

Proposal to change credit note procedure

The CoM agreed at their meeting on 26/27 March 2002 that Nominet should no longer issue credit notes to tag holders after the point of invoicing. In the past, credit note issue has been the subject of abuse by Tag Holders who withhold allocation details in order to extend the period in which they can detag or cancel domain names. In effect, this means that Tag Holders will be responsible for paying their bills in full at the point of invoice. They must have de-tagged or cancelled any domain names on their Tag that they do not wish to pay for prior to the date of the invoice issue. The invoice date will be last day of the month.

In order to give Tag Holders more time to be able to indicate that they no longer wish to keep a domain name on their Tag, it is proposed subject to confirmation with Customs & Excise to move the date of invoicing back by an extra 14 days. That means, for example that a domain registered or due for renewal on June 1 will not be invoiced until of July 14. This would provide Tag Holders with a longer period in which to allow domain names to pass through their system and to determine which domain names should be registered or renewed, and which should be cancelled or de-tagged as appropriate. It would also overcome the problem of a possible refund to a Consumer under the 7 day cooling-off rule.

Registration

We propose that following initial registration the tag holder can cancel a registration until such time as the invoice is produced for that registration fee. Once the invoice is produced, the cancellation of a domain name will no longer result in a credit note being issued to the tag holder. The tag holder may still request the cancellation of a new registration up until the point at which the invoice is paid, but the tag holder will be liable for the total cost of the invoice. This proposal does not impact upon a registrant's right to directly request the surrender of a domain name.

Renewals

Likewise with renewals, if the domain remains associated with a tag at the point at which the renewal invoice is produced, the Tag Holder is liable for the total cost of the renewal invoice. If however, a domain is detagged prior to renewal and is subsequently re-tagged to an new ISP at the request of the registrant, an invoice will be sent to the new Tag Holder who has already agreed to pay the fee by pgp-signed email. In some cases the registrant pays the full fee in advance of the re-tag.

Nominet will continue to issue to every Tag Holder who requests it, a list of domain names that are due for renewal three months in advance of the date of the invoice run. This proposal does not impact upon a Tag Holder's right to detag a domain name after invoice, but no credit note will be issued.

Tag changes

When a domain name is moved from one tag to another via the Automaton, the charge will remain with the Tag Holder bearing that domain name at the point of the invoice run. Alternatively, if Nominet receives a request from the registrant to change the tag associated with their domain name, Nominet will check if the domain name has been paid for before changing the Tag and request payment of the appropriate fee from the registrant if necessary.

Summary of benefits of this new procedure

- Tag Holders have an extra 14 days to reconcile the domain names on their Tag before they are invoiced
- Nominet will have a more streamlined billing system, making it easier to know which domain names have been paid for.
- Certificates can be issued in a more timely fashion.
- The Tag Change procedure will become more speedy, as there will be no prevarication over whether their domain name has been paid for or not
- The new expanded WHOIS will accurately reflect the next renewal date because the fees have been allocated immediately.

Next Steps

- Nominet will ask the PAB to consider the implementation of the changes as described at their meeting on 5 June 2002
- The draft proposal will be put out for member consultation when it is published as a PAB document on the public site. Comments will be invited from the members.
- Tag Holders will be given three months notice of the proposed changes.

Timescales

22 May 2002 - Publish as PAB document

5 June 2002 - Receive feedback. Amend proposal.

17 June 2002 - Circulate revised draft, and put members on three months notice of changes

1 October 2002 - Introduce changes