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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

NEW TRAVEL PLATFORM TO PROMOTE SOUTHEAST ASIAN HOLIDAYS

BANGKOK – A high-tech consumer travel website, SoutheastAsia.org, will anchor a new marketing campaign for Southeast Asia.

When launched on January 25, 2010 the site will allow users to research, plan, and book multiple-destination trips to and within the 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

SoutheastAsia.org is aimed at international tourists, especially adventurous culture seekers, special-interest travelers, and cruise passengers. It will offer themed feature articles, events, and points-of-interest content, as well as a forum for user-generated content such as anecdotes, travel tips, photos, and videos.

SoutheastAsia.org will also feature a content-rich, meta-search capability that will explore dozens of sites before presenting results integrated into an interactive map and travel planner. The search and planning technology is being developed by Singapore-based Wego.com based on its existing meta-search technology.

“The trip planner will draw upon the great variety of bookable flights, hotels and innovative itineraries that are available in the region,” said Martin Symes, CEO of Wego. “The site will present multiple destination options, low-cost to full-service airlines, creative tour choices and accommodation in everything from hostels to boutique lodges, stylish city hotels and luxury beach properties.”

Wego joined the ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) and the ASEAN Competitiveness Enhancement (ACE) Project in December.

The ACE Project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Regional Development Mission Asia to help ASEAN enhance the integration and competitiveness of its travel and tourism sectors. ASEANTA is ASEAN’s official travel industry association and includes both private- and public-sector members.



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“We want SoutheastAsia.org to be the new go-to site of choice for anyone interested in travel to Southeast Asia,” said ASEANTA Chairman Felix Cruz. “It is part of our strategy to raise awareness of ‘Southeast Asia’ as a desirable destination relative to ‘Europe,’ ‘the South Pacific,’ and ‘the Caribbean’.”

Much of the content of SoutheastAsia.org is being built around niche themes such as ecotourism, train travel, cultural sightseeing and cruising, said ACE Project Director R. J. Gurley. “Visitors will be able to research, plan, and book experiences ranging from stays in village guest houses, trekking and mountain biking in the hills, all the way to pampering in luxury beach resorts and spas,” Gurley said.

The website is part of a new marketing strategy to showcase the variety of travel options available in “Southeast Asia” while raising global awareness of “ASEAN” as a community of nations.

ACE and ASEANTA will formally announce a new destination marketing brand and campaign signature for Southeast Asia on January 25, 2010 during the ASEAN Tourism Forum in Brunei.

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For editors: images of Felix Cruz, RJ Gurley, Martin Symes and Southeast Asian destinations can be downloaded [here](#).

About ASEAN Competitiveness Enhancement (ACE)

ACE was designed and funded by USAID's Regional Development Mission in Asia (RDMA), which is based in Bangkok. ACE's objective is to enhance the integration and competitiveness imperatives of two of ASEAN's priority sectors: travel & tourism and textiles & apparel. The ACE Project is part of the broader ASEAN-US Enhanced Partnership which was launched in 2006, under which the United States pledged its support to ASEAN in pursuing its objective of becoming an ASEAN Community by 2015. The ACE Project is managed by Nathan Associates Inc. E-mail: rjgurley@ace-advance.com. Website: www.ace-advance.com.

About the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is an independent agency that provides economic, development and humanitarian assistance around the world in support of the foreign policy goals of the United States. The Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) was established in Bangkok in 2003 to manage bilateral USAID programs in Asian countries without USAID Missions, such as Burma, China, Laos, and Thailand. Its role has broadened to address regional and transnational issues, and its programs now cover most of Asia. The Mission's regional approach to development projects provides a cost-effective way to manage services and programs. It strengthens regional institutions and helps to engage regional and international partners. More about [USAID](#).

About the ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA)

The ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) was formed on 27th March 1971. ASEANTA is a non-profit tourism association comprising both public and private tourism sector organizations from ASEAN. ASEANTA has grown to become a tourism association of influence within the ASEAN tourism landscape, playing an integral role in shaping tourism development growth and policies in the ASEAN region. Further information and [ASEANTA mission statement](#).



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About Wego.com

Wego.com allows travelers to search for flights, hotels, packages, travel deals and travel research across 100+ travel websites in the time that it normally takes to search just one. Wego searches travel websites in real-time so that the latest pricing and availability are shown. Travelers are then linked through to partner websites to book. Wego.com was founded in 2005 by former executives from Intercontinental Hotels Group (NYSE: IHG), Yahoo! (NASDAQ: YHOO), Priceline (NASDAQ: PCLN) and ZUJI. News Digital Media, the Australian digital arm of News Limited and part of News Corp (NYSE: NWS), is an investor. For more information, please visit <http://www.wego.com/about>.

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