

TADPOLE ACQUIRES UTILITY SOFTWARE DEVELOPER CONIC SYSTEMS, CREATES ENLARGED BUSINESS UNIT FOR UTILITIES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS MARKETS

Strategic acquisition provides Tadpole with an enlarged customer base within the utilities and telecommunication industries, and complementary technologies, skills and solutions that put a broad range of corporate GIS and works management data into the hands of field workers

Carlsbad, October 6, 1999 - With the goal of becoming the mobile computing vendor of choice for the world's utilities and telecommunications industries, Tadpole Technology today strengthened its position through the strategic acquisition of the business and certain assets and liabilities of Texas based Conic Systems Inc. and its wholly owned subsidiary Scottish based Conic Systems Limited for a total consideration of \$1.25 million in cash.

The acquisition of Conic enables Tadpole to further extend its mobile software product offerings for the utilities and telecommunications markets, add significant new companies to its customer base, access more geographies through Conic's extensive partner network, and enhance its technical skills and market coverage.

Founded in 1991, Conic is a software developer of mobile geographical information systems (GIS) and mapping solutions. Headquartered in Edinburgh, the company's customer base comprises over fifty gas, water, cable, telecommunications, national mapping and government industries, including BC Hydro (Canada), CME (Brazil), EDP (Portugal), First Energy and Texas Utilities (USA), Ordnance Survey, Scottish and Southern Energy and Northern Electric (UK). Conic has approximately 20 business partners across Europe, North America and Australasia.

It is also announced today that Tadpole is proposing to raise in aggregate, approximately £2,200,000 before expenses, by way of an issue of unsecured convertible debentures. The convertible debentures have been subscribed for by a number of US financial institutions and the proceeds are available to be drawn down in two tranches of £700,000 and £1,500,000. The first tranche of £700,000 will be drawn down today to finance the acquisition of Conic and the second tranche of £1,500,000 will be used to provide working capital for the enlarged group. A further amount of £1,800,000 may be subscribed for by the same US financial institutions at their option. The draw down of the £1,500,000 and £1,800,000 are subject to shareholder approval at an extraordinary general meeting ("EGM") of the Company. Listing particulars of the unsecured convertible debentures and the notice of the EGM will be sent to shareholders as soon as practicable.

Bernard Hulme, chief executive of the Tadpole Technology Group, comments: "Putting the full wealth of corporate data into the hands of field workers is the driving goal of the utilities and telecommunications industries as they strive to become more productive, more customer-centric and maintain profitability." He adds: "The strategic acquisition of Conic, and its integration into our Tadpole-Cartesia division, allows Tadpole to create a world-class business unit with extended technologies, skills, and products."

Hulme's remarks refer to the determining business advantages offered to the utilities and related industries by deploying the mobile computing solutions of its enlarged Tadpole-Cartesia division - substantial gains in field worker productivity, improved levels of customer service, reduced operational costs, optimized return on assets, better quality, reliability and accuracy of data made available to and received from field workers, tighter management of sub-contractor workforces, and the ability to change business processes in line with evolving regulatory requirements.

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Some seventy percent of a utility's workforce will be tasked to undertake business-critical missions in the field at some time including surveyors, inspectors, maintenance teams and emergency repair crews. The complexity of tasks to be performed varies and requires appropriate enterprise data to be delivered from corporate databanks to different types of mobile task forces. Utilities and telcos use GIS (Smallworld, ESRI, Intergraph, Vision) and CAD systems extensively to help manage their assets, which, along with maps and works management data, need to be quickly and cost-effectively deployed to field workers across a range of platforms including Java and Windows® 95/98/NT.

Tadpole announced its Cartesia and J-Slate product family for the utilities and telecommunications markets in late April this year - a unique Java-based suite of hardware and software that allows detailed maps and job-management data to be downloaded from corporate servers via GSM or conventional phones to field workers using hand-held, diskless pen computers. With the acquisition of Conic Systems, Tadpole has extended its range of mobile computing software platforms and solutions by enabling field workers to access a wider range of GIS and CAD data allowing the utility industries to maximize their business potential from field operations, notably through improved works management, asset exploitation and inspection.

Conic's core product is Conic GIS, which enables field workers to access, collect, verify and update spatially-related information and provides levels of customization ranging from configuration of the user interface through to tailor-made applications using Visual Basic and other tools. Conic GIS provides four graduated levels of functionality: Conic View as a map display and navigation tool, Conic Redline to redline and sketch facilities, Conic Query for database review and update, and Conic Capture to add full graphic interaction and provide the ability to link to external instrumentation and perform data analysis.

More On Conic Systems Customers and Business Partners

Over fifty utilities, telecommunications, local and central government agencies as well as emergency services form the current customer base of Conic Systems including: BC Hydro, EDP, CME, Cleveland Fire Brigade, Columbia Gas, Copenhagen Water, Dumfries and Galloway Fire Brigade, First Energy, GMPTE, GTM, Mansfield District Council, Mason Land Surveys, Northern Electric, Northern Ireland Electric, Ordnance Survey, Premier Surveys, SC-DLO, San Jose Water, Scottish and Southern Energy, Sierra Pacific Power Company, TU Electric (Lone Star Gas) and the University of Glasgow.

Conic business partners include: Cook-Hurlbert, DGIS, Edinfor, HSS, GEIS, IMASS, IST Energy, Logica, MITS, Mettenmeier, Oranjewoud, Realworld, SC-DLO, Sykora, Unisys and Westech.

About Tadpole Technology

Tadpole Technology, a specialist vendor of mobile computing solutions for professional markets, is a listed company on the London Stock Exchange. The company comprises two divisions: Tadpole-RDI Inc., global leader in portable UNIX workstations and servers for applications of Sun and Hewlett-Packard operating systems in industry, commerce and government; and Tadpole-Cartesia, leader in field information systems for the utilities, telecommunications and public service industries. Website: www.tadpole.com

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For further information, please contact:

Una Richens, Tadpole Technology
Tel: 760-929-0992, Email: unar@tadpolerdi.com

Laura Hanscom, Patcom Media Relations
Tel: 925-243-0300, Email: laurah@patcom-media.com

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