



Google and UNESCO team up to provide virtual tours of World Heritage sites



Archaeological Areas of Pompei, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata

3 December 2009 – Internet users can now explore World Heritage sites such as France’s Palace of Versailles and the United Kingdom’s Stonehenge online thanks to a new partnership between the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**) and Internet search giant Google.

“The alliance with Google makes it possible to offer virtual visits of the sites to everyone, to increase awareness and to encourage participation in the preservation of these treasures,” **said** UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova.

The partnership enables internet users to visit 19 of the 890 sites inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List via Google’s Street View interface. All the other sites on the List will be shown on the Google Earth and Google Maps interfaces.

“Cultural and natural heritage sites are an irreplaceable source of inspiration and fascination. This is an exciting project and we’re thrilled to be working with UNESCO to make more World Heritage sites universally accessible and useful to all,” said Carlo d’Asaro, Google’s Vice-President for Southern Europe, Middle East and Africa.

The 19 sites currently available online are located in Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and the UK. Google will soon be visiting and photographing other sites on the List located in South Africa, Brazil, Canada, Mexico and the Netherlands.

Google and UNESCO plan to also work together to provide online access, via Google Maps, YouTube and Google Earth, to maps, texts and videos pertaining to the agency’s Biosphere

Reserves, to documentary heritage inscribed on the Memory of the World Register and to endangered languages.

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