dotORG Foundation

For Immediate Release

Contact:
Judy Piercey
jpiercey@dotorgfoundation.org
858-795-3056

Support for Validation Strong; Evidence Clear

DotOrg Foundation President "Astounded" by Noncommercial Committee Report

Washington, D.C. – August 23, 2002 – The DotOrg Foundation today offered further evidence of the desire of the nonprofit world for validation. The Foundation is submitting this evidence to ICANN in response to the report of the Noncommercial Constituency Evaluation Committee.

"Quite honestly, we were astounded by the failure of the Evaluation Committee to understand the significance of validation for the nonprofit world," observed Marshall Strauss, president of the DotOrg Foundation. "To those of us who daily tackle the realities of fundraising, volunteerism, and general public support for the civic agenda, the importance of validation is obvious," he said.

In contrast to the reaction of the Evaluation Committee, nonprofit groups and coalitions have stepped forward to endorse the Foundation's validation concepts, namely:
- Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP)
- CanadaHelps
- Charities Aid Foundation
- Charity Navigator
- eGrants.org
- ePhilanthropy Foundation
- GuideStar
- Habitat for Humanity, Canada
- Independent Sector

Strauss noted that he himself is president of Human and Civil Rights Organizations of America and chair of the National Combined Federal Campaign Committee. "Every day, I deal with donor concerns as to whether a nonprofit is real. Every day, I see the value of reassuring people that the groups they are interested in helping are worthwhile. If we can strengthen the confidence of those wanting to support nonprofits, we will be contributing a profound service," Strauss said.

Strauss noted that in many ways the DotOrg Foundation's directors represent and reflect the concerns of the noncommercial community around the world. "It is an honor, really, to sit on a board with individuals of this stature, people who bring years of international leadership experience in the field of civil society," Strauss said. "These individuals came to this project specifically because they realized the importance of validation."

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The DotOrg Foundation submitted further support for validation to ICANN to be found in three studies:

- Independent Sector's latest public survey on trust in the charitable sector, http://www.independentsector.org/PDFs/trust.pdf, states several reasons why having trust in a charity is financially important to the charity: "The amount given to the charity is 50% higher when the donor has trust in the organization."
- Better Business Bureau/Wise Giving Alliance, October 17, 2001: 51% of adult Americans surveys said that it is not easy to find information about a particular charity, 70% say it is difficult to tell whether the charity making the solicitation is legitimate, 56% of online users say they are likely to go to the charity's website for more information. Full report at: http://www.give.org/news/survey1.asp.
- The government of India has been studying ways to make their Non-Governmental Agencies more accountable and transparent. The government has put this data on the web at http://164.100.97.14/ngo/default.asp. From a study regarding Indian NGOs from January 2002, http://planningcommission.nic.in/strgrp/stgp_vol.pdf, "Department/Ministries should evolve systematic monitoring and evaluation practices … [monitoring and evaluation] information should be published and placed on [the Department's/Ministries'] websites."

In its bid to ICANN to operate the .org registry, the DotOrg Foundation proposed to offer optional services that would bring together nonprofit groups and those that validate them. "The concepts we presented to ICANN have attracted the support of a who's who of leaders from the international nonprofit world," Strauss said. "We would plan to consult with the .org community before actually rolling out the product, but that community must largely include working nonprofit and other noncommercial organizations that face the challenges solved by validation."

About DotOrg Foundation

The DotOrg Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded with the sole purpose of administering the .org top level domain (TLD) registry for The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, known as ICANN. The value of the DotOrg Foundation's specific and directed purpose is that it focuses all of the Foundation's resources on developing the .org TLD into a more reliable, trusted, productive and distinctive space on the Internet. The DotOrg Foundation is joined in its ICANN proposal by two partners with established reputations in the Internet and nonprofit sectors – Registry Advantage, a division of Register.com Inc. (NASDAQ: RCOM), as its registry function provider; and Kintera, to provide technical development and maintenance for planned additional products and services. For more information, visit the DotOrg Foundation website at www.dotorgfoundation.org.

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