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STRATUS AND EDI SOLUTIONS, INC. ANNOUNCE
FIRST EDI TRANSLATION SOFTWARE FOR XA2000 SYSTEMS

Third-Party Pact Targets Companies' Emerging Requirements for Electronic Data Interchange

Marlboro, Mass. -- October 17, 1989 -- Stratus Computer, Inc., a leading supplier of fault-tolerant computers for on-line transaction processing, and EDI Solutions, Inc., a Minneapolis-based developer of electronic data interchange (EDI) software, today announced a marketing agreement that will make EDI Solutions' EDItran® software available on Stratus® XA™2000 Continuous Processing® Systems.

The partnership targets the emerging market for EDI systems in the retail, distribution, and manufacturing industries, and adds to the the suite of on-line applications Stratus already offers users in these core markets. A growing number of companies in these and other industries, such as transportation, are adding EDI capabilities to support the computer-to-computer exchange of data for routine business transactions such as purchase orders, shipping notices, bills of lading, and invoices.

Running EDItran software, the Stratus XA2000 is especially suited as a gateway for processing all of a company's inbound and outbound EDI traffic. EDItran is an EDI translation software program that converts data formats used by applications running on a company's internal information systems into standard formats that can be accepted by its trading partners' computers.

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The software enables companies to transmit and accept transactions in the widely-used ANSI (American National Standards Institute) X12 standards in addition to industry-specific and international standards.

Stratus XA2000s offer a wide variety of communications interfaces, enabling the EDItran software to perform its translation function between virtually any business system within a company and the external networks and systems used by trading partners. Just as important, the XA2000's fault tolerance provides the continuous system availability (or up-time) needed to keep transactions flowing between a company and its trading partners.

"With EDItran software running on Stratus' fault-tolerant XA2000 Systems, companies now have a high-volume EDI gateway that assures the timely flow of critical business information between their internal information systems and their customers and suppliers," said Dick Jacobson, Stratus' marketing manager for the retail and distribution industries.

"EDI is the information lifeline that makes operating strategies such as quick response merchandising and just-in-time manufacturing possible. As corporations conduct more of their business-to-business transactions electronically, continuous system availability such as Stratus provides will be essential in keeping companies 'open for business,' " he added.

EDItran can run on Stratus' higher-end XA2000 Models 110 - 160 in conjunction with a company's other critical, on-line applications, such as credit authorization, point-of-sale data collection, inventory control, materials handling, and factory-floor control. Companies can also take advantage of Stratus' entry-level Model 30, introduced earlier this month, as a dedicated EDI gateway.

EDI Transactions Supported for Retail, Distribution, Manufacturing, and Other Industries

EDItran's broad, cross-industry support for EDI standards enable companies to electronically conduct transactions with trading partners in a variety of industries. The software supports the leading EDI transaction sets (sets of information needed to conduct standard business transactions) in use today, including the ANSI X12-based standards used by the automotive, steel, paper, chemical, electrical, electronics, and retail industries.

Support for other widely-used transaction sets includes those used by the transportation, warehouse, and grocery industries. The software also enables companies to handle EDI-based transactions with international trading partners, through support of the EDIFACT standard.

To accommodate trading partners who may operate using different revision levels of the standard, EDItran lets companies use multiple versions of the same standard concurrently. As new versions of the standards are issued, users automatically receive updated releases of the EDItran software. This enables companies to keep current with revisions to the standards without the burden of maintaining changes and additions themselves.

Flexibility Accommodates Trading Partner Relationships

EDItran enables companies to establish EDI profiles for each customer or supplier, so that versions of standards, valid transaction types, transmission envelopes, type of functional acknowledgement, and other parameters can be tailored to a particular trading partner's needs. If changes to trading partner profiles are required, end-users can access and modify the partner files interactively on the Stratus system.

The software also allows transactions to be separated into multiple inbound or outbound files, as determined by the transaction or the destination. Routing can be controlled by specifications in the trading partner's profile. Output can easily be directed to multiple communications facilities (outbound) or to different applications (inbound).

Integration With Internal Applications

EDI Solutions offers two options for interfacing EDItran's translation functions to internal applications running on the XA2000 or other systems. First, companies may perform the integration themselves using tools provided with EDItran. As an option, customers can contract for the EDImap® Application Interface Service, under which EDI Solutions will implement interfaces between EDItran and a company's internal applications.

These interfaces enable data to flow between the formats used by internal applications -- such as order processing, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and inventory control -- and the translation software on a Stratus XA2000, without the need to re-key transactions.

Supports Range of Communications Interfaces

With EDItran running on the Stratus XA2000, companies can select from a broad range of communications interfaces -- providing the flexibility to connect directly to trading partners' systems, to value-added networks, as well as to other systems within the company. These capabilities make the XA2000 platform well-suited as an EDI gateway between a company's various departments and its trading partners.

XA2000 Systems support communications software protocols and network hardware interfaces that help companies integrate their EDI applications with their existing data communications facilities. Stratus systems offer a communications platform that supports X.25, IBM SNA, DECnet™, and TCP/IP, plus Ethernet and Token Ring interconnects to local area networks.

Stratus also offers OSI Server software that supports development of applications, such as X.400 messaging, which comply with the international Open Systems Interconnect standards. To accommodate highly-specialized or proprietary protocols, Stratus offers user-programmable communications adapters which allow users to implement their own communications links.

Fault Tolerance Keeps EDI On-Line

As more companies conduct a larger share of their daily business transactions electronically, continuous system availability will grow in importance as a requirement for EDI. For example, a company's trading partners commonly have operational windows during which they accept and transmit transactions. Missing this window could result in inventory gaps for a retailer who operates on a quick-response basis or in material shortages for a manufacturer who operates with a just-in-time strategy.

To ensure uninterrupted processing, Stratus systems employ hardware-based fault tolerance so that applications can continue running even in the event of system errors or the failure of a component. XA2000 Systems use self-checking hardware logic to detect and isolate faults, and each major system component operates in lockstep with a partner. If the operation of a component -- such as a processor board or disk drive -- is interrupted, its twin continues processing at full speed. XA2000s automatically report system faults or interruptions to Stratus' Remote Service Network (RSN™) for fast problem resolution.

Pricing and Availability

Under the third-party marketing agreement with Stratus, customers will purchase the EDItran software directly from EDI Solutions. EDI Solutions will begin selling and supporting the software on Stratus XA2000 Systems in November, 1989. Prices for EDItran vary according to the XA2000 Model on which the software runs; they start at $18,000 on a low-end XA2000 Model 30. Installation and training are included in this fee.

EDI Solutions' EDImap Application Integration Service will also be available to Stratus XA2000 users. Price depends on the integration project being performed; a fixed price is established after specific customer requirements are defined.

Established in 1986, EDI Solutions, Inc. of Minneapolis, Minn. designs, develops, and supports EDI software solutions for minicomputer and mainframe systems. The company has installed its software at more than 130 sites in Fortune 500 companies and other leading firms.

Based in Marlboro, Mass., Stratus Computer, Inc. supplies a family of fault-tolerant computer systems for on-line transaction processing and communications control. One of the fastest growing companies in the computer industry, Stratus reported revenues of $265.3 million for fiscal year 1988, up 44 percent from $184.2 million in 1987.

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