BROTHER BUSINESS SOFTWARE WINNER

Worldwide Potential For Brother Business Software Winner

This year's **Brother Business Software Awards** winner, WeldPrint, could save manufacturers in a range of industries around the world hundreds of thousands and possibly millions of dollars through its fault detection capabilities in hi-tech welding.

The winner was announced by **Brother's** National Marketing Director George Nawa on the **Nine Network's Small Business Show** on Sunday (December 9).

The Runner-up was Brisbane based company **Incorporator.com.au**. The Internet Application winner was **HQhospitality**, also from Brisbane. And the Australia-Specific category was won by **businessSuite Financials** from Maddington in West Australia.

"The quality of applications this year was the highest in the seven years of the Awards," John Hanrahan, Manager of Brother Business Software Awards for Nine, confirmed.

Chief Technical Officer, Peter Hughes, from the winning company, **WTi Pty. Ltd**., accepted the Winner's Certificate from Mr. Nawa and a cheque for $10,000 from **Westpac Business Banking**'s Alastair Welsh.

WeldPrint will be showcased at the world's biggest IT trade show, CeBIT, in Germany next year, courtesy of **Austrade** and **travel.com.au** and will receive 1000 CD-Rom business cards from Melbourne based **DesignerCD**.

"The software application is a signal analysis program for automated arc welding for providing quality assurance for manufacturing," Peter Hughes, from the Sydney based company, explained.

Industries where the software will become widely used include automotive, aeronautical, ship building and pipeline manufacturing.

"It's a major change of direction for the Software Judging Panel which has tended to pick service and retail industry products in the past. But clearly they recognised the enormous potential for WeldPrint's application in a wide range of manufacturing industries," John Hanrahan, manager of the Business Software Awards said. "With more than 150 entries, all of a very high calibre, this 7th annual Business Software Awards were the most competitive yet."

The Runner-Up, Incorporator.com.au will receive $5,000 from **Westpac Business Banking.**

The Internet Application winner, HQhospitality and Australian Specific winner, BusinessSuite, will both receive $2,500 from **Westpac Business Banking.**

Each of the four major winners will also receive a 5-in-1 **Brother Multi-Function Centre**.

Peter Hughes: " WeldPrint can monitor the quality of the part as it's being welded and, if there is a problem, notify the operator immediately thus avoiding the necessity to do a lot of cut-ups, plus, if there was a problem, rather than have to quarantine a whole shift's worth of production the manufacturer knows about it straight away and can take corrective action."

The original technology was developed at Sydney University's Department of Engineering led by Professor Steve Simpson. The University has patented that technology which has

been licensed to a private company that has spent around one million dollars commercializing the software.

Peter Hughes: "We've sold a few units into South East Asia and into Europe but they were more a unit designed for a consultant. Now we've been more focused on getting a unit that can be used actually in manufacturing, a full time application and we're focusing on the automotive industry. we have one unit in Queensland and we have four units in Victoria. "

The win, and the chance to showcase Weldprint at CeBIT, in Germany next year, has come at the right time.

Peter Hughes acknowledged the value of the exposure at CeBIT: "Very important at the moment. we've got communications going with Japan and the USA but we really don't have any communications going with Europe and we see that's another big market that we are interested in exploring. we've had conversations with the welding institute at Cambridge in the UK and they're very interested in our technology "

The five member software judging panel immediately identified Weldprint's global potential.

Roy O'Malley, Chairman of the Software Judging Panel, said it had applications in every country of the world: "Because first of all it is a small business taking to the large business a solution which has been a problem for a long time. It has looked at the area of how can we improve and streamline big business with some small business ingenuity."

Veteran PC User reviewer Jan Wikstrom, said: "I was impressed by the scientific background to it and the implementation is highly professional."

The relative simplicity of the software in its day to day usage was also vital, in the judges' minds.

Khimji Vaghjiani, from Westpac Business Banking, commented: "The graphical user interface that the customer has to work with were interesting and easy to use and apply, and once results were generated the customer or the user could then print charts out, put graphs etcetera to be able to analyse the data.

Walter Gheller, an independent IT consultant: "when I first picked up the product I looked at it and said here is software or a product that has actually been written to answer a problem or solve a problem. in many other cases there was software written that's in search of a problem. ."

And Austrade's judge, Tony Burchill, confirmed Weldprint's worldwide promise: "Firstly, it's got a real business model, second its a contribution to smart manufacturing which is particularly important for a country like Australia. They've got a good chance of overseas success."

WeldPrint and two of its executives will be represented at CeBIT, in Hannover, Germany, next year under the Austrade banner.

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