The Future of ccNSO Lunches
February 2014

Background

Since the beginning of the ccNSO, the ccTLD Community has been invited to sponsored lunches during the two ccNSO meeting days. When possible, the Tech Day participants have also received sponsored boxed lunches.

Arranging these lunches has been an extra service provided by the ccNSO staff, outside their usual working tasks in order to create a good and uniting atmosphere in the community.

Challenges

Providing sponsored lunches has lately become increasingly challenging, mainly due to:

- Increased prices – the prices vary from venue to venue, however, generally, staff has noted that the average prices for a lunch have increased significantly, independently of which country the meeting is held in.

  The cost of a lunch for 100 people for the last five meetings + the upcoming Singapore meeting:

  Prague: 4,602,61 US$ (one sponsors)
  Toronto: 6,402US$ (one sponsor)
  Beijing: 5800 US$ +15% service charge (one sponsor)
  Durban: From 1550 (simplest lunch option) to 1900 US$ (one sponsor)
  Buenos Aires: From 3900 US$ + 21% tax (simplest lunch option) to 7400.23 US$ + 21% tax (one sponsor)
  Singapore: 5500US$ (no sponsor so far)

- Increased difficulty to find sponsors, even when prices are relatively low (see Durban – only one sponsored lunch). Also, the Secretariat notes that the lunches are sponsored by a small group of ccTLDs with very limited fluctuation.

- Disproportionate burden on staff - the arrangements around a sponsored lunch are often (depending on venue) complicated, time consuming and burdensome for staff. A lot of time during (and before) the meetings needs to be invested in steering up logistic matters, instead on focusing on substantial issues.

Implications

As the lunches are costly, the sponsors generally only cater for 100 people. With a growing ccNSO, this has become increasingly challenging.

ccNSO Staff has noted that about 1/3 – 1/4 of the community is not able to get a lunch ticket at every lunch opportunity. This is creating frustration and a sense of division and is becoming counterproductive to the original purpose of the lunches - to unite the group.

Furthermore, the frustration of the community members increasingly lead to personal attacks on ccNSO Staff members, which are expected to arrange more tickets or "fix the problem"; gate-crashing has also become more common. This situation is demotivating for staff members.

Proposal

Given the time and energy that is invested in arranging the ccNSO lunches and that the outcome no longer is what was intended (uniting the ccTLD community), the ccNSO Secretariat suggest that the ccNSO Council considers ceasing the arrangement of sponsored lunches.

Investing the resources in an open-for-all cocktail reception for a fast growing ccTLD community feels more adequate and contributes to uniting the community.