

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **iTools Online dives into UK's Big Blue**

At 8pm New Zealand time, it is 9am in London. An IBM employee in the UK grabs a coffee, sits down at their desk, and logs onto an Auckland server to find out what they will be doing that day. They log onto New Zealand-based iTools Control, a software application used to project manage one of IBM UK's larger client implementations.

IBM, commonly referred to as the Big Blue, is the world's largest provider of IT products and related business and technology services, with revenues of \$86 billion in 2001 and 320,000 employees worldwide. IBM UK employs around 20,000 permanent employees and 5,000 contract staff alone.

Counting IBM UK as one of your clients is something many established technology companies aspire to. For two year old Auckland based technology company iTools Online, forging a client relationship with IBM UK has been "something we would never have dreamed of a year ago, and a huge step forward", according to Managing Director Chris Bulman.

Ignition Partner Executive Director Chad Wilkie helps shape innovative companies and is also a director of Deloitte Ventures and The Icehouse. Mr Wilkie has had a long track record working in this sector in New Zealand and believes "this could arguably be the smartest technology start-up deal in New Zealand's history. It is remarkable. Name me another NZ company that sells to IBM in the UK after just two years of starting up?"

5000 user licences for iTools Control were sold to IBM Global Consultancy UK in February 2003. So what do iTools Online have that the Big Blue needs?

What iTools Online offered IBM UK is a scalable solution to manage a large, complex project via the web.

IBM UK Global Consultancy are rolling out a very large Customer Relationship Management (CRM) implementation. Their client is so big and owns so many household brands that it touches every household in Britain in some way. Just one of its brands has a customer base of 60 million people.

The complexity of such a project is immense.

iTools Online is providing their software to just one part of this project for one of the client's consumer brands. This initiative alone is a two year programme of work with more than 50 projects underneath it.

According to iTools Online Marketing and Sales Director Hamish Miles "IBM needed an Internet-based solution to manage the project. They found there was nothing they could implement as fast or cost effectively as iTools Control."

"Using iTools Control, they had a project management platform up and running within five days on a pilot. In that time, we had trained 50 of their staff to use iTools Control, and they were able to get started on the project straight away."

"The scale of the project is huge. It involves 2000 issues and risks. Before we came along, they had been using manual processes to manage the project. There was no data sharing between users making coordination of the project and risk management near impossible", said Mr Miles.

iTools' solution is testament to the changes in today's business environment. With the consolidation of global brands, mergers and acquisitions, today's projects are more complex, involve many more parties, are geographically dispersed, and demand collaboration and flexibility if they are to succeed.

It is an environment where someone in New York needs to report a project's status to his or her board at 8:00am New York time, while at the same time in London, a team member working on the same project needs to report to their line manager on tasks completed.

The only way to share data, coordinate and manage such complex projects is through web-based applications such as iTools Control. It is territory where the quick,

nimble and scalable reigns supreme, and where the Application Service Provider (ASP) model really comes into its own.

“The biggest benefit to the client is visibility. As it is web-based, all the users can see what each other has done, what tasks need completing, what tasks are overdue and why they are overdue”, said Mr Miles.

“Users can access project information anytime on any time zone from anywhere, making it ideal for companies that need to deliver projects across countries and time zones”.

“Also reporting is a lot easier. People who used to spend three days a month on status reporting now spend half a day using iTools Control.”

“One of the major benefits of iTools Control is its scalability. It can be used for projects which involve five people through to projects involving thousands of people”, said Mr Miles.

The IBM deal has helped iTools Online scale up to meet the UK market. “It is unusual in New Zealand to get projects with the sheer scale and complexity of the IBM project. It has helped us gear up to meet the market’s expectations”, said Mr Bulman.

iTools Online is opening an office in London in the coming months to expand its UK business operations.

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