

Stichting Oophaga Foundation introduces free digital certificate service hosted in Netherlands

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Stichting Oophaga Foundation announces that the CAcert service provision of free digital certificates will now be hosted in the Netherlands.

The service is based on Open Source software technology under the name of CAcert. CAcert's certificate service is an alternative to the commercial Certificate Authorities (CAs) for which users normally have to pay a yearly fee. A certificate can be used to apply digital signatures to secure a document, a file, a program, a web site, or to authenticate the sender of an e-mail.

CAcert's certificate service, originally initiated in Australia, is now undergoing a comprehensive upgrade in services, professionalism and security. As part of this process, a major part of the service has moved to Ede, Netherlands, to the premises of internet services provider BIT.

Teus Hagen from the NLnet foundation, one of the founders of Stichting Oophaga Foundation: "Commercial CAs are used by many big companies nowadays, but there is huge interest in free and reliable digital certificate support. We should remember that software developers freely develop many plug-ins for commonly used applications such as Firefox, Thunderbird and Open Office, and consumers want to secure their private data. At this moment CAcert has about 100.000 users. We expect that this will be doubled in about six months".

Sponsors

Stichting Oophaga Foundation is a fully independent organisation. Dutch companies and service providers have been approached by Oophaga to support the hosting provision with financial and hardware donations. The goal is to create a separate and secured location with brand new and reliable equipment in Netherlands. Companies such as SUN Netherlands, AMD, Cisco, Net.work Appliances and Tunix have provided the equipment and support for free. The industrial internet provider BIT is hosting the CAcert services and provides a very well secured environment.

Leo Willems of Tunix: "TUNIX always supports good Open Source projects. For example, for our own development of the Tunix firewall, we use FreeBSD. In this respect, we offer both free support to CAcert and Oophaga for securing their infrastructure and free consultation for the rehosting of these services to Netherlands."

Michel van Osenbruggen of BIT: "I like this exceptional initiative, mainly because of the free certificates. With this free service provision, we stimulate the usage of digital certificates so the Internet becomes more secure. We are glad to host the CAcert services in our data centre, because we contribute in a very positive way to the Internet community. The decision of CAcert and Oophaga to choose our data centre underscores that BIT-2 fulfils the highest requirements in the area of security and safeguarding."

About CAcert:

CAcert was founded in 2002 in Sydney Australia by Duane Groth. He was a young Australian photographer and programmer who was looking for a secure and cost-effective authentication and identification system for the regional wireless access project across Sydney. Through his efforts, CAcert Inc. was created as non-profit Australian-based association.

Initially, it was a local service WiFi access provider in New South Wales. Today it is better known as the free certificate authority at www.cacert.org. The free certificate service grew enormously and spread around the world very quickly. CAcert usage can also be found now in Germany, Austria, Netherlands, United States, Canada, and Brazil.

A registered user of CAcert can obtain digital certificates, which secure their identity and authenticity by means of a Web-of-Trust of assurances. Users can obtain free authenticated certificates from CAcert for client and server applications. The certificates are based on the X.509 standard, and often are used as a digital identification tool. Most e-mail applications, internet browsers and document applications support the X.509 certificate standard and usage.

About Stichting Oophaga Foundation:

The Dutch foundation has several goals: To stimulate the widespread usage and application of free digital certificates; to obtain and maintain secured privacy on the Internet, free use of secure and authenticated communication on the Internet, and development of Open Software for free use of certificates for this type of communication.

More information is available from www.oophaga.org, www.cacert.org, and wiki.cacert.org.