

Microsoft Announces First Small Business Specialist in Louisiana; New Designation Distinguishes General Informatics as an Expert in Small-Business Solutions and Services

BATON ROUGE, La. -- Microsoft Corp. today announced General Informatics has become the first Small Business Specialist in the Baton Rouge metropolitan area. To attain this new designation, General Informatics has demonstrated expertise in planning and building solutions for small businesses. As part of the Small Business Specialist Community, General Informatics will receive a rich set of benefits from Microsoft, including access to training specifically designed for the small-business industry, small-business marketing materials for reuse, special partner offers, and the ability to use the Small Business Specialist logo in marketing materials, which can help give the company a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

The Small Business Specialist Community, available as a competency-like designation as part of the Microsoft(R) Partner Program, was developed in response to input from customers and partners that expressed a need to build easier connections that enable small-business customers to quickly and easily identify technology partners best suited to support them.

"Small businesses are looking for partner companies that understand their unique business needs," said Steve Guggenheimer, vice president of small business for the Small and Midmarket Solutions & Partner Group at Microsoft. "With resources like the Small Business Specialist Community and the partner locator tool on the Microsoft Small Business Center Web site, it will be much easier for Baton Rouge's small businesses to identify local partners that are best able to address their specific needs. We are confident this offering will help General Informatics reach its full potential by creating more visibility, opportunity and demand in the local small-business segment."

"General Informatics is extremely pleased with our status as a new Small Business Specialist," said Mohit Vij, President at General Informatics. "This special designation allows General Informatics to effectively promote ourselves to customers as having proven expertise in delivering high-value, strategic solutions for small businesses. For Louisiana and particularly Baton Rouge area customers, Small Business Specialist status provides General Informatics with early line of sight to new products, services and programs from Microsoft, which can extend the value we bring to our client relationships."

As one of the requirements for attaining Small Business Specialist status, General Informatics had to pass Microsoft's Small Business Sales and Marketing Skills Assessment, designed to test the company's knowledge of the dynamics and dependencies of the small-business market, as well as the value to small business of several software solutions, including Windows(R) XP Professional, Microsoft Office 2003 and Windows Small Business Server 2003. In addition, at least one individual in the company had to pass a certification exam that measures the ability to design and implement solutions for the small and medium-sized business by using Windows Small Business Server 2003 and the Windows Server System (TM).

The Small Business Specialist Community was announced earlier this month at the Microsoft Worldwide Partner Conference 2005. To enroll, partners can go to <https://partner.microsoft.com/smallbizspecreadiness>.

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