



PROTEL INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

Media Release

Monday 2nd April 2001

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For Immediate Release

Protel International acquires TASKING group

**First true “single-source” for electronic designers to revolutionize
Embedded Software Design and Desktop EDA industries**

Sydney, Australia – April 2nd, 2001 – Protel International Limited, a leading developer of Windows-based electronic design software, today announced that it has acquired TASKING, a worldwide specialist in tools for embedded software development for US\$38 million.

In an industry that has traditionally seen clear lines of demarcation between design tools for hardware and software, this acquisition represents the first true “single-source” solution for electronics designers.

“The powerful combination of Protel and TASKING gives designers the opportunity to purchase both hardware design tools and software design tools from the same vendor – a first for a desktop EDA tool company,” said Kayvan Oboudiyat, CEO of Protel International. *“This move will further strengthen Protel’s position as the leading independent vendor of Windows-based, desktop EDA solutions.”*

The use of embedded microprocessors has become common-place in electronic design and more recently the industry has seen rapid moves towards “system-on-chip” design methodologies. This, combined with the fact that there is a convergence between hardware and software design tasks and a broadening of an individual engineer’s coverage of design areas, leads to an increasing need for greater links between embedded hardware and software design environments. This acquisition, in conjunction with Protel’s recent entry into the programmable device (FPGA) design area, allows Protel to provide engineers with all the tools they need for virtually all electronic product design flows.

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Frank Despomare, TASKING's founder and Chairman stated, "*we believe the joining of Protel and TASKING will provide our semiconductor partners with an opportunity to solve the long-standing problem of hardware and software integration*". Scott Taitel, TASKING's OOO added that "*Both customer bases are looking for powerful complete solutions to address next-generation electronic design challenges so they will greatly benefit from being able to purchase hardware design and software development tools from a single source.*"

Already a successful provider of leading desktop board-level (PCB) and programmable chip-level (FPGA) design tools, Protel's focus is and has always been on providing a complete and affordable tool-set for all forms of electronic design. Embedded software development has generally been treated by tool vendors as separate from hardware design. TASKING's embedded software expertise and broad range of embedded systems products can be combined with Protel's unique platform for the development of electronic design tools. This will create a significant opportunity to close the gap between electronics hardware and software design, which will enable engineers to benefit from the provision of a full set of electronic design tools from a single supplier, completely addressing their embedded systems design needs.

In its 1999 IPO prospectus Protel pointed to embedded software and FPGA development as the two main areas of the electronic design process that it needed to target in order to provide complete coverage of the electronic design process. Now that Protel has an established market presence in the FPGA arena, the acquisition of TASKING provides the means to secure this strategy for the following reasons:

- ⌘ TASKING is an industry leader in the development, manufacture and support of software development tools with over twenty-five years experience serving the embedded systems market place.
- ⌘ TASKING has exceptional strength in the area of 8/16 bit embedded software development - an area which has the closest synergy with the corresponding hardware design processes.
- ⌘ TASKING holds a strong position in the development of software tools for DSP (Digital Signal Processor) applications, a major growth area for embedded systems design and one that also has strong links to hardware development.

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- ⌘ TASKING is a founding member of the Extend The Internet (ETI) Alliance and is also a driving force in the emerging embedded Internet standards through its design of applications using embedded internet technology (software that enables connection of hardware devices to the Internet).
- ⌘ TASKING has a global network of value-added distributors spread over thirty countries, along with an extensive sales and marketing structure, including direct sales networks and sales offices across Asia, Europe and America – combining both companies' distribution channels will greatly increase Protel's geographic penetration, furthering its market strength in the US and Europe in particular.
- ⌘ TASKING has strong OEM partnerships with major chip manufacturers including Infineon, Intel, Mitsubishi Semiconductors, Motorola, NEC Electronics Inc, Parthus Technologies plc, Philips Semiconductors, Sanyo, Seiko EPSON and STMicroelectronics. These relationships provide significant opportunities to further Protel's development of its chip-level FPGA design products.

Protel's aggressive strategies for growth and strong financial position, following a successful IPO in August 1999, serve to provide TASKING with a solid backing for the future. This joining of forces provides significant opportunities for both Protel and TASKING customers and further strengthens Protel's position in providing a complete set of powerful, easy-to-use tools for the desktop electronic design market. Most importantly this will make the combined product offerings a highly attractive alternative to high-priced tools from work-station-focused EDA vendors.

The management teams of Protel and TASKING are now currently focusing on the seamless integration of the businesses and rapidly moving forward with the strategies to bring it's leading brands to an even wider customer base, seeking out new areas of market penetration and continuing to strengthen it's market leading position in the desktop arena.

TASKING customers will soon be mailed comprehensive information regarding the acquisition, with up-to-date details available from both Protel's website at www.protel.com and TASKING's website at www.tasking.com.

Summary:-

- ? **Protel International acquires TASKING group, a specialist in design tools for embedded software applications.**
- ? **Current industry trends towards concurrent hardware/software design and “system-on-a-chip” design methodologies have created a large demand for integrated hardware & software design tools.**
- ? **The joining of Protel and TASKING will create the first desktop EDA vendor able to provide the means to facilitate the co-design of software and hardware for electronic devices from a single source.**
- ? **TASKING has major strengths in the 8 and 16-bit embedded software development area.**
- ? **TASKING is strong in the DSP design and embedded communications markets.**
- ? **TASKING has close relationships with chip vendors – these relationships will strengthen Protel’s position in the FPGA design market.**
- ? **Providing a single source to address both hardware and software design requirements makes complete sense, and the combining of the Protel’s and TASKING technical expertise will benefit the combined customer base.**
- ? **TASKING partners and customers can benefit from Protel’s strong financial position following a successful IPO in August 1999, along with a high reputation for customer support and ongoing product development.**
- ? **This acquisition furthers the strategic plan outlined in Protel’s 1999 IPO prospectus for penetration into the embedded software design and FPGA design markets and is a major step towards Protel’s goal in providing a complete set of tools for desktop electronic design.**
- ? **This acquisition gives Protel an increased presence in the European EDA market.**
- ? **Protel can utilise the synergy between its current hardware design products and TASKING’s software design products to provide the combined customer base with a single-source for all their EDA and embedded software needs.**
- ? **By extending its philosophy of easy-to-use design tools at cost-effective prices to TASKING products, Protel can provide affordable embedded design solutions for new engineering companies entering the market, and an attractive alternative to high-priced tools from work-station-focused EDA vendors.**



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About Protel International Limited

Protel International Limited (ASX: PRI) is a leading global developer and supplier of desktop electronic design automation (EDA) software for the Microsoft Windows environment. Protel software is used for electronic design and development across many industries including telecommunications, defence, medicine, science, and consumer electronics. Protel's customer base includes Alcatel, BMW, Canon, CSIRO, Daimler Benz, Fujitsu, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Motorola, NASA, NEC, Nokia, Philips, Sony and Telstra.

Protel is headquartered in Sydney, Australia and operates a number of sales and support offices in Australia, the United States, Japan and Europe. Protel also maintains a large reseller network in all other major markets.

Protel's ongoing philosophy of "Making Electronic Design Easy"TM extends through every aspect of the Company's efforts. Through constant technical innovation, aggressive pricing and a strong focus on the needs of our customers, Protel continues to demonstrate the strongest possible commitment to users of Windows-based desktop EDA tools. More information about the company and its products and services may be obtained at <http://www.protel.com>.

About TASKING

TASKING, The Embedded Communications Company, brings together the software technology needed to compete in the embedded communications era. TASKING's award-winning integrated development environment, compiler, debugger, embedded Internet and RTOS offerings support a wide range of DSPs and 8-, 16- and 32-bit microprocessors and microcontrollers for all areas of embedded communications. TASKING, founded in 1974, is a privately held company with headquarters in Dedham, Massachusetts, and engineering, sales and support offices in The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Japan and the UK. TASKING's large installed user base includes the world's leading telecom, datacom, wireless and peripheral manufacturers. More information about TASKING can be found at www.tasking.com.

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