



Meet The Mild-Mannered VAR Running Point For "Iron Man" and "Marvel Comics" Property, Contracts and Royalties

New York, NY May, 26, 2008 / VAR Business/

With the big-screen adaptation of Marvel Comics' "Iron Man" hitting theaters this month and ushering in Hollywood's summer blockbuster season, it's sure to be followed by a wave of Iron Man merchandise, from toys to video games.

And New York-based Marvel Entertainment Inc. will be relying on software developed by a 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 New York-based solution provider Fadel Partners Inc.

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) Corp. implementation channel partner for five years, reselling Oracle's E-Business Suite of applications to publishing, media and entertainment companies in the tri-state area. Fadel won the Redwood Shores, Calif.-based vendor's coveted channel partner Titan Award in 2006, and is also 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. The solution provider also resells Oracle Fusion Middleware, including Oracle's application servers and SOA 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. 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 and other Fadel customers with a system for creating contracts for licensing intellectual property rights--such as the licensing of the Spider-Man 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 reps use the system, which includes a contract content repository, to see what rights have already been licensed to avoid granting "exclusive" rights to more than one company in the same market or area.

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 initiating 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 Incredible Hulk and the X-Men, was already an Oracle customer in early 2005 when Oracle brought to Fadel Partners' attention the media company's interest in deploying a rights and royalty management system.

After the three- to four-month 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 firms manage royalties they pay out to writers, actors and other parties, but as of this writing Marvel had not implemented that.