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WorkPlace Systems scoops In-Store Systems Award at Microsoft RAD Awards

Milton Keynes, 2nd March 2006 -- WorkPlace Systems, a leading supplier of integrated Workforce Management solutions, has won the In-Store Systems Award for its Workforce Management solution, WorkPlace ChangePlanner, in the annual Microsoft EMEA Retail Application Developer (RAD) Awards ceremony held in Düsseldorf, Germany in front of more than 400 guests from some of Europe's leading retailers.

WorkPlace ChangePlanner was selected for meeting four key criteria in the 'In-Store category: Quantifiable business benefits, Best use of available Microsoft technology, Ease of adoption and Best integration and exploitation of Intranet and Internet technology.

WorkPlace ChangePlanner, which is used by companies including Metro Cash & Carry, Next and Sports Café, allows retailers to look at the balance between existing staff schedules and the demands of customers. It identifies the optimum shifts for a typical week, providing alternative staffing scenarios ranging from small impact changes to working hours through to redefinition of the full-time/part-time mix, using details of footfall, deliveries and point-of-sale, information, combined with labour standards. This helps ensure that peak periods can be more accurately planned and the right number of extra staff can be scheduled and recruited.

Now in their sixth year, the Awards attracted entries across EMEA including: Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Norway and the UK, among other countries. The judges were Michael Gerling (EHI), Austin Bendall (Cornwell Management Consultants), Edward Westenberg (Capgemini), Georg Kube (HP) and Hansjoerg Bausch (Kaufhof).

Ian Lenagan, chairman and CEO of WorkPlace Systems, said, “WorkPlace Systems is delighted to gain this prestigious award and against such a high level field of competing entries across the whole of EMEA. The award reflects our ability and commitment to the retail market to deliver superior, innovative Workforce Management products that give our customers’ tangible value in their store operations by reducing costs and raising customer service levels to provide a strong ROI.”

The WorkPlace product set is a fully integrated, web-based suite of Workforce Management software which services the strategic requirements for Budgeting and Labour Modelling in addition to the operational demands of Labour Forecasting, Scheduling, Time and Attendance and Performance Reporting. With the addition of ChangePlanner, retailers can further optimise their resources to meet staff, customer and budgetary requirements.

“This year’s RAD winners are focused on helping retailers achieve greater customer intimacy irrespective of channel, with a more integrated and collaborative business approach,” said Dilip Popat, managing director, EMEA Retail Industry Unit, Microsoft. “The winning companies demonstrate that a connected environment can maximise the potential of existing systems and link with those of external partners to help deliver the optimum shopping experience.”

About WorkPlace Systems

WorkPlace Systems was founded in 1986 and is listed on the London Stock Exchange (WSI), WorkPlace is a leading supplier of Workforce Management software and of consulting solutions which increase customer service significantly and reduce labour costs. The WorkPlace product set is a fully integrated, web-based suite of Workforce Management software which services the strategic requirements for Budgeting and Labour Modeling in addition to the operational demands of Labour Forecasting, Scheduling, Time and Attendance and Performance Reporting. With a particular focus in Retail, Hospitality, Emergency Services and Transportation, WorkPlace has been implemented in some of the largest and most complex Workforce Management environments in the world.

Clients in the retail and hospitality industry include: Argos, IKEA (UK), Littlewoods, Metro Cash & Carry, Rank Group, Safeway, Sports Café, Whitbread Restaurants, Woolworths (SA), World Duty Free.

WorkPlace Systems is headquartered in the UK and has regional offices in Italy, Australia and the USA

For more information visit: www.workplace-systems.com

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realise their full potential.

About Microsoft EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa)

Microsoft has operated in EMEA since 1982. In the region Microsoft employs more than 12,000 people in over 55 subsidiaries, delivering products and services in more than 139 countries and territories.

About Microsoft Smarter Retailing

Microsoft Smarter Retailing helps retailers win today by leveraging current investments, and win tomorrow by easing delivery of new retail experiences. Consisting of Smarter Shopping, Smarter Selling and Smarter Operations, Microsoft Smarter Retailing is designed to close the loop between the retailer's strategy, the in-store execution and familiar technologies already in the consumer's hands. More information can be found at <http://www.microsoft.com/smarteretail>.

Current Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward looking statements which are not historical facts, but are based on certain assumptions and reflect WorkPlace Systems' current expectations. These forward-looking statements are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results or events to differ materially from current expectations. WorkPlace Systems disclaim any intention or obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Given these risks and uncertainties, investors should not place undue reliance of forward-looking statements as a prediction of actual results.