

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **First Internet-free Facebook, email and online chat service for Portuguese speaking Africans**

ForgetMeNot Africa and T-Mais launch internet messaging on any SMS-capable handset in Cape Verde  
Free messaging until December 18<sup>th</sup>

The first Internet-free Facebook, email and online chat service for Portuguese speaking Africans has been launched by ForgetMeNot Africa. Mobile operator T-Mais is improving its 100,000 subscribers' access to mobile internet by enabling internet messaging via SMS in the remote islands of Cape Verde. Customers can use the service for free until December 18<sup>th</sup>.

The new "Ch@t+" service uses ForgetMeNot Africa's unique Message Optimiser technology to convert Facebook actions and updates, emails and online chat messages into SMS format, and vice-versa. It bypasses the need for internet access and does not require subscriptions, smartphones, software downloads or data connections – transforming even the most basic handset into a virtual smartphone.

Six deployments of Message Optimiser in English and French speaking countries across east, west, southern and central Africa are already providing 47.5 million people with access to internet messaging on even the most basic mobile phones. But the launch of the new Portuguese version opens up Internet-free Facebook, email and online chat to nearly 23 million Portuguese speakers across Africa.

Jeremy George, Chief Operating Officer for ForgetMeNot Africa, said: "Our development work means that ForgetMeNot Africa technology can now serve the vast majority of people across Africa, no matter whether they speak English, French or Portuguese. This is a major step towards our aim to bridge the digital divide in Africa by providing internet messaging on every mobile phone on the continent."

The latest ITU figures show 30 per cent of Cape Verde's 491,875 inhabitants had used the Internet by the end of 2010, nearly triple the figure of 10.8 per cent of people across Africa who have ever been online. The ITU figures also show more than 60 per cent of people in the country have a mobile phone subscription, making mobile phones the most convenient way for Cape Verdeans to access internet messaging.

Figures from Internet World Stats, from June 2011, show just one in nine of Cape Verde's population are on Facebook (64,460 people). Now all of T-Mais' 100,000 subscribers can access Facebook Chat, update their Facebook profiles, 'like' their friends' statuses and comment on threads, as well as exchanging email and online chat messages – all via SMS.

Mr George said: "T-Mais is transforming all of its subscribers' mobile phones into virtual smartphones, no matter how basic their handset is. By providing affordable access to Facebook, email and online chat on the go, without the need for data plans or expensive handsets, T-Mais is extending more convenient internet messaging capabilities to its entire subscriber base."

The Ch@t+ service will also be a vital tool for tourists, farmers and fishermen and local businesses, giving them a simple, low-cost method of establishing two-way

email and online chat communications with friends, staff, suppliers and customers without having to invest in new technology, handsets or infrastructure.

Miss Tavares at T-Mais said: “Ch@t+ enables all of our subscribers to keep in touch with their friends, colleagues and family both in Cape Verde and all over the world whenever and wherever they like. We are offering the service to our subscribers for free until December 18th, allowing people free access to Facebook, email and online chat.

“ForgetMeNot Africa’s technology is transforming communications in the country as people no longer have to rely on going to internet cafes, offices or hotels, and don’t have to buy expensive smartphones to access internet messaging. It provides people across the Cape Verde islands with access to Facebook, email and online chat on any mobile phone at any time, all from the palm of their hand.”

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### **Notes To Editors**

Figures were sourced from the International Telecommunication Union ([www.itu.int](http://www.itu.int)) and Internet World Stats.

For further editorial information, images or to arrange interviews please contact [fmn@pwkpr.com](mailto:fmn@pwkpr.com) or call +44 20 7609 1900

### **About T-Mais**

T-Mais is a subsidiary of Teylium Telecom Group, which operates across West Africa, and is the most recently launched mobile operator in Cape Verde. T-Mais is an innovative operator, providing quality telecommunications that focuses heavily on providing simple but affordable technology.

### **About ForgetMeNot Africa**

ForgetMeNot Africa Ltd. is a "software as a service" (SaaS) company specialising in unified messaging that supports seamless interoperability between SMS, email and Instant Messaging clients for telecommunications operators. The core product is Message Optimiser which allows telecom operators to immediately provide cost-effective comprehensive unified messaging services to all of their customers without any upgrades to the device or any need for downloading new applications onto the device. This opens up a range of previously inaccessible services to many of their customers including 2-way email and 2-way instant messaging communication capability. For more information call +44 207 408 4730 or visit [www.fmnafrica.com](http://www.fmnafrica.com)