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AIMS Expands With Web Tools, Services

By Robert McAllister

Los Angeles-based software provider AIMS Technology Solutions Inc. is taking a step backward. Small- to mid-size apparel companies usually come to AIMS to handle sales and order processing. Now the company has expanded its product line to enable its clients to conduct transactions before the orders reach the accounting department. Having formed a partnership with Beverly Hills-based Focal Technology Inc., AIMS now offers transactional tools such as electronic shopping carts as well as Web development services at costs well below those of other third-party vendors.

The tools allow AIMS customers and others to conduct transaction through an e-commerce site or a B2b online showroom-type environment, allowing them to export the data into the AIMS system. AIMS handles the rest of the process, including processing ASN (advanced shipping notifications) and EDI transactions, bill of material, letters of credit, cutting tickets, factor assignment and inventory tracking.

The new applications are a missing piece of a puzzle AIMS has been working on. By providing a transactional platform, users can go paperless and even place orders at a trade show, provided there is a wireless environment.

The partnership also allows AIMS/Focal to help companies build their e-commerce and B2B Web presence from the ground up if needed.

In addition, Focal is a Microsoft gold-certified partner, which a title awarded only to the software giant's top customers. This allows Focal/AIMS to participate in beta testing as well as expediting customer support. It also has allowed AIMS to stage events such as Microsoft's "Truck Across America" demo in June, when a 42-foot mobile studio was brought to the Los Angeles Fashion District to promote AIMS' and Focal's products.

The shopping-cart technology gives users full administrative capabilities as well as a secure environment through SSL encryption and a Hack Resistant seal of approval, which is akin to anti-virus software.

"They can bring their Web or e-commerce environments into their shopping carts the same way you would change the background for your Windows environment. It's easy," explained Focal's Shahin Kohan. The system also allows users to zoom in on product shots as well as incorporate features such as celebrity blogs, generate gift certificates and discounts, and employ marketing tools such as Google product searches.

AIMS can integrate with the popular accounting program QuickBooks so users can view invoices, purchase orders, payments and account histories without re-keying data or switching to a different program.

"We're allowing the smaller companies to act like the giant companies, using the same type of system at a fraction of the cost. You can spend \$25,000 for a shopping cart or get one from us for \$175 a month," said Kohan.

AIMS Chief Executive Officer Scott Chaban agreed. "We provide as much functionality as six-figure software. The behind-the-scenes technical experience that comes with this is phenomenal. Not to diminish our customer, but they're getting a much better product than they even understand."

The alliance with Focal Technology is one of several AIMS has made over the past couple years to augment its service offerings. It recently partnered with Continental Business Credit for factoring and Groupe BDM for remote order-entry services. For more information visit www.aimstsi.com.

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