PRESS RELEASE

Technopark to set up Software Engineering Competency Center with support from Rational Software Corporation

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Trivandrum

Technopark, Trivandrum, India's first technology park, promoted by the Government of Kerala, has announced that it is setting up an Software Engineering Competency Center at its premises with support and endorsement from Rational Software Corporation (India) Pvt. Ltd., a fully owned subsidiary of the US based Rational Software Corporation.

The **Technopark Software Engineering Competency Center (TSECC)** is being set up through an MOU between Rational's Authorised Channel Partner, M/s Astra Infotech Pvt. Ltd., and Technopark, Trivandrum, with the objective of accelerating the awareness and adoption of cutting edge software engineering principles in industry and academia in Kerala.

TSECC would be a one-stop shop to create awareness in different software engineering tools and solutions from Rational and would also be a proof of concept center for Rational's entire product range. TSECC would be targeted primarily at software development companies, the student and academic/research community, as well as new IT entrepreneurs in Kerala. The center would guide software development companies on how to build software engineering into the software development process. For a prospective entrepreneur, it would serve as a first level information center on managing a successful venture in software development implementing cutting edge software engineering principles. TSECC would be run on a non-commercial basis.

Mr. P.K.Kunhalikutty, Hon. Minister for IT and Industries, Government of Kerala, said "Technopark is at the forefront of the IT initiatives in the State and TSECC is the latest example of Technopark's continued pursuit of excellence. The IT industry and academic community in Kerala shall surely benefit from this unique enabling initiative."

Ms. Aruna Sundararajan, Secretary-IT, Government of Kerala, added "The TSECC will, at the grassroots level, strengthen the culture of software engineering in the state of Kerala. The TSECC derives itself from the Performance Excellence Initiative announced as part of the Kerala IT Policy- 2001. It shall facilitate and accelerate the creation of a metrics and process driven software industry in Kerala. I welcome this uniquely progressive initiative".

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Announcing the setting up of TSECC, **Mr. Rajiv Vasudevan, CEO, Technopark,** said "We are happy to partner with Rational, the global leader in software engineering tools and services. It will uniquely enable industry, particularly freshly incubated units, to improve the quality of their offerings and reduce cost of software development. It will also enable the creation of a ready pool of technical personnel familiar with the latest software engineering concepts and tools. TSECC is one more qualitative differentiator and business enabler that uniquely positions Technopark as a preferred investment destination for IT companies, particularly the small and medium ones.".

Mr. M.K. Bharatee, Country Manager, Rational India said**,** "We are happy to be associated with Technopark on this unique initiative, the first in India, and possibly the first time anywhere in the world. The uniqueness of this joint initiative is that easy access to Rational tools shall be complemented by Rational certified professionals at TSECC who will facilitate acquisition of new skills by the target audience. TSECC would facilitate bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical implementation of best practices of software development through Rational's software engineering tools."

"Technopark will provide the necessary space and facilities in the Technopark campus for setting up the TSECC. Rational India shall provide the entire library of Rational tools, solution samples, product demos, white papers, and other necessary collateral. Astra Infotech shall station two Rational Certified Professionals at the TSECC who will handhold and provide guidance to visitors coming to the center, and as such shall be responsible for the operation of the center and for ensuring customer satisfaction. Astra Infotech shall show case different value added services on Rational Products through periodic seminars and workshops. Astra Infotech is proud to play this pioneering role in the promotion of software engineering awareness and skills in Kerala" added **Mr. Vipin Kumar, Director, Astra Infotech**

About Technopark

Technopark, Trivandrum is India's first technology park and among the two largest IT parks in the country today. Technopark is an autonomous society promoted by the Government of Kerala. Spread over 156 acres, and about 1.5 m. sq.ft. of built-up space, it hosts over 55 IT and ITES companies, including 4 CMM Level 5, 2 CMM Level 3 and several ISO 9000 certified companies. Technopark is the IT hub of the State of Kerala, and based in Trivandrum which can rightfully claim to be the knowledge capital of the region. Technopark provides world class, robust and failsafe infrastructure, meeting global standards to IT companies. More importantly, Technopark's vision is to provide a holistic enabling environment to make knowledge industry intrinsically competitive and world class.

About Rational Software Corporation

Rational Software provides a software development platform that improves the speed, quality, and predictability of software projects. This integrated, full lifecycle solution combines software engineering best practices, market-leading tools, and professional services. Ninety-eight of the Fortune 100 rely on Rational tools and services to build better software, faster. This open platform is extended by partners who provide more than 500 complementary products and services. Founded in 1981, Rational is one of the world's largest software companies, with revenues of $666.4 million in its twelve months ended June 30, 2002, and over 3,500 employees worldwide. Rational is a member of the S&P 500 Index and a component of the Nasdaq-100 Index®. Additional information is available at www.rational.com and www.therationaledge.com, the monthly e-zine for the Rational community.

About Astra Infotech Private Limited

Astra Infotech is a software development company with more than 8 years of industry presence. Astra Infotech is an Authorized Channel Partner for Rational Software in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. Astra has developed a range of products spanning different verticals like Health Care, Manufacturing and Workflow Automation. Astra has a core team of highly qualified experts in software engineering with an accumulated 65 man years of experience. Astra Infotech uniquely complements the comprehensive resource library of Rational Software with expertise and knowledge capital in software engineering.