CECUA

Confederation of European Computer User Associations

Confédération Européenne des Associations d´Utilisateurs des Technologies de l´Information

Annual Report

for

2007

www.cecua.org

CECUA Annual Report for 2007
From CECUA Deputy Director, Media and Public Relations
Friedrich Dittmer

In 2007 the Information Society was shacked and shocked at the massive increase in identity thefts. This has become a major threat in the western world. How far the other countries are confronted with this phenomenon is not known because of lesser information exchange. Whilst in the US most of this happened within the economical area by copying large data stores of banks and companies for paying cards. The European nations where mostly confronted with burglars who stole information about citizens on memory hardware. This was always very sensible because the European countries had started their databases not so long time ago and often against the will of their inhabitants. Many citizens' data about health conditions, driver faults and other sensible areas have been uncovered. This has also influenced citizen's refused acceptance of all increased storage of personal data since 9/11.

The new information age of CECUA by using web log could not now be started because of technical problems that will be solved in not so far time. The other thing is which burning message will be transported there? Because in 2007 many main concerns of the IS have been calmed down. However, many concerns remain.

CECUA Annual Report for 2007
From CECUA Vice President Alain Moscowitz

The year 2007 was a very active year for CECUA involving the Vice President in his role and representing CECUA on several occasions:

CECUA Vice President has continued his strong involvement within European Internet Foundation (EIF), especially as a Board Member. EIF held several meetings in Brussels attended by the Vice President focusing on user stakeholder issues and their relationship to other issues held by other stakeholders such as industry and government.

"Near shore" Co-organization of a conference on 13 June in Ecole des Mines de Paris with Northern Ireland, Roumania and Tunisia speakers.

Meeting between CECUA and ISACA European Task Force (ISACA: Information Systems Audit and Control Association www.isaca.org) to discuss IT usage development in companies – how to increase productivity and competitiveness by using ICT. Alain Moscowitz is a member of the European ISACA Task Force.

IT governance has become more and more important dealing with IT best practices use. IT Governance best practices in companies improve efficiency in the companies. Therefore, IT Governance is an important factor for successful implementation of the Lisbon Agenda. Consequently, CECUA has been very active in this field. CECUA has supported ISACA approach especially about certifications (CISA, CISM, CGEIT)

Although ICT is becoming more and more used at the individual level nevertheless the ICT use improvement is low in companies. There is a key challenge for EU in the knowledge-based society, regarding the productivity and competitiveness of EU.

In addition **CECUA 2007 activities** have been continued and focusing on 5 main issues:

1. **Involvement with the European Institutions and Communities:**
   European Parliament, European Commission, ENISA, ISACA European task Force, etc.
2. **Involvement within the European Internet Community:**
   CECUA has continued its excellent relationship with all the Internet Communities, especially with the other organizations dealing with users or consumers concerns.
3. **Involvement in Research programs** As mentioned, CECUA Academy has continued to publish a set of papers regarding key user issues
4. **Involvement in Innovation and Lisbon Agenda**
   This year, this involvement has been mainly through IT Governance in companies but also via organizing a conference about Near shore including in EU
5. **Involvement in Internet Governance** through participation in conferences, working groups and discussion groups

As reported in the CECUA 2007 last year your Executive decided to set up a separate organization, the CECUA Academy, to do research on user issues. The issues are not only technical but also legal, economic, social and political. Last year the CECUA Academy ran a successful pilot project. **The users: Hostages of the Free Market?** www.cecuacademy.org The report has been well received and raises many interesting points for discussion and further research. I would like to thank the researchers and also the CECUA high level expert group acting as an editorial board.

To pursue our course of action we need more human resources to participate in projects and events. We need to maintain the interest and support of our dedicated colleagues and also recruit new ones. If we manage both successfully we will be able to sustain and continue to develop a truly unique organization that CECUA is and also the CECUA Academy.

And I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the CECUA Executive, Board Members, Members and CECUA EIF high level expert Group for their excellent work and continued support.

Dr. Jon Thorhallsson, CECUA President

ICANN is not the Internet "Governor"; it is only responsible for certain technical and administrative tasks. The Internet is a global issue and ICANN as a private US company can not control it alone. ICANN can and will never have authority over national Governments which are responsible for maintaining law and order of any sort and protecting their citizens. Under the leadership of Janis Karlins of Latavia the GAC has become active and outspoken on Internet issues on behalf of the national Governments and an important collaborator for ICANN. However, there are still many who wonder who should be the boss, ICANN or GAC. One thing is sure. There will never be peace around ICANN as long as it is a private US company and under the wings of the US Government. CECUA believes the Internet should be controlled by an international organization at the level of the UN. This organization could subcontract ICANN for the administration. ICANN would be doing much the same as today but under international control. The UN has addressed the issue of Internet Governance but little action has followed. The EU should show more initiative and speak up for the member states with a strong voice. Internet Governance is a global issue. And it is an issue of such magnitude it should be discussed at high level meetings like the G8 and particularly so as most of Internet fraud such as spamming and pfishing comes from the G8 states. **The EU should put the Internet and Internet Governance on the G8 table for discussion and decision.** That would be a good start.

Last year CECUA focused very hard Internet Governance issues in specific. This included speaking engagements by your President and the Vice-President at various national and international conferences, very strong engagement by the Vice-President in the European Internet Foundation where he is a Board Member and publication of position papers on various issues.

The European Internet Foundation is a forum for Members of European Parliament to acquaint themselves with Internet issues and from various points of view, e.g. industry and user. The industry is rightly strongly represented on the Board while CECUA is the only Board member presenting and advocating user views. It is like David against Goliath for CECUA Vice President and member of the Board. The members of parliament want well rounded points of view on the various issues in connection with their parliamentary work. Getting the user point of view helps them to reach out to their constituents and make the Parliament and its work more transparent.

Your President spoke at several conferences, such as:

Ethics and human rights in the Information Society
European regional Conference
Organized by the French Commission for UNESCO
In cooperation with UNESCO and the Council of Europe.
13-14 September 2007,
Strasbourg

The Proceedings, synthesis and recommendation have been published by the Commission Nationale Francaise pour UNESCO.

Also the proceedings from **Internet Governance in the OSCE Region Workshop in** Paris in France (December 2006) organized by Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have been published by OSCE.

As the discussion progresses on Global Internet and Internet Governance user issues are slowly returning to the foreground. After many years of treating user issues as consumer marketing issues ("the market knows best") we are beginning to see a turnaround. As an example of this turnaround CECUA again and again is being asked for opinions and position papers covering a wide range of issues both technical and legal. Also it has become evident that CECUA is the only independent user organization able to deliver such papers. This is a big challenge, both **organizational and financial.**

CECUA Report for the year 2007

CECUA President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

For years now CECUA has been focusing on Internet Governance and user issues. The Internet is a wonderful thing and one of the great inventions of the last century. Almost effortlessly it has invaded our lives to such an extent that we can not really live without it. But the Internet, like any other infrastructure, needs to be managed. That is where Internet Governance comes in. Internet Governance means many things to many people. But one thing is above any disagreement: Internet has to enjoy the trust and confidence of the people who use it, the USERS. In the past CECUA has been pushing the trust and confidence issue very hard. People should not need to worry about their bank accounts on the web or their shopping on the web.

When we buy something in a store we have recourse if we feel we are being treated unfairly. We can also turn to consumer associations for help. For Internet we have nothing. The consumer associations have not discovered the Internet consumer yet although Internet sales are growing rapidly every year. **Here is a need for change**.

The year 2007 saw cyber attacks on Government installations produce awareness at a highest level. Best known is the alleged Russian attack on Estonian eGovernment sites. This was reported extensively in the media and received lots of attention. Cyber attacks are not limited any more to individual and corporate citizens. Every site is a candidate for attack. There are no exceptions. Regretfully a follow up public debate is still missing. Do we need a major cyber attack leading to a national disaster? Probably we do.

CECUA has been focusing on the private citizen and corporations. Government installations need to be added to the list. The EU Commission is urging Member State Governments to move faster and introduce eGovernment to improve services and make administration more transparent. Increasingly citizens and corporations communicate with administration using the Internet and they become dependent on this service just like they depend on phone and electricity to be available any time they need. With the growing trend toward storing medical data on the web availability can really mean the difference between life and death. Therefore the EU Commission would do well also advising Member State Governments on beefing up their security measures before it is too late. CECUA has many years urged the Commission to look at cyber attacks of any sort as serious crime and the attackers themselves as criminals. They should be punished like other criminals. The Commission has done little yet. What we need is a harmonized legal environment adapted to the Internet. There is no need to invent a new legal environment. **Do we need a major national disaster for them to wake up and take action?**

ICANN is one of the cornerstones of the Internet. ICANN has been undergoing transformation under new leadership. It has become more transparent. However, ICANN is still a US private company. It has tried to reach out to governments and users alike. The Government Advisory Committee (GAC) is the liaison between ICANN and national Governments. CECUA has always maintained that the Committee is a key to successful Internet Governance.