

# SaudiNIC Experiences in Managing the Saudi ccTLD (.sa)

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# About KACST



- An independent scientific organization administratively belonging to the Prime Minister - established in 1979
- Played a pioneering role in establishing GULFNET, and linking it to the BITNET at the end of 1980's
- Played a fundamental and positive role in the introduction of the Internet to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the end of 1998 by establishing Internet Services Unit (ISU)



# About SaudiNIC



- A non-profit entity that is operated by King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology
- In charge of administering the domain name space under (.sa) since 1995
- Mission Statement:
  - to provide an equitable, just and competent technical and administrative management of domain name registrations for Internet community in Saudi Arabia.



# About SaudiNIC : Main Tasks



- Operating of the DNS root servers for .SA domains
- Setting up policies regulating domain name registrations.
- Domain name registrations
- Provide system and databases for domain name registration.
- Participation:
  - Participating coordinating with other GCC, Arab, and International ccTLDs.
  - Participating in international events supervised by ICANN, RIPE, ISOC, ITU, WIPO, and any other activities that are related to domain names



# About SaudiNIC : History



- 05.1994 delegation by IANA
- 10.1995 registering the first domain name
- 01.1997 publishing 1st domain name registration form and regulation
- 07.1998 publishing version 1.0 of the regulation
- 11.1998 open “net.sa” for local ISPs
- 07.1999 publishing version 1.1 of the regulation
- 02.2000 publishing version 1.2 of the regulation
- 11.2001 publishing version 1.3 of the regulation
- 10-2002 Published the SaudiNIC whois server (based on whois protocol)
- 02-2004 start testing Arabic-domain names under .sa and السعودية.
- 09-2005 publish Arabic Domain Name Regulation
- 09-2005 Start registering Arabic domains names.
- 09-2005 publish the new SaudiNIC website
- 12-2005 change the root servers for .sa



# Organization Structure : Staffing



- SaudiNIC started with two persons and now it has 4 people:
  - Manager,
  - Senior system analyst,
  - Registrar (clerk), and
  - Webmaster.
- The technical support and operation of the DNS servers are provided by the Network Operation Center of ISU / KACST

# SaudiNIC : Financial



- SaudiNIC has been funded by KACST since its establishment.
- Operation and staffing costs are part of KACST budget.
- Domain name registrations are provided free of charge for the purpose of encouraging the local community to use and utilize the Internet for e-businesses and other applications.



# Regulations : Development



- Registration regulations have gone through a number of major revisions.
- Regulation developments were done through group efforts
  - SaudiNIC
  - ISU staff
  - consultation of interested parties such as
    - universities, Internet service providers, private sectors, Ministry of Commerce, and individuals.
- They get reviewed by the legal department of KACST.
- Approved by the senior management of KACST



# Regulations : Applicability



- The "Domain Name Registration Regulation in Saudi Arabia" is the guideline for the registration procedure followed by SaudiNIC staff.
- All registrations without exceptions are done according to this regulation on first come, first served basis.
- The regulation is applied equally over all different type of entities (governmental, educational, private, non for profit, and individuals).



# Regulations : Major Points



- First come first served
- Applicant bears the responsibility of obtaining legal permission to use the domain name
  - the use or registration of a domain name does not interfere with or infringe upon the right of any third party
- Generic names (e.g., www, internet) and famous people will not be registered under any domain
- Domain names are NOT for sale!
- Registering a domain name does not confer any legal rights to that name



# Regulations : Applicant



- **The Applicant must be:**
  - Physically in KSA,
  - Has a local representative in KSA , or
  - Owning trademarks or trade names that are registered in Saudi Arabia.
- **Domain contacts:**
  - Administrative contact: manage the domain name and must from the entity requesting the domain name
  - Technical contact: should be the one who are looking after the DNS servers.
  - Requester contact: who fills the online form.
- **The Applicant agrees that:**
  - information submitted is true
  - domain name does not violate the right of a third-party
  - it will not be used for any activity not permitted in KSA
  - will inform SaudiNIC for any changes in the information
  - will not register domain names for the purpose of selling them



# Domain Name Dispute Policy



- Any disputes between parties over the rights to use a particular domain name are to be settled between the contending parties using **normal legal methods**.
- SaudiNIC exempts itself from all responsibility for the verification of rights to a name. SaudiNIC cannot act as arbiter of disputes arising out of this kind of conflict.



# Registration Procedure : Sub domains



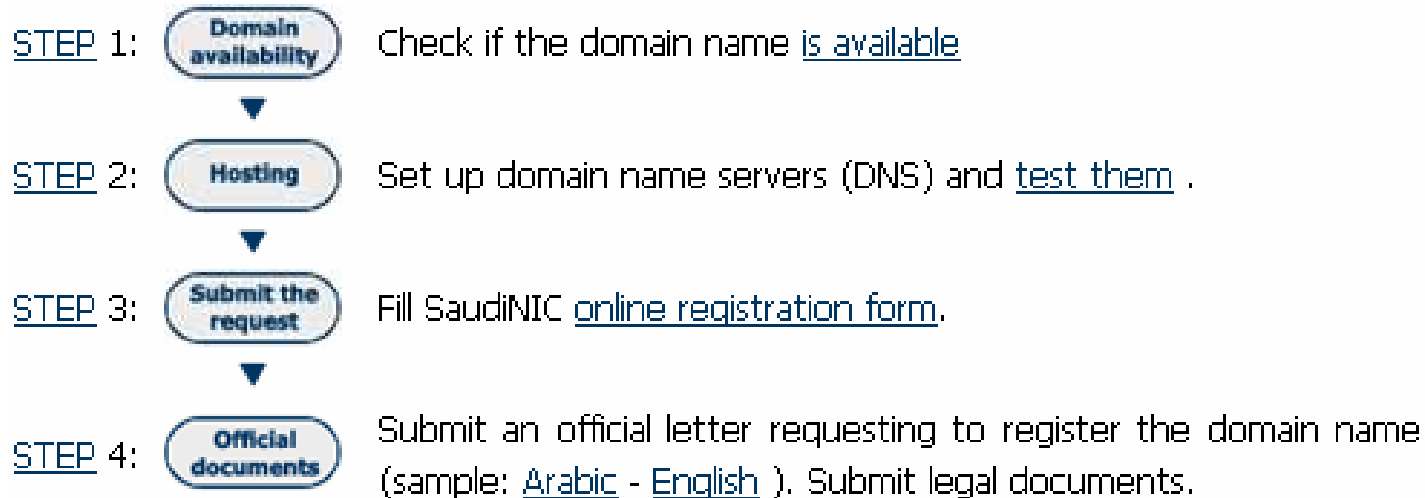
- **com.sa** : Dedicated only for entities that provide **commercial services**
- **edu.sa** : Dedicated only for **educational and training institutions**
- **sch.sa** : Dedicated only for all types of **schools**
- **med.sa** : Dedicated only for entities that provides **health** services.
- **gov.sa** : Dedicated only for **Governmental** entities
- **net.sa** : Dedicated only for entities that provide **Internet-related** services
- **org.sa** : Dedicated only for **non-profit** organizations.
- **pub.sa** : Dedicated only for **individuals** (including personal names)



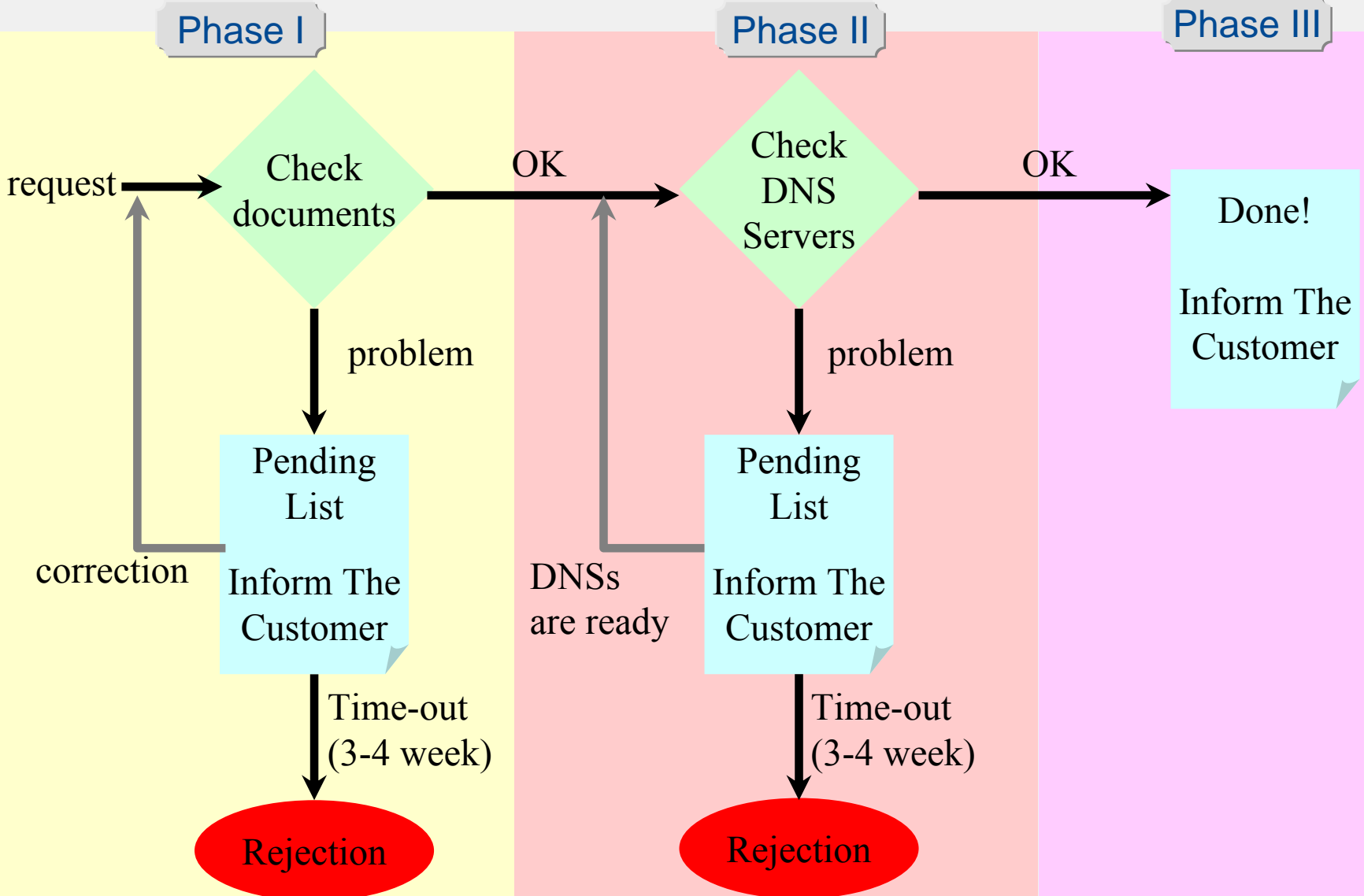
# Registration Procedure : Customer



- Registration steps



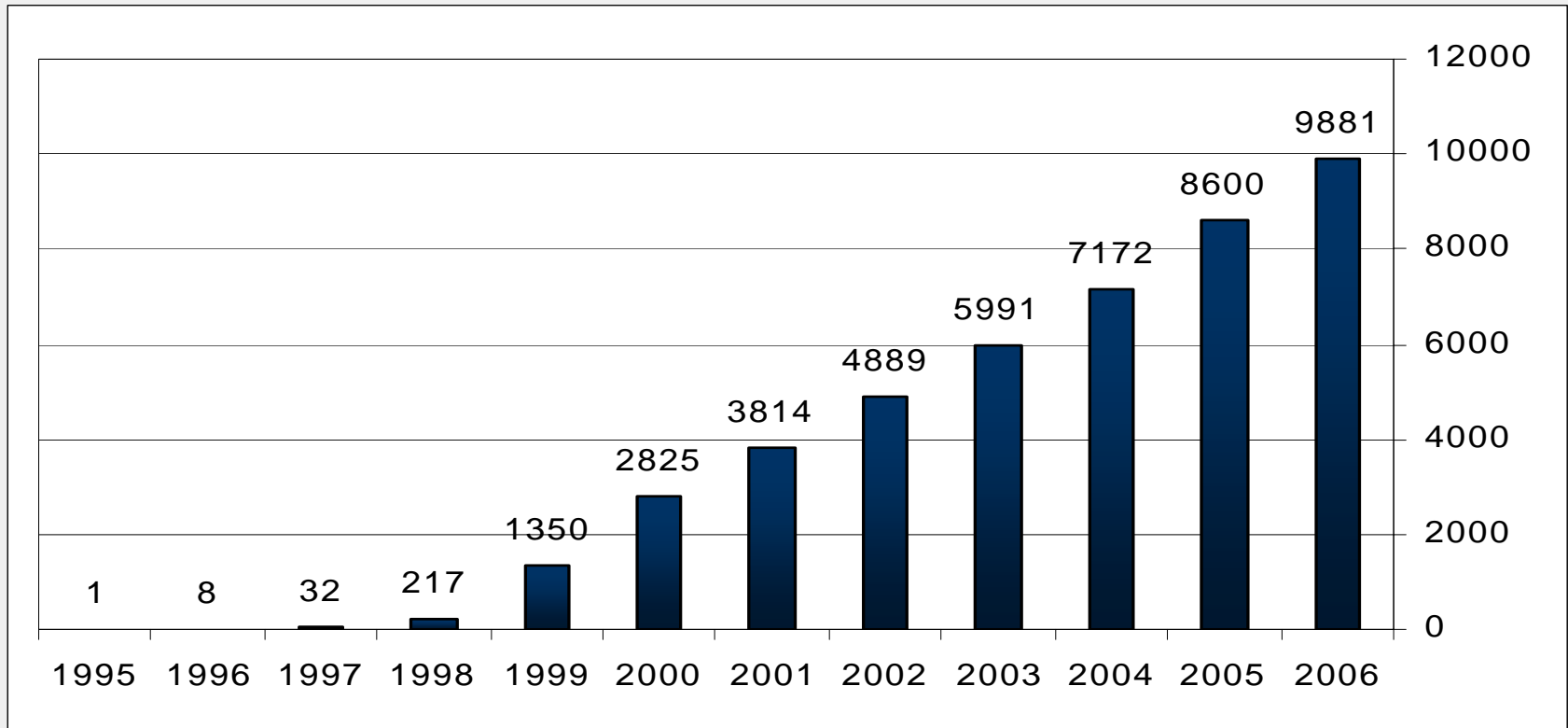
# Registration Procedure : Internal



# Information : Statistics



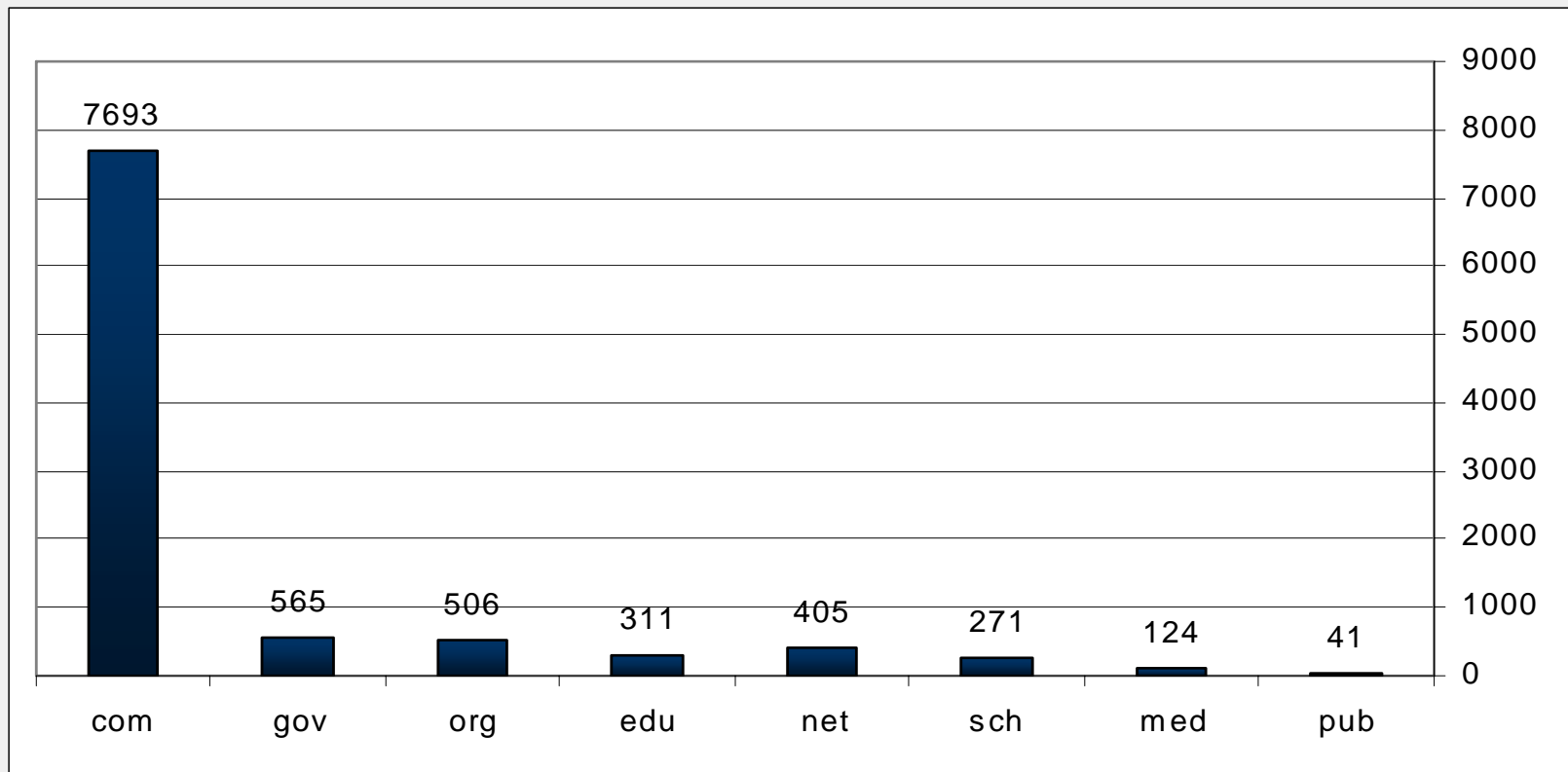
Total number of registered domain names per year by the end of 2006



# Information : Statistics



Total number of registered domain names per sub-domain by the end of 2006



# Information :

## What has been done so far?



- Regulations
- Internal procedures
- Registration System
- Ticketing System
- Database & zone builder
- Name servers for .sa
- Online information (Web)
  - web site: [www.saudinic.net.sa](http://www.saudinic.net.sa) (since 1997)
  - Arabic& English
  - Online forms
  - Whois server and Web-whois (domain lookup)
  - documents (FAQs, how-to, RFCs, Regulation, Error messages)
  - Orders system
  - Ticketing interface
  - Many other tools ( DNS checker, Host checker, idn converter ...etc).



# Information: Future work



- Flat registration, e.g., <domain-named>.sa
- Registration fees (Collecting payments)
- Supporting Registry-Registrar system
- Developing Dispute Resolution Policies and procedures
- User capabilities to modify registration information online
- Electronic archiving
- Increasing public awareness (continuous effort)



# Information : Future work



- Any enhancement to the registration process should consider the following guidelines:
  - Speed up the registration process and no additional delay is introduced
  - Minimize the human interactions and automate the registration process
  - Easy to use by operators and easy to follow up and fallback
  - Could be realized by existing resources (e.g, employment & technical capabilities).
  - Appropriate for our culture/environment and accepted by local community



# Information : More information



- Domain names in Arabic language:
  - <http://www.arabic-domains.org>
  
- SaudiNIC web site:
  - <http://www.nic.net.sa>
  - <http://www.SaudiNIC.net.sa>



# Thanks

شكرا

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