

Open / Closed Website Section

1) Options

ccNSO staff is looking for direction whether to pursue a closed section on the ccNSO website. Three options are foreseen:

Option A: There should be a clearly marked, closed ccNSO website space, with the possibility to contain areas such as address books, sensitive material etc.

Option B :The (Confluence) Wiki tool¹ should be used for the purposes of a closed section whilst the ccNSO website should remain completely open.

Option C: No areas on the ccNSO website or the Confluence Wiki Spaces should be closed

2) Advantages versus Disadvantages Closed Website Section

Advantages:

- Lighten email burden – discussions on certain topics can be kept on forum instead (users log in when interested)
- Documents are archived in one place
- Meet ccNSO Review recommendations on using website as more collaborative tool²
- Meet community request on closed website section³

Disadvantages:

- Transparency issues: Closed website contradicts the community call for greater ICANN transparency
- Additional burden on users (users need to actively log in to follow discussions)
- Additional burden on staff (maintenance)

3) Suggestions

- If the Council decides to refrain from a "closed" section, the option to create a general wiki space could still be pursued.
- If the Council decides to pursue a "closed" section, we advise to opt for a wiki space, for reasons of flexibility and organic growth, cost effectiveness and ease of maintenance.
- If the Council decides on either option A or B above, a definition is needed of who should have access. Depending on the functionality multiple criteria may be needed. For example if the "closed" section is used for formal voting purposes it

¹ See 4.0

² See 5.4

³ See 5.2 and 5.3

is only ccNSO membership. If it (also) used for general discussion on new topics the criteria for the ccTLD community list could be used:

ccTLD Managers, administrative contacts and technical contacts of ccTLDs; Staff and board members of ccTLD registries, as approved by the ccTLD Manager or administrative contact; Observers from Regional ccTLD registry organisations, identified by their manager or board; The ccNSO secretariat, the ICANN ccNSO Policy Support Officer and the IANA ccTLD Liaison Officer.

(the definition is taken from the Community email list charter
<http://www.ccnso.icann.org/about/charter-cctld-community-list.pdf>)

4) Confluence

ICANN has implemented a multifunctional wiki tool called “Confluence”, which the ccNSO already is using for several Working Groups today.

Confluence is a “wiki” - a website that allows the creation and editing of pages by those invited to the space (an invitation involves a password and a link to log in through).

It supports several functions, such as:

- Message board function - threads on topical issues can easily be set up
- Voting functions – the anonymity of the voter is granted
- Possibility to set it so that alerts are sent at every activity in the chosen space
- Possibility to archive discussions
- Possibility to archive documents

Maintenance of subscription can be based on ccNSO membership (for example for voting purposes) and/or on ccTLD community email list charter.

5) Background Information

5.1) Message Board Discussions on ccNSO Council

In 2008/2009, discussions were held within the ccNSO Council on the creation of a “Message Board” function. The thought was that a Message Board would enable discussions on topical issues without a need to use email lists, which would be beneficial for people only interested in certain topics, as a message board would allow them to visit it when needed⁴.

⁴ The ccNSO Secretariat was tasked to pursue this issue with ICANN’s technical department – however, at that time there were no possibilities to implement such a tool and the idea was abandoned for the time being.

5.2) Survey on New Website

When preparing for the creation of a new ccNSO website, interviews were conducted with various community members on their views and wishes. Without being prompted, the wish for a “closed website section” was raised several times.

5.3) Follow-up Survey on Closed Section

A follow-up survey was conducted with a random, minor selection of community members. This survey focused on the need for a closed website section - and if so, what they would wish to see here.

Only seven replies were received; however, six of those indicated they would wish to see some kind of closed section on the website.

The major benefit that the community members envisaged was the possibility to have closed sections where they could discuss their issues on a message board-type of tool.

Furthermore, it was suggested to create a section where members could share sensitive data (statistics, financial reports etc.) and to create an “Address book”, where community members could leave their contact details.

The reply against a closed website section indicated that the ccNSO should remain open for transparency reasons: the community has called for greater ICANN transparency and it would therefore not be consistent to close off some of the own pages.

It was also felt that discussions do not need to take place on the ccNSO website.

5.4) ccNSO Review Recommendations

One of the ccNSO reviewer’s recommendations was *“the implementation of a collaborative networking tool allowing the ccNSO to create subgroups based on thematic, regional, linguistic grounds. Such a tool could include wiki, agenda, project management functions and allow members to update their own contact details”*. The Board WG final recommendations in this respect are: *“the WG recommends that the independent reviewers’ suggestion be considered by the ccNSO community in the light of the community’s evolving needs, as a subsequent potential step once the new website has been established. Such a demand-driven step-by-step approach is further justified in light of the public comments received, expressing doubts about overly ambitious plans.”*

This does not mean that the website needs to be closed, however, it is suggested that it could be better used by introducing new communication tools.