The Durrant Group Chooses Autodesk Consulting for Building Design Software Assessment and Implementation Services

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Autodesk and Avatech Solutions Join Forces to Help Firm Roll Out Autodesk Architectural Desktop and Autodesk Building Systems Nationwide

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Apr 8, 2004 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK), the world's leading design software and digital content company, announced today that The Durrant Group, a global architecture, engineering, and construction management firm, chose Autodesk Consulting to assist in its software decision-making process and to deliver implementation and training services for deployment of Autodesk(R) Architectural Desktop and Autodesk(R) Building Systems software firm-wide. Initial consulting services included a process assessment, development of an action plan, and assistance in using the software in a pilot project. For this engagement, Autodesk teamed with reseller Avatech Solutions, who is providing in-depth implementation know-how and local training support to complement Autodesk's broad information technology expertise.

"We're pleased to see that Autodesk is expanding its role from that of a software vendor to a consultant," said Charles Marsden, president and chief operating officer of The Durrant Group. "Autodesk Consulting has become a trusted advisor, working with us to find innovative ways to roll-out and finance new technology, and to develop ways to measure our success."

The Durrant Group, Inc., based in Dubuque, Iowa, has approximately 350 employees in 12 offices across the United States. Durrant anticipates that Autodesk building design solutions will allow the company to standardize its processes, leverage experience across all 12 offices, enhance productivity, save time, and provide clients with enhanced services.

Assessment and Implementation Services

With the growing interest in building information modeling, Durrant's CAD committee began considering how to standardize its use of Autodesk solutions so that architects and engineers at different offices could work together, enabling the firm to take on larger projects. A combination of Autodesk Architectural Desktop and Building Systems seemed the right choice. But different offices had varying levels of experience with Autodesk solutions. It made sense to seek an outside perspective as well as assistance with firm-wide training and standardization. The firm issued a Request for Proposal for implementation services and selected the powerful team of Autodesk Consulting and Avatech Solutions.

The Autodesk Consulting team performed a process assessment of Durrant's needs, confirmed the committee's conclusions, and delivered an action plan for the roll-out period, including a timeline and associated costs. "This gave us the confidence that we were choosing the right product for our process," said Gary Schulte, chairman of Durrant's CAD committee. "Autodesk's process assessment helped the management group understand what commitments would have to be made, and how implementation would be handled." The Autodesk Consulting team then led a five-day training session for selected staff from all 12 offices, who now serve as training leaders for their respective offices.

Durrant used a past project as a pilot project to allow pressure-free learning. The Autodesk Consulting team is reviewing the pilot process in order to set up and optimize the software for all offices so it can be used system-wide. Autodesk Consulting and Avatech Solutions will also provide ongoing mentoring to Durrant.

Autodesk partnered with Avatech Solutions to meet the client's day-to-day needs, relying upon Avatech's staff power and experience in real-world, project implementation. Having the strengths of both companies to draw upon proved an asset for Durrant. "Avatech has a location near each of our offices and training expertise," said Rich Koblischke, systems analyst for The Durrant Group. "Autodesk has been very active in making recommendations and providing decision-support. And who knows their software better?"

About The Durrant Group

Established in 1933, The Durrant Group, Inc. is a multi-discipline, full service design firm. Durrant has designed structures of nearly every major building type in all 50 of the United States and in 10 countries. Combining design disciplines, crossing geographic boundaries and focusing on market sectors, Durrant provides the resources, versatility and expertise to respond to the emerging needs of clients in any building enterprise -- whether it be new construction, expansion, renovation, modernization or financing. By operating as a virtual firm with a network of offices located throughout the United States, Durrant has a national presence with a global reach. For more information on Durrant, visit www.durrant.com.

About Avatech Solutions

Avatech Solutions, Inc. (OTC Bulletin Board: AVSO.OB) is the recognized leader in design and engineering technology with unparalleled expertise in CAD software, data management and process optimization for the manufacturing, engineering, building design and facilities management industries. Headquartered in Owings Mills, Maryland, the company specializes in software integration, standards development and deployment, education and technical support. Avatech is one the largest integrators of Autodesk software worldwide and a leading provider of SMARTEAM PLM solutions. The company serves 18,000 clients worldwide including the industry leaders from Fortune 500 and Engineering News Record's Top 100 companies. Visit http://www.avatechsolutions.com for more information.

About Autodesk

Founded in 1982, Autodesk, Inc., is the world's leading design software and digital content company. Autodesk offers solutions for professionals in building design, geographic information systems, manufacturing, digital media, and wireless data services. By delivering progressive products and services, Autodesk helps customers create, manage, use and maximize the value of their digital data throughout the lifecycle of their projects. For more information about the company, see www.autodesk.com. Autodesk Consulting, including integrated consulting and training, helps customers worldwide maximize the value of their investment in Autodesk technology. For more information about Autodesk Consulting, see www.autodesk.com/consulting.