



Press Release

Date:
14.12.06

London Office: 55 New Oxford Street London WC1 1BS
Cheshire Office: 700 Mandarin Court Warrington WA1 1GG

Subject:

Latitude Attains Gold Certified Partner Status in Microsoft Partner

Subheading:

Latitude Further Distinguishes Itself by Earning Two Microsoft

London, UK — December 14th, 2006 Latitude, Leaders in Search, today announced it has attained Gold Certified Partner status in the Microsoft Partner Program with a competency in ISV/Software Solutions and Networking Infrastructure Solutions recognising Latitude expertise and impact in the technology marketplace. As a Gold Certified Partner, Latitude has demonstrated expertise with Microsoft technologies and proven ability to meet customers' needs. Microsoft Gold Certified Partners receive a rich set of benefits, including access, training and support, giving them a competitive advantage in the channel.

"We believe we're the first Search Engine Marketing agency in the world to gain these competencies and the Gold Certified Partner status in the Microsoft Partner Program. For Latitude, an ISO 9001 company, this is further testament to our investment in technology, including our bespoke COBRA software, and processes. It allows us to clearly promote our expertise and relationship with Microsoft to our customers," said Rob Shaw, CTO, Latitude. "The benefits provided through our Gold Certified Partner status will allow us to continue to enhance the offerings that we provide for customers."

"Customers are looking for partner companies that can bridge the gap between their business demands and technology capabilities." said Allison Watson, vice president of the Worldwide Partner Sales and Marketing Group at Microsoft Corp. "They need to trust in a company that can act as an expert adviser for their long-term strategic technology plans. Microsoft Gold Certified Partners, which have certified expertise and direct training and support from Microsoft, can build a positive customer experience with our technologies. Today, Microsoft recognises Latitude as a new Gold Certified Partner for demonstrating its expertise providing customer satisfaction using Microsoft products and technology."

As one of the requirements for attaining Gold Certified Partner status, Latitude had to declare a Microsoft Competency. Microsoft Competencies are designed to help differentiate a partner's capabilities with specific Microsoft technologies to customers looking for a particular type of solution. Each competency has a unique set of requirements and benefits, formulated to accurately represent the specific skills and services that partners bring to the technology industry. Latitude achieved two competencies in ISV/Software Solutions and Networking Infrastructure Solutions.

The ISV/Software Solutions Competency recognises the skill and focus partners bring to a particular solution set. Microsoft Gold Certified Partners that have obtained this competency have a successful record of developing and marketing packed software based on Microsoft technologies.

"Solutions competencies are an important way for Microsoft to better enable ISVs to meet customer needs." said Sanjay Parthasarathy, corporate vice president of the Developer & Platform Evangelism Group at Microsoft.

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“They allow ISVs to keep and win customers through their deep knowledge of solutions-based Microsoft platform technologies. Microsoft has a long history of working closely with ISV partners to help them deliver compelling solutions and applications to our mutual customers, and the Microsoft Competencies are an important step in continuing to enhance vital relationships with ISVs worldwide.”

Microsoft Gold Certified Partners enrolled in the Networking Infrastructure Solutions Competency have proved their expertise in implementing technology solutions based on either the Microsoft Windows Server 2003 or Windows 2000 Server operating system, with a particular focus on Microsoft Small Business Server 2000 and Windows Small Business Server 2003. These implementations may include crafting solutions that connect Windows-based servers, PC locations and the Internet; installing a server farm; or building a small-business Windows Server stand-alone solution that includes file and print capabilities.

“We place tremendous value on our partners, which help us deliver solutions and applications to customers,” said Allison Watson, vice president of the Worldwide Partner Sales and Marketing Group at Microsoft Corp. “Solutions competencies provide an integrated partnering framework that recognizes an enterprise’s expertise and rewards it for the effect it has in the technology marketplace. It also allows companies to demonstrate for customers their knowledge of building solutions based on Microsoft technologies, such as setting up networks using Windows Server 2003 R2 and Windows Small Business Server 2003.”

The Microsoft Partner Program was launched in October 2003 and represents Microsoft’s ongoing commitment to the success of partners worldwide. The program offers a single, integrated partnering framework that recognises partner expertise, rewards the total impact that partners have in the technology marketplace, and delivers more value to help partners’ businesses be successful.

About Latitude

Latitude (www.searchlatitude.com), with anticipated worldwide sales of more than \$100m in 2007, is one of the world's leading Search Engine Marketing agencies. Using its unrivalled pay-per-click and search engine optimisation expertise, it helps clients obtain superior click rates, rank in the best possible positions on search results pages and achieve exceptional ROI. One of the fastest-growing technology companies in the world, Latitude is at the forefront of integrating search expertise with Web marketing and online communications. Headquartered in London, with approximately 100 employees, Latitude is a 2006 Media Momentum Award winner and its CEO, Dylan Thwaites, was named Ernst & Young Technology & Communications Entrepreneur of the Year 2006.

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