

# I • A • O • N

**KEEP YOUR CUSTOMERS:**

# Advice from

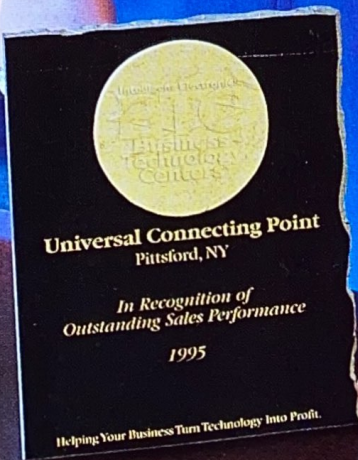
resellers **David and Jennifer McCADDEN**

**The biggest  
in the business**

IBM Software's Elliott and  
Bonner discuss distribution

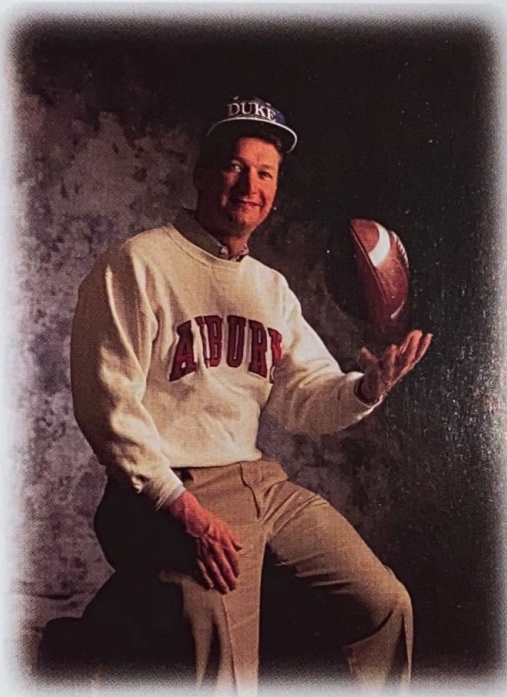
**Driving dealer  
development**

Visit with IE sales  
directors Fries and Shem



# Tim Cook

## Keeping product on the move



Perhaps one of the biggest changes in demand fulfillment is the new warehouse management system, CDF/1, which will go into effect this July in Memphis and in October elsewhere. It will streamline infrastructure on the entire fulfillment side of the organization and will further improve accuracy.

"My goal is to get down to zero defects," Tim says. "The number of modifications will substantially decrease as soon as CDF/1 is implemented."

A step toward this goal is the opening of the new half-million-square-foot megafacility in Memphis, which allowed IE to close two other warehouses. Fewer hands will touch the product under the new system, reducing the opportunity for errors and shipping delays.

Twelve years of experience at IBM enabled Tim to step up to the process-oriented challenges IE faces. "My focus on process makes it fundamentally different than managing a hierarchical structure, because the boundaries of the organization fall," Tim says.

"The organizational chart in the world I think about doesn't have legs." Tim streamlined the command structure by whittling four management levels to two in support areas and empowering more people to make decisions. He values speed and quality of work and implemented a quarterly bonus system to reward outstanding performance. "A bonus system should stretch people to achieve higher levels of performance," he says. "By putting a level of peer pressure on everyday work, overall performance improves."

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Tim's high energy makes him a fanatic about more than just work. A native of the South, he plans to bicycle across Georgia and perhaps attempt the higher-altitude "Ride the Rockies" in Colorado this year. Given his druthers, he'd spend more time watching his beloved Auburn Tigers vie for college football's national title. For now, he'll settle for defeating the competition in the industry. ●

**I**f you can't stand the heat, get out of the warehouse. As senior vice president of demand fulfillment—the IE branch encompassing distribution, configuration and operations—Tim Cook likes it hot. After coming to IE last fall, Tim quickly launched a number of aggressive strategies that have drastically improved delivery accuracy and efficiency.

who we are & what we do

I • C • O • N

M A G A Z I N E

October 1994

Feature Section:

**26 Portable Computing:** For the traveling professional, portables are becoming as essential as toothpaste and underwear. Laptops, notebooks and the incredible shrinking subnotebooks come complete with fax, telephone, a messaging center, database access and word processing capabilities. This month, take a look at the trends and products making headlines in the mobile market.

**13 Forum** How are portables being incorporated into the overall corporate solution? Resellers note low weight, power, speed and color among the top features their corporate customers are requesting in mobile computers.

**14 Trends** Guarding against obsolescence is a key reason manufacturers are looking toward modular designs for easy upgradeability in notebook computers.

**18 Management** Walking the straight and narrow isn't always easy, but doing so is sure to keep your employees off the scandal page and on the path to a more productive and happier work environment.

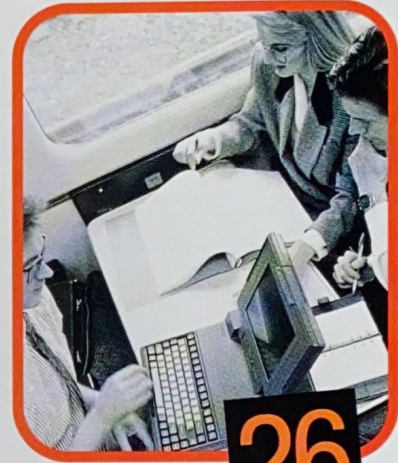
**38 Vendor Corner** High quality was NEC's number one consideration when adding a new line of computer technologies to its already impressive product family.

**42 Inside Track** IE Update • Ask Mark Briggs • BTC Joins Forces with ISMA and FAMA • Education Services • Special Events • Compaq/IE sky box at the International.

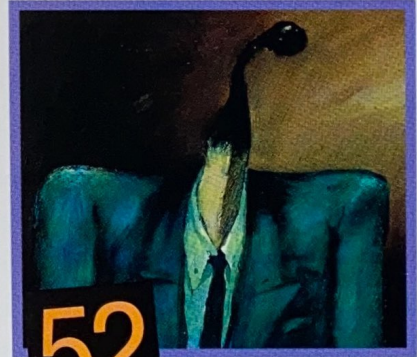
**52 Sales** Complacency, frustration, defeat, stagnation and routine are some of the forces that blunt the selling edge. Here are some hints that help salespeople remain sharp as a tack.

**60 Vendor Profile** Robert Boehner talks about how Xerox is embracing the PC and network arena with its high-end printing products.

Photography and illustrations by Stockworks and The Image Bank.



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# BREAK is served

## DataSource dishes up solutions with the National Service Network

by Alison Grabau

**W**hen resellers Michael Beach and Ray Roberts wake up each morning, they share a bowl of cereal. Of course, Beach rises an hour earlier at his home in Minnesota while Roberts enjoys an extra bit of slumber in Utah—yet they both greet the day with Malt-O-Meal.

A cooperative agreement through Intelligent Electronics' National Service Network (NSN) brought these two resellers from different parts of the country together to provide a total solution for an important end-user customer, Malt-O-Meal.

Most people associate Malt-O-Meal with its popular hot cereal, but actually the largest segment of its business is producing inexpensive, ready-to-eat bagged cereals and super-market brands. A year ago, the privately held, Northfield, Minnesota cereal manufacturer began shopping around for a reseller that could handle a wide variety of product and service needs, including assistance with a Windows NT implementation and traditional break-fix for its four warehouses across the country. Malt-O-Meal began slowly testing about three or four different resellers with small projects until it eventually determined that DataSource could provide the most reliable service.



John Dusek, Aaron Knopf, Michael Beach

Operations Manager Beach says DataSource won over Malt-O-Meal by illustrating that with 15 years of experience, it had "a lot of colors of paint on the palette" and is willing to do whatever it takes to solve a customer's problems. What began as a battle of the best price on products developed over time into consulting, network installation, and a host of other opportunities.

After building a trusted partnership since last October, Malt-O-Meal called on DataSource to help service one of its remote warehouses. Aaron Knopf, Malt-O-Meal LAN administrator, says that DataSource demonstrated it could handle



a national account through NSN associations. Now DataSource handles nearly all of Malt-O-Meal's computer needs, both locally and in its out-of-state warehouses.

"DataSource has always made sure our expectations are met," says Knopf. "Most resellers won't give such a high-level of service."

When Minnesota-based DataSource needed a cabling vendor to service Malt-O-Meal's Salt Lake City warehouse, Beach immediately called Roberts, operations and service manager for Salt Lake City-based DBL Connecting Point; Beach already knew that DBL specializes in network integration and cabling.

Actively involved as members of the Services Advisory Council and NSN, Beach and Roberts had met and established a rapport in January 1994 at the Intelligent Electronics Annual Conference in California.

"It was amazing how easy it was to take care of, even with deadlines changing constantly," says Beach. "We were relieved that we didn't have to hassle with finding some unknown service provider in Salt Lake City. As it happened, it took no more than a 10-minute phone call."

"While the competition may have dispatching services, there isn't any quality control," says Roberts. "Relying on local Intelligent Electronics resellers is like a referral. It is based on a personal relationship."

Throughout the project, both resellers had the same goal in mind—to make sure the client was completely satisfied. Beach allowed Roberts to deal directly with Malt-O-Meal. The service was handled by DBL Connecting Point in Salt Lake City, but the relationship and the billing stayed with the primary reseller, DataSource. As a result, the process was virtually seamless to the end user.

For the cable installation, DBL Connecting Point went to the Malt-O-Meal warehouse late in the afternoon to avoid disrupting business. Technicians pulled the cabling, making the connection of servers and printers virtually plug-and-play—and were finished before the sun went down that evening. It also ran a series of tests to make sure everything worked properly and according to specification. Although the initial project amounted to less than \$1,000 in cables, it opened the door to future service opportunities for the NSN member.

"Aaron (Knopf) would rather trust us with arranging the service than finding some unknown provider because he knows we will take responsibility for the project's success," says DataSource Account Manager, John Dusek, assigned to the Malt-O-Meal account. "It was great having an ally like Ray (Roberts) who handles the other end making sure everything went smoothly."

As with Malt-O-Meal, NSN has helped many resellers successfully expand the breadth of their businesses by creating a network of resellers able to service national accounts.

"When you belong to NSN, you belong to a family," says Malt-O-Meal's Wilczek, manager of marketing development for the National Service Network. Over 250 participating NSN members and a proven track record for success strengthens resellers' confidence in one another's expertise and gives them a large pool of competent people from which to draw.

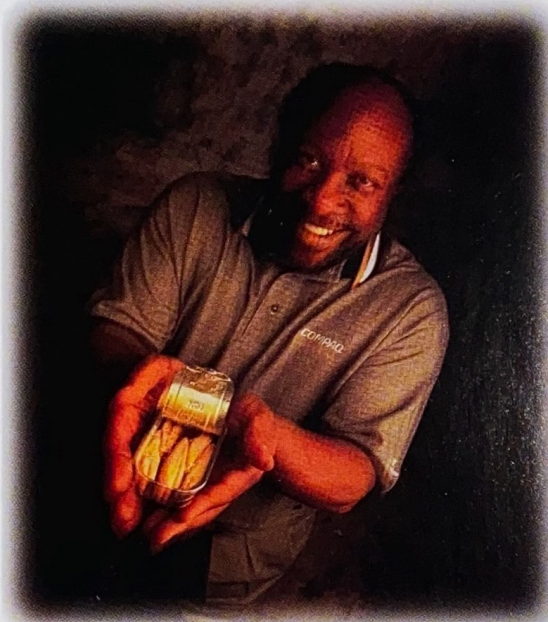
Service in the '90s changes constantly, so Wilczek makes herself available to handle urgent issues and any questions resellers may have. And while the NSN staff encourages resellers to work out special service arrangements independently as in Beach and Roberts' situation, they also are very willing to provide members with recommendations on whom to call. To further control quality, NSN performs a customer satisfaction survey via phone directly to the end user within 72 hours after a service call is closed.

Currently, NSN gives members access to a skills database on Lotus Notes, and also is evaluating a new dispatch software application that will allow members to see real-time service call data. A reseller in New York, for example, could pull up a profile of an affiliated reseller in California and find out how many engineers, technicians, or specialists are on staff to handle a network installation for an end user with multiple sites.

"We have a real network of professionals willing to help each other out across the country. We scratch each other's backs," says Beach. "We have never had anyone be uncooperative. In all my experience, things have run smoothly. Through Intelligent Electronics, we feel we have a huge advantage because no one can offer better coverage." ■

# Aaron Woods:

## Learn and earn



**A**aron Woods loves learning as much as he loves teaching. As IE's director of national service programs and training, Aaron was asked to mentor two high school students interested in the computer business. His charisma and attitude made him a perfect choice.

Anyone who dreams of going inside a live volcano "just to see what it looks like" is clearly not confined by conventional wisdom.

That attribute has served Aaron well. The computer business has changed, and margins in hardware sales have gotten harder to come by. With resellers seeking creative avenues of revenue, professional services have begun to gain the recognition they deserve.

As overseer of IE's service seminars and consulting, Aaron develops coursework for the two service management seminars hosted in various cities every month. The National Training Network (NTN) provides customized, high-quality instruction for end users across the United States.

"Customized train-

ing is very important to many Fortune companies, so NTN will have standardized courses as well as many individually customized courses to fit their needs," Aaron says.

Aaron also organized ISMA (Intelligent Service Managers Association). Members receive a bimonthly newsletter that offers ideas on how to run a productive, profitable service department. It features the latest information on service vendors, course offerings, management software programs such as the newly released ISMS

(Intelligent Service Management Software), course schedules and idea-sharing articles from others in the industry.

The IE Service Advisory Council, a recent merging of the ISG and ISMA councils, meets bimonthly and gives upper management input. The Annual Service Conference, with its informative breakout sessions, zeros in on IE service providers' concerns and other current trends.

"ISMA offers a clear understanding of where the industry is

heading and, more importantly, how to get there," Aaron says. "The service confer-

**ISMA offers a clear understanding of where the industry is heading and, more importantly, how to get there.**

ence provides a terrific opportunity for resellers to network with their peers."

In his spare time, Aaron is writing an instructional volume on a subject few resellers know much about: sardines. "It's a cookbook," he explains cheerfully. That may explain why Aaron's classes are never dull—you never know what he'll cook up next. ●

who we are & what we do

# Case Study

## Jade Systems

### Suits Brooks Brothers just fine

Supporting classic, timeless style, reseller Jade Systems is tailored to meet Brooks Brothers' expectations. The New York clothier, with more than 110 locations nationwide, has relied on Jade Systems' dependable, high-quality service for three and a half years just as men—and more recently, women—have trusted their tasteful appearance to Brooks Brothers' fine garments since the first store opened in 1818.

New York's most illustrious families—the Astors, Rockefellers, and Vanderbilts—have preferred Brooks Brothers over other clothiers for generations and faithfully return to Brooks time and again. Five generations of Morgans have selected Brooks Brothers, including J.P. himself, who virtually grew up at the store, having been dressed by Brooks since childhood. Understanding the importance it places on integrity and its long tradition of high standards, Jade Systems knew it would have to go over and beyond Brooks Brothers' expectations to create a perfect fit.

Searching for a technology partner who gets things done right the first time, Brooks Brothers first began its relationship with Jade with product procurement, before expanding into maintenance services and embarking on large-scale networking and communications projects.



**Brooks Brothers' Eddie Valentin and Jade Systems' Gloria Romanowski.**

Needing reliable nationwide support, Brooks Brothers signed an annual service agreement with Jade Systems because it is often able to better manufacturers' standard warranty turnaround time by responding within 24 hours. To further differentiate itself from the competition, Jade provides warranty service even on product not purchased through them. "That means that our customers only have to make one phone call," says Gloria Romanowski, senior account manager for Jade Systems, who has increased Jade's services business by 20% since she was hired last June.

*"NSN and ISG give us the competitive edge to provide global support. It gives us a capability to compete with larger players while still offering our entrepreneurial spirit. NSN and ISG respond globally while we coordinate the activities."*

*—Gloria Romanowski*

"Our success strategy with our customers is simple, really," she adds. "We just let our hair down. We deliver straight facts to clients and leverage all the resources Jade has access to." Those resources are Intelligent Electronics', National Service Network (NSN) and Intelligent Systems Groups (ISG), with more than 250 reseller-members providing nationwide service and support. Jade is able to review the profiles on participating NSN members and interview prospects to find service providers who best fit the customer's criteria.

"NSN and ISG give us the competitive edge to provide global support. It gives us a capability to compete with larger players while still offering our entrepreneurial spirit," explains Romanowski.

"NSN and ISG respond globally while we coordinate the activities."

Jade also has customized a break-and-fix service arrangement with Brooks where Jade technicians are actually placed on-site to support PC Systems Manager Eddie Valentin's small, five-member IT staff as needed. It is done so seamlessly, that they are viewed as Brooks Brothers associates.

"If a computer goes down in any of our stores, I am comforted to know that it will be up within 24 hours," says Valentin. "We can't afford to have a single PC down, so I certainly don't want to worry about 10 or 15 stores being down.

"Also, Jade services our warehouses, where the response time is even less than 24 hours—more like four-hour mission critical—because the shipping is so crucial. We can't always be there when something goes wrong. We need someone who can."

Once any service call is complete—for instance, if NSN dispatched a technician in California for service—then Jade would call Brooks Brothers to let them know everything at that particular location had been repaired.

"Call backs are very nice," says Valentin. "It tells me that Jade is on top of it and it means that it's something I don't have to worry about."

One of Brooks Brothers goals is to become absolutely paperless. Toward

that end, Jade Systems has taken on a consulting role and suggested various software options to help Brooks more efficiently conduct business between individual stores across the country.

With technology changing so rapidly, Jade has also helped Brooks Brothers with Total Lifecycle Management. Preventing antiquated equipment from sitting on desks is much like a clothing company taking measures to keep the store looking current with in-style merchandise rather than last year's fashions. Total Lifecycle Management begins with the presale, deciding which product is the right one to buy, then deciding whether to lease it or buy it outright. Once it's on the desktop, the owner must understand how to manage and maintain it, and finally, once the system's life is complete, deciding what to do with it before replacing it and starting again.

Jade Systems believes in a team approach with all its customers, ensuring that clients always receive a timely response to all their questions.

"Reliability is a key with Jade," says Valentin. "I have often called at weird hours and they have always delivered. I must call four or five times a day. Working with Jade is like working with one big family. We are very comfortable with the consistent service they deliver."

He adds, "On any given day, I handle a number of problems. The last thing I want to worry about is my reseller. Jade is more than just a computer supplier to us. They're a partner. They come through for us."

In a recent interview, Brooks Brothers' President and CEO Joe Gromek stated that his idea of a perfect suit is "one that a man puts on and says to himself, 'I feel great.'" Similarly, Jade Systems versatile service offerings are expected to suit Brooks Brothers' needs for a long time to come. ■ —alg