

MENOG 2015 – Dubai – 1st April 2015

**Domain & Hosting Industry Insight from a
UAE hosting company - AEserver**

Presented by

Munir Badr

Founder/CEO



Agenda

1. About the speaker

2. Domain name industry review

- UAE/Qatar domains**
- Rest of the GCC region**
- ICANN registrars**

3. Web hosting market review

- Hosting business in UAE**
- Common challenges**

4. Improvements over time/positive change

About Munir Badr / AEserver

- **Dubai based internet entrepreneur. UAE resident since 1996 and Engineering graduate from American University of Sharjah**
- **Dubai based startup in 2005. Registered as a company in 2008.**
- **Started as a reseller of .AE domain names through the local ISP + Web Hosting**
- **TRA formed aeDA in 2008 to change the regime – registry-registrar model launched – we applied for accreditation (.ae)**
- **Hosting: Local (Dubai) + offshore (EU, USA) hosting**
- **Signed up with ictQatar for .QA accreditation in 2013**

Domain Market Review - UAE

- **National country code: .AE (IDN: emarat) - Over 124,000 domains registered as of December 2014**
- **Registry: aeDA – part of TRA, operates registry-registrar model (since 2008). Clear well written and transparent policy.**
- **2nd level domains are open to the whole world – no restrictions**
- **3rd level domains are restricted and require docs**
- **Very popular domain name, used by most business and international brands.**
- **22 accredited registrars (local and international) and most offer instant registration via EPP**
- **Domain after market exists and boasts high value sales**

Domain Market Review - Qatar

- **National country code: .QA (IDN: .qatar) - Over 19,500+ domains registered as of today**
- **Registry: Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA), operates registry-registrar model (since 2013). Clear well written and transparent policy**
- **2nd level domains are open to the whole world – no restrictions**
- **3rd level domains are restricted and require docs**
- **Popular domain name, used by most business and international brands.**
- **14 accredited registrars (local and international) and most offer instant registration via EPP**

Domain Industry in GCC

- **All other GCC countries (Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain & Kuwait) have restrictions on the national domain names**
 - **Require paperwork such as local presence, trade license, etc**
 - **Some are not open to individuals, only businesses**
 - **No clear data on registration statistics**
 - **Registrations offered by “resellers” and “law firms” locally and globally that fulfill the requirements and charge a huge service fee \$\$\$\$\$ and registrations processing upto 2 month**
 - **No clear information on when to expect a change in regime, no news sources, no community feedback (coming soon, we are working on it, etc)**

Extension/Requirements (MENA)

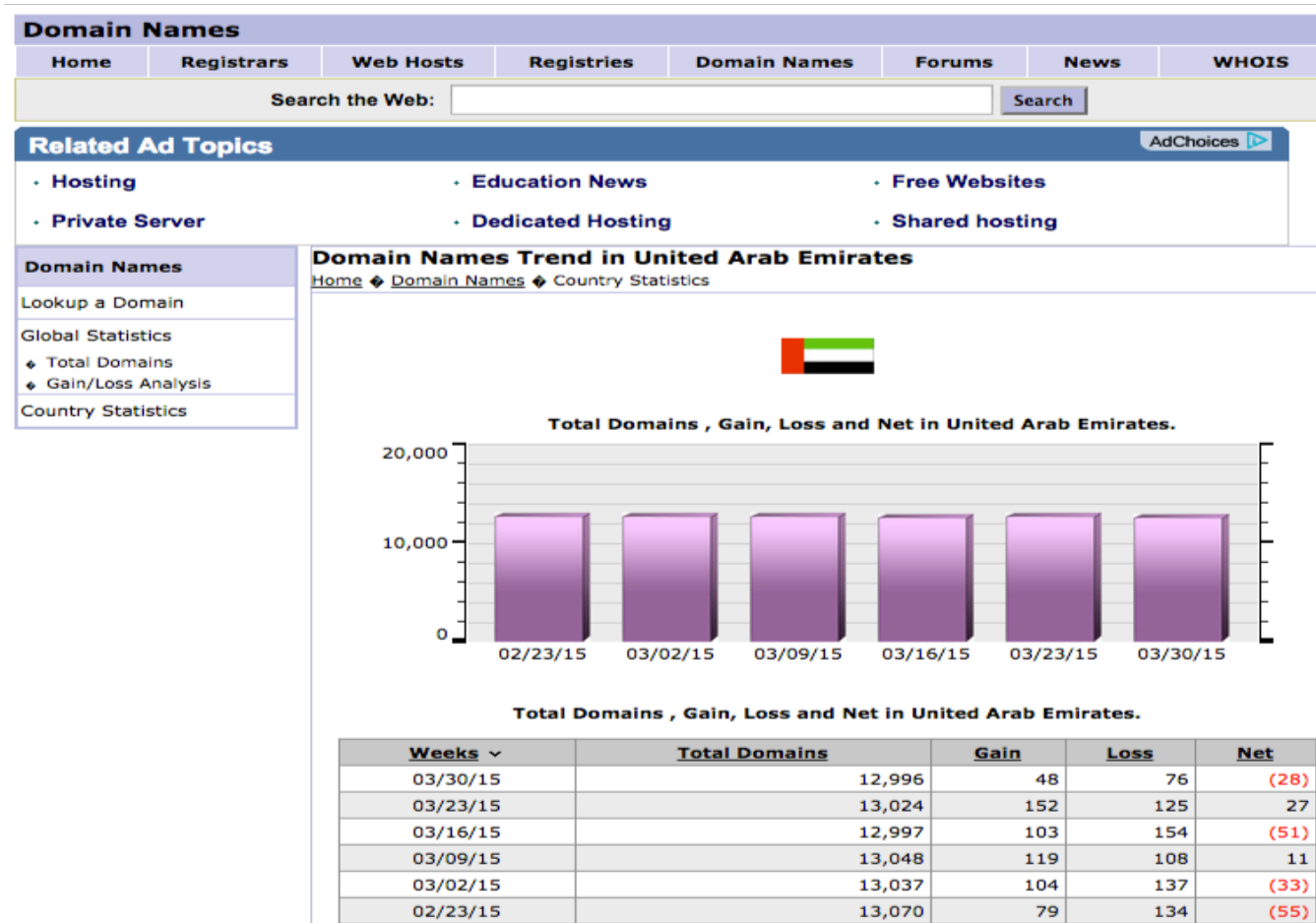
MIDDLE EAST DOMAINS		
Extension	Country	Requirements
.bh	Bahrain	The owner must be a company (from any country).
.com.bh	Bahrain	
.jo	Jordan	In order to register .jo and .com.jo domain names you must:
.com.jo	Jordan	
.com.kw/.net.kw/org.kw	Kuwait	Your domain name must match your Company name or Trademark name. If your domain name matches your Company name you only need to provide a letter of authorization (we will provide the model). If your domain name matches your Trademark name, the owner of the Trademark must be the same owner as the domain. You need to provide the Trademark Registration certificate and a letter of authorization.
.com.lb	Lebanon	- a Lebanese trademark identical to the domain name, covering the internet advertising and use in class 35; and - an administrative contact in Lebanon. If you don't meet
.org.lb	Lebanon	
.net.lb	Lebanon	
.com.om	Oman	The owner must be a company, not an individual. An incorporation certificate is required.
.co.om	Oman	
.sa	Saudi	Registrant should have: - a registered trademark in Saudi Arabia matching the
.com.sa	Saudi	
.sy	Syria	SY domain registration is not available for applicants from
.com.sy	Syria	
.com.ye	Yemen	Registrant must have a local administrative contact in Yemen.
.net.ye	Yemen	
.org.ye	Yemen	

ICANN Registrars

- **Very few ICANN registrars in our region**
 - **UAE: 4**
 - **Kuwait: 1**
 - **Oman: nill**
 - **Saudi Arabia: nill**
 - **Bahrain: nill**
 - **Qatar: nill**
- **Total = 5 registrars in GCC**
- **Out of 4 registrars in UAE non offer local services!**
- **2 out of 4 UAE registrars are international companies with legal status in UAE but work for other markets**
- **1 registrar is a new gTLD operator (.GDN)**
- **1 Registrar is local ISP (etisalat) and applicant for new gTLD**
- **Few registrars closed**

Domain Statistics

- There is no single reliable source on local domain name statistics. Example:



Source: http://www.webhosting.info/domains/country_stats/AE

Web Hosting Industry Review - UAE

- **UAE web hosting marketplace is small but growing**
- **Most companies do NOT own any hardware or operate any data center**
- **Most companies are simply resellers of larger providers in the USA, EU**
- **Most companies advertise “dubai hosting”, “uae hosting” keywords but no have servers in UAE.**
- **Most companies operate in an old fashioned way with very limited options and small plans and expensive cost.**
- **In the past few years many new companies comeout with more advanced offerings, competitive pricing and 100% Dubai based hosting, support, etc**

Example 1

SHARED WEB HOSTING PLANS						
PARAMETERS	SILVER	GOLD	PLATINUM	LINUX BASIC	LINUX ENTERPRISE	
Commercials						
Onetime Charges	US\$ 50.00	US\$ 50.00	US\$ 100.00	US\$ 50.00	US\$ 100.00	
Monthly Charges	US\$ 15.00	US\$ 25.00	US\$ 100.00	US\$ 25.00	US\$ 100.00	
Platform						
Platform (OS)	Windows	Windows	Windows	Red Hat	Red Hat	
Web Server	IIS 6.x	IIS 6.x	IIS 6.x	Apache 5.x	Apache 5.x	
ASP 3.0 .Net 2.0	✓	✓	✓	×	×	
PHP 5.1.6	×	×	×	✓	✓	
Data Base (DB)	×	Access	SQL	MySQL	MySQL	
SQL Enterprise Manager	×	×	✓	×	×	
Content Management	×	×	×	×	Joomla	
FTP Access	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Raw Files	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
MS Front Page Extns	✓	✓	✓	×	×	
Resources						
Data Transfer (Monthly)	750 MB	1 GB	2 GB	750 MB	1 GB	
Disk Space (Web)	50 MB	150 MB	300 MB	50 MB	200 MB	
Disk Space (DB)	×	×	100 MB	100 MB	300 MB	
Backup	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Source: “google search for UAE based hosting”, first page result. Dubai based Company, well known.

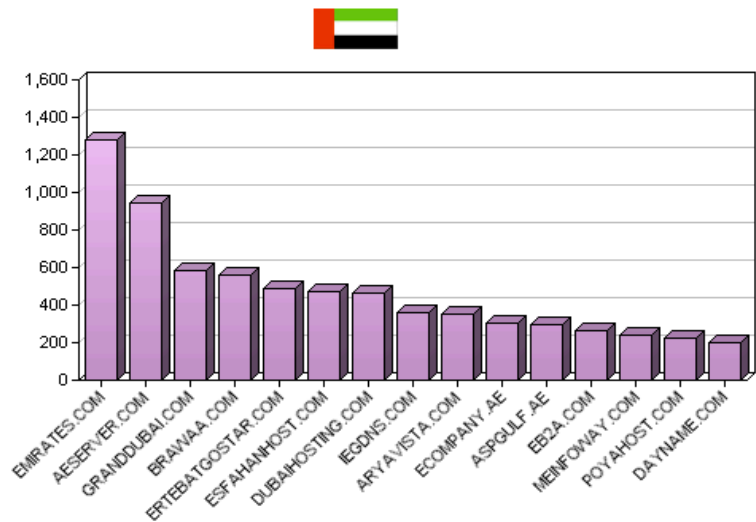
Example 2

Only 700 AED per year	Only 1200 AED per year	Only 1800 AED per year	Only 2400 AED per year
10GB Monthly Bandwidth	15GB Monthly Bandwidth	20GB Monthly Bandwidth	Unmetered Monthly Bandwidth
1GB Disk Space	1GB Disk Space	2GB Disk Space	Unmetered Disk Space
01 Domain	01 Domain	01 Domain	01 Domain
100 Email accounts [150MB each] 15GB in Total	100 Email accounts [150MB each] 15GB in Total	100 Email accounts [150MB each] 15GB in Total	100 Email accounts [150MB each] 15GB in Total

NOT EVEN UAE BASED SERVERS!!!

Source: “google search for UAE based hosting”, first page result

Web Hosting Statistics



Top Hosting Companies in United Arab Emirates

Rank ^	Hosting Company	Market Share	Total Domains
1	EMIRATES.COM	9.8492 %	1,280
2	AESERVER.COM	7.2484 %	942
3	GRANDDUBAI.COM	4.486 %	583
4	BRAWAA.COM	4.3167 %	561
5	ERTEBATGOSTAR.COM	3.7858 %	492
6	ESFAHANHOST.COM	3.6088 %	469
7	DUBAIHOSTING.COM	3.5472 %	461
8	IEGDNS.COM	2.7547 %	358
9	ARYAVISTA.COM	2.6854 %	349
10	ECOMPANY.AE	2.37 %	308
11	ASPGULF.AE	2.2853 %	297
12	EB2A.COM	2.0314 %	264
13	MEINFOWAY.COM	1.8236 %	237
14	POYAHOST.COM	1.7236 %	224
15	DAYNAME.COM	1.5389 %	200

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- Unreliable source of information
- Incorrect data
- Shows unrelated results

Source: <http://www.webhosting.info/webhosts/tophosts/Country/AE>

Challenges

- **Small choice of data center space**
- **Limited & regulated connectivity = expensive bandwidth costs, making hosting servers EXTREMELY expensive and not profitable**
- **Overall small number of domain registrations and population compared to rest of Asia, Europe and USA**
- **Lack of tools to do comparisons or local forums/press covering this industry.**
 - **For example DNJournal, theWHIR, Domaining.com, Hostingcon, this list goes on...**
- **Cost of cctlds – compared to gtlds**
- **The industry must work as a complete ecosystem to be advanced and successful**

Recent Improvements

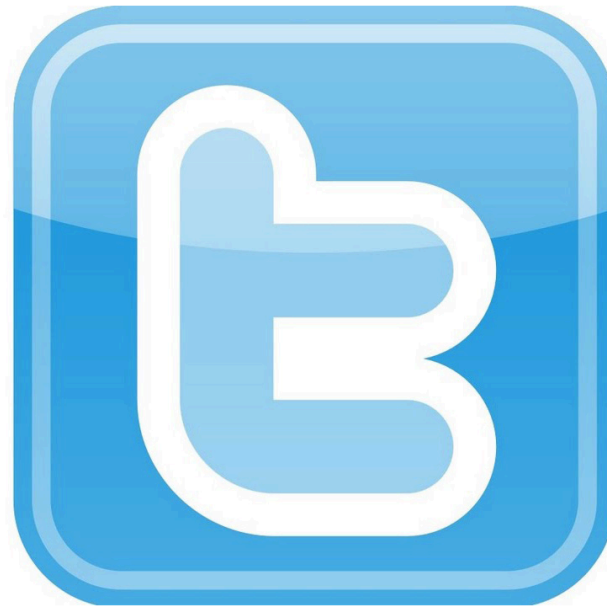
- **Many new (and private) data centers have been setup in the past few years.**
- **New Data centers now offer carrier neutral internet and allow a choice of local ISPs (etisalat, du) and international providers.**
- **Cloud hosting companies boomed in the past 2-3 years. Cloud hosting in the UAE is now at almost the same price level as abroad. Example 1CPU, 1GB ram @ AED 200/year compared to AED 500+ few years ago.**
- **Most providers now offer standardized, clear and transparent cloud options, OS choice, SLA, etc**
- **Last 2 years have seen more change overall than the past decade all together. A google search for cloud hosting based in Dubai is the proof.**

Thank you!

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