African roots is the African Union Commission's unwavering support of the Registry's bid for the rights to administer the .africa ('dotAfrica') gTLD (geographic Top Level Domain) in the best interests of the African internet community.

According to Lucky Masilela, ZACR CEO, "Internet opportunities abound in Africa with 170 million web users in the top three connected nations alone. However, the domain name space is an untapped market with just 2 million African domain names registered by the continent's 1.1 billion people.

"Centralised country registries help to radically boost the number of ccTLDs. With this in mind, ZACR's outsourced registry model is well-suited to emerging African countries because it means resellers can focus on retail functions.

"The ZACR is well-positioned to help streamline the African domain name space by using its considerable expertise to address price disparities on the continent, develop supporting technological infrastructure and collaborate on coordinated policy frameworks," concluded Masilela.

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