



## **PRESS RELEASE**

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 am Tuesday, November 13 2007

### **Guardian Languages Launches**

Guardian News & Media today launches Guardian Languages ([www.guardian.co.uk/languages](http://www.guardian.co.uk/languages)) a resource for language teachers and learners around the world.

Guardian Languages is collaboration between Guardian Professional, Languages Out There and Voice Commerce. Teachers and students of English can buy and download lesson plans and self-study packs. The resource also offers learners from around the world the opportunity to engage in real-time practice with native English speakers. The system, known as Engage, integrates Voice over Internet (VoIP) and payments technologies developed by WorldPay founder Nick Ogden.

There are six levels of English language lesson plans and self-study packs ranging from beginner to advanced. The whole resource uses the innovative approach to English language teaching developed by Languages Out There.

A key feature of the resource is the real-time speaking practice with native English speakers, which helps learners increase the speed and depth of their learning and understanding, and get a feel for the real spoken language. Learners pay just £6.95 an hour (or 11.5p a minute) for the speaking practice. The native speakers will earn £5.52 an hour (9.2p a minute). Native speakers will be rated by the language learners that use them,

All Guardian Languages Engage sessions can be recorded and then downloaded onto an MP3 player or iPod.

Teachers, language learners and native speakers will be supported by an ever-increasing range of training tools and lesson plans developed by the Guardian Languages team.

Over the next couple of years more languages will be added to the resource.

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Languages Out There founder Jason West explains: “Learning a language shouldn’t be a passive activity, you should be engaging from the outset with native speakers, making mistakes, having fun. More than half of Guardian Unlimited users live outside the UK, and many of these are not first language English speakers. Guardian Languages makes it possible for them to practice their English with native English speakers – and soon for anyone, anywhere in the world, to learn Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and a host of other languages.”

Nick Ogden adds: “This is the natural progression of the internet. We’re monetising the incredible knowledge that people already have, and delivering it anywhere by the use of voice.”

Robert Ingram-Smith, head of business development at Guardian Professional said: “We are excited to be involved in such an innovative project. Guardian Languages underpins our commitment to education and reinforces our drive towards delivering quality content in a digital future.”

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## **Notes to editors**

### **Guardian Professional**

Guardian Professional is a commercial division of Guardian News & Media. It specialises in providing products and services in education, media and the public sector including digital content and web build, contract publishing, conferences and events and advertising and sponsorship.

[www.guardianprofessional.co.uk](http://www.guardianprofessional.co.uk)

### **Voice Commerce Group - Nick Ogden**

Nick Ogden has been at the forefront of financial services technology since 1985.

In 1995 Nick founded the multi-currency processor WorldPay. He led the company through its growth to over 270 employees with 20,000 merchants in 120 countries and processing transactions in excess of \$2bn a year. He invented the internet payment guarantee in 2001, guaranteeing internet transactions for consumers and businesses. WorldPay was sold to the Royal Bank of Scotland in 2000.

He has twice been a finalist in the UK Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award. In 2004 Nick was selected as part of the Internet Decade, an event organised to recognise the contribution of around 100 individuals for their input and influence on the development and growth of e-commerce and the internet in the UK over the previous 10 years.

Nick is a non-executive director of the World Wide Knowledge Group, as well as chief executive of the Voice Commerce Group, Voice Pay and Cashflows Limited.

### **Languages out There - Jason West**

Jason has 20 years experience in sales, marketing, management and language teaching. He started his career in media sales at HTV, and left in 1992 to set up an English language school in London's West End. Within two and half years the school achieved the highly prestigious British Council accreditation.

Jason felt that there was a good deal more that could be done to increase language learners' overall experience and development. So he created the Out There concept, where classroom time is restricted and students engage with native speakers at every stage of their language development. Out There materials are incorporated into the Guardian Languages website.