

Singapore, October 15, 2002

.NET MySingapore Announces New Partners to Bring XML Web Services Closer to Singaporeans

Singaporeans will soon experience how Web Services can make life more convenient and take the hassle out of everyday tasks. To support this primary objective, the leaders of .NET MySingapore, the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA Singapore) and Microsoft today announced three new partners - the Institute of Systems Science (ISS), National Computer Systems (NCS) and NTUC Income. Together, they create the world's first living lab for XML (Extensible Markup Language) Web Services.

First announced in April 2002 by IDA Singapore and Microsoft, .NET MySingapore is a collaborative project to develop XML Web Services in Singapore. The project also aims to tap into the potential of Web Services for opportunities to build new infocomm skills and knowledge as well as open new avenues of business.

IDA Singapore Chairman Lam Chuan Leong said, ".NET MySingapore is in line with IDA's efforts to leverage the potential and growth of Web Services. We have identified Web Services as one of the areas that Singapore can play a leadership role, and become an engine of growth for our software and IT services industry."

In line with the collaborative spirit of .NET MySingapore, both IDA Singapore and Microsoft have invited the new partners on board. Each partner brings industry leadership to the project. The ISS is a leader in IT training, NCS is a premier IT service and engineering provider, and NTUC Income has consistently shown its customers how it can make their daily tasks even more convenient through the Internet.

"This is a great example of how governments are working with the software industry and its partners to create Web Services--and helping people realise their full potential at home and at work," said Microsoft Chief Executive Steve Ballmer in Singapore today.

.NET MySingapore consists of four distinct pillars: Community XML Web Services, Training, Overseas Development and Emerging Technologies Exploration.

Community XML Web Services

NTUC Income is the services aggregator in this first pillar of .NET MySingapore. Through .NET MySingapore, NTUC Income will enhance its existing online services for its 1 million policyholders and the public.

NTUC Income's contribution to the XML Web Services project will be unveiled later today, at the launch of www.BigTrumpet.com.sg. The site will enable the public to easily access and utilise online services, enjoying the convenience of transacting in a personalised environment with a number of organisations simultaneously.

NTUC Income Chief Executive Tan Kin Lian said, "By incorporating XML Web Services into our existing online services, we hope to create a whole new experience for our customers and business partners." NTUC Income is also partnering with Hewlett-Packard (HP) and TrustedHub on BigTrumpet. HP is providing the agile IT infrastructure and managed services, and Trusted Hub is providing a highly secure and certified Electronic Trusted Vault for the creation, storage and management of electronic content for BigTrumpet.

Microsoft, through its .NET initiative, provides an XML Web Services framework for organisations like NTUC Income that can be adapted and implemented into existing Internet structures. .NET enables the sharing and combination of information with other systems on any platform, and provides tailored solutions for organizations and people.

As a key partner in this pillar, NCS provides the innovative portal framework and smart engine to power the .NET MySingapore programme. NCS also works closely with the participating government agencies and business partners to develop and integrate their respective Web Services.

NCS' Chief Executive Officer Lee Kwok Cheong said, "NCS is pleased to contribute our expertise on large-scale systems integration and Web Services design to .NET MySingapore. Through .NET MySingapore, we have further enlarged our spectrum of offerings. We aim to power many more collaborative Web Services to create unparalleled value for our partners in the public and private sectors, and the community at large."

Training

ISS, working together with Microsoft, has developed a new training curriculum for post-graduates. By the end of the year, 70 full-time ISS graduate diploma students will attend four .NET-related course modules.

ISS Director Lim Swee Cheang said, "By July 2003, three .NET-related electives will be made available to our 400 part-time masters students. We will also launch a .NET-based e-learning short course next year. We hope to expand beyond this in the near future. In particular, our intention is to package and transfer this curriculum to other institutes of higher learning in Singapore. Also, in collaboration with Microsoft and other interested partners, we are looking into the possibility of creating a .NET certification scheme for IT professionals."

Microsoft Corp. has committed resources to this pillar. In particular, Microsoft will provide specialised expertise, make available existing content and conduct research to make a significant contribution to the development and delivery of the courses.

The training project team is in the process of setting up a steering committee to oversee the curriculum definition and to ensure its relevance to development of local IT professionals. The committee will consist of members from leading educational and tertiary institutions, and leading .NET user organisations in Singapore.

Overseas Development

The third component of .NET MySingapore is the establishment of a Microsoft-IDA Singapore overseas development programme designed to provide Singaporean IT enterprises with a voice and unprecedented direct access to new web service technologies emerging in the US. This pillar gives local businesses the opportunity to further enhance their development capabilities, global competitiveness and overseas market share. Under this pillar, a position at Microsoft Corp, Redmond will be created and co-funded by Microsoft and IDA Singapore to manage this programme. Currently in its early stages, the new position will be filled, and Singapore-based partners will be identified by 1Q 2003.

Emerging Technologies Exploration

.NET MySingapore is currently examining ways of establishing Singapore as an emerging technology development hub. By working closely with Microsoft Corp. in Redmond, along with leading academic and industry researchers in Singapore, .NET MySingapore will identify the shape and form this can take in the coming months.

About .NET MySingapore

.NET MySingapore (pronounced *dot-net my Singapore*) is a strategic partnership between IDA Singapore and Microsoft and is aimed at bringing Singapore to a higher level of Internet connectivity through first-of-its-kind services that will allow Singaporeans to take advantage of leading edge technologies. .NET MySingapore comprises four pillars. They are:

- The creation of community XML Web Services that enable Singapore citizens to easily access and utilise community services and organizations.
- The development of a new training curriculum and the world's first programme for certifying Web Services professionals, and establishing a Microsoft .NET Professional Certification.
- The establishment of a Microsoft-IDA Singapore overseas development programme designed to give Singaporean developers better access to new Web Services technologies developed by Microsoft in the United States. This will involve the creation of a position at Microsoft's research facilities in Redmond, Washington, co-funded by Microsoft and IDA Singapore.
- The establishment of an emerging technologies exploration initiative to work with academia and industry. This is another vehicle used to bring the .NET environment closer to Singapore. This would enable researchers to investigate new programming approaches and then test them in Microsoft's real-world software development environment.

About IDA Singapore

The Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA Singapore) is a dynamic organisation with an integrated perspective to developing, promoting and regulating info-communications in Singapore. In the fast-changing and converging spheres of telecommunications, information and media technologies, IDA Singapore will be the catalyst for change and growth in Singapore's evolution into a vibrant global info-communications technology centre. For more information, visit www.ida.gov.sg.

About ISS

The Institute of Systems Science (ISS) of National University of Singapore (NUS) is a premier IT knowledge transfer institute that supports IT manpower development through education, research and consulting services. It provides broad-based industry-oriented IT courses for IT professionals and postgraduates in areas such as strategic IT management, knowledge management, IT project management, software engineering and knowledge engineering. It also provides customised training programmes for top and middle management personnel. Over the years, ISS has trained some 27,000 people in the IT industry. For more information, visit <http://www.iss.nus.edu.sg>.

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (NASDAQ "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and Internet technologies for personal and business computing. The company offers a wide range of products and services designed to empower people through great software -- any time, any place and on any device. For more information, visit www.microsoft.com.

About NCS

With a presence in nine locations over six countries across the Asia Pacific, National Computer Systems Pte Ltd (NCS), a wholly owned subsidiary of the SingTel Group, is the region's leading information technology (IT) and engineering services provider. NCS helps its customers gain a competitive edge through the strategic implementation of infocomm and engineering solutions. With a regional workforce of 2,800 dedicated professionals, NCS is well positioned to engage in a long-term partnership to bring business value to our customers. For more information, visit www.ncs.com.sg.