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Cisco Announces EMEA Channel Initiative

Cisco Unify Enables Cisco and Channel Partners to Create Joint Sustainable Business Plans

LONDON, 14th January 2002, Cisco Systems Inc., the world-wide leader in networking for the Internet, today announced an innovative channel initiative, Cisco Unify. It provides Cisco EMEA Channel Partners (Cisco resellers and system integrators) with a suite of strategic business planning tools aimed to bring Cisco and its Channel Partners' business planning even closer together. This comprehensive resource brings together a consolidated suite of web-based applications: Unify Business, Unify Relationship, Unify Knowledge and Unify Support.

“Over the last few years we have asked our Channel Partners to build new business models focused not only on hardware volume, but also services and solutions. We realise that we need to work together with our Channel Partners to do this, so over the last year we have re-developed the Cisco Channel infrastructure with the Channel Partner Programme and New Distribution Strategy,” said Paris G. Arey, Vice President of Channels and Alliances in EMEA. “Unify is the next step in our goal to create the channel model of the future. By providing our Channel Partners with the appropriate resources to turn change into competitive advantage our Channel Partners can evolve into trusted business advisors.”

The four areas within Cisco Unify are:

Unify Business is a web-based business planning tool enabling Cisco and the Channel Partner to establish goals and priorities for the business they share. Unify Business takes into account what area of the market the Channel Partner has historically invested in, where that market is going, what the Channel Partner's market share is and the current and future growth areas. The final result is a business plan establishing a clear base for the future development of the relationship.

Unify Relationship is a web-based diagnostic tool that allows Cisco and the Channel Partner to assess how well they are aligned. Unify Relationship establishes the key priorities and values of a business relationship based on a series of Cisco and Channel Partner behaviour statements that reflect different types of Channel Partner relationships - Inform, Respond, Connect and Engage. Each behaviour is linked to a current and desired customer value, so by aligning the Cisco Channel Partner relationship more closely, Cisco and its Channel Partners are able to target resources more precisely and improve customer satisfaction levels.

Unify Knowledge provides the expertise, training, e-Learning and online resources that our Channel Partners need to keep their network professionals up to date with the newest technologies, develop training paths required to scale Channel Partner organisations into new market areas and to become trusted business advisors.

Unify Support is key to sustaining our Channel Partner relationships. It helps to establish how the long-term relationship between Cisco Channel Partners and end-users is managed, by providing details on ongoing support requirements for existing and new technologies.

Cisco Unify will initially be available for all Gold Certified Partners in EMEA, after which it will be made available to all Cisco Certified Partners (Silver and Premier) in EMEA.

About Cisco Systems

Cisco Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ: CSCO) is the worldwide leader in networking for the Internet. News and information are available at www.cisco.com.