

John's Notes of the joint TF-MSP, TF-PR

Tuesday 30 October 2008

SWITCH Offices, Zürich, Switzerland

The Case for NRENS

John Dyer gave a presentation on the development of the paper, "The Case for NRNs" in which he covered a number of areas of background where he had undertaken research and had discussions with a people in the community. The most important issues had come up during the TNC2008, the TERENA General Assembly meeting and in discussions with Donald Clark of REANNZ. In addition some interesting characteristic of NRENS have been revealed during the analysis of Compendium data.

The first finding is that utilization of NREN interconnect capacity is generally in the range of 2%-20%. Whilst at first sight this seems very low, it is in line with the expectations of luminaries such as Andrew Odlyzko, University of Minnesota who study network traffic patterns. The rationale behind low utilization is that it is the preferred approach to providing good Quality of Service; it does not hinder innovative development and users of the network value the ability to be able to support the timely movement of large volumes of data.

The Compendium data also reveals that the proportion of traffic between community sites and global internet sites varies widely. The percentage of such traffic varies from 20% to over 90%. The variability can be explained by the different approaches taken by NRENS to providing access to content. If content providers are able to locate content servers on the NREN backbone, then the traffic generated is not seen as external traffic.

In addition, providing centrally provided connections to the global internet is an approach to delivering collective procurement for the national NREN communities of users. This is a beneficial effect for the user institutions and since most of the user sites are ultimately government funded, is beneficial for the tax payers.

There was a brief discussion on the different models used for funding of NRENS which vary from 100% user/client funding to 100% centralized government funding. The most effective approach seems to be a hybrid approach as suggested by the SERENATE and EARNEST reports. The hybrid approach appears to provide stable funding and motivation for good production services whilst encouraging innovative development.

John Dyer reported that the document "The Case for NRENS" will be updated within the next few weeks and will incorporate the comments made during the presentation.

Possible Areas of Collaboration between TF-MSP and TF-PR

Koen Schelkens reported that BELNET had been considering ENUM and asked if this was a potential area for collaboration. ENUM is a suite of protocols to unify the telephone numbering system E.164 with the DNS system storing additional records in the DNS database. Both FUNET and SWITCH indicated their interest, indeed SWITCH setup a trial in September 2007, but discontinued this due to lack of demand.

Alberto proposed that we should define a project to indentify user trends as early as possible in order to bring about some collaboration between the NRENS.

Koen suggested that TF-MSP have common ground with TF-PR in the area of service marketing where they are already doing a lot of work. Koen went on to present the BELNET customer segmentation work. It was also reported that DANTE had undertaken a survey in the last few weeks.

Sabine Jaume of RENATER suggested that TF-MSP and TF-PR hold joint meetings with the activity leaders of the GN3 in order to identify potential new work areas.

The requirement for multiple language translation for documents is needed. John Dyer recalled that the EGEE partners had undertaken such an activity making the versions available via a single one-stop publications interface. Alberto mentioned that RedIRIS has experience in providing translations for the Latin Americans through the ALICE project.