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### 11/03/03 -- Information Builders, Starthis Partner

*From Wire Reports*

Information Builders (<http://www.informationbuilders.com/>), a provider of enterprise business intelligence (BI) and real-time Web reporting, and Starthis (<http://www.starthis.com/>), an industrial automation middleware company, announced a strategic alliance focused on providing real-time plant floor reporting throughout the manufacturing enterprise. The companies offer an integrated technology-set that collects data directly from the manufacturing floor, distributes the data to existing enterprise resources, and creates reports using the WebFOCUS business intelligence suite. Using this solution, real-time reports can now be generated instantaneously from plant floor data and delivered to the appropriate people throughout the manufacturing enterprise.

Starthis is the first and only provider of software to directly link Java 2 Enterprise Edition J2EE applications with plant floor automation networks. WebFOCUS reads Starthis data tools from iWay Software -- an Information Builders company that accelerates business integration -- then creates reports on the data collected directly from plant floor sensors and programmable logic controllers (PLC). The resulting solution allows rapid identification and resolution of manufacturing inefficiencies and/or problems.

"Understanding plant floor information is vital to the successful management of manufacturing operations, yet this data is typically not analyzed today," said David Naylor, CEO of Starthis. "Two reasons why Starthis and Information Builders can offer this new level of insight are because of the advent of enterprise Java or J2EE and the emergence of industrial networks. Sensors now monitor everything on the plant floor using barcode scanners, photo sensors, color sensors, and PLC data. Using WebFOCUS and iTapestry, enterprise executives gain a new perspective of the manufacturing floor by simply and intelligently collecting and analyzing readily available data."

Starthis builds a bridge between disparate islands of automation on the plant floor to accommodate the flow of information to and from enterprise information systems. WebFOCUS turns the collected plant floor data into intelligent information that can be easily understood by anyone in the extended enterprise, including executives, suppliers, customers, or even the general public.

"This is another example of 'rings of data' inside an enterprise that can access and analyze critical information. In this case, tying together Information Builders and Starthis technologies provides a unique snapshot of a manufacturer's work in progress," said Gerald Cohen, CEO of Information Builders. "Imagine the value of customizable, detailed information about cycle time, uptime, downtime, pieces an hour, and error rate. We are providing a better understanding of the production process and drastically improving reaction time. This unprecedented new perspective into the manufacturing process can translate into substantial annual savings for manufacturers, not to mention possibly generating new services that could ultimately give them a competitive edge."

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