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Newsletter

January, 2020

2019 Report

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Activities Implemented by the Registry

Upgraded Software System

The implementation of an internationally recognized software system (EPP Protocol) for the Registry-Registrar model came into effect as of February 18, 2019, which granted:

- Option of adding foreign registrars;
- Implementation of registrar portal;
- Upgrade of WHOIS SERVICE;
- Improvement of security system (LOCK)

Rules for .GE domain registration and administration have been updated for the first time following the change in the .GE domain registration and administration procedure in 2018. The second updated version of the rules was approved by the Registry on February 18, 2019. The changes were primarily linked to the implementation of the administration/registration system with EPP protocol, and to ensure compliance with the Advisory Board's recommendations, regulatory legislation, and GDPR (EU General Data Protection Regulation)

Legal Changes

On January 10, 2020, the Registry approved the third updated edition of the .GE domain registration and administration rules. The changes included:

- Automatic assignment of the 30-day Lock function to a domain name (change restriction) in the following cases: registration of a domain name or updating the information linked to the registrant or the administrative contact, or the change of the domain owner.
- Individual registrants shall be able to make their personal information data publicly available via WHOIS service, which requires the statement of the corresponding wish in the registration application. Otherwise access to all personal information containing data shall remain hidden, with information on the registration date of a domain name, registrars and NSs remaining the only accessible data.

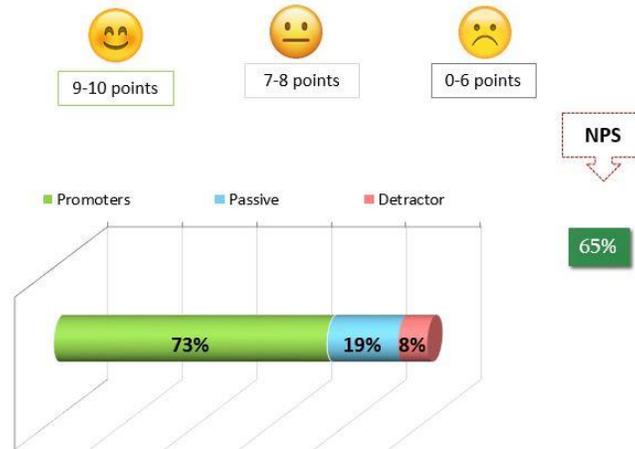
The WHOIS service options have been upgraded according to the recommendations worked out under the memorandum of cooperation signed between the Registry and ISOC Georgia.

PEN Testing

In 2019, the Registry conducted a penetration test (Gray Box) and HP Fortify Code Analysis to EPP protocol-based system. The faults identified were instantly processed. All testing stages successfully completed.

Registrants and Registrars Satisfaction Survey

In September-October 2019, the Registry in a joint effort with ACT Consulting Group conducted a survey to obtain data on the registrants' satisfaction level with the registrars. Regardless of a number of shortcomings revealed with the registrars, the overall results are quite optimistic:



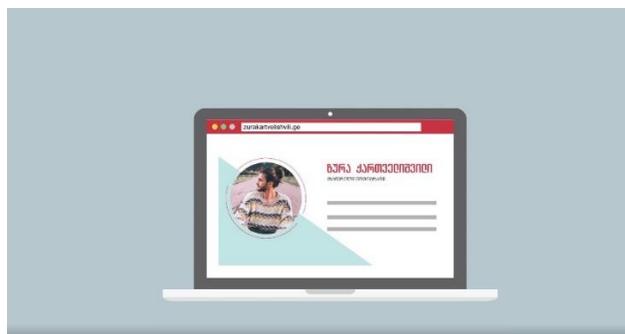
Marketing Campaign and its Results

March 1, 2019, the Registry launched a publicity campaign in cooperation with Alterway- a company selected through tender- to increase the .GE domain popularity via raising the consumer awareness. Several segments were selected for the message boxes developed under the campaign: small and medium-sized businesses, marketing specialists, IT specialists, and students. The leaders are:

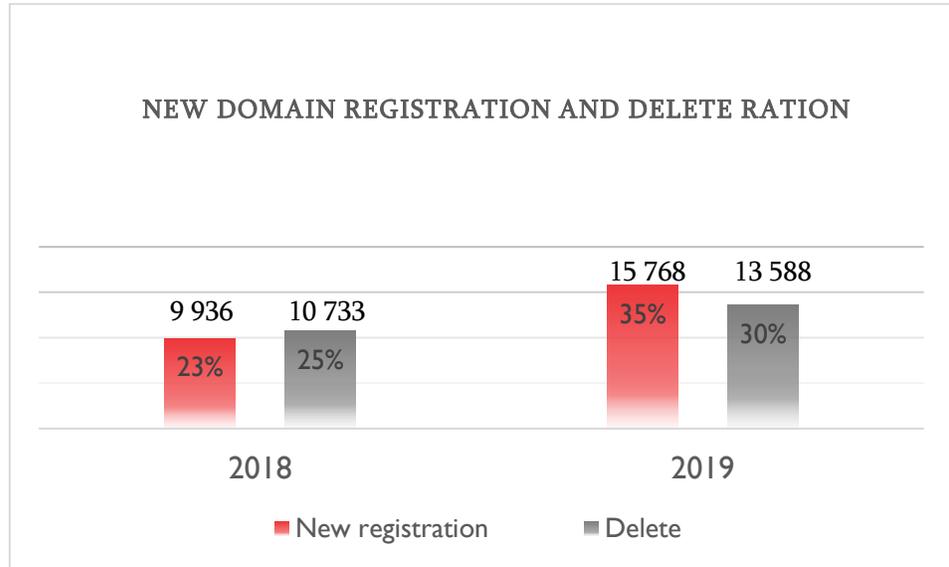
1. Students;
2. Small and medium-sized businesses;
3. Professional groups.

The campaign also envisioned creation of the www.mygedomain.ge platform. Its working principle is described in a real example.

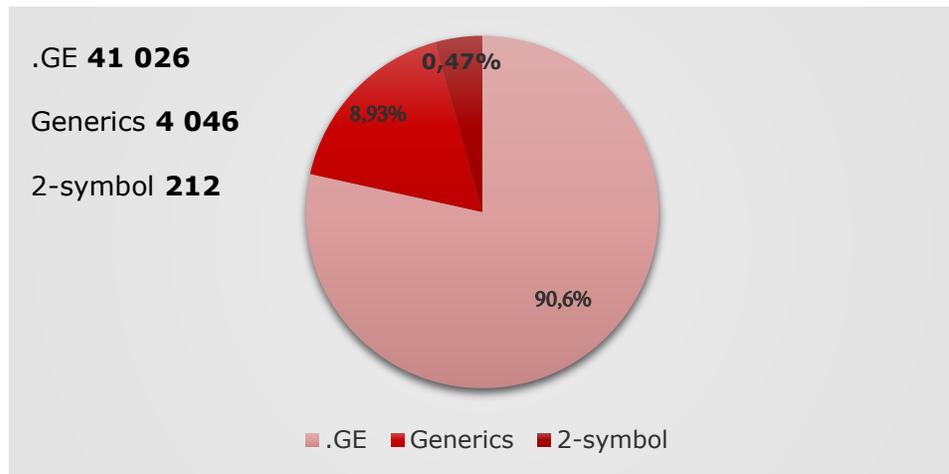
<https://www.facebook.com/1087394624780766/videos/695265334334301/>



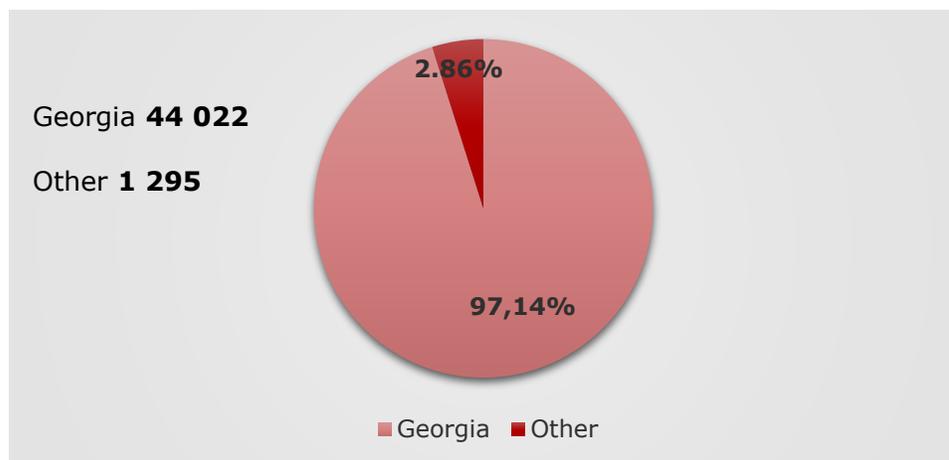
.GE Growing Trend



Redistribution of Domain Names



Redistribution of Domain Names by Zones



Advisory Board Recommendations

Recommendations and working meetings held in 2019 by the active advisory board based on the [memorandum](#) of cooperation signed between the Registry and ISOC Georgia:

Protocol of the .GE Registry Advisory Board meeting #4

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/zdp0snd48ugwpsm/GE%20cctld%20board%20meeting%20January%202015%20-%202019.pdf?dl=0>

Protocol of the .GE Registry Advisory Board meeting #5

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/mld69juwnjwhl2a/GE%20cctld%20board%20meeting%20-%20March%202017%20-%202019.pdf?dl=0>

Protocol of the .GE Registry Advisory Board meeting #6

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/c3xf46adbepnpb6/GE%20cctld%20board%20meeting%20-%20June%202012%20-%202019%20.pdf?dl=0>

CENTR Updates and Registry Recommendations

World Map by Country Code Top-Level Domain (ccTLD)



What would the world look like if countries were scaled according to registrations of their country code domains?

.UK registry [Nominet](#) has published its “The Online World 2019” map (full res version [here](#)) that does just this.

The South Pacific island of Tokelau, which has a population of just 1,500, looks the most out of whack. That’s because its .tk domains are given away for free and over 25 million are registered.

A couple of other interesting notes from Nominet:

- 107% year-on-year growth in Guernsey’s country code domain, .gg, largely driven by the video game and eSports community, for whom the initials “gg” is a common abbreviation for the phrase “good game”
- The academic community’s interest in Ascension Island’s .ac, which has seen growth of 130% over the past 12 months, as well as the continued growth of Anguilla’s .ai, supported by the continued rise of Artificial Intelligence technology

Fraud Cases in European ccTLD Companies



On September 3, 2019 .GE ccTLD Registry [DNSBelgium](#) published an article about the invoice fraud titled: “Don't fall victim to invoice fraud”.

The article says: “Because invoices are increasingly sent digitally, the risk of fraud is greater. A frequently used method: fraudsters mail you a fraudulent invoice, with their own account number”.

On December 13, 2019 .nl ccTLD Registry [sidn.nl](#) warned its registrants about the fake invoices.

“We are currently getting reports about people receiving fake invoices from an organization calling itself “DNS registrations NL”. Costs are charged on the invoice for domain registrations. Do not pay these invoices! If you receive an invoice DNS registraties NL, do not pay it. Report the approach to [Fraudehelpdesk.nl](#)”.



The reason behind focusing on the issues highlighted by .GE domain Administrator is that there has been a number of cases of the third party, either acting as natural person or legal entity, fraudulently extorting money for domains names by contacting and sending a fake invoice to registrants in an attempt to con them into paying downright unreasonable sum of money supposedly required for the renewal of domain registration.

The above examples show that similar issues also exist in other countries, and that high level of customer awareness is an efficient countermeasure against them. We recommend that .GE registrars develop notification method they find most convenient (email, posting on the website, pop-ups in the user profile, etc.) to inform the customers on the potential threats.



Recommendations

Recommendations for Companies:

- Make your employees aware of the fact that such fraud exists and how they can recognize it.
- Ask your staff to always be careful with payment requests and to check them for irregularities.
- Issue internal payment guidelines. For example, you can agree that payment requests by e-mail are subject to a check to verify their authenticity. Or that for payments above certain amounts extra consultation is necessary.
- Tell your employees not to share too much information on social media.

Recommendations for Employees:

- Don't trust the e-mail address in the 'From' line. It is very easy to copy! Fraudsters can even make a perfect copy of your supplier's layout and logos in the mail!
- When in doubt, talk to an authorized colleague.
- Work out a guideline to confirm the correct bank account and beneficiary for payments above a certain amount.
- Did you receive a request to change the payment details? Request confirmation of the company in question. Don't use the data specified in the letter, fax, or e-mail you received, but the contact data specified in previous correspondence.
- It is always handy to have a single point of contact in companies you make regular payments to.

Events Planned for 2020

Year of Raising Awareness

- Presentations at universities.
- Specialty trainings for stakeholders;
- Cooperation with Media Literacy project;
- Assisting local registrants in obtaining ICANN accreditation;
- Updating and further improvement of existing regulations.

Pilot lecture delivered at the University of Georgia December 4, 2019.

