

## **Feature Release**

**For Release At Will: April 27, 2005**  
**Jeff Rogers, vice president, Evolution**  
**702-656-9888**

### **Uptime Becomes First Microsoft Gold Certified Partner In Las Vegas**

LAS VEGAS — Uptime, which provides network, system, and program solutions, became the first IT company based in the Las Vegas area to become a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner. Uptime was notified of the certification just prior to moving into new offices at 6280 South Valley View, Suite 416.

To become a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, companies must complete a rigorous certification process, have Microsoft Certified Partner credentials, retain a staff with advanced Microsoft certifications, and maintain high customer service standards. Of more than 250 participating partners nationwide, Uptime ranked among the top 25 percent in customer service with a customer loyalty rating exceeding 94 percent.

“Microsoft Gold Certified Partners are the top 2 percent of all Microsoft solutions partners and have access to the tools and support

**-more-**

## **Uptime; Gold Partners — page 2 of 4**

they need to help them stand out in the marketplace,” said David Rounds, COO and vice president of operations for Uptime. “Microsoft gives its valued partners early access to new technology and tools, including beta products, prioritized referrals, and advanced technical information, to develop products on its platform.”

According to Rounds, Las Vegas companies looking for Microsoft Gold Certified Partners were previously referred to IT companies based in Phoenix. Companies would fly engineers to Las Vegas, which resulted in exceedingly high IT costs.

“Now companies have the option of using a local company with the right engineers to meet their system, database, and application needs,” said Rounds. “The Microsoft certification also fits well with other partnerships we’ve earned with Cisco, Symantec, Veritas, APC and Hewlett Packard. We’ve really developed the right mix of friendly, qualified people that care about our customers.”

Beyond staffing five qualified and experienced engineers, customer satisfaction remains the driving force of Uptime’s growth, Rounds said. Since opening in 2001, the company has grown from 17 customers to more than 180.

“We’re currently on track to make the Inc. 500 fastest-growing companies within the next two years,” adds Shelly Rounds, president

**-more-**

### **Uptime; Gold Partners — page 3 of 4**

and CEO of Uptime. “While growth is a common story among successful businesses in southern Nevada, we’ve managed to grow at a pace that allows us to maintain the same high standards we established when we opened. By working closely with our employees, they’ve embraced the vision of our company and appreciate that customer service is at the core of our operations.”

Shelly Rounds says as a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Uptime’s customer service standards will never change. Microsoft periodically monitors its partners to ensure the service provider maintains high quality and customer satisfaction.

“It has been an exciting transition to move from a mom and pop shop into a reputable IT company ranked among the top in the country,” said Shelly Rounds. “We see it every day here. We’ve created a culture where employees might go out bowling together, suggest a pizza party, or challenge each other to see who scores the highest on the next round of certifications.”

She says finding the right people remains a priority for Uptime and the IT industry in the Las Vegas market. While attempting to keep pace with growth, new technology often takes a back seat to other business priorities, making it possible for senior engineers to fall behind on education and certifications.

**-more-**

## **Uptime; Gold Partners — page 4 of 4**

“We were fortunate to hire Jeff Fox, who managed systems for large enterprise companies,” she said. “As our company grew, we created the position so he could lend support to our senior engineers, but also assist in predicting industry shifts.”

As technology services manager, Fox plays a key role in developing Uptime’s IT strategy, which includes planning systems that are capable of adapting to new technology in 5 to 10 years.

“Vertical applications for a specific industry such as banking, health care, and hotel/gaming operations are among the important trends that will continue to grow in the next two to three years,” said Fox. “Whether we’re working with in-house IT departments or acting as a company’s IT department, it’s important for us to be ahead of the curve on changes that could dramatically affect your company.”

Fox also counts entrepreneur-class software for small- and mid-sized businesses, security applications for wireless technology, and open source proprietary software among the most pressing trends in the industry. He added that he sees Las Vegas catching up to other markets at a rapid pace.

Uptime is a Las Vegas-based IT company that specializes in network and computer sales, installation, system design, and maintenance. The company is classified as a Women’s Business Enterprise (WBE) and opened in 2001.