The Uttermost Company extends Portal to include buy-side partners

For immediate Release

Plymouth, Massachusetts and Rocky Mount, Virginia – The Uttermost Company, *the* largest manufacturer of framed mirrors and wall décor in the United States, announced today that it has chosen PLMresearch, a leading Small to Midsize Business (SMB) eBusiness consulting firm, to develop Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) capabilities within its Internet portal. This effort will facilitate interaction and collaboration between Uttermost's buy-side partners (designers, vendors, manufacturers) and its factories in the United States and China, providing an online "venue" where design and manufacturing ideas can be shared anywhere, anytime via a standard browser (e.g. Internet Explorer™ or Netscape™).

"Uttermost has chosen to use an outsourced business model - leveraging our own internal skills with those of our independent designers, contract/component manufacturers and selling agents - to bring the Uttermost product from the point-of-conception into the consumer's home", stated Mac Cooper, President of The Uttermost Company, "Most recently we've pursued these relationships – particularly in the in areas of sourcing and manufacturing – on a global basis."

 "This business model has been extremely effective for us, however, its continued success will rely heavily upon a seamless information flow between our partners", Cooper added. "Unfortunately, our current collaboration processes have (or soon will) become too intense and slow to accommodate our expansion plans into the future. We realized that Uttermost needed a cost-effective, real-time alternative that would link our partners together across time zones and business cultures" stated Cooper," and PLMresearch showed us a way to accomplish this quickly and painlessly via PLM".

"PLM facilitates interaction and collaboration between value chain partners – vendors, R&D, logistics, etc – and is becoming particularly important for companies that are utilizing an outsourced business model", stated Mark Withington, Principal of PLMresearch. "We will base Uttermost's development on an open source[1] platform, allowing us to deploy PLM capabilities at a fraction of the cost typically associated with such an effort", explained Withington.

Unlike traditional shrink-wrap software licensed products, open source provides coding stability *along with* the flexibility for customization that, until now, has been available only to large enterprises with equally large budgets. Used in conjunction with PLMresearch's Rapid Development Methodology (RDM), open source development is an excellent alternative for the SMB to base their mission critical applications.

The Uttermost Company intends to deploy its PLM capabilities over the next several weeks.

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[1] Open source refers to a distribution model that promotes collective software development by making a software program's source code – the "human-readable" computer code before it is compiled into "machine code" - freely available to outside programmers. This process fosters "global collaboration" amongst developers, allowing them to critique the code and contribute their own enhancements and bug fixes.

About The Uttermost Company

The Uttermost Company is the largest manufacturer of framed mirrors servicing retail stores in the United States, and one of the largest manufacturers of framed prints, decorative plaques, oil reproductions and lamps. The name Uttermost is taken from Acts 1:8, and expresses both a personal belief and the company's marketing plan to spread the gospel and sell its products "to the uttermost parts of the earth".

Founded in 1975 by Bob and Belle Cooper, Uttermost is still 100% family owned today. Its culture is founded on the concept of mutual respect for all of its partners in business: from the person in their plant running a mitre saw to the retailer who selects and merchandises that perfect mirror, "we're all dependent on each other".

Today's Uttermost has grown to include over 300 employees at the factory in Virginia, 120 sales representatives and thousands of retail partners throughout the world. Its growth is primarily due to their commitment to three things–superior service to retailers, maximizing the value of its products, and treating its employees and sales representatives as partners in business.

About PLMresearch

PLMresearch specializes in the automation and re-engineering of business processes that facilitate demand creation, information sharing and collaboration. It assists SMB stakeholders, shareholders and owners in evaluating, designing and deploying - primarily open source - technology within their underlying business process need or value proposition.

PLMresearch recognizes the Internet's ability to leverage current legacy systems - Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Distribution Resource Planning (DRP) and Materials Resource Planning (MRP) - via emerging open source technology platforms that address the challenges of the SMB in a cost effective way. Through a combination of portal, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), content management, e-Commerce, and Enterprise Application Integration (EAI) technology, SMB's can streamline existing business processes, facilitate demand creation and maximize profitability.

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