

1ST INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS ACCREDITATION FOR E-PROCUREMENT PLATFORM

Submitted by: Powell Communications

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Birmingham based, technology and e-procurement vendor Probrand has secured a major breakthrough by becoming the first organisation in the UK to have an e-procurement solution fully accredited by The Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW).

Probrand is the first e-procurement solution provider to have its software accredited by the Institute. The Institute has provided accreditation for Probrand's e-procurement engine, which drives the company's IT Index technology procurement solution. The announcement follows more than 12 months work with Probrand to prove the power of its software.

Probrand's IT Index is believed to be Europe's largest e-procurement hub for IT products and it features more than 60,000 products from more than 500 vendors.

The accreditation represents a significant milestone for Birmingham based Probrand and it provides the company with a powerful endorsement of its product set. Probrand is now looking to roll its e-procurement solution to other vertical markets beyond the IT sector.

The IT Index enables organisations to secure best price and availability on a wide range of IT products from a laptop or desktop PC through to printer toner cartridges. Since its launch two years ago, The IT Index has grown significantly and secured customers including British Bakeries, Golden West Foods, Unipart, Marks & Spencer, Geest and Motorworld. Last year the IT Index generated sales of more than £2M and this year it is on target to double this.

On average, organisations using The IT Index are saving as much as two days a week in time that used to be spent by procurement staff ringing around suppliers to secure best price and availability on products.

Because the solution is web based, Probrand is able to offer its solution to companies on a monthly rented ASP (application service provider) basis and it does not charge suppliers for transactions. Probrand works with a customer's existing suppliers to integrate them into the e-procurement hub and this enables a customer to continue dealing with trusted and reliable suppliers. This approach has already delivered a highly successful IT procurement solution and the company is confident this can be replicated across all areas of an enterprise.

Commenting on the accreditation, Stephen Bushell, Group Head of New Business Development at Probrand, said: "This represents a massive step forwards for us. To be the first e-procurement solution provider to receive accreditation from the Institute highlights the fact that our software has achieved the highest accolade.

Craig McLellan of the Institute said: "The IT Index is an exciting new procurement solution and I am delighted that Probrand have successfully completed the accreditation process. We are looking forward to working with the company in the months ahead and believe the solution has the potential to increase the

efficiency of the procurement process in many organisations.

John Oates Information Systems Partner of Chartered Accountants and business advisers, Baker Tilly, believes: "The IT Index is a powerful and proven solution that enables organisations to generate significant fiscal savings in the area of IT procurement. With an increasing number of enterprises focusing considerable effort on their procurement processes, I believe that the IT Index provides a boxed and ready solution for organisations looking to adopt best practice."

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Established in 1992, Probrand is a major supplier of top branded computer products - ranging from a floppy disk to a fully implemented network. Located in the heart of Birmingham, and employing more than 50 people, Probrand is a multi million pound corporation servicing a wide range of business customers throughout the UK.

It is one of only 65 HP resellers (out of a total of 4000) in the UK – and the first business in the Birmingham area - to have achieved this highly acclaimed accreditation. It has been appointed as a result of its ability to deliver the highest level of service and advice on IT to SMEs

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