



## **VeriSign Breaks the English Language Hold On Internet Navigation With Internationalized Domain Names**

***56 million Internet users in China Can Now Navigate the Web and Send Email with Domain Names using Chinese Characters***

**BEIJING, CHINA -- MARCH 4, 2003** – VeriSign, Inc. (Nasdaq: VRSN), the leading provider of digital trust services, today announced two new services, Web-based Navigation and i-Nav<sup>TM</sup> plug-in software that allow China's Internet users to navigate the Web and send email in the Chinese. VeriSign's new Internet navigation services will promote more global usage and adoption of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) – domains using non English characters – and give Internet users a choice of Chinese and 350 other languages for domain names ending in .com and .net. VeriSign also announced today that it has signed distribution agreements with 3721.com and Foxmail, making the i-Nav software available immediately to China's 56 million Internet users.

With VeriSign's Web-based Navigation and I-Nav<sup>TM</sup> plug-in services, the burgeoning online population in China can now type a domain name in Chinese and effortlessly navigate the Internet in the local language. Upon resolution, users will continue to see the domain name in Chinese, so they can recognize it and bookmark the site for future use.

Web-based Navigation has been installed on VeriSign's 13 DNS server locations around the world, making Internet navigation in any language available globally to every Internet user for .com and .net domains, anywhere in the world. The i-Nav plug-in software companion provides a complete multilingual experience for popular browser programs like Internet Explorer and email programs like Outlook and Outlook Express. i-Nav today supports not only .com, .net and other international domain extensions, but also supports top-level domains like .kr, .jp, and is looking to support any ccTLDs and gTLDs in 2003.

"We have improved the Internet experience for non-English users so they have the choice to navigate the Internet in their own language," said Rusty Lewis, executive vice president, VeriSign Global Registry Services (VGRS). "Language should no longer be a barrier to the accessibility and utility of the global Internet. VeriSign is pleased to back up our technology announcements with strong alliances with Chinese companies. And we are also working closely with leading Chinese companies and the Chinese government to address the issue of Chinese character variants. We feel strongly that this issue should not be allowed to slow the growth of the Chinese IDN market, and are working cooperatively towards a consensus solution."

China has surpassed Japan with the largest global at-home Internet population, according to a 2002 Nielsen/NetRatings telephone survey of 1,000 randomly selected households across

mainland China. China's 56.6 million Internet users represent a dramatic leap from the 22.5 million users the country found online at the end of January 2001, but since that number represents just a small proportion of the country's 1.3 billion population, it is expected to continue to grow rapidly.

It is estimated that two-thirds of all Internet users are non-English speaking users. Further, mature domain name markets have much higher domain name to user percentages than rapidly developing markets in Asia.\*). VeriSign and its IDN partners see this as an indication of pent up demand for IDNs. (\*eGlobal: Demographics and Usage, January 2002, and Domain Names Analysis, Zooknic Internet Geography Project, [www.zooknic.com](http://www.zooknic.com), October 2002

3721.com began distributing the i-Nav software on January 1, 2003. "IDNs provide Internet identities in the Internet user's own language," said 3721.com CEO, Zhou Hongyi. "Offering this localized navigation service will accelerate the Internet's popularization and development in China."

"Foxmail is happy to support the adoption of IDN's in the Chinese market through a distribution agreement with VeriSign," said Jiajian Zhu, CEO of Foxmail. "We have a proven record of efficient distribution as shown by the success of our leading email software, and we see a large market for IDN's in the Chinese market."

The free i-Nav software can be easily installed with the click of a mouse. Upon installation all IDNs are resolved locally on the user machine. Users can install the i-Nav plug-in for free by visiting [www.idnnow.com](http://www.idnnow.com). VeriSign created the user-friendly site to educate users and support the adoption of IDNs. The site is translated into Arabic, Chinese, English, Greek, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, and Russian to showcase the software and to help answer questions about IDNs. VeriSign is also working to translate the Web site into Brazilian Portuguese, French, Danish, German and Spanish by February 2003.

To date, more than 900,000 IDNs have been registered, with Chinese, Japanese, and Korean IDNs among the most popular. There are 40 IDN certified registrars that also are promoting new registrations of IDNs.

#### **About 3721.com**

Over the past three years, 3721 has established itself as one of the most popular Internet brands in China. 3721 is dedicated to the vision of promoting truly human-friendly Internet navigation and search service and helping millions of Chinese businesses and their prospective customers to interface more easily with each other on the Web. Its Chinese Keyword Service is one of the most widely used services on the Internet in China, serving over 20 million keyword resolutions everyday and reaching over 95 percent of Chinese Internet users. 3721 has formed broad strategic partnerships with leading portals, search engines and close to 200 local ISPs through out China.

#### **About Foxmail**

Founded in 1999, Foxmail specializes in a popular email client used by over 3 million people daily in China, and available in more than 20 other countries. Foxmail's email software is rated "5 STAR" by ZDNet. For more information please visit [www.foxmail.com.cn](http://www.foxmail.com.cn)

#### **About VeriSign**

VeriSign, Inc. is the leading provider of digital trust services that enable everyone, everywhere to engage in commerce and communications with confidence. VeriSign's digital trust services create

a trusted environment through four core offerings—Web presence services, security services, payment services, and telecommunications services—powered by a global infrastructure that manages more than seven billion network connections and transactions a day. Additional news and information is available at [www.verisign.com](http://www.verisign.com).

Statements in this announcement other than historical data and information constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. These statements involve risks and uncertainties that could cause VeriSign's actual results to differ materially from those stated or implied by such forward-looking statements. The potential risks and uncertainties include, among others: VeriSign's limited operating history under its current business structure; the risk that VeriSign and its acquired businesses will not be integrated successfully and unanticipated costs of such integration; uncertainty of future revenue and profitability and potential fluctuations in quarterly operating results; failure of the combined company to retain and hire key executives, technical personnel and other employees; failure of the combined company to manage its growth and the difficulty of successfully managing a larger, more geographically dispersed organization; failure of the combined company to successfully manage relationships with customers, suppliers and strategic customers; network outages, network capacity constraints or security breaches; failure of the combined company's customers to accept new services or to continue using the products and services of the combined company; and competition in the various markets serviced by the combined company. More information about potential factors that could affect the company's business and financial results is included in VeriSign's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, especially in the company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2001. VeriSign undertakes no obligation to update any of the forward-looking statements after the date of this press release.

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