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Socket Demonstrates World's First 2-D Bar Code Laser Scanner-on-a-Card

In-Hand Scan Card-Xtreme Uses Symbol's SE-923HS Engine to Add PDF417 Scanning to Windows-based Mobile Computers

WASHINGTON, DC, March 20, 2001 - At the FOSE conference today, Socket Communications, Inc. (NASDAQ: SCKT; PSE: SOK) unveiled the In-Hand Scan Card Xtreme™, a CompactFlash plug-in card with an integrated SE-923HS laser scan engine from Symbol Technologies to add PDF417 2-D bar code scanning capability to mobile computers based on the Windows operating system from Microsoft. The newest member of Socket's family of mobile bar code scanners can read both traditional linear bar codes and 2-D bar codes based on the PDF417 standard.

Developed by Symbol Technologies and placed in the public domain, PDF417 is a 2-D bar code symbology capable of encoding more than 1,800 bytes of data on a single label, offering 100 times the capacity of traditional linear bar codes. 2-D scanning is more than 50 times faster and 30,000 times more accurate than manual data entry. In addition, PDF417 labels can contain biometric data files such as photographs, fingerprints, and signatures, as well as text, numbers, and graphics. PDF417 bar codes can enhance existing bar code applications as well as create new applications in governmental, health care, logistics, manufacturing, transportation, automotive and retail markets. PDF417 has been recognized by the major worldwide standards bodies and has been designated by the U.S. Department of Defense as the standard 2-D bar code for logistics applications and EDI formatting on paper labels.

"We're thrilled to be the first company to offer Windows application developers a plug-and-play solution for mobile PDF417 scanning," said Jack Brandon, Socket's product marketing manager for scanning products. "Symbol's PDF417 symbology has become the dominant standard for 2-D scanning, and by incorporating Symbol's scan engine into our In-Hand Scan Card Xtreme we are able to provide a state-of-the-art data collection product to exciting new markets."

Socket's In-Hand Scan Card Xtreme comes with SocketScan™ keyboard emulation software that routes bar code data to any Windows program as though it had been typed on a keyboard. Socket will initially offer the card as part of a software developers kit beginning Q2, 2001. Interested developers should send email to iscx@socketcom.com. Retail shipments are expected to begin in Q3, 2001. Socket Communications, Inc. develops and sells connection products for handheld computers and other devices. Socket's products include the Battery Friendly® family of plug-in cards for enhancing mobile computers by adding wireless Internet connectivity, local area networking, bar code scanning, and data communication. Socket's products incorporate the company's energy-efficient chip technology,

making them ideal for battery-operated mobile computers. Socket is an Associate Member of the Bluetooth Special Interest Group (SIG) and is developing products that will add Bluetooth wireless technology to handheld computers, notebooks and other electronic appliances. For information about Socket's complete range of products, visit <http://www.socketcom.com/prodinfo.htm>.

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