

USA, World Power in Digital Content is Home to 45 Million Spanish Speakers

The United States, Featured Country at FICOD 2009

- **The objective is to promote bilateral relations between Spanish and American sector companies at an edition where the major commitment is to networking.**

Madrid, 6 October 2009.- FICOD 2009 (International Forum on Digital Content) is featuring the USA as guest country at this third edition. The Secretary of State for Telecommunications and the Information Society, Francisco Ros and the Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in Spain, Jaime Malet, spoke today at the breakfast presentation of this nation as guest country, at an event that was aimed at business leaders, authorities and the press from both countries.

The FICOD 2009 opening ceremony will feature the presence of companies, senior Administration officials and Latino associations in the US. The purpose of choosing this country is to promote relations in the digital content field between Spanish and American companies and Administrations. FICOD has been an international window on the Spanish digital content industry since 2007. Due to its magnitude and its impact in the media, it is the most important annual ICT and Internet sector event in Spain.

The new technologies, a driving force behind the Spanish economy

"The technology sector is the driving force behind economic growth and great help for getting out of the crisis we are experiencing," confirmed the Secretary of State Francisco Ros. "It's an overwhelming reality. There is no economic and social change without the new technologies. There is no communication between people, there's

no economic management that increases its competitiveness without the use of the new technologies. Spain has to gain strength in this sector, otherwise it will be a historic loss".

The national digital content sector in Spain continued growing in 2008 attaining turnover of 4.982 million Euros, which is 15.8% more than in 2007. This means 82% growth for the 2003-2008 period. This growth is due in large part to the development of the mobile broadband, the implementation of DTT and the dizzying growth of advertising on the Net.

According to the Secretary of State, *"Digital content is included in the Global Content Sector which invoiced a total of 15.858 million Euros in 2008, according to ONTSI data," and "its importance is reflected in the percentage that this sector occupies within the content sector: in 2003, digital content turnover amounted to 20% of the total turnover of the content sector; and in 2008, this figure was already 31%"*.

The Net speaks Spanish

Spanish is the second language as far as the volume of content on collaborative websites (wikis) and the third most important on the Internet in the number of users. Its growth between 2000 and 2008 was 571%, which is quite above the average world growth rate (336.1%). *"The number of net users in our country continues to currently grow at a sustained rate of a half million every six months,"* stated the Secretary of State. *"In 2009, we reached 24.3 million net users"*.

Francisco Ros highlighted the importance of the social networks in Spain, which is *"the second country in the world that most uses this digital tool and the world leader in electronic signatures with between 14-15 million identifications"*. On the other hand, national e-commerce continues growing, even though, as Ros indicated, *"the fear of buying has been broken, but not of selling. Spanish companies have to get over their fear of selling online"*.

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Moreover and thanks to the Internet in the Classroom program and the Agrega platform, Spain has become a world reference in the development of educational digital content platforms. The Agrega platform is a large virtual library of educational digital content where teachers, students and families can create, search, view and share educational materials.

There is also a strong videogame demand in Spain, which is the fourth largest market in Europe. Growth during the 2002-2008 period attained average values of above 10%, which is expected to increase to 13% for the 2006 to 2012 period. For all of these reasons, FICOD has become an important and key forum within the international digital content industry.

About FICOD

The third edition of the International Forum on Digital Content will take place on November 17th, 18th and 19th at the Juan Carlos I Convention Center in Madrid. It was established in 2007 as part of the series of measures approved by the Secretary of State for Telecommunications and the Information Society of the Spanish Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce under the Avanza Plan to develop the Information Society and to bring Spain in line with Europe and provide the Autonomous Regions with common direction. Its primary objective is to promote the products and services of the digital content industry, seek synergies and exchange experiences, with a special focus on the Spanish language markets. The digital content sector in Spain saw turnover of 4.982 million Euros in 2008, which is 15.8% more than in 2007. This means 82% growth for the 2003-2008 period. It is made up of companies that do business in digital audiovisual services, music, film and digital video, interactive entertainment software, websites and digital publications. Digital content is included in the Global Content Sector, which invoiced a total of 15.858 million Euros in 2008. The importance of the digital content sector is reflected in the percentage this sector occupies within the content sector; in 2003, Digital Content turnover amounted to 20% of the total turnover of the Content Sector, and this figure was 31% in 2008, meaning an increase of 11 percentage points during this period. It is an industry that includes more than 455 million Spanish speakers and around 104 million Internet users throughout the world.

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