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Kirtas Technologies Signs Digitization Contract With Microsoft

— *Books will be digitized and searchable on Live Book Search* —

Rochester, N.Y., Tuesday, Oct. 17, 2006 – Kirtas Technologies, a leading innovator and provider of digital scanning solutions, is pleased to announce the signing of a digitization agreement with Microsoft Corp. to provide the highest quality digital books available in the world. The project includes both copyrighted material furnished by publisher partners as well as select collections of public domain material provided by library partners.

Starting early next year, these books will become gradually available to the general public through Live Book Search. Access to the books will strictly conform to widely accepted copyright laws.

Microsoft selected Kirtas Technologies for its radically innovative book-scanning technology as well as its unique digitization expertise. Besides being the fastest robotic book scanner in the world, Kirtas' APT BookScan 2400 coupled with the BookScan Editor PRO software delivers superior image quality with a book handling that is gentler than the human hand. Furthermore, Kirtas' Service Bureau has mastered a proprietary digitization process that guarantees an overall error rate lower than 1 per 10,000 pages, ensuring a quality mass digitization that will meet the highest standards and endure the test of time.

“We believe that searching and finding relevant book content will become an important and integral component to the search experience of Web users worldwide,” said Danielle Tiedt, General Manager of the Live Search Selection Team at Microsoft. “That’s why Microsoft has made the decision to enable this experience as a key part of our strategy to compete in this arena. We view Kirtas’ innovative technology and expertise in this field as a key enabler of this massive undertaking.”

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“We are delighted by this partnership with Microsoft to free up for the world at large hundreds of years of knowledge that’s today held captive by exclusive library shelves. This is nothing less than the fulfillment of our founding mission to enable the moving of 560 years of backlog from books to bytes,” said Dr. Lotfi Belkhir, CEO and Founder of Kirtas Technologies.

Microsoft has collaborated with Cornell University Library (CUL) in a win-win relationship where Microsoft digitizes CUL’s outstanding collections for its Live Book Search portal, while CUL is enabled to meet the increasing demand of its Library users for online access to high-quality full-text scholarly material.

“I especially commend the CUL leadership for both their dedication to Large Scale digitization and their uncompromising attitude towards quality standards,” said Dr. Belkhir. “This 3-way partnership proves that libraries don’t have to settle for inferior digitization just because it’s subsidized by a corporate partner” Dr. Belkhir added.

“Kirtas’ involvement was a key factor in our decision making process. The combination of their revolutionary book scanning technology, their digitization know-how, and their ability to meet our tough quality requirements won the day,” said Cornell University Librarian Sarah E. Thomas.

Kirtas is quickly ramping up its digitization capacity in Victor, NY to meet fast growing demand for its digitization services, and planning on adding satellite operations in the US and abroad. “We are seeing an explosion of demand for our digitization services driven primarily by an emerging market, our revolutionary technology and our commitment to unmatched quality standards,” said Dr. Belkhir.

About Kirtas Technologies

Kirtas Technologies was founded in 2001 with the vision of bringing to the digital realm the massive knowledge sitting on library shelves, government archives and corporate storerooms. Today, the company’s revolutionary technology redefines digitization of all bound documents, delivering gentler handling and higher image quality faster, with fewer errors, and at a lower cost than any other solution in the marketplace. For more information, visit www.kirtastech.com.

About MSN and Windows Live

MSN attracts more than 465 million unique users worldwide per month. With localized versions available globally in 42 markets and 21 languages, MSN is a world leader in delivering compelling programmed content experiences to consumers and online advertising opportunities to businesses worldwide. Windows Live, a new set of personal Internet services and software, is designed to bring together in one place all the relationships, information and interests people care about most, with enhanced safety and security features across their PC, devices and the Web. MSN and Windows Live will be offered alongside each other as complementary services. Some Windows Live services entered an early beta phase on Nov. 1, 2005; these and future beta updates can be found at <http://ideas.live.com>. Windows Live is available at <http://www.live.com>. MSN is located on the Web at <http://www.msn.com>. MSN worldwide sites are located at <http://www.msn.com/worldwide.ashx>.

About Cornell University Library

One of the leading academic research libraries in the United States, Cornell University Library is a highly valued partner in teaching, research, and learning at the university, offering cutting edge services and a full spectrum of library resources, from rare books and manuscripts to a rapidly expanding network of digital resources. Through such initiatives as the life sciences portal, the installation of a pioneering high-end mobile and flexible computer laboratory designed specifically for collaborative use, and innovative scholarly publishing support, the Library is an integral component of the many educational programs and research projects under way at Cornell. To learn more about CUL's resources, please visit www.library.cornell.edu.

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