

Bye-bye my old friend XS4ALL



After much deliberation (actually, about two years of discussions between me and @merelzward) I finally bit the bullet and cancelled our internet account with XS4ALL to fly into the future on dazzlingly fast fibre power with UPC for half the price :-/. I know, that emoticon just now should have been a smiley, but I have mixed emotions about the change of provider.

I have always felt a great bond with and sense of loyalty towards XS4ALL. They were the first internet provider I signed up with, back in 1995, giving me my first ever e-mail address, `suzero@xs4all.nl` (I can put that in a post now without worrying about spam because in a few weeks that address will be bouncing mail back to the senders). I also know that I am not alone in my torn feelings of loyalty regarding XS4ALL (See [Erwin Blom's blog about his divorce from XS4ALL after 15 years](#)).

Actually, XS4ALL and I have parted ways before. In 1998 I was still paying per minute on a 28k8 modem via XS4ALL whilst UPC offered flat-fee internet access via cable. So I switched. The joy and wonder at being able to make phone-calls whilst connected to the internet was immense, despite the fact that my first combination of these two services was to spend hours on the phone to the UPC helpdesk to get the internet connection working at all. After being accused by the UPC Helpdesk employee of using an illegal version of Windows98 (he claimed that if I had an English version it must be illegal as only the Dutch version had been released so far -uh, yeah right) and suggesting I format my computer's hard drive, a different employee finally got it working for me. By 2003 or so XS4ALL finally offered ADSL internet access, so I went back to them and could happily reclaim my `suzero@xs4all.nl` e-mail address.

So now it's 2010 and I'm giving up XS4ALL because their prices have become exorbitant in comparison to other providers and they are not the company they used to be with regard to technical pioneering and (more importantly) a strong stance on political (internet) issues and customer privacy. Don't get me wrong, I still think XS4ALL is a company with more integrity than, for example, UPC, but the divide has diminished considerably - enough for me to feel the difference in price is no longer worth it. After all, what exactly am I paying for at XS4ALL?

So it's bye-bye to an old friend. Thanks for the good times, XS4ALL. Maybe our friendship will be rekindled again in the future if you get your act together and offer new services at a realistic price. I'd like that. Perhaps I can even reclaim `suzero@xs4all.nl` sometime too (despite all the spam I'll be getting on it by then ;-)).