

For Marvel Comics, Solution Provider Is A Super Hero

New York, April 11th 2008 - When the big-screen adaptation of Marvel Comics' "Iron Man" hits theaters early next month, it's sure to be followed by a wave of Iron Man merchandise, from toys to video games. And Marvel will be relying on software developed by a New York City-based solution provider to manage all the contracts and royalties from those spin-off products.

Managing intellectual property rights, licensing contracts and royalties is a major task in the media, entertainment and publishing industries. "But in many businesses the rights and royalties [operations] are not working together and that results in lots of extra manual labor and lost revenue," said Tarek Fadel, CEO of the solution provider, Fadel Partners. The company has built a successful business around developing and implementing applications that handle those chores.

Fadel Partners has been a certified Oracle (NSDQ:ORCL) implementation channel partner for five years -- it won the vendor's coveted channel partner Titan Award in 2006 -- reselling Oracle's E-Business Suite of applications to publishing, media and entertainment companies in the Tri-State area. Fadel Partners is a member of Oracle's Accelerate program that provides sales and technical assistance to channel partners who sell vertical industry-tailored application bundles to SMBs. And the solution provider also resells Oracle Fusion Middleware, including Oracle's application servers and SOA Suite, which underpin the E-Business Suite.

But Fadel's forte is the eRoyalty Suite rights and royalty management system the solution provider developed that runs on the E-Business Suite. Tarek Fadel, who worked at Oracle before starting his company, assembled the eRoyalty Suite using the same technology that Oracle's software is built on for a seamless link.

The Fadel software provides Marvel (officially Marvel Entertainment Inc.) and other Fadel customers with a system for creating contracts for licensing intellectual property rights, such as licensing the Spiderman image to a T-shirt maker or birthday card publisher, and managing the approval process (through legal, finance and brand management operations) for those contracts. Marvel sales representatives use the system, which includes a contract content repository, to see what rights have already been licensed to avoid duplication and granting "exclusive" rights to more than one company in the same market or geography. In the case of the "Iron Man" movie, which debuted May 2, Fadel Partners' applications will be managing licensing contracts for Iron Man toys and video games with more likely to follow if the movie is successful.

The system also manages the reports detailing sales and owed royalties that licensees send Marvel. "The key ingredient here is integration with the Oracle financials," Fadel said. Marvel can make sure licensees are complying with their contracts, such as meeting minimum sales requirements, and generate reports for analyzing which of its properties are generating revenue -- and how much -- and which ones are not.

Marvel, which has a library of some 5,000 characters like Iron Man, the Hulk and the X-Men, was already an Oracle financial applications customer in early 2005 when Oracle brought to Fadel Partners' attention the media company's interest in deploying a rights and royalty management system. (Tarek Fadel said Oracle at one time was developing its own rights and royalty management system, but put the project on hold and never restarted it.) After the three-to-four months sales cycle, Fadel Partners got the job and the implementation work took just under a year, concluding in mid-2006. For Fadel Partners it was a "medium-sized project," Fadel said. Fadel Partners has also developed software that lets media companies manage royalties they pay out to writers, actors and other parties, but Marvel hasn't implemented that application.

Contact:

David Dubovsky
ddubovsky@orphelis.com
646-502-9494 x7011