24/10/2002

HKUST/WebEx Institute Leads the Way to IT Hub

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and San Jose-based WebEx Communications, Incorporated (WebEx) have announced a plan to set up an advanced HKUST/WebEx Information Technology Institute (the Institute), with the objective of helping Hong Kong develop into a web-service hub in the region.

The Institute will focus on the research and development of cutting-edge multimedia technologies at HKUST, such as wireless applications and on-line product design. WebEx — a leading provider of interactive Web communications services — will assist the Institute, including by making WebEx services and technology available, and helping commercialize R&D results from the Institute.

Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa congratulates Paul Chu and Min Zhu after the Signing Ceremony for the HKUST/WebEx Information Technology Institute

A signing ceremony for the cooperation was held at the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in San Francisco on Wednesday (23 October). The HKUST delegation attending the ceremony was led by President Paul Chu, while WebEx was represented by its President and Chief Technical Officer, Mr Min Zhu.

The Chief Executive, Mr Tung Chee Hwa, who was visiting the US, was present at the ceremony to congratulate the two parties. "The basis of success of the economic restructuring of Hong Kong rests on innovation and technology. I am delighted to see WebEx coming to Hong Kong to work with HKUST," said Mr Tung.

The Institute will hire about 40 IT professionals in the initial phase, with support from faculty of various academic departments at HKUST. Industries that are expected to benefit from the project include garment design, electronics product development, and on-line trading.

Prof Chu said the Institute represented a major step in HKUST's efforts to team up with leading multinational hitech companies in research and development. "Combining the technological prowess of both parties, the Institute will contribute to the development of high value-added web service industries in Hong Kong," he said.

WebEx's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Mr Subrah S Iyar, said the cooperation with HKUST was a major factor in choosing Hong Kong as WebEx's regional focal point for business and technology development. "We are very impressed by the quality of research at HKUST and the conducive business environment of Hong Kong, whose strategic position in the China and regional markets gives it tremendous potential as an IT hub," said Mr Iyar.

Education and training is another main area of cooperation between HKUST and WebEx. Mr Zhu of WebEx said: "WebEx will help enhance IT education at HKUST, while the University will help train professionals needed by WebEx in the region."

The setting up of the Institute proceeds the Agreement of Cooperation the University signed with WebEx in May, which

sets out the intention to jointly develop education, training, and commercialization potential in IT.

About HKUST

Officially opened in 1991, HKUST is a young and dynamic research university dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, and thus to the economic and social development of Hong Kong and its neighboring areas through teaching, research, and service. It is the only university in Hong Kong to offer an all-PhD faculty. Its groundbreaking work in science, engineering, business, humanities, and social science is successfully pushing back the boundaries of the information age.

About WebEx

Founded in 1996 by Min Zhu and Subrah S Iyar, WebEx Communications, Inc. (Nasdaq: WEBX) is the leader in interactive communications infrastructure for business meetings. WebEx provides Web-based carrier-class communication services through its multimedia switching platform deployed over a global network. WebEx's services enable end-users to share presentations, documents, applications, voice and video spontaneously in a seamless environment. WebEx services are used across the enterprise in sales, support, training, marketing, engineering and various other functions.