Welcome Speech

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the 2016 BNIX Networking Event!

We have the pleasure to organize the seventh edition of this event in a unique location, **the Museum of Natural Sciences**. I'm pleased to mention that the Museum is a customer of Belnet. It is a wonderful example of the variety of organizations that can benefit from the services Belnet has to offer, and I'd like to thank the Museum for hosting us tonight. But we are not here to discuss Belnet.

In this prehistoric environment, and in the companionship of some extraordinary fossils, I will briefly talk about BNIX's path to the future. **What we have done, to NOT become a dinosaur in this digital age**.

As you may know the Belgian National Internet Exchange is squeezed between three big neighboring Internet Exchanges in London, Amsterdam and Frankfurt. And although we are a small regional player, we have always strived for speed, stability, high performance, and value for money. Throughout the years we have stayed true to these core values and to our core competences. I'm proud to say that this has paid off.

During our **21 years of existence** our participants have increased in number, up to 58, and in terms of diversity. We do not only support larger companies, local internet and content providers, or Web hosting and data storage suppliers. More recently we have welcomed global content providers such as Microsoft, Facebook and CloudFlare. We are delighted that Jérôme Fleury, the Network Engineering Manager of CloudFlare, will elaborate on his company and their participation to BNIX later this evening.

The involvement of such big players proofs that BNIX is growing in importance while adding value to its participants. We ensure that they can **exchange traffic better, faster and cheaper**. In return, our participants can deliver the best services to their customers for which user friendliness, speed and high quality of service are increasingly important.

This evolution in consumer behavior is related to technological evolutions such as mobile, e-commerce, analytics and the Internet of Things. Traffic is still growing exponentially and it doesn't look like it is going to stop doing that soon.

Our Belgian government is also conscious of this evolution. Reinhard Laroy, advisor in the cabinet of Minister Alexander De Croo and specialist in telecom

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matters, will enlighten us on the Belgian ambitions in this domain. Ambitions that are worth exploring and supporting.

As already mentioned, it is important that a critical infrastructure such as an Internet Exchange stays up to date, but even more so stays ahead and is prepared for the future.

*How did we achieve this? For one thing, with **this year's successful migration of BNIX to a new platform**. Because of this new platform the heart of the Belgian Internet is prepared for the digital era. BNIX participants now have higher scalability, increased capacity with multi-Terabit switches, more 10G port density, better energy efficiency and the availability of 100G customer ports! I will not go further into detail as Pieter Hanssens, BNIX's Network Manager, will tell you all about it.*

*However, I would like to take this opportunity **to express my gratitude to the employees of BNIX**. It is said that people are the engine of a company and its transformation. This is certainly true for Belnet and BNIX. We work with small teams and limited resources. But it is the motivation, passion, expertise and flexibility of my colleagues that made this immense project the success it is today. They are not often put in the spotlight, but I do believe they deserve <u>an applause</u> for their dedication and commitment.*

Before handing over the microphone to our world famous Frédéric Libotte, I want to thank you all for your presence here tonight.

Our walking dinner has been set-up between the dinosaurs. I invite you to explore this beautiful setting and to share ambitions. For it's the future that counts.

Thank you!

Jan Torreele
Director of Belnet