Internet Access in the Marshall Islands

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The Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) is located in eastern Micronesia and consists of 29 atolls and 5 isolated islands. Two-thirds of the nation's population lives on Majuro, which is the capital and Ebeye, Kwajelein. The outer islands are sparsely populated due to lack of employment opportunities and economic development.

Generally speaking, life in the outer islands is fairly traditional, and the daily sustenance of the rural population depends mainly on local produce and marine catch as compared to that of the urban residents, who rely considerably on imported products. The Marshall Islands has high potential for tourism and fishery; however, this potential is currently being exploited. Today, there are fish bases, giant clam farms, small resorts, and other enterprises to name a few.
Geography:
The Marshall Islands are located in the North Pacific Ocean some 4,000 kilometers northeast of Australia, consisting of 27 atolls and 5 islands. Land area is approx. 181 sq. km. scattered over 2 million square kilometers of territorial waters. Among the islands and atolls, there are only 4 islands and 22 atolls that are inhabited and Majuro is the capital.

Population:
The total population is about 60,000 (-1) of which 60% resides on the capital, and 20% on Ebeye/Kwajalein (second urban center). The remaining 20% is scattered over 24 Atolls/Islands.

Government:
Marshall Islands is a non-constitutional monarchy, thus it is a Republic. The Republic is a Parliamentary Democracy in Free Association with the United States Government.

Telecommunications:
By legislative condition, MINTA is the current sole Telecom service provider:
Service provided include:

- **PSTN** - on Majuro and Ebeye
- **GSM** – currently in Majuro, Ebeye, Jaluit, Wotje, Kili and Rongelap
- **TELECENTER** – currently on Enewetak, Mejetto & Santo
- **ISP** – offered in all the above atolls/island – and will be extended to other 29 sites
- **HF** – 66 sites
- **TV** – Majuro and Arno
ECONOMIC SITUATION

The RMI economy relies mainly on U.S. funding brought about by the Compact of Free Association, grant assistance from diplomatic partners such as U.S., Japan, Taiwan, Australia, European Union, and Korea, and foreign investors, just to name a few, to develop the country’s economy mainly on the educational, health system, and infrastructure.
A LITTLE TRIVIA... ON WHERE THE MARSHALL ISLANDS IS...

The atoll, however, has always been called Bikini by the native Marshall Islanders, from Marshallese "Pik" meaning "surface" and "Nj" meaning "coconut". The name was popularized in the United States not only by nuclear bomb tests, but because the bikini swimsuit was named after the island in 1946. The two-piece swimsuit was introduced within days of the first nuclear test on the atoll, when the name of the island was in the news. Introduced just weeks after the one-piece "Atome" was widely advertised as the "smallest bathing suit in the world", it was said that the bikini "split the atome".

For more information please go to Wikipedia and type Operations Crossroads and Bikini.
Marshall Islands
DAMA Remote site equipment list

- 1 x 200 watt solar panel
- 2 x 12 Vdc battery
- 5 watt buck (amplifier)
- 2.4m satellite dish
- 1 x satellite Remote terminal
- 1 x laptop
- 1 x phone
- 1 x fax machine

Connecting the Nation
Tele-center Network
Star SCPC DAMA Network Topology
Internet connectivity

NSS 9 183°E

Arno
Jaluit
Majuro CO
Woja
Namo
Tele-center Sites Installation

Santo

Mejetto

Enewetak

Connecting the Nation
Leap Frog Events for the RMI

1990 - 2009 – via Satellite connectivity
64kbps is the fastest internet speed available, ~80 USD/month, while outer island communicates using HF radio

2010 – Submarine Fiber Optic Cable arrival
80 GB capacity
20Mbps for 10,000 USD/month ADSL Commercial
256kbps for 39.99 USD/month ADSL Residential

2010 – MOTC and MINTA MOU signing
encompasses all ICT initiatives and projects

2012 – conclusion of DAMA system roll-out in the outer islands
Free internet connection for one year

2013 – fiber optic cable laying in Majuro, Capital of Marshall Islands and installation seamless WIFI
The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish a mutually agreeable framework for cooperatively addressing the short and long term sustainability plan for Marshall Islands outer islands telecenters that are not viable for business while providing the basic telecommunications services and to provide a smooth implementation of EBCJ projects and other similar projects.

All parties to the MOU agree that it is to their mutual interest and benefit to work cooperatively in planning, installing, operating, and managing a sustainable and eco-friendly telecenters in order to serve communities that are not viable to telecommunications services. All parties also agree it is to their mutual benefit to work cooperatively to educate, train, and share Technology with agency personnel and the general public about telecenter benefits, and to work cooperatively to seek funding to address the sustainability aspect of the telecenters.

Actual signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, September 23, 2010

From L to R,
Honorable Senator Anthony Muller (former MINTA CEO),
MOTC Permanent Secretary Phil Philippo,
MOTC Director of Communications, Mr. Rommel Natividad (Spectrum Manager during the MOU signing)
2013 – fiber optic cable laying in Majuro, Capital of Marshall Islands and installation of seamless WIFI.
Cont.....Leap Frog Events for the RMI

.MH ccTLD history

January 2002
July 2003
December 2003
August 2007

June 2013

2013 – ccTLD, .MH was recovered August 2, 2013
Wellcome
Dr. Raymond ‘Ray’ House and his wife, Rebekah ‘Becky’, arrive on April 2 to manage the Wellness Center at Majuro Hospital for Canvassback. The two taught on Ebece for a year 30 years ago and will take the place of Greg and Cathy Garwin who have been temporarily managing the facility. Wellness Center focuses on preventing diabetes, an illness that affects half of the population over age 35 and nearly 50 percent of youth.

Ours or yours
The RMI government has asked the Aviation Task force to meet with OurAirline to resolve a financial situation described as a “misunderstanding.” According to Foreign Minister Phillip Muller, reports he received indicate the flights have been full, so the government was surprised to get reimbursement claims for the full amount when it expected a smaller “top up” amount.

“We hope it can be mutually settled soon,” he said.

RMI gets help to recover key ‘em aitch’ domain
The Ministry of Transportation and Communications and Marshall Islands National Telecommunications Authority held a public consultation last week at the International Conference Center for the re-delegation process of the country code top level domain (ccTLD), which is known as “.mh.”

Savonoe Yoceva, Vice President for Enterprise Stakeholder for the Australasia and Pacific region of Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), visited Marshall Islands to assist the consultation process.

The meeting was attended by officials from the Council of Island, Chief Secretary’s Office, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, College of the Marshall Islands, and CHEPP. The re-delegation of the .mh. TLDs to explore the possibility of increasing the internet traffic through the fiber optic cable.

Tom Muller expressed his passion to pursue this unfinished business, control of the Internet designation, “.mh.”

Attorney General Florence Manusen joined in the discussions. All agreed it was important to pursue the re-delegation to explore its benefits.

Ministry of P&C said the benefits of the .mh designation is that RMI would be able to register Marshall Islands websites locally, host websites locally, and further increase Internet traffic going to the Marshall Islands through the fiber optic cable.
On-going tasks and challenges

1. “.mh” ccTLD Policy and Regulatory formulation
2. MI2S (Marshall Islands Internet Society)
3. Cybercrime Bill
   (International Telecommunications Union)
4. Office of Telecommunications
   (World Bank)
5. Child On-line Protection
   (International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyber Threats (IMPACT))
6. ICT related projects
   (International Telecommunications Union / Asia Pacific Telecommunity)
On behalf of the Republic of the Marshall Islands,

Kommol tata
Thank you very much
Gamsahamnida