



TECHNOLOGIES

"Turning point" as internet companies launch LU-CIX

Par Duncan Roberts, publié le 06.03.2009

LUXEMBOURG'S FIRST CROSS-INDUSTRIES INITIATIVE WITH A COMMON AIM OF DEVELOPING THE INTERNET WAS UNVEILED ON 4 MARCH IN THE PRESENCE OF MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS JEAN-LOUIS SCHILTZ. ITS FOUNDERS CLAIM THE LUXEMBOURG COMMERCIAL INTERNET EXCHANGE POINT WILL MAKE THE INTERNET FASTER.

It was perhaps ironic that LU-CIX was unveiled on the day that a run on online bookings for the forthcoming Depeche Mode concert blocked ticket-vendor websites and severely limited access to the Cetrel online-payment server. LU-CIX does, after all, promise to "bring tremendous gains to consumers in Luxembourg" by acting as a short-cut between Internet service providers and content providers.

Based on the model of major international centres such as LINX (London) and DE-CIX (Frankfurt), Luxembourg Commercial Internet Exchange Point is divided into two key entities. LU-CIX ASBL, headed up by Marco Houwen from Datacenter Luxembourg, will be used to promote the new structure as a major Internet platform. LU-CIX GIE, an Economic Interest Group whose CEO is Claude Demuth from the P&T, will run the technical backend of the operation. Both will be run in will be run in the same spirit of openness and neutrality as other well-established internet exchanges.

It was Demuth and Houwen who last year up with the idea of a Luxembourg commercial internet exchange. They have successfully recruited other companies such as LuxConnect, Cegecom, Global Media Systems, root eSolutions and inexo to join the project. The presence of Jean-Louis Schiltz at the launch underlines the significance of LU-CIX to the government's continued strategy of improving Luxembourg's competitiveness as an e-commerce centre. "The benefits of this direct networks' interconnection are numerous," explains inexo founder David Zimmer, who is vice-president of LU-CIX ASBL "Traffic can now be exchanged without cost, more efficiently and with a reduction in latency."

Dynamic actor

LU-CIX will complement important investments made in recent years to develop national and international bandwidth connectivity and to connect Luxembourg to key European centres, including London, Frankfurt and Amsterdam. "The creation of LU-CIX is a turning point: it is the first cross-industries initiative with a common aim of developing the Internet in Luxembourg," says Demuth. "The main objectives are to participate both nationally and internationally to the rise of the Internet, to position LU-CIX as a dynamic international actor and provide simple ways to access the world networks."

To promote its activities LU-CIX will participate to a number of conferences, public or private meetings and fairs. Marco Houwen explains the coming months will be dedicated to setting up the administrative and technical infrastructures as well as promoting LU-CIX on the international scene. "And more especially discussing the opening of such a project to other potential partners."