

Ireland XO Website Reaches The One Million Visitor Mark

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GALWAY, IRELAND, September 16, 2014 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Ireland Reaching Out (Ireland XO) is a multi-award-winning programme based on a simple

idea; instead of waiting for [Irish](#) descendants and their global counterparts to come back to Ireland to trace their [roots](#), they go the other way. Working through voluntary effort at a townland and parish level, local Irish communities identify who left, tracing them and their descendants worldwide inviting them to become part of an extended “virtual” community with their place of origin. In this way, the entire Irish Diaspora of 70 million can be systematically reunified.

Ireland XO is justifiably taking credit for helping the boom in Irish Tourism as it welcomed the one millionth visitor to its website last week. The National Diaspora Programme has helped many thousands of people abroad re-connect with the parishes and communities from where their people once emigrated.

Speaking about the milestone, Ireland XO founder and Chairperson Mike Feerick said that “the interest of the Irish Diaspora abroad to re-connect with the communities from which their people once left is unabated and greater than ever in our experience. Our volunteers make a huge difference on the ground. Once upon a time, people would return to rural villages, not knowing who to contact, not knowing where to go. Now, in over 1,000 parishes in Ireland, returning Diaspora can send a note prior to their return and be met on their arrival to local communities. The difference in that experience is incredible. Once returning Diaspora meet local people, relationships bloom, and the volunteers of Ireland XO then step back and let new relationships between local communities and Diaspora abroad blossom”.

The Ireland XO website has surprisingly had most traffic from the United States, with over 29% of the one million visitors originating in the United States. Second, outside of Ireland was the UK,



and then almost tied, Australia. Canada, with 7% of visitors was also well represented. Argentina was a late developer with many queries forwarded in recent months due to a number of high profile articles on the Ireland Reaching Out Programme across Argentinian social media.

Speaking on the announcement, Ireland XO [Heritage](#) Resource Manager, Clare Doyle stated that “the traffic to the website has been greatly encouraging. We are aware the current site has limitations and are delighted to also announce that a contract for developing a brand new website will shortly be awarded. There are some very exciting features to be included in the new website and we have no doubt that our volunteers, not only in the West of Ireland but worldwide will find it much easier and more fun to use”.

The Ireland Reaching Out (Ireland XO) programme won the special award at the national “Pride of Place” Awards in Nov 2011 and in February 2012, was voted the “Best Community” initiative nationally by the Local Authorities Members Awards (LAMA). The project was founded in South-East Galway by tech entrepreneur Mike Feerick in 2009 and has been funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Heritage Council, Atlantic Philanthropies, the Ireland Funds, Galway County Council, Galway Rural Development (GRD), and Irish-American sources. Sponsors include Google, Guinness, An Post, and the National Library. In Dec 2011, the project launched a global partnership with the GAA, agreeing to link newly identified members of the Irish Diaspora to the network of nearly 500 GAA clubs worldwide. Well-known broadcasters and economists David McWilliams and George Lee have been prominent supports of Ireland XO pointing out the extraordinary economic potential of the programme, which rises well beyond the immediate and obvious tourism opportunity.

Press release courtesy of Online PR Media: <http://bit.ly/1s5cebs>

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