

Statoil employs intelligent agent software to boost responsiveness

December 15, 2005 --- Norwegian-based Statoil, one of the world's largest suppliers of crude oil and natural gas, is developing software to support oil trading and operations management, using the JACK intelligent agent development toolkit from Agent Oriented Software (AOS), with additional application development support from Cambridge Consultants.

Intelligent agents will be applied to help solve optimisation, planning and process control issues in Statoil's trading and operations areas. Among the expected benefits in the trading area is the timely provision of the most up-to-date information, enabling the company to rapidly respond to changes in the market. This speed of operation will allow Statoil to improve effectiveness and continually modify ongoing business tactics, giving the company ample opportunity to further maximise revenues, while reducing the number of decisions made on out-dated information. The first applications are scheduled to start going live in April 2006. Statoil also plans to explore the use of intelligent agents in other areas including gas operation and remote monitoring of production facilities.

Statoil chose JACK as its development platform because of AOS's field-proven track record in knowledge engineering applications, its extensive training and mentoring services, and the availability of valuable support from Cambridge Consultants.

"To prosper in many of today's global markets companies need to gather and act on only the latest information. By integrating agent technology into their system, Statoil can focus on running its business, safe in the knowledge that these programs are gathering business-critical data all the time", says Cambridge Consultants' Grant Garner. "We've used intelligent agent technology in a range of applications in defence, telecoms and transport, and

we hope to maximise that know-how to help Statoil accelerate the development of its intelligent systems".

"This is a tremendous win for AOS and the intelligent agent market as a whole", says Tony Delaney, enterprise sales manager at Australian-based Agent Oriented Software. "Statoil is a leading global energy company that has seen the opportunities presented by JACK and how it can add value to its vast operation. It promises to be an exciting project and I look forward to seeing the agents in operation."

Intelligent agents are small autonomous pieces of software that provide encapsulated knowledge, which can be deployed within larger information systems to provide flexible and autonomous action. Each agent has an internal structure based on Beliefs, Desires and Intentions (BDI), which can be used to make systems behaviour-driven or provide attributes such as decision support.

Agent Oriented Software's JACK language - based on Java - is a framework that allows developers to build, debug and run intelligent agents in information systems. First released in 1997, JACK has become a leading global player in the emerging field of agent software.

Cambridge Consultants is one of a few commercial organisations in Europe with practical experience of building intelligent agent applications for real-time applications. The company has worked in this area for over 20 years, and has created its own methodology for managing knowledge-based engineering projects, based on KADS (Knowledge Acquisition and Design System). Its project framework extends the KADS methodology with models that bridge the design and the process, speeding and simplifying the production of systems.

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