



Covast Introduces the Business Bot, the World's First B2B Appliance for Supply Chain Hubs

ATLANTA – February 6, 2007 – Covast, a leading provider of business-to-business (B2B) integration solutions, today introduced the world's first B2B appliance for large supply chain hubs. The Covast Business Bot, or BBot, automatically enables seamless integration between the complex supply chain systems of large hubs and their smaller suppliers. BBot is virtually maintenance-free, requiring only a LAN with internet connection to facilitate immediate integration across the supply chain.

BBot solves a fundamental problem with supply chain integration and visibility. Most large hubs use many complex supply chain systems to conduct business, while small suppliers use less complex systems, spreadsheets or email. BBot overcomes this challenge by automatically connecting and integrating the supply chain systems of hubs with the Microsoft Office environments of their smaller suppliers.

Built on Microsoft technology, BBot is a network appliance of pre-configured hardware and software. To work, a hub publishes a profile of its different supply chain systems and processes to the network. Suppliers simply plug BBot into their LAN and the appliance automatically configures itself to the hub profile. Using Microsoft Office, BBot instantly bridges supply chain systems, allowing real-time integration between hubs and suppliers.

Source PRO, a provider of outsourced supply chain services in the auto manufacturing industry, recently implemented the Covast B2B Suite for Automotive. One of the primary reasons the company selected this solution is the development of BBot, which will solve major supply chain challenges for Source PRO's customers. Currently, major auto manufacturers require suppliers to respond to Request for Quotes (RFQ) using electronic B2B document formats. Many small and mid-sized suppliers do not have the IT infrastructure in place to support these formats, thus precluding them from the RFQ process. BBot, which is fully supported by the Covast B2B Suite, will allow suppliers to complete RFQs regardless of format and internal support for various B2B document formats. BBot will automatically transform and route RFQs to suppliers while transmitting them back to hubs in the required document formats.

"Covast's new appliance technology will be a win-win for everyone in the supply chain. Hubs can do business more efficiently with a wider selection of vendors. That will translate into increased efficiencies and profits for all parties," said Gautom Bose, executive vice president, Source PRO.

The impact of BBot extends beyond supply chain visibility and integration. Other benefits include:

- **Increased responsiveness to market and customer demand.** Hubs can react to market and demand changes in real-time.
- **Easy supplier and regulatory compliance.** BBot gives small suppliers the integration infrastructure needed for hubs to comply with RFID, SOX and other regulations.
- **Reduced IT costs.** BBot requires virtually no setup or maintenance.
- **Maximized value of existing IT investments.** BBot improves ERP, CRM and other supply chain systems by giving each system consistent, accurate and timely data.

"We think BBot is a landmark innovation in supply chain technology. For as long as IT has been a part of the supply chain, there have been integration issues between large hubs and small suppliers. BBot





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overcomes this issue with – quite literally – the flip of a switch. That means better business for everyone – hubs, suppliers and, ultimately, consumers,” said Daan Scheer, CEO, Covast.

The general availability of BBot will be April 2007. To learn more about the Covast Business Bot, please visit www.covast.com.

About Covast

Covast is a leading provider of business-to-business integration solutions for collaborative business environments. The company provides integration solutions that bridge the gap between legacy electronic data interchange (EDI) applications and today's new Internet standards. The suite of products that Covast offers is designed to facilitate fast and cost-effective business-to-business integration with single platform environments, such as those supported by Microsoft BizTalk Server and IBM WebSphere. Covast is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and an IBM Business Partner. With its European headquarters in the Netherlands and its U.S. headquarters in Atlanta, Covast has strategic relationships with partners and customers including GXS, Accenture, EDS, HP, Citrix and Siemens. For more information, visit <http://www.covast.com>.

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