



World Software Leaders Autodesk and Microsoft Forge Strategic Alliance to Help Mid-Sized Manufacturers Streamline Their Product Development Processes From Design Through Delivery

October 7, 2003

Integration of Engineering Product Data and ERP Business Solutions Significantly Improves Efficiencies and Helps Manufacturers Get to Market Faster

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Oct 7, 2003 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Supporting the company's strategy to provide the industry's most comprehensive solutions to create, manage, and share digital design data, Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) today announced a new strategic alliance with Microsoft Corporation (Nasdaq: MSFT) to bring key business productivity improvements to mainstream manufacturing companies. Specifically, the software leaders will integrate Autodesk's engineering data management (EDM) software with Microsoft Business Solutions (MBS) enterprise resource planning (ERP) offerings to help customers bring better products to market faster at a lower cost.

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Helping Customers Maximize Their Digital Design Data

Currently there is no easy way for customers to connect engineering data to ERP systems. This deficiency results in data inconsistencies, poorly controlled engineering change processes, long delays in releasing or changing products, and manual data re-entry. Autodesk and MBS are leading the way in mid-market ERP to improve this process by providing this important capability.

The new Autodesk(R) Vault functionality available to customers on subscription and integrated with the best-selling 3D design software, Autodesk Inventor(R) Series, uses a Microsoft(R) SQL Server Database and will be the integration point. This is Autodesk's first offering in a line of EDM solutions that will be connected to Microsoft Business Solutions ERP solutions. Future EDM solutions from Autodesk will be announced as they become available.

"We evaluated a number of software vendors and found Autodesk to be the clear choice for its market leadership, expertise in the mainstream manufacturing market and innovative technology," said Mike Frichol, general manager of manufacturing solutions for Microsoft Business Solutions. "The alliance will provide our customers with a solution that is easy to implement and that automates and streamlines the manual processes they use today."

"Our customers' business and technology requirements are becoming more sophisticated. As a result, their need has increased to use the digital design data, which is embedded in the millions of design files they've created with Autodesk software, throughout their products' lifecycle," said Robert Kross, vice president of the Manufacturing Solutions Division at Autodesk. "Working with Microsoft, we can help our customers' ability to use this valuable design information from concept through manufacturing."

To share its plans for this integration, Autodesk will be exhibiting with Microsoft at the annual conference of the American Production and Inventory Control Society, APICS 2003, in Las Vegas, October 6-8, and at the Microsoft Worldwide Partner Conference 2003 in New Orleans, October 9-11.

Autodesk Manufacturing's Design and Data Management Solutions

Autodesk Manufacturing Solutions Division's design and data management solutions help customers solve critical business challenges by giving them a comprehensive set of tools to innovate, increase productivity, optimize processes, and bring higher quality products to market faster for less cost. Unlike other offerings on the market today, Autodesk's design and data management solutions solve problems for small and medium-sized manufacturers, especially those that cannot tolerate large-scale product lifecycle management installations. Autodesk's design and data management solutions are easy to install and use, providing rapid results without complex, costly installations. These solutions include AutoCAD and AutoCAD(R) Mechanical software, the Autodesk Inventor(R) Professional and Autodesk Inventor Series 3D mechanical design packages that are integrated with the new Autodesk Vault functionality that is available to customers on subscription only, and the Autodesk Streamline(R) collaboration service. In addition, customers can take advantage of widely available third-party applications purpose-built for Autodesk software and they can utilize Autodesk Professional Services to garner greater value from their software.

The Autodesk(R) Subscription Program is the most efficient way for Autodesk customers to stay current with the latest design technology and to benefit from simplified software management and easy budgeting. For products like Autodesk Inventor software with a history of rapid development, the program provides a timely cycle of new releases with rich new content as soon as it becomes available. For more information, visit www.autodesk.com/manufacturing.

About Autodesk

Autodesk is the world's leading design software and digital content company, offering customers progressive business solutions through powerful technology products and services. Autodesk helps customers in the building, manufacturing, infrastructure, digital media, and wireless data services fields increase the value of their digital design data and improve efficiencies across their entire project lifecycle management processes. For more information about the company, see www.autodesk.com.

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CONTACT: Cindi Goodsell of Autodesk, Inc., +1-415-507-8452, or cindi.goodsell@autodesk.com.

SOURCE Autodesk, Inc.

Cindi Goodsell of Autodesk, Inc., +1-415-507-8452, or

cindi.goodsell@autodesk.com

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