

Localising online queries

Internet registry and addressing services provider Mynic Bhd signed a memorandum of understanding with Internet Systems Consortium Inc (ISC) last month that soon led to the deployment and operations of a new mirror version of the F-root server in Malaysia. What this means for organisations and individuals is that with the server in place, the online community can experience a faster query response launched on the Web. Rozana Sani catches up with Mynic's director Shariya Haniz Zulkifli to find out more.

Q: What exactly is a mirror version of the F-root server?

A: Root servers provide a roadmap that ensures a numerical Internet address can be accessed through human readable names that are common to Internet users. There are 13 globally distributed root servers catering to some 85 million Web addresses. The root server system overall answers well over 100,000 queries per second, providing the first step in determining the requested network address.



A mirror server is actually an exact duplicate of what's available on the root server. It's not a backup server, but an exact copy available in real time. With this mirror server in place, a .my Net address query need not leave the country, but takes place locally. It's all about the localisation of the queries – trying to localise the traffic and promote .my domain names and to carry out hosting locally.

Shariya says Anycast technology is commonly used by companies that want redundancy and resilience in their infrastructure.

Q: How does this benefit users?

A: For the average user, they won't feel it. But in situations where there are international links and the performance is affected, then you will see the difference. The way the system is installed is such that the mirror server is not distinguishable from other root servers in the world.

This particular project is under the Anycast banner. Anycast is a technology where the query is routed to the best location or the nearest location instead of going out to the F-root server.

This Internet technology is commonly used by people who want redundancy and resilience in their infrastructure. This gives organisations a significantly reduced risk of deploying their business on the Internet. Having the complete set of facilities to continue to operate Internet locally present here contributes to lowering the risks. We hope this will encourage the local community – consumers and businesses – to participate on the Internet.

Q: Can you elaborate on your partnership with ISC?

A: ISC is a non-profit corporation dedicated to supporting the infrastructure of the universal connected self-organising Internet and the autonomy of its participants by developing and maintaining core production quality software, protocols and operations.

ISC has installed and is operating the mirror server in Malaysia in co-operation with Mynic. The organisation has set up such servers in Taiwan and Singapore.

They developed the Bind software, which is the software we use for our DNS (domain name server) operations. Seventy or 80 per cent of ccTLD (country code top-level domain) managers like ourselves use the software.

Q: What does Mynic have in the pipeline?

A: Our next project is the DNS IPv6 project where we will make our systems and networks IPv6-ready. This means if other organisations are IPv6-ready, they can register their IPv6 addresses with us as well. That's coming soon.

We are working closely with ISPs (Internet service providers), regulators and the co-ordinator for IPv6 in Malaysia. We opened up our testbed last year and got approximately 180 participants from organisations.

As for our electronic number mapping project, it is at its preliminary stage and will go deeper by end of the year.

http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/techNu/Monday/TechTalk/20080706121900/Article/index_html