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Microsoft and Key Universal Plug and Play Supporters Announce Forum To Advance Universal Plug and Play

Preliminary Universal Plug and Play Specifications And Source Code Available Through Forum Web Site

LOS ANGELES - April 7, 1999 - Microsoft Corp. and six companies announced today at the Windows® Hardware Engineering Conference and Exhibition (WinHEC) 99 the formation of the Universal Plug and Play Forum, a group of companies promoting Universal Plug and Play networking protocols and device interoperability standards based on open Web-based protocols. Initially, Universal Plug and Play members will work with Microsoft to enable device-to-device interoperability by promoting Universal Plug and Play protocols and cooperatively developing and contributing XML schemas for device description, naming and HTML-based control. The Universal Plug and Play specifications and preliminary source code for technology evaluation are available at the Forum's Web site at <http://www.upnp.org/>.

"Intel believes that consumer-friendly home networking is extremely important as multiple PC households proliferate," said Dr. Kevin Kahn, Director of Communications Architecture in the Intel Architecture Labs. "We are pleased to be one of the first companies to support the Universal Plug and Play Forum and believe that open specifications are the fastest way to make the vision of connectivity among home devices a reality."

To support the Universal Plug and Play Forum design process, Microsoft will create and maintain a Web site (<http://www.upnp.org>) that will include background information on Universal Plug and Play, the Universal Plug and Play Forum and its activities, Universal Plug and Play source code, white papers, XML dialect, developer kits and membership information. Upnp.org will contain the namespace and be the repository for device and service descriptions created through the forum process and using the forum conventions. Microsoft will publish conventions for the repository at the organizational meeting of the Universal Plug and Play Forum in Redmond, Wash., on June 7, 1999.

The Universal Plug and Play Forum is open to any company wanting to participate in driving the adoption of Universal Plug and Play. Companies with interests in particular device classes should become Universal Plug and Play Forum members and participate in the process to design schema templates for their device classes.

"The formation of the Universal Plug and Play Forum is the next step in delivering on Microsoft's vision, first outlined at the Consumer Electronics Show, of computing everywhere, connecting everything," said Alec Saunders, group planning manager of Microsoft's Productivity

Computer Corp., Gateway 2000 and Axis Communications Inc. have already agreed to participate in the Universal Plug and Play Forum's first meeting.

About Universal Plug and Play

Universal Plug and Play is the next phase of the Plug and Play initiative introduced by Intel, Compaq and Microsoft in 1992. It is a cross-industry effort to define a set of common interfaces that describe devices and services, allow automatic discovery when a device is plugged into a network, and allow other devices and people to use them without complicated setup or configuration. Universal Plug and Play is a key element in Microsoft's standards-based vision of simple networking, where easy-to-configure intelligent appliances, networked peripherals, PCs and the services they provide become peers on networks in homes and businesses and do not require the presence of a PC or any Microsoft® Windows operating system.

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software for personal computers. The company offers a wide range of products and services for business and personal use, each designed with the mission of making it easier and more enjoyable for people to take advantage of the full power of personal computing every day.

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Supporting Companies for Universal Plug and Play Forum

"We are committed to the Universal Plug and Play Forum because we believe that standards are the fastest way to make the vision of communicating devices a reality. With the broad industry support of the forum, creative standards will be promoted that will result in connectivity solutions being available much sooner."

- Bengt Christensson

Chief Technical Officer

Axis Communications

"Dell is proud to be one of the charter members of the Universal Plug and Play Forum. As networking moves into the home, common specifications and standards will create a variety of interoperable devices from diverse industries."

- Eric Harslem

Sr. Vice President of Technology

Dell Computer



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industry support, will promote more creative standards that will result in consumer devices being available much sooner."

- Jim Bell

General Manager

Embedded Software Operation

Hewlett-Packard

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