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Record online donations for Haiti

Since the start of the aid campaigns, more than 15,000 people have accessed www.betterplace.org and www.payback.de/spendenwelt to donate money or the value of their Payback points to provide quick and direct help to the population of Haiti free of red tape. The scale of the humanitarian disaster brought about by the devastating earthquake has prompted such a willingness to make donations that the portal servers were at times unable to cope with the extra load at the weekend.

The number of visitors accessing the site was eight times higher than on a normal weekend, says Till Behnke, Managing Director of betterplace.org. On Saturday evening, a donation was recorded approximately every five seconds. More than EUR 100,000 has been donated through betterplace.org alone since last Wednesday. Thanks to the Payback donations initiative, which was started in December last year in partnership with betterplace.org, and a special e-mail newsletter on Haiti at the weekend, we were able to mobilise thousands of Payback members, explains Burkhard Grassmann, Spokesman of the Payback Management Board. As a result, points equivalent to more than EUR 200,000 have been donated via our donations initiative. We would like to thank all our members for their generosity.

The number of visitors to the site caused the betterplace.org portal to crash temporarily on Saturday afternoon. Customers were also unable to donate points for a time via www.payback.de/spendenwelt. Our IT team was quickly able to extend the server capacities to match the demand. Both donation portals were back up and running to full capacity on Sunday evening and equipped to cope with the increased demand, continues Behnke.

Anyone making a donation at betterplace.org (in euros) or Payback.de/spendenwelt (in Payback points) provides direct support for aid projects of many well-known organisations, including CARE, UNICEF, Aktion Deutschland Hilft, Action Medeor and Deutsches Rotes Kreuz. The people affected by the disaster need help urgently. Speed is of the essence. Above all, they need drinking water, food, medical supplies and toilets. People seeking to make a donation will find a detailed description of the individual aid projects at betterplace.org and in the Payback donations initiative, along with the names of contacts who organise the projects, report regularly on their progress and answer any questions that arise.

The listed aid projects receive 100 percent of the donations and the equivalent value of Payback points all without the usual red tape and administrative costs. Users can track the progress of a project online in real time and find out how much money or how many points are still needed. Donors can rate the aid projects online and upload their own photos as project sponsors. They can even set up their own projects. In this way, visitors to betterplace.org and Payback customers really can help make a difference.

In view of the recent flood of donations for Haiti via the Internet, Till Behnke, Managing Director of betterplace, is confident that online donation campaigns are the way of the future: People want to ensure that their donation goes to those who really need it. What's special about betterplace.org and the Payback donations initiative is that the people who need help meet those who want to help directly online. There is a face behind every project. What's more, anyone making a donation can upload his or her own photo or set up their own initiative. Every donation, whether it be money or points, reaches its goal quickly, simply, directly and in full.

For more information, go to www.betterplace.org and www.payback.de/spendenwelt.