Windows CE stack gains digital maps, targets PNDs

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Intrinsyc Software has announced another deal aimed at bolstering the navigation capabilities of Soleus, its application stack for Windows CE-based phones and PNDs (personal navigation devices). A "multi-year" agreement with Navteq means Intrinsyc will be able to bundle digital maps as well as navigation software with Soleus, it says.

Soleus is a software stack that runs on top of Windows CE 5.0 or 6.0, and includes a suite of development tools. It was originally touted as a "turnkey" development platform for "feature phones" that didn't have enough power to run Windows Mobile, but recent Soleus-related announcements have increasingly targeted PNDs.

For example, Intrinsyc in June released version 1.5 of Soleus, touted as being compatible with Microsoft's Windows Embedded NavReady 2009, a customized version of Windows CE 5.0 designed for PNDs. It also recently completed a planned, $16 million purchase of assets from Destinator Technologies, including Destinator 7 navigation software, software development centers in Israel and China, and seventeen related patents that are either granted or pending.

In a further PND-related development, Soleus last month achieved what appeared to be its first release on an actual shipping product. The Mio Moov 380 (right) is a PND (personal navigation device) with GPS, tri-band GSM telephony, a SIM card slot, and a 4.3-

Mio's Moov 380 PND uses Soleus
(Click image for further information)

inch display. Partnerships with one or more carriers in Taiwan will provide Moov 380 buyers with always-on GPRS connectivity, providing both voice calling and web browsing, according to Mio.

Intrinsyc says its new deal with Navteq will provide PND manufacturers with a single source for digital maps, Destinator navigation software, and the underlying software stack. Customers will "further benefit from Intrinsyc's world-class wireless engineering services, including systems integration, BSP (board support package) development, and power management," the company says.

Navteq already supplies maps for a wide variety of PNDs and GPS systems, including in-car systems sold by BMW, Ford, and Chrysler, plus portable devices from Dell, Garmin, HP, Magellan, Mio, and Navigon. The company's

maps are now available in 73 different countries, and are said to be distinguished by their detailed inclusion of "over 260 road network attributes essential to dynamic, turn-by-turn route guidance and navigation."

And, in the "it's a small world" department, Navteq is now owned by Nokia: On Jul. 10, the phone giant completed a previously announced $8.1 billion acquisition of the digital mapmaker. Coincidentally, Nokia released a product earlier this year that is not only its first dedicated PND, but also its first device to be based on Windows CE. The Nokia 500 includes Windows CE 5.0, a 400MHz Samsung S3C2440A processor, 4.3-inch touchscreen display, SiRF's starIII GPS chipset, and pan-European maps supplied -- naturally -- by Navteq.