

PRESS RELEASE: 1st March 2008

Independent News and Media launches IndependentSingles.ie
Ireland's first premium online matchmaking service with PARSHIP
- 456,000 Irish singles now logging on to find a partner -

Independent News & Media (Ireland) has concluded a deal with PARSHIP -Europe's largest premium online matchmaking service, to integrate Parship's psychometric dating service into Independent's flagship website, www.independent.ie. Launching today, www.independentsingles.ie is a premium dating service, created to take the potluck out of dating. Closer to matchmaking the new service will use a proven rigorous personality-profiling test to determine compatibility between Ireland's 1.2 million singles.

Independentsingles.ie will be marketed and promoted across selected Independent News and Media group titles under a revenue share agreement agreed with Parship.

Commenting, Gerry Drumm, Enterprise Manager, Independent News & Media (Ireland) said: "Over the past 12 months online revenues at INM have increased significantly. We believe that premium services such as "independentsingles.ie" will deliver sustainable online traffic and revenues. Serious online dating services are growing three times more quickly than casual dating sites, however, until now, Ireland has done little to develop a service targeting this demographic, even though 57% of Irish singles are actively looking for a long-term relationship. Over the coming months we plan to roll out independentsingles.ie across our regional titles and sell-in the service to other online brands with a major presence in Ireland. Given the success of Independent Singles in the UK we are very excited about this deal."

According to a new report published today by PARSHIP, to support the launch of the service, the Internet is fast becoming a mainstream way to meet someone special: there's now a one in three chance that any single person you know in Ireland is currently logging on to find love. In 2007, 456,000 Irish singles used some form of online dating service to find romance, compared to the 648,000 who relied on their local pub.

Tony Blin-Stoyle, PARSHIP's director for both the UK and Ireland, commented, "Irish singles, particularly those between 30 and 50 are the fastest-growing group of online daters. Recognising that as they get older and their social networks become smaller, they need to maximise their opportunities in order to meet a partner. We are delighted to have partnered with Independent News and Media to launch IndependentSingles.ie and expect that the presence of a premium online matchmaking service in Ireland will grow the online dating market over the next 12-months."

The launch of IndependentSingles.ie follows the successful integration of PARSHIP.co.uk proprietary service with The Independent in the UK.

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About the Independent News & Media Group

Ireland is the headquarters of the Independent News & Media Group where it is Ireland's leading media company, publishing 5 market leading national newspapers, eleven regional newspapers and a fast growing consumer directory. It is also a leading commercial newspaper printer, the largest newspaper and magazine wholesaler and distributor and the leading on-line news portal.

The Independent brand name is a household name in Ireland, with the *Irish Independent*, *Sunday Independent*, *Evening Herald*, *Sunday World* and the *Irish Daily Star* all market leaders in their segments. In addition to the five national titles, the Group publishes twelve paid for regional newspapers in counties Cork, Kerry, Dublin, Louth, Wexford and Wicklow.

Unison.ie (www.unison.ie), the group's on-line portal, supporting 27 leading national and regional Irish newspaper titles (including competing regional titles) is now the number one news portal in Ireland with over [10 million] page impressions per month.

About PARSHIP

PARSHIP, Europe's largest premium online matchmaking service, is specifically for people who are serious about forming a lasting relationship and is built on a rigorous personality profiling test that determines compatibility.

It is the British subsidiary of Europe's most successful serious online dating service, now with millions of members, predominantly affluent, educated men and women between 28 and 55 years old.

Since its launch in Germany in 2001, PARSHIP has matched thousands people who are serious about forming a long-lasting relationship, and it now operates in 14 countries of Western Europe and also in Mexico

PARSHIP GmbH is headquartered in Hamburg and is 87%-owned by Holtzbrinck networkXs AG, part of the Georg von Holtzbrinck publishing group, one of Germany's largest publishing companies with financial interests in more than 80 companies, including the Macmillan Group.

