PRESS RELEASE

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Mali gives away its .ML domain names for free

BEIJING – APRIL 8TH 2013. Mali became the first African nation to announce it will give its domains for free. Today the Dot ML Registry published the launch schedule for the .ML top level domain space. Dot ML – the Mali domain name – will be operated by the Agence des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication (AGETIC) as a generic, unrestricted, clean and global TLD focusing on individuals and businesses in- and outside Mali.

Free domain names will be offered to all internet users in both Mali and other countries from July 15th onwards. This General Availability will be preceded by a Sunrise and Landrush period, to protect trademark holders worldwide. There will be no restrictions to registrations of free domains and anyone can claim its own .ML domain. Free .ML domains work exactly like any other extension and can be renewed each registration period at no charge.

"Providing free domain names to our own community and to internet users worldwide is a great opportunity for us.", says Hawa Diakité, Chef Service Gestion du .ml of AGETIC. "Because of the events in the Northern part of Mali we have been under a lot of stress lately. We believe that providing free domain names to our internet population will greatly improve the usage and the knowledge of the IT industry in our country."

The .ML Registry will be powered by Freedom Registry. Freedom Registry has the expertise and knowledge to run a large country code registry, as it already operates .TK. Dot TK is the largest country code on the internet, with more than 16 million active domain names. Freedom Registry's AnyCast cloud, with servers located in 15 countries, ensures continuous uptime of all domains.

The .ML launch schedule was released during the ICANN meeting in Beijing, China. The launch schedule includes a Sunrise, Landrush and General Availability phase. Sunrise starts on the 1st of May 2013 and will last for one month until May 31st. Landrush will begin the following day and will end on July 14th 2013. General Availability starts on July 15th at the ICANN meeting in Durban, South Africa.

"We are proud to be the first African nation to give domain names for free. ", says Moussa Dolo, General Manager of AGETIC. "By providing free domain names to internet users worldwide we will put Mali back on the map. We wish to show the rest of the world the fantastic opportunities our country has to offer. "

During Sunrise and Landrush, hundreds of generic and premium domain names will be released. People interested in developing and utilizing .ML domains are invited to contact the Registry to discuss strategic partnership opportunities.

General Availability will start on July 15th, at which point domain names will be available on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Resellers are not required to perform any technical integration for Sunrise and Landrush and can simply connect to the Registry via API or EPP in time for the General Availability. All phases of the ML launch are open to hosting providers, registrars and trademark protection agencies. Further details on the launch schedule, FAQs and the reseller registration process are available on www.dot.ml.

About Dot ML

Dot ML is an initiative of the Agence des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication (AGETIC) in Bamako, Mali. Supported by the actors of the local internet community, AGETIC's mission is to develop and promote the usage of domain names and the internet in Mali. AGETIC is using the infrastructure and expertise of Freedom Registry to run the ML domain in a stable and automated way. With its experienced team, multi-redundant backbones and DNS root-servers located in every corner of the world, Dot ML can handle millions of registrations and is fully secure.

About Freedom Registry

Freedom Registry is a registry operator for TLDs. What sets us apart from other registry operators is that we believe domain names should be free. Just like email services are provided for free these days (think Gmail and Hotmail), we believe the best way to attract registrants to a TLD is to give away domain names for free. At Freedom Registry we know that giving out free domain names makes good business sense. Our subsidiary, Dot TK, has been the registry for the Tokelau country-code TLD since 2001. So far, Dot TK has been the only TLD registry that gives away free domain names. As a result, Tokelau (.tk) is now the largest country code top level domain registry in the world and has more active domain names registrations than Russia and China combined. Because of the enormous growth, Freedom Registry is actively looking for additional name space to support its future business goals.

Media contacts and logo pack:

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