

Country Manager of DHH Slovenia Tomaž Koštial shares his insights about Web Hosting Market peculiarities

Milan, 17 April 2018. The modern web hosting industry is developing at high speed, with customers' profile and expectations changing fundamentally. In fact, according to the country manager of DHH Slovenia, Tomaž Koštial, nowadays clients are usually business people with small to zero technical background, while in the past, the majority of clients was represented by developers, programmers, and other professionals with specialized knowledge.

How does this affect web hosting businesses?

Tomaž Koštial answers this and many other questions about DHH Slovenia and web hosting market trends in our recent interview.

How did the first three months of 2018 go for DHH Slovenia? Were there any significant events within the company?

Tomaž Koštial: “There were not many significant events taking place during the first three months of 2018 that centrally impacted the company. However, we have a lot of projects planned, with some of them ready to be launched in the upcoming week. So, there was a lot of planning and preparation involved at the beginning of the year.

We are trying to keep up the path we have set up in 2017, as we are also trying to optimize the way we provide support to our clients. At DHH Slovenia, we understood that it is essential that a client is given a distinct way of how they can solve a particular problem.

One of the projects we have planned for the beginning of 2018 is the overhaul of our knowledge base. The idea is that currently, our knowledge base is like a dictionary – it has all the information, but it is not organized in a way that allows you to find the answers quickly. We have overhauled it to make it more like a troubleshooter. We want to make it simple in a way that when you go to a knowledgebase page, you see a few big icons, which eventually lead you to the options that enable you to get the necessary information in just 3-4 clicks.

Also, we are trying to make this service as user-friendly as possible. In fact, a lot of support calls we receive are related to very fundamental questions. We want to enable our clients to be able to find the simple information they need quickly, so they are, in a way, more independent. We, in turn, can concentrate on more complex issues that some of the clients face.

We also made sure that the support we provide can be customized and personalized, like in case with the option of the email set up. We have tested this idea already and noticed that such approach allows us to save up a lot of time on the support calls.

Presently, our organization is also testing a new software call system that will allow us to manage call queues better, since, at the moment, our system is not very user-friendly. It also appears somewhat hard to distribute calls for the agents – a particular agent might receive two or three calls in a row. Thanks to the new upgraded system, we hope that we can manage the requests more evenly.

At DHH Slovenia, we are also now migrating all of our infrastructures from Plesk control panel to cPanel, which is a significant project. We have around 15.000 domains to transfer, and we are developing our migration script.

The idea behind this change is that we aim to stay ahead of the Google Chrome update, which will mark all websites that are not SSL encrypted as unsafe. cPanel provides SSL certificates for free, so all of our clients, who still did not switch to the HTTPS using SSL certificates will have an issue when the July Chrome update comes out. Therefore, we are trying to move the majority of the domains to cPanel where the SSL certificates will be free for them. So, it will be much easier for them to switch over to HTTPS so they won't experience any issues.”

Looking back to DHH Slovenia's performance in 2017, which events would you like to highlight? How did the previous year treat DHH Slovenia?

Tomaž Koštial: “In 2017, DHH Slovenia has seen a record year in regards to the new domain registrations. We have increased our share of .si domains to a record 28%. We also were solid in promoting these domains, and our efforts have paid off. Also, we have managed to streamline our 1st level support processes.

One of the interesting facts I would like to share is that compared to the last year's same period, we have managed to cut 1 minute from the average support call duration. While it might seem like a small number, in just two months, it provides us with 60 additional hours of time that we can use to perform other tasks (make improvements, develop new products or services).”

In 2017, DHH Slovenia has started integrating paid expert support. Could you please tell me more about this initiative?

Tomaž Koštial: “Yes, back in 2017, we decided to offer expert support, as we already introduced some of these services like optimizing WordPress websites to work faster.

In total, there will be around 50 services like that, and we are currently in the process of developing some of them.”

Talking about the long-term strategy, which goals does DHH Slovenia plan to achieve in regards to the market growth in the next five years?

Tomaž Koštial: “As for the long-term vision, DHH Slovenia undoubtedly will focus on offering services that are connected to Wordpress, since it has become a significant player regarding CMS systems. In the last couple of years, it became quite evident that Wordpress is the most popular platform our clients use to set up their new websites.

Our goal here is to become the critical support provider for them. Imagine, for example, if a car gets stuck somewhere, the owner then calls help team, so, in the same fashion, we want to become the similar kind of service for people who experience issues with Wordpress.

We want to offer our clients an experience and assurance that they can rely on us. At DHH Slovenia, we strive to be more than just a web hosting provider. We want the clients to feel that we can help them with any obstacles they might face.

We want to provide a bunch of other services which are not strictly hosting related services. This is because core hosting business services generally have low-profit margins. We plan to put more focus on offering complimentary services with higher margins to utilize our technical expertise and also our knowledge of providing customer service.”

Which trends are currently dominating the Web Hosting, SaaS and Cloud Computing industries? How might these change in the long-term?

Tomaž Koštial: “We see Wordpress becoming the critical system that our clients use, as everything is becoming more Wordpress-oriented. So, even when we are thinking about new projects at DHH Slovenia, we are always keeping in mind the fact that the majority of our clients use Wordpress.

From the user point of view, we see the critical changes in the technical background of clients. For instance, in the past, a significant share of our clients was represented by people with specialized knowledge – programmers, developers, and the like. Recently, it is becoming more apparent that these days, clients are the people that do not necessarily have the technical background. Our clients mostly just want to create a website, and thanks to the user-friendliness of such applications as Wordpress, the pool of our clients is expanding.

Many users of Wordpress are people who, even five years ago, would not be looking for a hosting package. This trend might become even more apparent, as time passes.

It is also worth mentioning that nowadays clients tend not even to bother understanding some of the technical stuff since they do not have time for that. They prefer to concentrate on their own business, and that is where our expert support services come in. Our clients appreciate the opportunity to have the chance of focusing on their core business and to delegate some of the technical tasks to our experts.”

About DHH S.p.A.

DHH S.p.A. (“DHH”) is an industrial investment company focused on the web hosting, SaaS and cloud-computing industry with the goal of creating the leading *"Internet Platform of European emerging markets,"* a geographic area where expected growth rates are higher thanks to current lower digital penetration.

DHH is listed on AIM Italia, a Multilateral Trading Facility regulated by Borsa Italiana and registered as an SME Growth Market.

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