

Local News - Local News - July 02, 2010

Softechnologies Co. acquires mobile dispatching software

Spokane concern employs 30 people, plans to create online service version

By Chey Scott

Of the Journal of Business

Softechnologies Co., a young Spokane-based software development company, says it has acquired a software product from a New Jersey-based concern that helps businesses organize and track field service workers.

The software, called Mobile Command Center, was owned by Antenna Software, and is used in field-service businesses that rely heavily on mobile communications to assign, dispatch, and track jobs that are completed outside of a company's walls, says Vance Blakely, president of Softechnologies. The software runs on most Smartphones, including Blackberry, Windows Mobile devices, iPhone, and Google Android, and accesses data at a company's main server.

The acquisition includes all of the intellectual property, rights, and contracts related to the Mobile Command Center software, as well as select customers, Blakely says. He declines to disclose the financial terms of the transaction.

"The acquisition was extremely important to us," Blakely says. "It allowed us to secure the Mobile Command Center software and it is a technology that aligns very closely with the work we have been doing."

Softechnologies, which was founded in 1996, provides software development services and consulting, as well as technical support for the products and services it sells. It currently employs 30 people and is headquartered at 1504 W. Northwest Blvd.

Mobile Command Center allows field service-oriented businesses to complete every step of a business transaction electronically, from the initial service request by a customer to the billing, Blakely says.

Two of the customer accounts that were transferred to Softechnologies as part of the acquisition were Abbott Labs, a global health-care company based in Illinois, and Telecom New Zealand, the main telecommunications provider in New Zealand, he says. The Spokane company also has designated UXC Mobility, of Australia, as a certified reseller of the Mobile Command Center software, Blakely says.

Mobile Command Center is primarily targeted at companies with 100 or more employees, but Softechnologies also is working on a project to create and market an online service using the Mobile Command Center software to make the technology available to smaller companies, he says. The company plans to market the online product using the Internet name freefieldservice.com, and will offer businesses one feature of the product free of charge, in hopes that they'll buy more options if they like the product, he says.

"We think this will revolutionize the field-service industry for micro businesses," Blakely says. "We are going to bring this to them online so they can access a very sophisticated call, scheduling, and dispatching solution all powered by Mobile Command Center."

He adds that small companies will benefit most from the service because of the current economic challenges.

Softechnologies is in the process of launching a market test of freefieldservice.com in the Inland Northwest and is seeking small businesses to participate, he says.