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Chris Hulick

Division President, Eurest Dining
Compass Group



Doing More with Less, Compass Group Extends Industry Leadership with Microsoft Technology, Goes on to Win Vendor Award

Compass Group joined with two technology partners, Area101 and Cactus, in using Microsoft® technology to create online catering and conference room management solutions that make life easier for users, increase the productivity of caterers and customers, and help both Compass and Microsoft save.

In addition, Compass Group has used its strategic relationship with Microsoft to transform itself into a vendor with significantly enhanced capabilities from which other customers can benefit. In the case of Compass Group, doing more with less means not just saving money, but also increasing revenue while increasing efficiencies. Compass gained a powerful competitive advantage by demonstrating business agility.

CUSTOMER PROFILE	BUSINESS SITUATION	SOLUTION	BENEFITS
Compass Group North America is headquartered in Charlotte, NC. Compass Group is a major player in the food services and hospitality industry, employing over 116,000 associates in the US and Canada, and producing pro forma revenue for 2002 of nearly \$5 billion.	Customers and caterers alike spent a lot of time and effort managing orders and services by phone and e-mail, or with MS Market, an intranet procurement portal. Compass wanted to find a way to increase efficiencies and better accommodate the service-level dynamics of the catering business.	Compass Group enrolled Area101, a Microsoft certified partner, to take an existing product, eCatering, onto the Microsoft technology by porting it from Coldfusion. Using Microsoft products, Area101 also added a large number of features to fit customers' needs even better.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurable reductions in time spent managing orders More responsive, flexible services for critical customers More efficient inventory and menu management, improving margins and lowering costs Higher catering market share as a result of increased value A repeatable solution that sharpens Compass Group's competitive edge

“We help our vendors to do more with less by using Microsoft technology—which they usually already own and work with—to expand their business agility and become more competitive.”

Steve Lee

*Vendor Business Development Program
Microsoft*

Situation

Compass Group North America, headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, is a division of Compass Group PLC, which is based in the UK. Compass Group is a global leader and one of the largest companies in the contract food service and hospitality market. With over 360,000 employees working in more than 90 countries, Compass Group PLC has annual food service pro forma revenues in excess of \$13 billion. Compass Group North America has been active in the U.S. since 1994, experiencing dramatic growth in its revenue and the number of clients it serves. Its pro forma revenues for 2002 amount to nearly \$5 billion. The company employs more than 116,000 associates in the U.S. and Canada.

When Microsoft evaluated its vendor services and business relationships, it decided to select a new vendor for catering and hospitality services at Microsoft headquarters and distributed campuses around the U.S and Europe. With Compass Group’s vast service delivery infrastructure and cross-industry expertise, it was a perfect fit for Microsoft’s needs. Compass has been a Microsoft vendor for over four years, contracting with the Employee Services Group (ESG) to provide dining and catering, as well as conference room management under the label of its Eurest division. In optimizing its operation and looking for ways to satisfy its customer, this vendor embarked on a complete transformation of the way it does business.

The Microsoft Strategic Vendor Relationship and its Award-Winning Best Practice Create an Optimal Customer/Partner Experience (CPE)

Vendor management plays a crucial role at Microsoft. Transcending the traditional supplier and customer relationship, the company prefers to enter into strategic relationships with its vendors. The Vendor Business Development Program seeks to

understand the business issues vendors face every day, and aims at mapping vendor needs to Microsoft software and services. This kind of close relationship helps Microsoft create technology that is directly applicable to real-life problems. It also gives the vendor an opportunity to maximize the way it does business by using technology to streamline processes, empower workers to become more productive and efficient, and increase the profitability of the company. Steve Lee, who runs the Vendor Business Development Program, often finds himself extending invitations. “We help our vendors to do more with less by using Microsoft technology—which they usually already have and work with—to expand their business agility and become more competitive.”

In the process, Microsoft and its vendors rally around their shared interests. The Microsoft sales and consulting organizations help vendors deploy and utilize any Microsoft products in their businesses, and support them through the customization and implementation cycles of any business applications. The Vendor Business Development Program can help vendors access resources of technology and expertise that they may find difficult to find and acquire on their own. It can leverage product support, professional consulting services, and outside industry partners to help a vendor map its technology to its business interests, and arrive at compelling, repeatable solutions.

Microsoft sales and Eurest/Compass Group recently signed an Enterprise Agreement for Microsoft to provide software and ancillary services. “Thanks to the strategic, cooperative relationship between Compass and Microsoft,” says Kerry Williams from Microsoft Sales, “I was able to approach the company’s executive leadership and found them interested in considering the possibilities I tried to open up. I could enrich their operation with the best

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Kerry Williams

*Enterprise Retail Vertical Strategic Sales
Microsoft*

practices of the Vendor Business Development Program.” Janet Kennedy, Microsoft Retail Vertical Sales Director, fills in the background. “They saw the potential of the technology that was available to them,” she explains, “and how we could assist them in designing an IT strategy that would help them migrate to the latest Microsoft technology. It would allow them to run their business more efficiently, and with a higher level of security enhancements.”

Within the Vendor Business Development Program, Microsoft vendors regularly go through a team effort known as “360-Business Review.” This process includes executives and line-of-business owners from the vendor company, the Vendor Business Development Program, Microsoft technology and business experts, as well as Microsoft vendor account managers and business stakeholders. It evaluates all aspects of the relationship between Microsoft and the vendor. It identifies any opportunities for growth and improvement, including those where Microsoft can make a contribution to the vendor’s competitiveness and business agility. Microsoft strongly encourages its vendors to take innovative risks, and helps them to develop and roll out beta programs and services. The customer/partner experience (CPE) is strongly improved by this process. The 360-Business Review is an award-winning best practice at Microsoft.

Winning the Vendor Excellence Award for Diversity

In selecting vendors, Microsoft invites minority- and women-owned businesses to enter into long-standing relationships. Its vendor diversity program focuses on three areas: increased spending with minority- and women-owned businesses through direct engagement as well as encouragement of its suppliers to do business with them; collaboration with national procurement agencies that support diversity in business; and direct investment

to provide seed money for developing businesses. In complete alignment with these efforts, Compass Group was already in a strategic partnership with Thompson Hospitality, the nation’s largest minority-owned food service company. The success and strength of the tightly woven relationship of Compass and Thompson has won industry awards and spirited acclaim from observers of business and societal issues. In June 2003, Compass Group and Thompson won Microsoft’s Vendor Excellence Award for Diversity.

The Vendor Award honors the accomplishments of Compass Group and Thompson Hospitality in creating a diverse workplace, and the innovative joint venture of the two companies. To help meet Microsoft’s objective for fiscal year 2003 to increase its diversity spending with first-tier vendors, Compass and Thompson formed a three-party agreement with Microsoft. Thompson has been responsible for a string of diversity breakthroughs in corporate environments. The company developed initiatives such as diversity celebrations in cafés, supported recruiting of and internships for students of historically black colleges and universities, and helped to identify second-tier minority- and women-owned businesses to help Microsoft to further advance its own diversity efforts.

Today, Compass Group and Thompson Hospitality Food are jointly responsible for food services and catering at all Microsoft facilities in the United States. The two companies also provide event management for Microsoft’s Conference Services, including a 143,000-square-foot conference center at Microsoft headquarters in Redmond, Washington. They also manage most of Microsoft’s food services in Europe.

Ron Ouellette, Sr. Director, Employee Services Group (ESG), at Microsoft, is very clear on the crucial role vendors such as Compass and Thompson play in

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Microsoft*

allowing the company to realize its vision. The ability of a vendor to focus on common goals and find innovative solutions to business issues makes a significant difference in the quality of the relationship between the vendor and Microsoft. “My group is responsible for significant expenditures,” says Ron Ouellette. “We spend approximately \$1 billion with the various companies with whom we contract. I look for all of the obvious things—an effective service delivery infrastructure, for example, and the best economy. To me, at least as important as cost-effectiveness is that vendors have the capability of continuous improvement. When they grow and become better vendors, and are cost-effective as well, everybody benefits, including their other clients.”

The Need for a New Online Food Services Solution

Soon after Compass Group and Thompson Hospitality started working on the Microsoft campuses, conversations began between them and Microsoft ESG. Part of the mission of the Employee Services Group is to offer services that help people increase their productivity and efficiency. Culturally, one aspect that called for innovation was the nature of self-service at Microsoft, which has increasingly become a vital strategy for the company’s success. Microsoft aims to empower employees to take care of business independently as much as possible, giving them the best and most effective tools available. MS Market is the portal in use at Microsoft internally for purchases and management of travel services, technology, office supplies, and catering services. ESG was looking for a solution that would facilitate onsite delivery of catering services from multiple vendors at all campus locations. This solution would need to be easy to use, combining intuitive front-end functionality with a full-featured, back-end financial system.

Similar to many other enterprises, Microsoft had decided earlier to standardize on highly regarded, robust SAP back-office technology as its enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution. The SAP system supported such tasks as purchase order creation and invoicing approvals. A new catering solution would have to be flexible enough to connect with the SAP system’s capabilities. This business challenge—to integrate legacy systems, such as SAP, with newly developed technology—is one that many organizations in all industries face as they upgrade and extend their operations.

Catering service management was very labor- and time-intensive for the caterers, who responded to phone and e-mail order submissions. Any changes to catering orders were difficult to make and frustrating for both customers and caterers. Customers were not able to make changes or review orders over the Web—instead, they had to make a phone call or send an e-mail. Because these communication processes frequently led to inaccuracies and errors in order items and price confirmations, services suffered. Customers in Microsoft locations outside of the Washington headquarters could not place orders.

Microsoft ESG realized the need for an online, flexible solution to satisfy the needs of the many users of catering services throughout the organization. Ideally, the solution could be outsourced, leaving it to a vendor to manage product information, pricing, and processes according to its expertise. Compass Group was ready to take on the task.

Solution

Compass Group needed to enroll a technology partner to help create the catering solution. It soon found Area101, a Microsoft certified, e-business solutions

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Todd Ballinger
President
Area101



provider as well as a minority- and woman-owned business, with headquarters in Denver, Colorado. In business since 1999, Area101 delivers innovative solutions, services, and products that help its customers streamline their operations and maintain a competitive advantage. Compass Group determined that Area101 was a great fit, especially because of the company's wide-ranging expertise in the food, beverage, and contract food service markets. In fact, Area101 had a product called "Food Venue" that could address many concerns of Compass Group caterers and its Microsoft customers. Version 5.0 of Food Venue was already in use in several large, distributed organizations, including Intel and J.D. Edwards.

Building an eCatering Solution for the Microsoft Environment

Area101 traditionally used Coldfusion to implement Food Venue and its other solutions. Compass Group asked that Food Venue be brought into a Microsoft technology environment, with which its users were productive and comfortable. Area101 quickly formed a team of programmers and technologists, and initially engaged with Microsoft's Consulting Services to help establish the new solution's architecture. They used Microsoft SQL Server™ to overlay Coldfusion, and Microsoft Visual Studio® .NET tools to map all features and functions fully into the new environment.

Visual Studio .NET, used by developers all over the world, is a powerful, end-to-end tool for designing, developing, and deploying security-enhanced applications for Microsoft Windows® and the Web. The applications are robust and easy to use, and developers can use the same skills, programming model, and development tools to build applications that span from small devices to enterprise data centers. SQL Server is Microsoft's industry-leading database, data management, and business intelligence solution used by enterprises in

all industries to increase employee effectiveness, integrate heterogeneous IT ecosystems, and maximize capital and operating budgets.

"Food Venue is a very complete and complex application with a wide range of features and capabilities," explains Todd Ballinger, President of Area101.

"Microsoft Visual Studio .NET was flexible and powerful enough to take our entire solution into a Microsoft environment in a very short time. It's noteworthy that the project was not only fast, but also graceful. The Microsoft technology made it easy for us to reuse programming objects. Our programmers worked intensely, and they got the transition accomplished in just about five months. The result has far more security features, and is more dependable and economic than any other solution we have developed in a competing operating system environment."

Porting Food Venue from Coldfusion to the Microsoft .NET-connected software enabled the Area101 team to incorporate best practices generated in previous deployments of the solution. In the process, they also added a large number of new features that Compass had requested, capturing all nuances and intricacies specific to the way Compass and its caterers do their jobs.

The project stakeholders from Microsoft, Compass Group, and Area101 used Microsoft Project Server 2002 for project management purposes. Since project information was readily available over the Web to everybody involved, it was easy for participants to connect to it and synchronize the steps of the process.

The eCatering solution was released in early February, 2003 at five Microsoft campuses: Redmond headquarters and the Sammamish, Washington, campus; the Microsoft Silicon Valley campus in Mountain View, California; and offices in Las Colinas, Texas, and Charlotte, North Carolina. Project managers used a minimally intrusive train-the-trainer approach to familiarize users with the solution. They also made sure to brief administrative professionals and executive assistants, the most frequent users of the catering services.

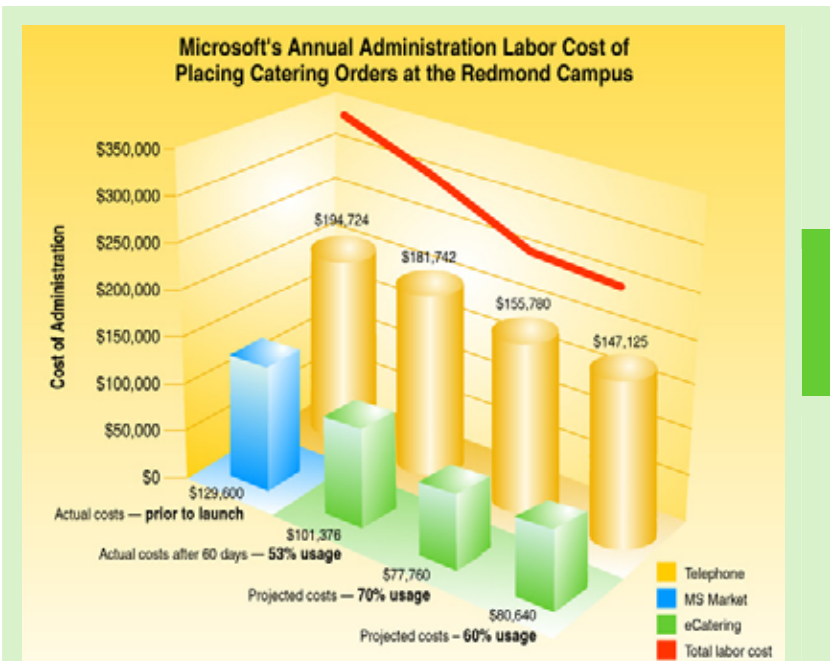
As a result of the implementation of the eCatering solution, catering clients now can order food and catering services, make menu selections, check and modify their orders with a tool that is enjoyably easy to use and rich in self-service features, allowing users to take care of their needs in very little time. The purchasing and catering management interface connects seamlessly to the SAP system, and can leverage its powerful customer relationship management (CRM), financial reporting, and other capabilities.

Users may not notice that eCatering is a solution hosted by Area101, but they

benefit from that service. Area101 makes extensive use of Microsoft .NET technology to let catering customers access full authentication and personalization services. The increased level of security features enhances the dependability and integrity of transactions and data.

With the new eCatering solution, customers benefit from single sign-on at the intranet portal. For example, from the ordering and menu screens, they can move across to the Compass Web site, then back without having to sign in again. They previously had the capability of leaving MS Market and visiting vendor sites for additional information, but now they can do so with security enhancements, from within the network firewall. New vendors will need to support and use the same technology, and will most likely find it as dependable and flexible as Compass does.

Having brought eCatering into the Microsoft environment opens up a wealth of new business opportunities for Area101. "Now that we've done this project, it has amazing potential. We'll definitely benefit from leveraging our great experience here with other clients," says Todd Ballinger.



RAPID ADOPTION OF ECATERING AT MICROSOFT'S REDMOND CAMPUS MAKES SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS POSSIBLE.

Expanding from eCatering to Full-Service Online Conference Management

Compass Group also takes care of all centrally managed space for Microsoft, including conference rooms and conference centers. Compass Group's hospitality experience makes it the perfect fit for this service. And for Microsoft, it makes good business sense to have only one vendor handle these two closely related functions. Combining the catering and conference room services eliminates having two organizations work with redundant data relating to locations, rooms, and schedules. Customers, too, have a better experience when they can efficiently make space reservations and order food in one simple procedure.

The eCatering solution took care of the catering part of the operation, but Compass needed to find the technology to help it run conference room management services with equal efficiency. It found the perfect support in Cactus, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner located in Ottawa, Ontario. Among other technology solutions, Cactus has developed a wealth of expertise on conference facility management. The custom-built conference room management solution built by Cactus for Compass Group and Microsoft is called Nautilus. Currently, Nautilus is in the testing stages, but promises to add significant cost and efficiency benefits to Compass and Thompson operations. Cactus is using Microsoft BizTalk® Server, Microsoft Content Management Server, Microsoft SQL Server, and other Microsoft products in its development, all running under the powerful, new operating system, Microsoft Windows Server™ 2003.

As the chief technology officer of Cactus, Jean-Yves Martineau is a supply chain management specialist with many years of integration work behind him. Martineau highlights the strengths of the Microsoft technology available to him in this project. "We are using Microsoft BizTalk Server to

integrate Compass' delivery infrastructure with Microsoft's employee service portal and other internal systems," he explains. "The process is remarkably smooth. In the end, we will have built a synergistic facility that is considerably more flexible and capable than anything else we would arrive at by using more traditional or proprietary technology."

To users, Nautilus and eCatering will be one integrated solution. They will be able to access both from the same operating environment, without having to change screens or familiarize themselves with new software.

Benefits

"Considering how quickly we were able to demonstrate that we could save money and improve the productivity of both our own and Microsoft's employees, I'm very excited about the results we will be looking at a year from now," says Chris Hulick, Division President for Compass Group. "Starting with eCatering, moving on to conference room and facilities management, we may be looking at a complete reinvention of the way business is done in our industry."

In the few months since its introduction, eCatering has netted a wide range of tangible benefits already for Compass and Thompson catering staff and operations, as well as for their customers. A customer satisfaction survey is currently in preparation, and informal feedback from all sides has been uniformly positive. The eCatering solution requires only a very small amount of training for catering staff, and is completely intuitive to customers. Adoption has been immediate, attracting users to the new facility and away from cumbersome e-mail and telephone interactions. For example, at the time eCatering was being introduced to Microsoft's Sammamish campus, catering

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Jean-Yves Martineau
Chief Technology Officer
Cactus

The logo for Cactus, featuring the word "cactus" in a lowercase, serif font. The letters are dark blue, with the letter "u" being a lighter shade of blue.

customers had been using MS Market to handle 50 percent of their catering orders. Less than two months later, usage had escalated and 85 percent of orders were being processed through eCatering. In the same timeframe, ordering and catering management by way of e-mail dwindled from 20 percent to 1 percent, and telephone ordering shrunk from 30 percent down to 12 percent.

Let's take a closer look at the impact of eCatering on customers and caterers—and the bottom line.

Creating Customer Satisfaction

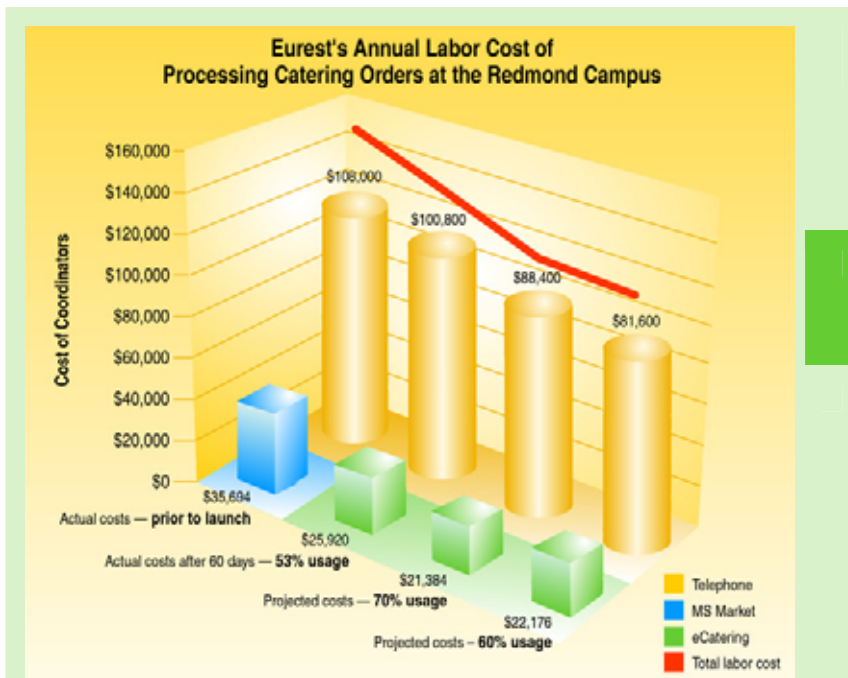
Overall, eCatering has been shown to produce an increase of 20 percent in customer satisfaction. There are a number of reasons for this.

Standardization is one aspect of eCatering that helps catering customers most practically. A customer in Redmond who needs catering in Las Colinas can use eCatering to access the menu, then place an order, using streamlined, common items, fees, and categories. Once the order is in the system, the customer can change it easily, update quantities, or select different menu items.

The easily navigated, fully customer-managed ordering process reduces errors and improves meal coordination. Invoicing, which used to be frustrating for everybody, is now much improved. Before invoices go out to customers, the catering team reviews a report to verify orders and billing totals. Eliminating billing problems, alone, is seen as a significant enhancement to customer satisfaction.

Optimizing Service Delivery

“Now, all our caterers want to work at the Microsoft campuses,” says Chris Hulick. “Introducing eCatering was the best thing we could have done for employee productivity and morale.” The most promising, almost instantaneous feedback from Compass and Thompson catering staff concerned the drastic time savings brought about by eCatering. For the catering service professionals, doing away with almost all telephone calls, as well as a large number of e-mails, regarding order changes and menu items, was a little like embarking on a newly enhanced career. Working almost entirely without interruptions has freed caterers to concentrate on critical customers who have urgent orders to be processed for the same



EUREST'S COSTS OF PROVIDING CATERING SERVICES SHRINK, ALLOWING THE COMPANY TO BE MORE PROFITABLE.

day. Catering managers can concentrate on other vital tasks, such as budgeting and business planning, leaving control over eCatering to staff who can easily manage the day-to-day business operations.

With eCatering, food service workers and managers can change the pricing on overstocked or seasonal items instantly, resulting in more efficient inventory and menu management. With this capability, they can drive sales, improve gross margins, and lower food costs for the catering business.

“Compared to what we had to deal with before, now the business operation almost runs itself,” says Rick Postiglione, CEO – Business and Industry Division for Compass Group North America. “My managers can make any necessary changes with a few mouse clicks, and eCatering doesn’t need any code modifications or additional development—it created a significant improvement in our productivity and efficiency right from the start.” Rick Postiglione also stresses the role Microsoft and its Vendor Business Development Program play in helping Compass compete. “Microsoft is one of our largest customers,” he explains, “and definitely one of the most strategically important—because they challenge us to continually improve.”

Increasing the ROI in Staff, Resources, and Technology

Financial results, so far, are promising, even though eCatering has been in place for only a short time. The reports from all five campuses show that the new solution is likely to have a significant impact on improving the profitability of Eurest catering operations. Estimates of its client, Microsoft Employee Services Group, peg the annual savings generated by eCatering at roughly \$250,000.

The two diagrams in this article illustrate the diminishing costs of using and providing catering services for

Eurest/Compass and Microsoft at the Redmond campus. While many catering customers still use the telephone and e-mail, especially for same-day orders, their number is rapidly going down, resulting in tangible dollar savings and increased efficiencies. On the Microsoft side, the costs of using the catering service while interacting over the telephone and via e-mail are projected to be 25% less than before the launch of eCatering, with 70% of users accessing eCatering. At the same time, the costs of using eCatering are approximately 35% less than the costs of using the old solution. For Eurest/Compass, the costs of doing business with telephone and e-mail also decline approximately 25% between launch of eCatering and acceptance by 70% of the customers. And the cost reduction as a result of eCatering amounts to almost 38% of what the costs were previously.

As a consequence of eCatering, Compass expects to increase its market share of the catering business. Caterers at the Redmond campus expect that they will take, consistently, ten additional orders each day, maybe more. There may be more new business once all likely catering and food service customers have had a chance to try eCatering and find out for themselves how efficient and easy to use it is. The Redmond caterers also anticipate saving ten minutes of work on each order they process—an increase that translates quickly into impressive dollar savings.

Seeding Future Growth

The eCatering project has become a milestone in the ability of Compass Group to expand on its strengths by granting itself increased business agility. Chris Hulick says, “Being in a strategic relationship with Microsoft has helped us become a better vendor, not to Microsoft alone, but to all our clients.” In the process, Compass has enhanced its capability as a vendor of services, acquiring a powerful technology

“There is no doubt that becoming a more capable vendor to Microsoft has increased our ability to add value to other customers.”

Gary Green

*Chief Executive Officer
Compass Group*

solution for managing catering and food services.

As it continues to grow and increase its leadership in the catering and food service market, Compass will be able to take that solution to other clients, allowing them to generate similar productivity and financial benefits. When online conference room management becomes part of the Compass and Thompson portfolio, customers and service providers will be likely to see additional, tangible improvements in productivity and economy. "I hope that we can share eCatering, as well as the conference room management facility, with some of our other clients in the near future," says Gary Green, Chief Executive Officer at Compass. "There is no doubt that becoming a more capable vendor to Microsoft has increased our ability to add value to other customers."

The eCatering solution will soon be rolled out to the Microsoft Business Solutions campuses in Fargo, North Dakota, and

Findlay, Ohio. Subsequent to that, the sales offices and field sites in the United States, as well as international locations, will have the opportunity to experience the benefits of eCatering.

Compass Group has managed to show the market what doing more with less can mean. As a consequence, the company is able to aim much further than any technological solution. Adding to its core business skills of industry and service delivery expertise, Compass created a significant competitive advantage for itself through its adaptability and agility. In today's business climate, customers expect vendors to go beyond the call of ordinary duty, and become imaginative and creative in addressing business needs. Look to Compass Group to strengthen its leadership as it extends the benefits of its relationship with Microsoft across all the industries it serves.

Software and Services

Microsoft® Windows Server 2003
Microsoft SQL Server™
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The **Microsoft Vendor Business Development Program** develops vital, strategic relationships between Microsoft and its vendors. It helps vendor companies increase their competitive strength and realize business opportunities with enhanced leadership in their industries.

Software for the Agile Business

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