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Microsoft Announces New Premier Level of Windows Media Hosting Provider Certification Program and Selects Keynote Systems as Certification Partner



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Website

First Providers to Upgrade Their Certifications Are Akamai, Limelight Networks, Nine Systems, SAVVIS and VitalStream

REDMOND, Wash. and SAN MATEO, Calif., Oct. 27 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Microsoft Corp. (Nasdaq: [MSFT](#)) today announced the enhancement of the Windows Media(R) Hosting Provider Certification Program with the addition of the Premier designation and has chosen Keynote Systems Inc. (Nasdaq: [KEYN](#)), a leading Internet Performance Authority(R), as its certification partner. The first providers to upgrade their certification to this new level are Akamai Technologies Inc., Limelight Networks, Nine Systems Corp., SAVVIS Communications Corp. and VitalStream Inc. To achieve Premier certification status, members of the program must pass stringent network quality assurance tests administered by Keynote Systems using its Streaming Perspective(R) service. This includes significant testing of live streaming URLs. Partners that have achieved Premier certification can provide the best streaming experience for even the largest streaming events and projects. This designation will help content owners whose needs for stream hosting go beyond the ordinary.

(Photo: NewsCom: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/2000822/MSFTLOGO>)

Since its inception in December 2002, the Windows Media Hosting Provider Certification Program has been a symbol of proven excellence in the delivery of Windows Media Audio and Video streams. As Windows Media continues to be widely adopted, membership in the program has grown to include 12 companies from the United States and Europe. The Premier designation is being introduced to the program to differentiate those companies that have implemented hosting networks which exceed basic requirements and demonstrate exceptional reliability and serving capacity. Hosting providers, content providers and enterprise customers can find more information about the Windows Media Hosting Provider Certification Program and a list of all hosting providers that have achieved certification at

http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/service_provider/programs/wmhp.asp .

"This certification program gives content owners confidence that certified hosting providers have been evaluated and tested to ensure they have the technical expertise to deliver the best the Windows Media platform has to

offer," said Jonathan Usher, director of the Windows(R) Digital Media Division at Microsoft. "We have added this premier designation to distinguish hosting providers that have built out extensive networks with the capacity to handle the toughest situations, and our partnership with Keynote represents the trust we have in the independence and accuracy of its measurements."

The availability and widespread use of broadband connections and improvement in streaming technology have made the Internet a viable and cost-effective way for major companies to market their products and services. According to a study conducted by Arbitron Inc. and Edison Media Research last year, 103 million Americans have used Internet audio or video broadcasts. The explosive growth of broadband content on the Internet makes it critical for

hosting providers to measure the performance of their content from the end-user perspective to meet both internal and external goals.

"Keynote's ongoing partnership with Microsoft demonstrates that we are the industry standard for monitoring and measurement of streaming media delivery quality," said Shai Berger, general manager of the Streaming Division at Keynote. "Keynote is thrilled to continue providing the testing services behind the highly regarded Windows Media Hosting Provider Certification Program."

The ongoing and random testing of real-world URLs ensures that the streaming quality measured by Keynote reflects the quality experienced by end users of that provider. In addition to this rigorous testing, Premier providers must have at least 100 processors licensed for Windows Server(TM) 2003 and used exclusively for hosting. This ensures that providers have the serving capacity for even the most demanding streaming events.

About Keynote

Founded in 1995, Keynote Systems, The Internet Performance Authority, is the worldwide leader in Web performance measurement and management services that improve the performance of e-business. Keynote's services enable corporate enterprises to monitor, benchmark, test, diagnose and optimize their e-business systems both inside and outside the firewall. Over 2,100 corporate IT departments and 19,000 individual subscribers rely on the company's easy-to-use and cost-effective services to increase revenues and reduce downtime costs, without requiring additional complex and costly software implementations.

Keynote is The Internet Performance Authority due to the company's global infrastructure of over 1,600 measurement computers in more than 50 cities worldwide that capture and store on a daily basis over 40 million Internet performance measurements, frequent media citations quoting Keynote's Web performance data and analysis and the company's growing range of market-leading Web performance indices for vertical markets (http://www.keynote.com/solutions/solutions_pi_index.html).

Keynote Systems Inc. is headquartered in San Mateo, California and can be reached at <http://www.keynote.com> or by phone in the U.S. at 650-403-2400.

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

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Premier Hosting Providers Quote Sheet

"Akamai is excited to be among the first streaming delivery providers to join the new Premier program from Microsoft. As the market leader of distributed computing solutions and services, we believe that the new, more rigorous testing will better reflect the added value that our global streaming platform brings to customers."

-- Bill Wheaton
Director of Streaming
Akamai

"Limelight Networks understands the rich-media delivery needs of today's content owner. We see the Windows Media certification program, and specifically the Premier designation, as a powerful differentiation tool for content owners to consider when choosing among the competitors in this space. We're proud to be among the first content delivery companies to rise to the challenge of the new Premier testing regiment."

-- Gary Baldus
Vice President of Operations
Limelight Networks

"The intelligence of the Stream OS platform combined with Nine Systems' own delivery network and our relationships with other CDNs provides users with a superior streaming experience. By joining the new Premier program, our customers can see that the performance of Stream OS and an aggregated delivery network have been recognized and validated by Keynote testing."

-- Troy Snyder
Chief Executive Officer
Nine Systems

"SAVVIS is pleased to be certified by Keynote as a Premier Hosting Provider for outstanding support of Windows Media Audio and Video streams. Over 2,000 enterprises rely on SAVVIS for content delivery and media services. The Keynote certification recognizes our ability to deliver superior rich media services and expertise to our customers."

-- Pat Greer
Vice President of CDN Services
SAVVIS

"Reliability is our customers' No. 1 priority and is our No. 1 operational focus. The ongoing testing that we are doing as part of the Premier designation demonstrates this dedication to our customers and validates our status as a leading global provider of rich media streaming and content delivery network (CDN) services."

-- Paul Summers
President and Chief Executive Officer
VitalStream

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