



Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Membership

Announcement Kit Microsoft Gold Certified Partners For Hosting and Application Services

Congratulations on your membership in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program! Microsoft is pleased to count you among its valued Microsoft Gold Certified Partners.

As part of the group of partners that have met Microsoft Corp.'s requirements for receiving Gold member benefits, you have an opportunity to utilize public relations materials to tell your customers, prospects and community about your affiliation with Microsoft. Created especially for Microsoft Gold Certified Partners for Hosting and Application Services, this announcement kit provides you with a press release template and guidelines for announcing your Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program membership.

The benefits of announcing your relationship with Microsoft include the following:

- Increased credibility with your customers and prospects
- The opportunity to distinguish your company image from that of other technology providers in your area
- Recognition for your business through your Microsoft affiliation

The template provided is in press release format, a clear and concise way to communicate with various audiences. Microsoft encourages you to submit your announcement as a press release to local newspapers and magazines, publish it on your Web site, and provide it to customers and prospects through your marketing and sales activities.

As part of your overall strategy for affiliating your company with the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program for Hosting and Application Services, Microsoft encourages you to take advantage of other benefits such as the logo program and customizable

Nondisclosure Agreement Notice

The information contained within this document is covered by the nondisclosure agreement between Microsoft and your company. Do not disclose the contents to unauthorized people.

Microsoft advertising templates. These benefits are detailed on the Microsoft Partner Program Web site at <http://www.microsoft.com/certpartner/>.

Steps for Creating Your Announcement

1. Review this document. It includes suggestions for creating a powerful announcement that not only describes your affiliation with Microsoft, but also defines how your customers benefit from that affiliation.
2. Use the template, which includes a quote from Microsoft and placeholders for key statements about your business.
3. Customize the template with statements that accurately reflect your business.
4. Obtain internal approval from the appropriate resources at your company.
5. Notify Marcy Dome, ASP marketing manager for Microsoft at marcyd@microsoft.com, of the date on which you will issue your release.
6. Direct any questions to Whitney Whiton, public relations manager at Microsoft, (425) 703-9962 or whitneyw@microsoft.com.

General Guidelines

When creating your announcement, please adhere to the following guidelines. Doing so will help ensure that Microsoft can approve your announcement and return it to you quickly, usually within three business days.

The attached template is for your use; however, you may not reword the Microsoft quote or change any text that describes the program. If you have any questions, please contact Whitney Whiton.

Defining Your Relationship With Microsoft

- You may not refer to your company as a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner in areas for which you have not received the designation. For example, because your Gold Certified track is for Hosting and Application Services, you may not use your Gold Certified Partner designation when referring to your network support services.
- You are certified for your processes in a specific service area (e.g., Hosted Exchange). The specific category in which you achieved certification must be defined.
- Please do not refer to your company as having a “partnership” or an “alliance” with Microsoft.
- Please do not refer to your company as being “authorized by” Microsoft through its membership in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program.
- Please do not include the Microsoft boilerplate, Microsoft trademarks or Microsoft press contacts in your release.

Tips on Style

- Present your information in a clean, factual, journalistic style.
- Keep the length of your announcement to two pages or less. It should be news, not a product brochure or marketing piece.
- Do not use superlatives, hyperbole or terms such as “the leading company” unless they are substantiated by a quote or data from a reputable source such as an analyst or research firm (e.g., Gartner or Forrester).

Corporate Boilerplates

In keeping with the style of a press release, you will need to include a corporate boilerplate. This is a brief description of your company that may include its mission, details about its products or services, its target customers, or its office locations.

Announcement Components

The announcement template has been designed so you can customize your press release with statements and a quote about your company. Sample statements are provided below that can be inserted into placeholders in the template. You may use the sample or create one that more specifically fits your business.

Statement No. 1 — What basic services does your company provide and what increased benefits will your customers experience because of your participation in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program?

Sample statement: [Your Company], which provides services such as [X, Y and Z], has been named as a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner for Hosting and Application Services due to its proven competence on the latest Microsoft technologies and its proven track record of customer satisfaction. Membership in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program will provide [Your Company] with resources to help it develop and deploy robust Microsoft hosting solutions and help customers to identify ASPs that meet high levels of service readiness, competency and capacity for deploying Microsoft technology.

Other customer benefits might include these:

- High-availability hosted solutions
- High-security Web transactions
- Proven ability to scale
- Increased revenue potential
- Knowledgeable sales representatives who are familiar with current and upcoming Microsoft technologies and products and who can recommend the appropriate Microsoft software and hardware solutions to fit specific business needs

Quote No. 1 (by your company's chief spokesperson) — What increased benefits will your customers experience because of your participation in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program?

Sample quote: “[Your Company] is extremely pleased with our new status as a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner for Hosting and Application Services” said [XXX, Title, Your Company]. “Being a Gold member of the program allows us clearly promote ourselves to customers as having proven expertise in providing high-quality hosting solutions. The incremental benefits provided through our Gold membership will allow us to continue enhance the offerings that we provide for customers.”

Other ways end customers might benefit from your membership include these:

- Mature datacenter operations, validated by rigorous on-site assessment
- Three to 6 months of verifiable customer service records upon certification plus quarterly end customer service surveys conducted by Microsoft
- Demonstrated service area expertise

Statement No. 2 (if applicable) — Provide details on any additional news about your company, or provide information about any special offers or supplementary company information not included in your boilerplate that may be useful to the members of the press.

Sample statement: In addition to [X, Y and Z] services, [Your Company] began offering hosting services on [Date], resulting in [XX] percent growth in revenue for the year.

Announcement Template

Use this template to create your customized announcement.

For Release [XX] a.m. PST
[XX XX], 2001

[Your Company] Announces *Its Membership in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program*

[CITY, State/Province, Country — XX XX, 2001 — Your Company, Tag Line],

today announced it is a new member in the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program.

[Insert first statement (see “Statement No. 1” above).]

[Insert first quote (see “Quote No. 1” above).]

The Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Program allows **[Your Company]** to utilize the Microsoft Gold Certified Partner logo, which is an easy way for customers to recognize **[Your Company]** as certified by Microsoft Corp. Microsoft offers a variety of resources to program members, including training, technical support, early access to Microsoft products and peer networking opportunities that allow a variety of partners to come together and provide end-to-end customer solutions.

“Hosting technologies have opened up a whole new range of options for customers in terms of accessing and maintaining technology solutions for their businesses. Critical to having an application out of house is a great degree of trust by customers who must be able to depend on their application service provider (ASP) to deliver a high degree of uptime for their datacenter or other hosted solutions,” said Rosa Garcia, general manager of the Partner Programs Group at Microsoft. “**[Your Company]** has clearly demonstrated that it has the technology and the expertise to provide its

customers with the most reliable hosted services. Because **[Your Company]** has met Microsoft's rigorous standards and datacenter -on-site assessment, Microsoft is pleased to welcome **[Your Company]** as a Gold Certified Partner for Hosting and Application Services."

[Insert second statement (if applicable; see "Statement No. 2" above).]

[Insert your corporate boilerplate.]

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For more information, press only:

[Insert your public relations contact, company name, phone number and e-mail address.]