

**SPECIAL
PCIA Global
Xchange
Edition!**

In-Touch NEWS

Volume 2 Number 2 • September 2000
An In-Touch Management Systems, Inc. Publication



Have any ideas for future stories? Write to us at: Editor, In-Touch News, One Huntington Quad, Suite 1C02, Melville, NY 11747, or e-mail suggestions to info@itms.com.

In-Touch Inks Deal with The Business Office

In-Touch Management Systems is partnering with The Business Office (TBO), a Nashville, TN-based service corporation providing a wide variety of business services to companies nationwide.

In-Touch is supplying the In-Touch II Business Management System to TBO. The company's Point-of-Sale System (POS), which interfaces with In-Touch II, will serve as the standard for a TBO client to set up accounts, enter inventory and activate pagers. TBO's client will also have the ability to print a "work order" at the TBO fulfillment desk to allow for special provisioning needs. This document will have the necessary information for operators to manually intervene as an agent for the TBO client with the required carrier for the pager being activated.

"We'll be utilizing In-Touch II in an ASP environment and using it on a per-transaction basis for customers," said Joe Gray, president of TBO. "It enables us to offer our current suite of business services in conjunction with serving as an ASP provider."

In addition to the new ASP platform that TBO is implementing as part of the new operational and marketing alliance, the company's business services include accounts receivable and payable management, bookkeeping, payroll and cash management, and financial reporting.

"We're thinking outside the traditional business paradigms and this will ultimately benefit both companies," said Alan J. Hills, president of In-Touch. "It will help us increase our market share and open up a new revenue stream for both firms."

Gray added that Franklin, TN-based NationLink is the first client to benefit from the new partnership. The company is a large paging and cellular phone reseller.

"In addition to processing transactions we're able to provide airtime services, direct debit, and more," Gray said. "Roll it together on a per-pager price for customers like NationLink and you have a real win-win situation for them."

Forging Ahead in the New Millennium



By Alan J. Hills
President
In-Touch
Management
Systems, Inc.

Last fall, one got the impression that the sky was falling and impending worldwide chaos was on the horizon come Jan. 1, 2000. Every PC around the globe would crash, software wouldn't function and the world as we know it would cease to exist.

Well, I'm pleased to report that we're all still here and most global hardware/software systems didn't come apart at the seams.

And that includes our In-Touch II. Not one of our customers worldwide experienced any problems because we anticipated the 'Y2K' situation back in the early 1980s. In fact, many of our customers insisted that we prove it was compliant. So we moved the date forward on a test machine and ran vari-

ous procedures to show the software would continue to work in 2000.

This is just one example of our foresight and innovation and we continue to apply this progressive thinking and philosophy as we move ahead in the 21st Century. In this issue of *In-Touch News*, for instance, read about a num-

ber of unique alliances we have established that will help our customers improve their productivity and reduce operational expenses. A one-of-a-kind installation done for one of our international customers in Saudi Arabia is a key example of how In-Touch adapts its technology to satisfy the ever-changing needs and requirements of our varied clientele.

Even though In-Touch is a "software developer," our principal "product" is customer service. Our longevity in the paging industry has been based upon working as a partner with our clients — not just as a vendor. This means

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ber of unique alliances we have established that will help our customers improve their productivity and reduce operational expenses. A one-of-a-kind installation done for one of our international customers in Saudi Arabia is a key example of how In-Touch adapts its technology to satisfy the ever-changing needs and requirements of our varied clientele. Lastly, we have initiated a number of internal operational improvements that have improved cus-

tomers. We look forward to continuing to serve our domestic and international clients. And I look forward to seeing you at PCIA Global XChange. Please stop by our booth — #1742!

We listen and take a "hands-on" role — we conduct "focus groups" and allow the software to evolve to meet the changing market place. So being In-Touch really means being "in touch" with those we exist to serve.

In-Touch



In-Touch Management Systems recently formed a strategic alliance with Shawnee, KS-based Brooklyn Group, Inc. (<http://www.brooklyngroup.com>), a full-service consulting firm specializing in information technology and retail marketing.

In-Touch is providing the Brooklyn Group with the latest version of In-Touch II, the company's business management system, pager provisioning interfaces for carriers who support resellers, and an active database for each established Brooklyn Group ASP client. This will allow the Brooklyn Group to offer In-Touch II features to its paging support product that they will provide to their clients through an ASP agreement.

"The alliance adds value to our clients as well as increasing market share and revenues for both companies," said Alan J. Hills, president of In-Touch. "It

In-Touch Forms Partnership with The Brooklyn Group

allows for a wireless agent to have a stable platform to activate and manage billing for their paging subscribers using their product powered by In-Touch II."

Douglas D. Whittenburg, president of The Brooklyn Group, added that traditionally, wireless resellers have had to come up with their own billing mechanism, dial into a carrier and double enter all client information into their own system and carrier's system.

"Now there will be a single point of entry and they will be able to capture, track activities and handle billing seamlessly through In-Touch II," he said. "The reseller also doesn't have to manage the system, software or servers — this is done by us. They simply pay us a flat monthly rate per paging subscriber. In return, resellers have a system that can be accessed over the Internet. Customers also have access to the servers we operate and they can

instantly activate customers."

The Brooklyn Group is providing the new service as part of its suite of services known as 'PAR' — Provided Applications for Retail. The firm now provides resellers with a complete suite of software to manage their business — paging, accounting, inventory, point of sale and carrier commission management.

"With In-Touch II, we're helping wireless resellers integrate these processes into their business, which enhances revenues and reduces operational costs," Whittenburg said. "We can send a page automatically to a customer notifying them of a bill or a past due notice. We can keep them from having to add expensive IT staff. They get revenue enhancement by having the customer database on site — they can do direct marketing for instance. It also reduces subscriber turnover."



SAUDI TELECOM COMPANY

In-Touch



In-Touch Wraps Up Telecom Project in Saudi Arabia

In-Touch recently completed a unique installation for the Saudi Telecom Company (<http://www.stc.com.sa>) through a partnership with National Advanced Systems Co., Ltd. (NASCO, <http://www.nasco.com.sa>) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. In-Touch created a user-friendly front-end interface for the Saudi Telecom Company (STC), which is using a paging system based on Motorola's Wireless Messaging Gateway (WGM) paging terminals.

NASCO, established in 1989, is a leading telecommunications company. It specializes in designing customized and integrated information technology and office automation solutions to companies in Saudi Arabia. The company is a licensed Motorola dealer and has installed the WGM system at STC. When operational, it will have a capacity of one million subscribers.

Steve Darnell, director of MIS for In-Touch, supervised the project on-site in Riyadh.

"We created a new product, the Remote Subscriber Administrative System (RSAS) that illustrates our company's ability to deliver a customized wireless/paging-related solution into any international working environment on fairly short notice," Darnell said.

RSAS is a provisioning and subscriber management system for activation and also features a database for subscribers. With RSAS, STC has an easy to administer interface utilizing In-Touch's core technology as a building block.

"We created a lot of new features for STC," Darnell said. "For example, the interface between the RSAS and WGM terminals will instantly notify a user if and when a subscriber transaction fails — a screen pop comes up stating the subscriber number and the error that occurred."

Profile

Jo Ann Keeps In-Touch Humming

Jo Ann Caracappa has one of the most pivotal and challenging positions at In-Touch. As vice president of operations, Jo Ann supervises the 50-person office staff. It's her responsibility to keep the company running as smoothly as a fine-tuned car.

After 18 months on the job, Jo Ann says one of her most notable achievements has been to initiate operational procedures that have greatly improved communications between employees and customers.



Jo Ann Caracappa

"It's important that we never forget that our customers are our number-one priority," she said. "We provide 24/7 service, 365 days a year, and our customers know that they can count on us anytime if they need assistance."

In fact, for one international customer, going the extra mile meant just that. Although most In-Touch II support is done remotely, one customer's unique circumstance required the work be done on-site. A two-person team flew overseas to conduct the upgrade.

"The customer was very excited that we sent a team to complete the modification," she said. "Sometimes you need to put forth more than the usual 100 percent and the customer was very appreciative of the extra effort."

As part of her ongoing goal to foster communication between In-Touch and its customers, Jo Ann has also initiated weekly conference calls between the Implementation Department and customers, beginning six to eight weeks prior to the "live date" or conversion. Once a customer has been live for a month, they then receive a call introducing them to the Customer Support Department, which handles their inquiries from that point.

Jo Ann has also instituted more extensive training for all employees, who receive continual instruction on the latest improvements, upgrades and enhancements of In-Touch II and various modules such as Point-of-Sale (POS) and Prepaid Services. Training instructions are also posted on the company's intranet.

While these and other operational procedures have improved productivity, Jo Ann does admit there is one area that still needs a lot of improvement. The company's softball team, which has dubbed themselves the Bad News Bears, went 0-15 in a Long Island, NY league comprised of other high technology and industrial firms.

"We're so busy keeping our customers satisfied, we don't have time to practice," she says. "There's always 'next year.'"

Client Focus

Focus on TRI-STAR Paging

At In-Touch, not only do we serve major industry players like Arch, MetroCall, PageNet and TSR Wireless, but we also meet the unique requests and specialized needs of numerous entrepreneurial wireless businesses.

Case in point is Moundsville, WV-based Tri-Star Paging and Wireless Communications. John and Lucy Durbin launched the company last February. Tri-Star provides paging services for 12,000 customers in West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, and also serves as a cellular agent for Alltel and Ntelos, two local telephone companies.

Tri-Star had recently acquired a new customer base from an In-Touch client

and needed to get the data onto its system quickly — *within days*. After a detailed discussion with co-owner Lucy Durbin, Alan J. Hills, president of In-Touch, realized that Tri-Star's current server and software couldn't handle the combined volume of the newly acquired customers plus the company's existing clients.

"Alan hopped on a plane to Charleston and told me that in just a few days In-Touch could reconcile our accounts," she said. "We had, for instance, over 2,500 phantom numbers that we were being billed for. That and other issues costing us money were quickly resolved, and in short order, In-

Touch got us up and running on a new server running In-Touch II."

She added that not only has In-Touch II made Tri-Star more productive, but also the customer support "has been phenomenal."

"They have worked after hours on projects to help us get established and have been very flexible in developing a customized payment arrangement that is affordable for a small firm like ours," Durbin said. "The bottom line is that the system paid for itself in only 90 days, and we now have more extensive reporting and informational tools that enable us to run a streamlined and efficient business!"

Developing Leading Edge Software Energizes Craig



Craig Hutchison

Nothing stirs Craig Hutchison's creative juices like designing software. As lead software engineer for In-Touch, Craig's mandate is to develop software that maintains In-Touch's position as an industry innovator and leader.

Craig joined In-Touch in 1996 as an entry-level software engineer. During his first 18 months, he helped develop the design for the company's Point-of-Sale (POS) System. Since then, he has worked on a variety of projects. One significant project was creating a graphic interface to a tiered billing system for PageNet, the world's largest wireless messaging and information provider.

The In-Touch II system that Craig helped tailor for PageNet also provided the Dallas, TX-based company with a uniform 'front end' in working with resellers around the country. It enabled PageNet to integrate all of its indirect business into one enterprise wide database for the first time. PageNet now has one standardized billing and provisioning platform and has centralized its business practices. Their regional offices focus exclusively on sales and the company has a reliable and fast method of signing up customers through reseller channels.

Craig is now working on new enhancements and upgrades to In-Touch's three-tiered system, which will allow the software to talk to an SQL backend.

Prior to joining In-Touch, Craig worked for an Internet service provider in Stony Brook, NY. He set up Web pages, Web sites, name servers and administered UNIX systems on their network.

A New York native, Craig graduated from Dowling College in Oakdale, NY, with a bachelor of science degree in computer science.