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**Fusion of Traditional and Digital Business: Rooted in 400+years of Trusted Commerce, CTMI is expanding its global trade trust, commercialization and economic development tools to all businesses and academia**

- key tags: extended support for intellectual property protection, commercialization, incubators, business clusters and Northern / remote / rural economic development -

**Vancouver, Canada and Paris France:** *CTMI announces a major expansion of both its client groups and applications for promoting and securing exports, trusted e-trade, and intellectual property protection worldwide. This extends to all types of businesses, academia, NGOs and various public sector initiatives worldwide. CTMI is introducing the additional offerings between now and the end the fourth quarter, including the Northern [Sp]Arc pilot project, initially destined for Northern and rural Canada, before expanding to other Northern regions around the world.*

CTMI is building on its deep roots in truly global commerce, including through its unique association with WCN (World Chambers Network), an organization officially representing and supporting Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade around the world in their online initiatives for over 20 years. After the first chamber was established in 1599, the chamber network has grown to 13,000 offices in over 160 countries in WCN alone, which represent over 40 million business members.

CTMI's base of clients and business offerings expanded beyond chambers, attracted by the proven foundations of trusted services provided with the WCN and its official chamber roles for two decades. In addition, the exposure to CTMI's internal global business databases appeal to both traditional businesses, and new ones in the process of commercialization, especially given the trust tools for trade, joint ventures and intellectual property protection. Inherent support extends not only to individual businesses the world over, but to business clusters, business incubators and commercialization systems (including those in universities), as well as regional economic development initiatives, 'local markets' and the arts community. Support has also been added for blockchains re. their initiating body / ownership.

Georges Fischer, Chairman of CTMI, added from Paris that “the expansion was a logical next step for us since in many parts of continental Europe, chambers are public bodies with virtually all businesses already belonging: a typical metro chamber or board of trade can have a quarter of a million members in parts of continental Europe, with Greater Paris at over 800,000. But, even with private Chambers, these organizations are very active with official roles in export rules, secure trade documentations and such... and recognized as trusted, neutral parties.” Mr. Fischer continued that now, ALL businesses and all other organizations in the Americas, Asia and elsewhere that are not in chambers directly can also avail themselves of the existing and new services via CTMI, though chamber members can do so at a discount, as WCN remains as a part of CTMI.

Joachim Knauf, CTMI's President and CEO, said from Vancouver that “decades of official business data worldwide and the introduction of several online trust tools for trade and exports have not only general global applicability, but also represent strong opportunities for Canada, where we had our technical HQ for WCN for almost 20 years.” Mr. Knauf added that “it is obvious that Canadian businesses and academia are watching a tougher trade climate unfold”, and on-the-ground, practical and trusted trade tools by CTMI will “support and enhance CETA (The Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement), China's 'Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)' and other similar global undertakings - even though all the underlying funding so far has been from private and

public sources abroad and private-only Canadian sources...the opportunities for Canada have great potential.”

Mr. Knauf continued that “CTMI's exiting trust tools for exports include business verification and securing trade documentation such as electronic bill of lading access. These are expanding to Intellectual Property protection for small, medium and large businesses and other organizations who negotiate a joint venture with new partners, or submit a RFP (Request-for-Proposal), among other applications which can include the 'arts world' where authorship and copyright can matter in some circumstances.”

The built-in Intellectual Property protection features of CTMI-eVault include auto-notarization with digital receipts and an automatic check against any existing files in the system. CTMI-eVault applications also extend to inter-university or university-to-industry joint research and development, incubation and subsequent commercialization processes.

And while on the theme of commercialization, being able to not only protect but also support roll out of ideas and opportunities to CTMI/WCN's pure business data across 160+ countries is another major benefit for the clients.

On a different business theme, Mr. Knauf added “that we have developed and are launching regionally specialized initiatives as well, such as the '**Northern [Sp]Arc**' project we announced earlier for Q4 2017, now that the pilot phase has been completed. We already have over 600 entries for example for Canada in our chamber offices and communities database, but Northern [Sp]Arc recognizes that while our data reaches into many of the rural and Northern communities, their needs (and available opportunities) often differ from their large metropolitan-area counterparts. Whether it is ecotourism, indigenous cultural endeavours, local food market hubs, resource development, plans for retirement communities, IT activities or green technologies - the layered local-to-global-to-local CTMI systems and their current service expansions are ready to assist in developing new export markets - and do so with peace of mind.” Northern [Sp]Arc will expand from Canada to other Northern regions around the world by Q2 2018.

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