

# News & Events Achieve – 2001

## Media Coverage in 2001

Date: Aug. 2001

### **i-Sprinting at 100kmh.**

Ask **Albert Ching** for the most gut-wrenching time a startup has to go through, and he will say it is when you have to convince other people (investors, in this case) to believe in what you believe.

For i-Sprint Innovations, that time came last October at the start of the slowdown, when the company wanted to attract its first round of investment funding.

"At that time, things were starting to look bad and we did not have a product to show yet," he recalled.

Still, attract funding it did, with Acer Technology Ventures taking a 20 per cent stake in the company.

"In the end, it was our domain knowledge, unique product concept and market potential that attracted investors to take a stake in the business," said Ching, chief executive officer of the company.

I-Sprint develops security products that address an organisation's need for enterprise access control, single sign-on and security administration. It claims to be the only player in the region with such offerings.

Its customers include National Australian Bank, Credit Suisse First Boston, Philips Electronics and MyBiz International.

For Ching, the first round of funding it secured signaled the start of something good.

Ten months later, with several customers in its fold and other projects in the pipeline, he is understandably upbeat.

"Most customers recognise that -security is a key concern in most organisations and they need a security infrastructure product like AccessMatrix to address their application security requirement. That is why, despite the slow down, companies are still willing to invest money in their infrastructure so that they can prepare for the upturn," he said.

**AccessMatrix**, the company's flagship product is an enterprise application access control and security administration system. It provides centralised authentication, authorisation and audit sciences for users to securely access different ecommerce and enterprise resources, for example, web and application servers.

Its single sign on capability to all web and client/server applications improves user experience and -efficiency in accessing business applications, he said.

With a framework known as the segmented hierarchy-based security administration and authorisation framework, AccessMatrix address the challenges of managing security for large user communities within a single organisation or across multiple organisations.

"The security framework enables security administrators to be appointed at every level of the organisation structure," explained Ching. "The administration rights of the local security administrators can be defined at a granular level to improve security and reduce administration costs. This means that it is able to define and manage application specific roles, security related business rules and business entitlements for example,

down to roles, objects, methods, parameters, time and location restrictions."

Once a user logs on, the authorisation services will ensure that the information or selected transactions are accessible by authorised users. There is an authorisation model to protect both front-end resources and back end applications.

This helps the organisation to implement a policy-driven authorisation system for enterprise-wide security policy enforcement.

While things are looking good at the moment, Ching admits that challenges remain. Running a business is a delicate operation because it is supported by four pillars - *people, products, funding and execution*.

"The people are important because you need a management team, technical expertise and domain knowledge. Also vital to this is the company's ability to retain talent," he said.

"Second, the ability to develop products that address market needs is crucial because it makes your offering different from all the rest that are available out there."

"Third, funding is important because the company need money to support the research and development activities, especially in the initial phase," he added.

"Fourth, execution is key to this because these ideas and concepts must be turned into reality otherwise it all comes to nought."

"When you think about it, running a business is one that requires everyone in the company to run at 100km per hour. This means that everyone has to work together as a team."

"Think of it this way? When you are running at that speed, you cannot afford to have your people looking in different directions or else you may slam right into a brick wall," said Ching.

i-Sprint is at <http://www.i-sprint.com/>

### **i-Sprint Innovations**

**Founders:** Albert Ching, chief executive officer; Chan Kim Hing, chief technology officer; Gu Guo-Liang, chief security architect

**Formed:** March 2000

**Staff Strength:** 42

**IPO:** Will follow the natural progression of things

**Initial funding:** \$750,000 (seed funding), Acer Technology Ventures has 20 per cent stake (first round)

**Value proposition:** Develops security products that address an organisation's need for enterprise access control, single sign-on and security administration.

Date: 25 May, 2001

## **Last line of defence.**

Local company i-Sprint Innovations has developed an enterprise application access control and security administration system with a single sign-on feature that is said to reduce the application administration and audit cost.

The offering, AccessMatrix, protects web resources, client/server applications and backend applications. It provides centralised authentication, authorisation and audit services for users to securely access different ecommerce and enterprise resources, for example, web and application servers.

Access control or authorisation is a critical security service and is the last line of defence, said Albert Ching, chief executive officer of i-Sprint Innovations, who was speaking at IBM's inaugural Software Development Conference last week.

With a framework known as segmented hierarchy-based security administration and authorisation framework, AccessMatrix addresses the challenge of managing security for large user communities within a single organisation or across multiple organisations.

This is the first such product to be developed in Asia and we believe that there are only a few competitors in North America, said Ching.

"The security framework enables security administrators to be appointed at every level of the organisation structure. The administration rights of the local security administrators can be defined at a granular level to improve security and reduce administration costs. This means that it is able to define and manage application specific roles, security related business rules and business entitlements for example, down to roles, objects, methods, parameters, time and location restrictions.

Partial delegation allows user identification and passwords and privileges to be managed at the -local level," he added.

Even external organisations, that is customers and business partners can use this hierarchical administration model to allow the management of IDs and user rights by their own security administrators.

After user login, the product's authorisation services ensure that information or selected transactions are accessible by authorised users. Furthermore, the authorisation model protects both front end resources and back end applications.

I-Sprint Innovations is working with IBM to provide secure solutions for enterprise applications which includes architecture, infrastructure design and integration.

Author : Melanie Liew , Singapore

Source: Computer World, date of issue: 25 May 2001 - 31 May 2001, Technology section

Date: 16 May, 2001

## **Elevator Pitch competition.**

One of the hardest things a CEO has to do is perhaps convince investors to put money in their company. At the eSymposium, six start-up companies had to participate in an "elevator pitch" competition. The stakes were three cash prizes to be won - the top being \$5,000.

The start-ups were Video4i, SkyQuestCom, JustLogin, Noon Communications, Bizibody.com, and i-Sprint Innovations. Each company had six minutes to pitch their winning ways to a panel of venture capitalists from AsiaTech Ventures, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, and 3i.

i-Sprint Innovations, a data and network security specialist company that offers companies a "single-sign-on", across various applications, came up tops.

Second place went to SkyQuestCom, which offered e-learning services, and third was JustLogin, an application service provider offering leave, payroll and other applications to companies.

The pitch had to be on the quality of the company's management; whether there was a genuine market need for the products and services offered; and how much competition there was to the start-up.

Source: ComputerTimes - Wednesday, May 16, 2001 - Page CT3

*Date: 2 Jan, 2001*

## **Acer Technology Ventures Takes 20% Stake.**

Acer Technology Ventures (ATV), a member of the Acer Group, has taken a 20% stake in local e-business infrastructure solutions provider i-Sprint Innovations (i-Sprint). This is i-Sprint's first round of venture capital funding since its launch in March last year.

"Acer Technology Ventures is a strategic investor. We will be able to leverage on Acer's global network and wide business connections in both Asia Pacific and North America," said Albert Ching, i-Sprint's Chief Executive Officer. "ATV's investment reflects its confidence in i-Sprint's business and strategy. On top of the fund's injection, ATV will also bring proven management experiences to i-Sprint." added Mr. Ching.

"i-Sprint has strong domain knowledge in both Internet security and e-business technology infrastructure. These are the two areas that will enjoy the most significant growth potential in the coming few years. i-Sprint's capability of putting every business on-line in the shortest possible time forms the basis to enable every company's success in the Internet market place," said Bobby Chang, Managing Director, South East Asia of ATV.

i-Sprint has 40 employees, and expects to increase this number to 50 by February 2001. It started its Malaysian operations in December this year. i-Sprint is led by founders Albert Ching and Chan Kim Hing, former senior technology architects at a leading global bank.

i-Sprint's mission is to be the leading provider of comprehensive managed technology services for e-commerce web sites and their backend applications. Its products and services are designed to maximize the performance, reliability and security of large-scale complex Internet sites and e-Business applications. i-Sprint e-enables brick-and-mortar companies, and design, implement and manage their e-commerce systems.

Its clients include UniG, an e-commerce and m-commerce joint venture between property giants City Developments Ltd and Far East Organisation; CXHub, a leading construction exchange; National Australian Bank, The Association of Banks in Singapore, Mitsui OSK Lines, and IBM Global Services.