IDEAL FOCUSES ON NAS INITIATIVES TO MEET GROWING CUSTOMER DEMAND FOR ENTERPRISE STORAGE SOLUTIONS

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By 2003 20 per cent of all servers shipped will be NAS devices, equating to $6.7 billion (source: IDC). Ideal envisage the huge potential of this explosive market and has announced its focus and investment into the NAS market in a drive to be the No. 1 NAS distributor in the UK and Europe. Ideal has implemented a number of initiatives which address the emerging storage requirements of its customers and positions it as a one-stop-shop for all NAS solutions.

Ideal's NAS team, headed up by newly appointed group product manager Mike Collins, is dedicated to bringing education, clarity and expertise to resellers in the ever-evolving market of storage solutions. Mike comments: "The increasing demand for more storage now and in the future is inevitable. Analysts predict that over the next few years 75 per cent of all IT spend will be on storage with NAS being the fastest growing segment. Our NAS team is there to help customers successfully deploy and manage their NAS solutions giving us a distinct competitive advantage.

"Our competitors in the UK and Europe are talking about NAS but few are investing enough. Ideal is not only investing heavily in the market but is building a fully integrated portfolio that will allow customers to choose the NAS solutions that best fit their market. We also offer fully interoperable SAN solutions which complement and enhance the rest of our storage offerings. I forecast that over the next three years we will see our NAS sales double every 12 months as more and more businesses recognise the benefits of this technology on the efficient operation of their business."

Following US Bell Microproducts' success in the US NAS market, Ideal will spearhead Bell Microproducts Europe's NAS operation through the launch of a range of NAS solutions across the UK and Europe. With plans to continue enhancing and developing its NAS portfolio of products and services, Ideal already offers a range of interoperable NAS and SAN solutions from premier vendors such as Snap, Sun Cobalt, Auspex, Passport2Learn (Internet solutions for educational institutions) and Maxattach from Maxtor.

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Editor's Note:

Ideal Hardware Limited www.ideal.co.uk the wholly owned subsidiary of US based Bell Microproducts Inc., is a leading UK based value-added, storage-centric distributor focusing on the high end of the storage market. Ideal is also a leading distributor of Compaq servers, PCs and storage products and is one of only 12 Compaq distributors worldwide to be awarded the prestigious CIP accreditation for high-end products. Ideal has strategic relationships with approximately 80 suppliers of Enterprise storage, computer systems, software and media products. These strategic products are packaged with Ideal's value-added programmes and services to provide complete NAS, SAS and SAN solutions.

Bell Microproducts Inc is an international value-added provider of a wide range of high technology products, solutions, and services to the industrial and commercial marketplace. The company's offering includes semiconductors, computer platforms, peripherals, and storage products of various types including desktop, high-end computer and storage subsystems, fibre channel connectivity products, RAID, NAS and SAN storage systems and back-up products. Bell Microproducts is an industry-recognized specialist in storage products and is one of the world's largest storage-centric value-added distributors. The company's products are available at any level of integration from components, to subsystem assemblies, to fully integrated, tested and certified system solutions. The company adds value with a broad range of services including testing, software loading, kitting, mass storage system integration, and computer system integration. Trained and certified technical personnel complete each of these processes at Bell Microproducts' ISO 9002 facilities. Bell Microproducts markets and distributes more than 150 brand name product lines, as well as its own BellStor storage and Trademark(R) computer brands, to original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), contract electronic manufacturing services (EMS) customers, value-added resellers (VARs) and system integrators in the Americas and Europe. More information can be found in SEC filings, or by visiting the Bell Microproducts Web site at http://www.bellmicro.com

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