

Issue 14 – Oct 2006

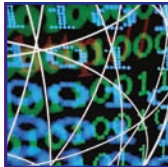
News from .aero

the domain of aviation

www.information.aero

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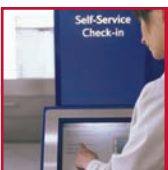
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Welcome

Our October newsletter, once again reflects some of the key issues which we are focusing on at .aero. Security is always a concern, so it's good to see continuing progress with the rollout of DNSSec. RFID is also moving forwards as a technology with a great deal of potential. We shall be discussing some of that potential at a special workshop to be held in conjunction with Airports Council International (ACI) at their 2006 Annual General World Assembly in Cape Town next month. If you're attending the Assembly, then come and join us to learn more about the development of RFID infrastructure and deployment, it will be good to see you there.

We are always working to enhance the management of the .aero domain. So we're delighted to have launched an improved registration service, based on a simpler and quicker process. Alongside that, we've also welcomed a number of new registrars aboard, with more in the pipeline.

With the impending disappearance of paper tickets from air travel coming closer daily, airline systems will need to deal with each other more frequently and faster each day. New standards and deployment of new technologies are needed to ensure that interline communications are developing in line with the industry's needs and advances of the communications technology. We explore this topic in our special feature.

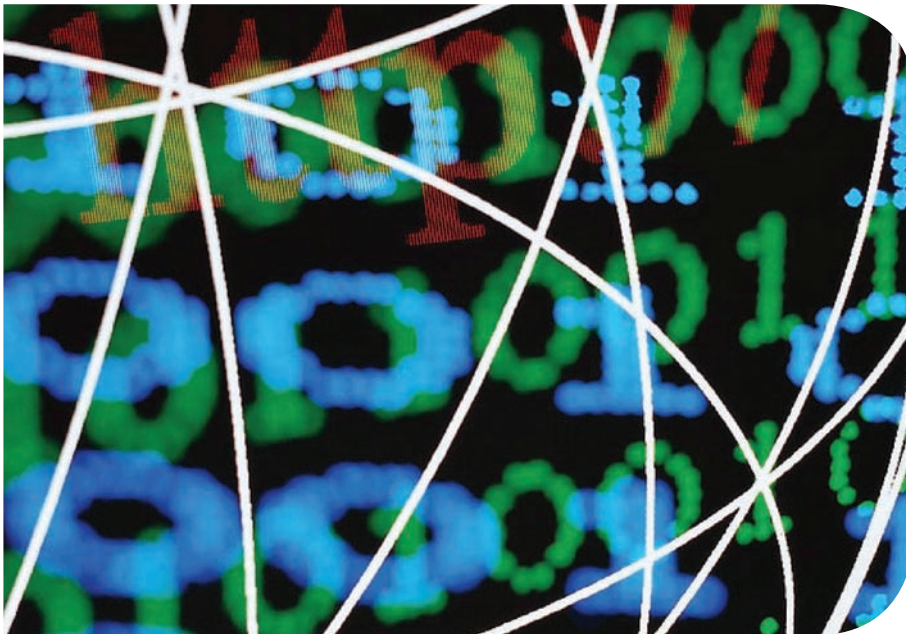
And finally, we learn about the 50m long earwig threatening the small German town of Arlesberg! As ever, there is a lot happening in the .aero domain – and we want you to be an active part of it. If you have any comments, don't forget to get in touch, at www.information.aero.

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.aero team, SITA

Securing the Internet with DNSSec

Some 10 percent of servers in the network today are vulnerable to domain name system (DNS) attacks, and many experts expect a serious attack on the underlying infrastructure within the next decade. The DNS Security Extensions (DNSSec) Deployment Coordination Initiative is part of a global effort to deploy new security measures that will help the DNS perform as people expect it to – in a trustworthy manner.



On 31 December 2007, the deadline will be kept – and IATA's current issuance of 300 million tickets a year will become history.

At the recent ATA e-business forum, this process was at the heart of a unique encounter between two communities engaged in digital security, but from very different perspectives.

They included experts from an aviation industry that is gradually moving from private networks to the Internet for its communications – and that needs to ensure that how it uses the Internet does not impact negatively on the safety and reliability of air transport. Also members of a technical community that has been active since the first days of the Internet and works in great depth to address security threats the system is facing.

The two communities met in a workshop called to explore what the Internet's engineering community is doing to secure the DNS, to learn how and why the US government is supporting deployment of a new security technology in DNS, and to discuss how Internet security meets aerospace needs.

They endeavored to find answers to a broad range of questions. For example:

- What level of deployment makes sense for the industry?
- How does implementation fit with digital security standards?
- Could we use DNSSec to distribute public keys? When would that be appropriate?
- Could we use DNSSec to secure Internet messaging?
- How and to what extent can this technology help create cost effective security solutions in the air transport community?



The speakers at the event, which was moderated by Marie Zitkova, Head of .aero, included:

- Steve Crocker from Shinkuro – an internet veteran, leader of the DNSSec deployment initiative and also chair of ICANN's Security and Stability committee.
- Cathy Handley from the Office of International Affairs, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, US Department of Commerce – reflecting her own particular involvement with DNSSec deployment.
- Julien Holstein from Airbus SAS – who, together with Jacqueline Knoll from Boeing, co-chairs the ATA's Digital Security working group.
- Gary Cooper – a solutions architect from ARINC. ARINC, like SITA, is actively involved in the digital security working group and in the .aero initiative.

DNSSec group deploys newsletter

The DNSSec deployment group now offers a simple way to monitor progress in this important initiative through a new monthly newsletter that will offer updates on new policies, early adopters and advances in DNS security extension development. You can download copies from their website at: www.dnssecdeployment.org/news/dnssecthismonth/ or: subscribe directly by e-mail to news-subscribe@dnssec-deployment.org.

RFID – community lookup services for more efficient use of RFID technology

In our last edition of the .aero newsletter we talked about the challenge set by RFID community services. This time, we will look more closely at the community lookup services needed for efficient systems integration between multiple business partners.

We know that today RFID applications can process and track baggage/cargo at a given airport or by its carrier, but most projects today involve little integration between RFID systems of respective carriers. So today's deployment of RFID technology will not help a bag stranded in a foreign airport find its way to its destination and a container will be only tracked when it moves through the premises of the airline/handling company which is involved in that particular tagging project. With no change in this approach, the air transport community will end up with a complex uncoordinated network of bilateral

relationships, a system which is costly to operate and every change on the network very hard to manage.

It is clear that such a situation cannot last forever and that eventually standards and service will evolve to create a virtual network for coordination and interaction between participants of the system. To extend this service beyond the boundaries of a handful of carriers or a few locations, to that of all shared locations such as airports. And to those that allow multiple business partners to securely interact with each other globally,

an agreement is needed on standards and community services, such as directory service, to allow multiple business partners to talk to each other.

The end result for the community would not only enhance customer services and operations but provide substantial economic benefits realized from using shared standards and shared facilities.

What directory services are needed?

First let's take it one step further – let's have a look at the community service needed for operations such as tracking a suitcase or an aircraft parts across the globe; There are three questions which a user may need to ask when exchanging data with third parties tracking and tracing a history of a suitcase or an spare part.

These are:

- 1 Where do I start my search to find out more about the item with an identifier 1234?
- 2 How can I find what happened to this item before it was sent to me?
- 3 How do I know to trust the system which is requesting data from me?



Accordingly, there are three sets of community standards and services needed to answer those questions.

1. Static lookup service

Archimedes is famous to have said "give me a firm and immovable point in the universe and I will move the Earth". Static lookup service in the RFID area is the firm point for the universe of RFID data processing. The single objective of the service is to provide a network address for a system which holds more information about the identifier in question. Not more, not less, just the location of a service which knows more. When Auto ID labs at MIT first described the RFID processing technologies, they decided to select Domain Naming System as a backbone database for a static lookup service and gave it a new name – Object Naming Service (ONS). ONS standard further evolved under the auspices of EPC Global, an industry standard body focusing in implementation of Auto ID technologies in various industry sectors.

2. Serial-level lookup service

Serial lookup service is a very important element for anyone who needs to track and trace an aircraft part or a baggage item across geographical and business boundaries. While the systems of each participants are likely to retain data about what happened with the object while it was in their care, the serial lookup service is the glue which will allow it to link series of events as they happened across multiple parties and geographical boundaries.

In the EPC Global context, this is called a discovery service. While the need for such a service is clear, the standard for the service is yet to be developed. Benefits of this service are obvious when multiple players need to communicate with each other and today's piecemeal deployment of the RFID technology is not yet far enough advanced to make effective use of the service.

The air transport industry as well as the pharmaceutical industry are examples of a community which will require the function earlier than others because of the nature of their business and regulatory requirements associated with traceability of object history.

3. Authentication services

We will not go into details of this complex area in this article but the reader will no doubt agree that access to various systems whether lookup service or system which hold the actual information must be tightly controlled and all information shared between the parties must be possible to authenticate. Lookup and directory services needed to ascertain third party's digital identity will be needed for any such system to be put in place. Industry standards are being created but groups such as ATA's Digital Security working group and initiatives such as Certipath will be needed.

But under what conditions would the community participate in a model of coordination and reliance on certain community services, and to whom would they turn to create this model ?

Without doubt the community would like to retain a degree of flexibility and choice when it comes to the implementation of a such a community service. They would look for one or more independent bodies with whom to work in partnership to define the service model and then to whom would they trust to operate the community aspect of their RFID system. Where possible, they would look for multiple service providers using open common standards, and ensure that only minimum necessary data is shared.

Step forward .aero

This is where .aero raises it hand and reminds the community that this is a function well suited to the role of this community initiative. Although .aero is not involved in the implementation of RFID technology as such, it does serve the community as a whole by providing the necessary policy and technology platform on which to create and maintain policies relating to the allocation of digital identifiers for the use by the air transport community and provision of certain lookup services.

By working with the leading aviation organizations such as IATA, ACI, CANSO and many others, .aero is well positioned to obtain the consensus needed to develop such policies.

How .aero can help leverage the benefits of removing paper tickets

Within little more than 400 days, there will no longer be industry standards for the use of paper tickets. IATA will cease to issue them. Travel agents will no longer be able to provide them. IATA's Billing Settlement Plans will no longer process paper tickets. No compromise. No slippage.

On 31 December 2007, the deadline will be kept – and IATA's current issuance of 300 million tickets a year will become history.

The immediate reward, as most readers will be aware, is a saving of US\$ 3 billion a year for the industry. The intent has been that 40 percent of ticketing by IATA carriers would be electronic by end-2005, 70 percent by end 2006, leading to 100 percent by end 2007. Real progress has been made in some regions, but others remain challenged.

For example, by the end of August this year, the US and Europe had hit the 70 percent point (in fact, the US is at 90 percent). The Americas and North Asia were on target to hit 70 percent by the end of the year. Africa and Asia Pacific were both trailing at a little under 50 percent, but the momentum from these regions is quickening. However the Middle East and North Africa are seriously behind schedule at less than 20 percent, while Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was lingering at just 2.5 percent.

Does it matter? Yes – airlines that have not made the change will evidently be at a disadvantage to airlines that have.

Crucially they will lose cost and convenience advantage in terms of interlining and settlement.

But that's not all

The impact of paperless ticketing goes a great deal further. The record of an electronic ticketing transaction is firmly stored in the validating carrier's database, acting as the 'anchor' for all actions. Because that data is carried in electronic form, it can be monitored and accessed by any authorized system. It follows that a number of back-office procedures can be automated and higher quality management information can be produced. These include:

- Expediting the dispatch of data to revenue accounting.
- Eliminating the uplift envelope of paper tickets thanks to more rapid accrual of revenue.
- Automating the prorating process according to agreed criteria.
- Providing faster sales information, triggering more responsive marketing and passenger offers.
- Improving the handling of involuntary re-routing.

Value can be found by re-prioritizing resources currently used for ticketing purposes. For example, agent productivity can be enhanced by turning call centers into revenue centers. Value can also be added to the ticketing process through operational changes to high input processes such as ticket by mail (TDM), and ticket on departure (TOD). Prepaid ticket advice (PTA) should be eliminated which results in eradication of fraud which typically is involved with this operation.

Handling interlining

There's another aspect to this major shift in the way airline data is processed, with direct relevance to the services offered by .aero. As we have seen, electronic tickets are stored in an authoritative database of the validating carrier rather than carried by a passenger on a piece of paper. However, all airlines and agents involved in the journey need to be able to access this authoritative database to use the ticket. In the beginning this was relatively easy, due to the small number of people required to interact. Each airline connection was configured individually, interaction between e-ticketing systems was strictly bilateral.

Now, with electronic interlining, this process of access has become progressively more complicated.

Each interline system maintains a list of IP addresses – the address describes the network locations of their counterpart. Think of it as an address book. To connect to other counterpart locations you must have the right address, you must use the right protocol, you must authenticate who you are talking to and vice versa. And if a system moves to another location, ALL users have to update their address books before they can talk again.

Today, as more and more airlines interline with each other, the cost of deploying and managing systems increases along with time to market – due in part to a lack of shared community standards that clearly set out how to locate and connect to their business partners

What's next?

It has become clear that new technologies have to be deployed to ensure that the communications between the airline systems for interline and other interactions are in tune with advancements of the technology. The Type X Working Group, one of the community initiatives working towards this goal, has recently announced the availability of new XML-based business-to-business messaging standards for the Air Transport community. The standards define a new messaging approach —making use of XML and Web Services technology to complement existing industry Type B messaging.



Deployment of these new standards in IP environment could take place using Domain Name System as an integral part of addressing scheme.

Fully qualified domain names are globally unique digital identifiers. Any conceivable set of known identifiers, such as a booking reference, can be easily converted into a structured domain name following an agreed convention.

Deployment of DNS technology and the application of standard naming conventions could help develop a shared application that would improve the flexibility and scalability of the current systems – removing the cost associated with maintenance of this information by each carrier.

On 31 December 2007, the deadline will be kept – and IATA's current issuance of 300 million tickets a year will become history.

New registrars join the .aero family

Over the past few months, SITA the sponsor of .aero has been actively recruiting new registrars, to join the current group of .aero authorized registrars. This expanded sales channel offers potential registrants, as well as existing registrants, a wider choice of registrar based services in a variety of languages such as web hosting and e-mail services, corporate services and internet know-how, over and above domain name registration.

Highlighting a few of our new registrars, offering .aero registrations:

Key-Systems GmbH

Founded in 1998 in Germany, Key-Systems is today among the leading domain-registrars in the world, with more than 1.2 million domains under management.

EPAG

EPAG Domain services GmbH is a German registrar geared towards domain resellers and corporate customers. The company explains their strategy as providing direct access to many international top level domains through a single interface.

Visit the .aero registrars web page for full contact details.

Soon to be live:

Ascio Technologies Inc. – accredited .aero registrar

The Danish company Ascio Technologies self-declared goal is to provide customers and partners with high quality domain portfolio management and services to ensure that maximum value is obtained from their web presence.



Name.com – accredited .aero registrar

US-based Name.com LLC is an ICANN accredited registrar offering an array of services including: domain name registration, web and e-mail hosting, digital brand management, domain name recovery, and reverse Whois. Name.com will offer .aero domains within the coming months.

Plus...

- DotAlliance (Canada)
- Core Internet Council of Registrars (Germany)

Keep an eye on the .aero website for more details.

Stop Press

The following 6 registrars are currently passing through the .aero accreditation process and will shortly be authorized to accept .aero domain name registrations.

- CPS-Datensysteme GMBH
- CSC Corporate
- Domain People
- EmarkMonitor
- Fast Domain Inc.
- French Connection dba domain.fr

New, improved registration service for .aero domain names

Geneva, 7 October 2006 – .aero the top level domain of aviation, today announced the launch of a new one step registration process for .aero domain names.

.aero domain registrars can offer to their .aero customers a one stop shop for registration of .aero domain names.

In the past, all customers had to pass a .aero eligibility verification process concluded by the issue of .aero ID from SITA before proceeding to register .aero domain names with a .aero registrar.

The .aero central registry system has been upgraded and now registrars can offer a one stop shop for customers by accepting applications for .aero ID and .aero domain name in one combined request. This new functionality reduces the complexity of registration by making it simpler and less time consuming by allowing registrants to apply for a .aero domain name without an existing, approved .aero ID.

Once received by the central registry, the domain application will be given a 'pending create' status. The name requested will be reserved, or 'locked', until the customer's .aero credentials have been reviewed by SITA.

If SITA approves the application, the sponsoring registrar and the customer will receive its .aero ID and the domain name will be activated. If the application is denied – or

if additional information is requested – both the customer and the registrar will be notified accordingly.

The current two step registration process, where a potential .aero registrant requests a .aero ID via the www.information.aero web site, prior to registration of a domain name via an accredited .aero registrar, will remain available.

SITA recommends all registrars to upgrade their systems as soon as possible, to enable them to offer this simplified domain registration process to their customers.

Allocation of reserved names made easier

The system for allocation of reserved names such as airline or airport codes was also streamlined.

For these registrations in the past, it was a 3 step process; not only did registrants have to apply for a .aero ID, but they also had to apply for a Domain Authorization ID, before they could even start their registration process.

Now, reserved names will be associated directly with the .aero ID. Once a reserved name has been allocated to the .aero ID,

the customer can register the name via any accredited .aero registrar via the usual process.

Customers entitled to allocation of reserved names can view and manage their allocation on www.information.aero web site.

Enhanced customer service

The implementation of this new service would not been possible without the direct involvement and support of the .aero registry operator Afiliis. This is the latest in a line of enhancements that Afiliis has brought to the .aero domain, enhancing the registration process and technology supporting the domain and improving the service provided to registrars.

"We wanted to introduce a process that would make it easier and quicker to register a .aero domain. But we also needed to ensure we do not compromise the eligibility process in the allocation of .aero IDs."

Marie Zitkova – .aero Business Manager

RFID workshop – deployment and implementation

From e-ticketing to the replacement of bar-coded baggage tags with the more robust RFID tags, ID technology is fast becoming a crucial topic for discussion.



RFID is an important area for development in the years ahead. This specially prepared .aero workshop will provide an invaluable level of understanding of the implications of the technology at the macro level.

As an emerging technology there are still many barriers to community-wide adoption, one of them being the risk associated with the deployment of RFID infrastructure and the development of applications. This is a risk that can be substantially reduced through the introduction of a shared infrastructure and service.

There is a clear need to explore and address this topic in more detail within the community. So the .aero team in co-operation with ACI will lead a workshop to explore how RFID technology can bring substantial benefits to the air transport community in the form of cost reductions, improvements in productivity, customer service and safety, as well as a means of generating new revenue.

Mark the date

Together with ACI the .aero community initiative invites you to join them to explore the challenge set by RFID shared community services, and to demonstrate how the "risk" factor can be substantially reduced through the deployment of community standards and shared infrastructure and services.



RFID is an important area for development in the years ahead. This specially prepared .aero workshop will provide an invaluable level of understanding of the implications of the technology at the macro level. You can get more details of the ACI event at www.aciworld.aero.

A number of RFID projects are already under way, but these are mostly one company activities – such as RFID-based baggage handling to speed up processing and accuracy at an airport (e.g. Hong Kong) or the tracking of cargo containers by one carrier or alliance (e.g. Lufthansa's joint venture with Trenstar). Some early adopters in the air transport community can demonstrate business cases for investment in RFID technology on their own, while others struggle. As a result, today's deployment of RFID technology will not help a bag stranded in a foreign airport find its way to its destination and a container will be only tracked if it moves through the premises of the airline/handling company which tagged it.

During the workshop the panelists will:

- Discuss the opportunities associated with implementation of ID technologies such as RFID in the air transport community
- Relate deployment of ID technologies to airports as service providers or infrastructure managers.
- Explore whether deployment of community standards and services for processing RFID data can ensure that the community as a whole benefits from shared facilities, whilst retaining flexibility and choice.
- Learn how the expectations of airports to the deployment of services, based on RFID technology, measure up against the real live deployment experience of this technology from airports who have already adopted and implemented this technology.
- Uncover the potential of the .aero initiative, as the natural platform for DNS based lookup services needed for community operation of ID technologies.

Panelists will include:

Marie Zitkova, Head of .aero, Gregory Ouillon , VP Innovation SITA, Thomas Romig ACI and Samuel Ingalls, Assistant Director of Aviation, Information Systems, McCarran International Airport

The workshop will also provide answers to other questions. For example, how does the work on RFID relate to .aero and how can .aero leverage RFID to add extra value to partners across the air transport community? What is the role of .aero in the provision of shared services. While .aero is not itself involved in the technical implementation of RFID technology, the .aero policy framework can be used as a common platform, on which the community can develop and maintain policies relating to allocation of digital identifiers.

New policy draft for .aero from the world's air sports federation

It's not only large jets that are flying high. Individuals and organizations working in the burgeoning recreational aviation sector are also valuable members of the aviation community.

Founded at the dawn of aviation history in 1905, the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) is today a non-governmental and non-profit making international organization with some 100 member countries. Its aim is to further aeronautical and astronautical activities worldwide.

As well as providing a home for a broad congregation of aviation related sports clubs, organizations and individuals, an important and growing part of FAI's membership activity is recreational aviation such as the clubs and individuals focusing on home-built aircraft.

Working with the FAI, the .aero team wants to reach out to enthusiasts and invite them to become part of the growing Internet aviation community. However, the current .aero policy for recreational aviation restricts this and makes this the only registrant group not allowed to register second level domain names, due to lack of defined eligibility criteria.

Most individuals and organizations, who would classify themselves under "recreational aviation" and wish to register second level

domain names have managed to do so but in a different registrant group, as they would typically meet defined eligibility criteria or credentials for the air sports or pilots groups. This anomaly has caused confusion to potential registrants.

Clear sky clear thinking

It is important to eliminate confusion and possible discrimination. Following discussion between FAI and SITA, the Dot Aero Council was asked to review this situation and give its recommendation regarding the merger of the two registrant groups "Air sports" and "Recreational aviation" into one registrant group, to be called "Air sports and recreational aviation".

Eligibility criteria for the new combined registrant group will be similar to those previously applied for 'Air sports':

- Air sports and recreational aviation clubs and their members,
- Federations, national associations, organizers of competitions linked to air sports and recreational aviation,
- Suppliers of air sports and recreational aviation equipment.

FAI Secretary General Max Bishop warmly welcomed the new arrangements, saying: "Anyone who flies for pleasure, not for work, can now easily become a part of the .aero community and advertize this in their electronic address."

The necessary credentials for this new registrant group will be: affiliation to FAI Member Organization; FAI Calendar Championship ID Number or other. Full details of eligibility and credentials can be found on the .aero website.

Working with the FAI, the .aero team wants to reach out to enthusiasts and invite them to become part of the growing Internet aviation community.

Living the passion

There are already more than 70 domains registered within the recreational aviation registrant groups – comprising air sports clubs and their members, federations, national associations, organizers of competitions linked to air sports, and suppliers of air sports equipment.

One registrant organization – the Deutscher Aero Club (www.daec.aero) – represents the interests of approximately 100,000 air-sportswomen and air sportsmen in Germany. It has active members in seven air-sports, including gliding, powered flight, aero modeling, parachuting, ballooning, microlight-flying, hang-gliding and paragliding. Within the different disciplines, the DAeC organizes national and international championships, administers sport-licenses and documents records.

Keep on jumping

On the other side of the world, Sky Sports (NZ) operates the oldest operational skydiving drop zone in New Zealand. The company's website tells readers that "We started jumping out of planes in 1968 and haven't stopped having fun since! Our students have gone on to become world champions".

www.0800skydivenz.aero

Back in Europe, the School of Parachuting of Château d'Oex (EPCO) the first school in Switzerland to offer jumps from an altitude of 4,000m, has chosen the .aero domain as the basis for their extensive web communication programme.

www.epco.aero



"We hope that the new policy for this group, as well as the new simplified process of registration, will attract and encourage more registered users to this group."

Elena Vladkova – .aero Customer
Liaison Specialist

A couple of great stories from 'The Register', the online news source for all those involved in IT.

Google's nostalgia

First, it turns out that Google has bought the house and garage where founders Larry Page and Serge Brin first set up the company. They rented the garage from a friend, who needed the money to help pay the mortgage. Smart move – the friend's now a senior executive at the company and the house is being preserved "as part of our living legacy" according to a Google spokesman.

Garages feature strongly in the history of computing. Hewlett and Packard famously founded the eponymous company in a garage (and in the process invented Silicon Valley), while Steve Wozniak used a garage to build

his first computer as a member of the now legendary Homebrew Computer Club. He and his friend Steve Jobs tried to sell it to Hewlett Packard, but they weren't interested. So they launched it themselves as the Apple Computer.

Presumably American garages were built particularly large in order to accommodate classic American cars, let alone budding agents of global domination. Somehow this writer's home garage in the sleepy west of England seems a little modest. Still, readers with large underused garages should perhaps keep an ear to the ground for the Next Big Thing. Never know, it might end up becoming a national monument.

"Germany menaced by 50m insect"

Anyone with a large garage in the small town of Arlesburg in Germany may be able to make a fortune from a different source. According to Google Earth, there's a 50m long earwig threatening the town from the north-east, currently munching its way across a corn field and heading for the cover of a nearby forest.

A sharp-eyed visitor to Google Earth spotted the earwig, which presumably crept into the picture while no-one was looking. Perhaps this is Arlesburg's attempt at gaining fame and fortune.



Industry events

ACI World General Assembly Conference & Exhibition: November 7,8, 9,10 2006 – Cape Town, South Africa

Once a year, leaders in the aviation industry gather to debate present and future issues, share experiences and exchange ideas at the ACI World Annual General Assembly.

For more information on this event please visit www.aciworld.aero

ACI & .aero workshop "RFID Technology at airports"

This event will be held on during the ACI world Assembly Conference & Exhibition, 7 November – 12:30 – 14:00pm.

Addressing RFID technologies development, deployment and impact on airport revenues. To register for this workshop visit: www.aciworld.aero

If you would like to have your aviation association events listed on the .aero web page then please send an e-mail to: aero.enquiries@sita.aero

Online information and late breaking news are available at www.information.aero
e-mail enquiries to aero.enquiries@sita.aero

This newsletter is issued by SITA, the Sponsor of the .aero Top Level Domain. SITA also operates the official .aero web site www.information.aero – providing information about domain registrations, policies and procedures and new developments in the .aero domain.

If you would like to comment on any of the articles in this issue or you would like more information, please contact our editor, Paola Piacentini, at aero.enquiries@sita.aero

News from .aero – the domain of aviation

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