TAG-ITI Newsletter

Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Information Technology International
The Arab Organization for Global IT Professional Services

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TAG-ITI is Committed to Providing Client-focused Innovative, High Quality Consulting Services and IT Solutions

TAGORG launches ICT partnership with UNESCO

UNESCO and the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization (TAG-Org) officially launched their partnership on Monday, 16 November, at the fourth Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, from 15 to 18 November 2009.

UNESCO and TAG-Org had already signed a partnership agreement in Paris on 7 August 2009. This partnership was officially celebrated in Sharm El Sheikh at a high profile event, which was attended by several hundred representatives of various organizations, dealing with Internet Governance issues, from around the world.

The launch of this partnership agreement was officiated by Abdul Waheed Khan, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information; Talal Abu Ghazaleh, Chairman of TAG.ORG; and Nitin Desai, Chairman of the IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group, under the patronage of the Minister of Communication and Information of Egypt, Tarek Kamel.

This new agreement marks yet another landmark in UNESCO's efforts to develop strategic partnerships with the private sector. It is unique because it is the first such partnership with one of the leading business conglomerates in the Arab region, which has more than 72 offices around the world.

UNESCO's partnership with TAG.ORG principally focuses on fostering free, open, equitable and pluralistic knowledge societies in Arab countries. The agreement covers the evaluation of knowledge societies in the region, building ICT capacity, developing Arabic content in cyberspace and other ICT related issues. It is part of UNESCO's mandate to foster knowledge societies in the developing world and is expected to make a great contribution to the Organization's activities related to ICT in the Arab region.

Source: TAG-ORG

New Projects Awarded to TAGITI

TAGITI has been successful in securing the following projects across the region due to the hard work put in by its consultants and management.

• **Moodle E-learning System for the Gulf University, Bahrain:** the Gulf University has expressed an interest to develop the basis of an e-learning platform to support its lecturers teaching activities. This will include the development of supportive functionality so students may download lecture material used by lecturers in the classroom.

• **ERP Implementation for JWICO, Amman:** JWICO is probably Jordan most famous manufacturer of furniture items. TAGITI will implement an ERP system based on Microsoft Axapta to cover JWICO's financial needs which will provide them with a robust system to meet their accounting needs. This will also provide the basis to implement supporting technology in the future should the need arise.

• **Back office application and Website development for UNDP, Syria:** The UNDP in Syria is actively engaged in various health initiatives in the region for which it requires both a website and a back office applications to process health related data. TAGITI will provide the UNDP with development and training on both systems.

e-City signs an agreement with Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization

The agreement opens the doors for cooperation between the two institutions in several areas, notably education

Manama, Bahrain – 1 December 2009 - His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa e-City signed an agreement with Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization (TAG-Org) for cooperation in all areas of their business and activities.

The agreement provides for the setting up of a partnership between the two parties and drafting the terms and conditions that govern and regulate such partnership. They will also consider the establishment of a joint training center in the international building of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh in Bahrain, in addition to studying a proposal to establish a center to refurbish used computers pursuant to 500-12 initiative launched by the United Nations Secretary General.

The agreement also stipulates that required studies shall be developed for the appointment of the e-City as the regional representatives in the countries of the GCC states for the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education. It was also agreed to establish a strategic partnership for the implementation of the e-Dictionary for the achievements of His Royal Majesty the King of Bahrain and the e-hall of Arabic

poetry project. TAG-Org will provide educational consulting services and consultations related to the development of education. The parties will also cooperate in the preparation of the draft procedures for the e-City's annual award which will be managed by TAG-Org.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the e-City by His Excellency Dr. Khalid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, its Chairman of the Advisory Board, and on behalf of TAG-Org by Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development, and Chairman of TAG-Org.

A ceremony was organized on the occasion of signing of the agreement and began with an introductory presentation on

the e-City by Dr. Ali Ibrahim, its General Supervisor, followed by a welcome speech by HE Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Advisory Board. Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh delivered a lecture on the importance of electronic systems and culture in the world of today. He declared that his firm volunteered to prepare a strategic plan for the e-City to be presented as a gift to His Majesty King Hamad on the anniversary of his taking up the throne in the middle of December.

e-City of His Majesty King Hamad

The e-City project in Bahrain is a national initiative that reflects the unique process of reform by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. It aims at using technology to identify his efforts in laying solid foundations for building the institutional and cultural structure of Bahrain. This national initiative was taken by the Bahrainis in the interest of their homeland and to implement the reform project through a scientific, professional and academic mechanism.

Abu-Ghazaleh calls on the Arab World to join the new generation of the Internet: the integration of multimedia with broadband

"The promotion of entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and motivation is key to all our social and economic goals and to achieving the Millennium Development Goals."

Hammamet, Tunisia – 1 December 2009 - Mr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development- of the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs participated in the in Information and Communication Technologies For All Forum - Tunisia +4, which was held in Hammamet on November 24 to 25, 2009, entitled "ICT Innovation as a Tool for Strengthening Competitiveness and Growth."

His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Ghannouchi, Prime Minister opened of the Forum meetings under the patronage of His Excellency President Zine El Abidien Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia in the presence of H.E. Mr. El Hadj Gley, Minister of Communication Technologies of Tunisia, and a number of UN, international and African organizations and institutions that are active in the areas of technology.

Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh began his opening speech by congratulating the Tunisian people for the re-election of H.E President Zine El Abidien Ben Ali so that he may continue the change process for the development of Tunisia.

Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh stressed the importance of production of various kinds as an essential factor for the economic and social development. He said that growth in production required entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and motivation as a key to all our social and economic goals and to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, to create and foster an entrepreneurial culture where innovation is encouraged and supported.

He explained that the digital technologies of information and communication is one effective way to meet the challenges and global crises; and said, "Investments in digital infrastructure continue to lure investors and provide hope to societies financial and economic hardship. But ICTs will only do as much for us as we do with them. We can harness ICTs to cope with many of our global challenges, from climate change, to hunger, to education."

Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh spoke of the activities of UN_GAID in the area of productive programs that focus on ICT as an enabler towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and remove barriers to ICT access. He mentioned, for example, the project to establish refurbished computer centers in Africa and Asia for use by schools in need pursuant to the initiative of the UN Secretary General to refurbish 500,000 computers by 2012. Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh expressed his willingness and the readiness of the UN-GAID to provide any assistance in any way to serve the development goals in Tunisia.

Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh called on the Arab World to join the inevitable future world of the Internet, i.e. the Video Internet, when all multimedia will be combined through broadband (audio, video, script, etc.) in a single communication protocol. He pointed out that one third of the current use of the Internet is the video.

Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh took part in the subsequent ministerial meeting held for the ministers of IT attending the Forum. The meeting was chaired by the Director General of the International Telecommunications Union and attended by the UNCTAD director general.

The recommendations of this year's Forum stressed, in particular, the significance of more support for the communication infrastructure, encouraging innovation in technology areas, deployment of techniques in the area of rationalizing energy and confronting climate change.

The ICT for All Forum – Tunisia+4 was the fourth meeting held to follow up on the second phase of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) which was held in Tunis in November 2005. The UN Economic and Social Council decided to recognize this Forum as a WSIS platform to promote the ICT environment worldwide.

TAG-Org effectively participates in the Internet Governance Forum: "Internet Governance – Creating Opportunities for All" in Sharm El-Sheikh

Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt – 1 December 2009 - Hundreds of representatives of governments, international organizations, the Internet community, the private sector, civil society, and the media have gathered from 15 to 18 November 2009 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, for the fourth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

Being an active member of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group of the IGF for several years, Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization (TAG-Org) participated by a high ranging delegation and effectively contributed to the IGF events. In addition the Founder and Chairman of TAG-Org Mr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh participated in the AGF in his capacity as the Chairman of the UN Global Alliance for ICT and Development.

Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh chaired an important session of the IGF and delivered a speech as GAID Chairman in which he stressed that he has been enthusiastically supportive of promoted the establishment of the Internet Governance Forum when he was the Vice-Chair of the UN ICT TF and Chair of the U.N.

Internet forum in Berlin; and that he presently continues to promote IGF as the UN GAID chair, and will always do as TAG Organization chair.

He explained that TAG-Org has proudly served on the United Nations working groups and U.N. Secretary-General working groups on Internet governance since its establishment. He said: "Today, once again, I wish to applaud IGF's success under its able leadership," and added that " IGF and GAID are twin brothers born out of the WSIS process and in the spirit of support for IGF under the debate about its future
agenda, I wish to suggest that IGF and GAID have a lot to gain by combining their agendas through the development of a creative formula."

On the other hand, Mr. Abu-Ghazaleh indicated that he UN GAID had adopted a practical approach to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals and other development goals and would be submitting in the year 2010 a program with clear indicators of how ICT can be used for development in every sector of development, including business, health, education, disability, and others.

Discussions during the Sharm el-Sheikh meeting focused on issues related to the main theme for this year's meeting, "Internet Governance – Creating opportunities for all", including the management of key Internet resources such as the domain name system, Internet protocol addresses, the root server system, technical standards, interconnection and telecommunications; the safety of the Internet and the fight against cybercrime; and improving access by all and promoting local content and cultural diversity; in addition to the opportunities made available to states, people and businesses, and how to address risks and challenges involved while raising awareness on the development dimension of the Internet governance. The IGF events also included panel discussions, workshops, and other gatherings on several related issues.

IGF

The Internet Governance Forum is an outcome of the "Tunis phase" of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which took place in 2005 as a new forum for policy dialogue to discuss issues related to key elements of Internet governance in order to foster the Internet's sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development.

The three previous meetings of the Forum were held in Athens, Greece, in November 2006, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in November 2007, and in Hyderabad, India, in November 2008.

TAG-Org Launches Creative Commons-Jordan

Under the patronage of the Jordanian Minister of Justice HE Mr. Ayman Odeh, the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization (TAG-Org) launched Creative Commons- Jordan on Nov. 15th 2009 in cooperation with the Creative Commons Organization and the Jordanian Royal Film Commission at Talal Abu-Ghazaleh College of Business.

Representatives from the Creative Commons Organization and a number of officials and delegates from the Ministries of Justice, Higher Education and Industry and Trade, the Jordanian Bar Association and organizations from both the private and public sectors will attend the event.
Several presentations tackling Copyright in the Digital Age, Jordanian Copyright Law, Science Commons and the Arab Region, Legal Issues Relating to Software Development and Product Strategy and Business Development in the Age of Openness will follow the launch.

The Creative Commons Organization is a non-profit organization that aims to increase and support creative works, which can be reused and shared in a free, legal manner. The organization has published a number of licenses which permit authors to designate the rights they wish to preserve and the capabilities bestowed onto others to utilize and develop their work.

The most important of the organization's goals lie in providing aid to researchers and facilitating their ability to determine whether or not their works are public domain, in addition to developing mechanisms which allow authors to place certain marks on works and digital compositions, which aid internet searchers to identify and retrieve the works placed under these marks.

The Creative Commons project has been implemented in more than 50 countries worldwide, and through TAG-Org; Jordan is the first country to adopt the process of localization of the system and the inclusion of its licenses in the general legal system in 2004, in addition to their redrafting in conformity with Jordanian laws.
Source: TAG-ORG

ICANN Moves Ahead With Non-Latin Web Addresses

The private organization responsible for overseeing the operational stability of the Internet approved on Friday the use of non-Roman characters in Web addresses, initially making it possible to use native language characters in domains controlled by national governments.

The International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers described its decision as marking the "biggest technical change to the Internet since it was created four decades ago."

"This is only the first step, but it is an incredibly big one and an historic move toward the internationalization of the Internet ," Rod Beckstrom, ICANN's president and chief executive, said in a statement.

The purpose of the change is to help bring online the billions of people around the world who never use Roman characters in their daily lives. Where Web addresses today can only use the letters A-Z and digits 0-9, they will evolve over the coming years to also include many of the 100,000 characters of the languages of the world.

Initially, however, the change will only apply to country-code top level domains controlled by national governments. Such Web address have endings such as .cn, .uk or .us, which stand for China, United Kingdom and the United States, respectively. Such ccTLDs cover about about 40% of Web sites. The rest have endings such as .com, .net and .org, which are obtained commercially. Internationalization of the latter TLDs is expected to occur in the coming years.

ICANN plans to launch Nov. 16, a Fast Track Process that will allow nations and territories to apply for Internet extensions reflecting their names and made up of characters from their national languages. If ICANN approves the application, then the applicant can start accepting registrations of Web addresses.

The approval of internationalized domain names followed years of intense technical testing, policy development and global co-operation, ICANN said.

"Our work on IDNs has gone through numerous drafts, dozens of tests, and an incredible amount of development by volunteers since we started this project," Tina Dam, ICANN's senior director for IDNs, said.

ICANN, headquartered in Marina Del Rey, Calif., oversees a number of Internet-related tasks related to managing the assignment of domain names and Internet protocol addresses. The Internet Engineering Task Force develops and promotes technical standards related to the global data network.
Source: Information Week

European Union gives Oracle extra time to respond to SUN inquiry

Oracle and Sun Microsystems have been granted an extra week to defend their planned $7 billion merger in front of European regulators, the European Commission said Friday.

Earlier this month the Commission, Europe's top antitrust regulator, issued formal objections to the deal, arguing that it posed a threat to competition in the market for database software.

The deadline for a final ruling has been put back to Jan. 27 from Jan. 19, which amounts to six additional working days for Oracle to win over the skeptical regulator.

"Oracle requested the extension in order to have the opportunity to further develop its arguments in response to the Commission's concerns," the Commission said in a routine weekly statement on the status of ongoing merger investigations.

The Commission's concerns center on Oracle acquiring MySQL, an open source database developed in Europe and bought by Sun a year ago for $1 billion. It argued in

 its statement of objections that the acquisition of the most significant open source database on the market by Oracle, the proprietary database market leader, could harm competition.

Oracle responded angrily, accusing the Commission of not understanding the database market. It claims that MySQL is aimed at a totally different type of client from the ones that use Oracle's database products.

However, the Commission, as well as many observers, argue that even if the products don't compete at the moment, Oracle's ownership of MySQL could stifle the software's development. This could have a negative long term effect on the database market, they said.

Source: InfoWorld, Apple4us.us