

# ! solution provider toolkit

Nothing solidifies a customer relationship like a job well done. Learn

about the tools handpicked by the Test Center to ease an engineer's job when

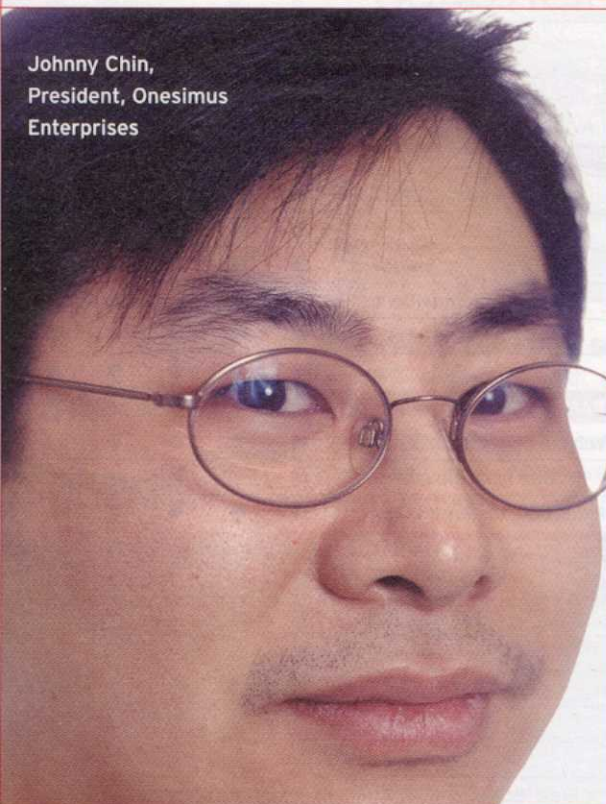
setting up or troubleshooting IT equipment in Nuts & Bolts on page 64.



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SOLUTIONS FOR CLICK-AND-MORTAR BUSINESSES

Johnny Chin,  
President, Onesimus  
Enterprises



## > solution provider @ work

### ONESIMUS ENTERPRISES

LOCATION: Staten Island, N.Y.

KEY CLIENTS: Finnair, New York Chinese Alliance Church, SDS Computers, Silicon Resources, ArrowLock Manufacturing

YEARS IN BUSINESS: 10 1/2

ESTIMATED ANNUAL SALES: \$1.2 million

WEB ADDRESS: www.onesimus.com

## > down to business

# DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS OF THE TRADE

By Michael Gros—New York

## channel focus

### O1 COMMUNIQUE

Offers generous margins, marketing assistance, joint seminars for solution providers in Toronto area.

### AMERICAN MEGATRENDS

Unveiling channel program Dec. 1, will include incentives, technical support.

### GFI

Provides basic support, good margins, sales assistance over the phone, marketing materials.

### IMAGINE LAN

Targets SMB solution providers, offers technical support, good margins, marketing assistance, technical sales materials.

### NETWORK INSTRUMENTS

Provides basic support and training.

### POWERQUEST

Includes rebates, tech support, flexible licensing program, hands-on training.



Savvy solution providers should never leave home without a

solution provider toolkit that includes diagnostic software, a network sniffer, partitioning software and related products, said Johnny Chin, president of solution provider Onesimus Enterprises, Staten Island, N.Y.

"End users have always been hesitant to buy sniffers, LAN analyzers, etc. They say, 'We're going to use it once, so why should we buy it? We'll just have consultants come in that have it, and they'll diagnose the problems,'" Chin said. "These tools are definitely things that solution providers use, but not the end client on a routine basis."

In fact, Onesimus is often hired by other solution providers to diagnose complex networking problems. "We do a lot of work for other computer consulting companies because we have more expertise in networking support and the Internet," Chin said. "We've become the VAR for the VAR." Working for other solution providers has become a significant portion of Onesimus' business, he said.

Network troubleshooting tools vendors need to keep in mind that their products >>

## > Diagnostic tools ease maintenance, repair tasks

	O1 COMMUNIQUE	AMERICAN MEGATRENDS	GFI	IMAGINE LAN	NETWORK INSTRUMENTS	POWERQUEST
PRODUCT NAME	I'M IN TOUCH 3.0	AMIDIAG SUITE 2.0	LANGUARD NETWORK SECURITY SCANNER 3	CPR FOR XP/2000	NETWORK OBSERVER 8.2	DRIVE IMAGE PRO, PARTITION MAGIC
PRICE	\$9.99/MONTH OR \$100/YEAR	\$260	\$249 FOR UP TO 50 IP ADDRESSES	\$30 PER SYSTEM LICENSE	\$995, \$2,895, \$3,995	\$35.20 EACH PER WORKSTATION LICENSE
CATEGORY	REMOTE CONTROL	HARDWARE DIAGNOSTICS	SECURITY SCANNER	SOFTWARE DIAGNOSTICS	NETWORK SNIFFER	DISK PARTITION UTILITIES
DESCRIPTION	PROVIDES BROADBAND-BASED REMOTE CONTROL	SOFTWARE DIAGNOSTIC USED TO TEST PC-BASED HARDWARE	SCANS NETWORKS FOR SECURITY VULNERABILITIES	RESOLVES SYSTEM BOOT PROBLEMS	TRENDS NETWORK DATA FROM WIRED AND WIRELESS NETWORKS	BACKS UP, RESIZES DISK PARTITIONS
						



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are used by both solution providers and customers and should tailor their channel programs accordingly, Chin said. He said he looks at documentation, good technical support and a direct line of communication.

Orem, Utah-based PowerQuest launched its channel program in mid-2001. Marilyn Harroun, manager of channel marketing, said the company plans to sell exclusively through the channel soon.

"When you look at our products and the level of expertise to take them to market, it's foolish to not go through the channel," Harroun said. "Our partners already have relationships with key stakeholders and decision-makers, and we appreciate that."

PowerQuest's multitiered channel program includes complementary products, technical support and MDFs. The company's flexible

focuses on marketing assistance for its partners, said Vice President of Marketing Brian Howden.

01 Communique, which launched its channel program in June 2002, provides general marketing and technical support and recently began working with solution providers to offer joint training seminars for customers. These seminars focus on current business topics and allow solution providers to talk about the services they offer.

Nashua, N.H.-based Imagine LAN has worked informally with solution providers for many years and recently established a formal channel program, said Jan Olsen, vice president of marketing and sales.

"We're focusing now on where our products are most needed—in the SMB market," Olsen said. Imagine LAN offers its partners technical sup-

### Networking support software vendors must understand the needs of the solution providers that use their tools.

licensing program lets solution providers choose whether to make money from support or from selling licenses. PowerQuest communicates frequently with partners regarding product development and features, and it offers ongoing partner training.

Product distribution, sales and technical support for Malta-based vendor GFI are handled by GFI USA, an independent company in Cary, N.C. "We've been developing our channel program for most of our six years of existence," said John Kucmierz, vice president of sales. "It's a low-risk program for resellers—just sign up and sell." Because demo copies of the product are available for free via the company's Web site, end users can try out the product before speaking with a solution provider.

The other vendors in this review recently launched or are about to unveil channel programs.

01 Communique, an ISV in Mississauga, Ontario, that sells to solution providers in the Toronto area,

port, leads and technical materials, and will establish a monthly partner newsletter and other services soon, Olsen said.

Bruce Clark, vice president of sales at Network Instruments, Minneapolis, said his company is also making the change from a direct-only sales model to one that includes channel sales. Network Instruments' dual-tiered channel program was launched in January, and includes sales assistance, technical training and lead generation.

"We offer our partners quality, qualified leads," Clark said. "We give them inbound leads from our Web site. If a company looks at our product demo, that means they have a problem to be solved, and therefore are a good lead."

American Megatrends, Norcross, Ga., sells primarily to OEMs, but is unveiling a channel program on Dec. 1 that will include MDFs, technical support and a flexible licensing program, said Mike Shields, corporate software sales manager.

## > channel program analysis



01 Communique  
American Megatrends  
GFI  
Imagine LAN  
Network

### AVERAGE MARGIN

Average margin (points)

40 23 30 30 22

### DISTRIBUTES TO

Major distributors

● ● ○ ● ○

### DISCOUNT PROGRAMS

Volume discounts offered

● ● ● ● ○

### SOLUTION PROVIDER SUPPORT

Help desk

V V V V V

### SOLUTION PROVIDER AUTHORIZATION

Sales

○ ● ● ○ ○

Agent/consultant model

### LEAD-GENERATION POLICY

Vendor passes leads to solution provider

● ○ ● ● ●

Leads prequalified by vendor

Leads furnished free by vendor

Solution provider required to report back

### DEMO-UNIT POLICY

Demos offered free

● ● ● ● ●

### MARKET-DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

Co-op funds available

● ○ ○ ○ ●

### VENDOR INVENTORY POLICY

Distributor or vendor offers price protection

○ ○ ○ ● ●

### KEY

● = Yes

■ = Both vendor and distributor

NA = Not applicable/not available

○ = No

V = Vendor

M = Multiple



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## > nuts & jolts

### TOOLS FORGE STRONGER CLIENT TIES WHILE PROVING EXPERTISE

By Frank J. Dohlhorst—New York

Troubleshooting and maintaining IT systems is one of the most daunting tasks facing solution providers.

The ability to properly resolve problems and the methods used are considered a key indicator of the quality of service provided by a solution provider to its clientele. Resolving problems quickly can lead to profits, while drawn-out resolutions are often felt in the solution provider's bottom line.

The current crop of tools reviewed here offer much-needed assistance to the technician in the field. Many of the products reviewed demonstrate technical proficiency and a means of building stronger relationships between solution providers and their clientele.

One of the most common problems encountered in the field is a failing or nonfunctioning PC; identifying and resolving the problems quickly help to reduce costs associated with repairs, especially on units warrantied by the solution provider.

Eliminating the need for a site visit can further reduce expenses and accelerate problem resolution. Remote control software such as I'm InTouch 3.0 from 01 Communique allows for remote control of broadband-attached PCs through most firewalls and other technologies that prevent many other remote control products from working. Furthermore, I'm InTouch uses a billed service to enable connectivity, which ensures an ongoing revenue stream.

American Megatrend's AMIDiag Suite 2.0 offers a plethora of diagnostic tools that help track down troublesome PC components. The provided self-booting CD brings up a specialized operating system that drives the product's diagnostic consoles. Technicians can select from a stable of tests ranging from hard-disk scans to video memory tests to speed diagnostic tasks.

GFI helps track down common security problems with LANGuard Network Security Scanner 3. The product is used to scan network IP addresses for security flaws and open ports while providing a baseline for remediation. The product also includes a powerful scripting language to automate and customize proactive security scans.

When a PC's hardware is not at fault, solution providers will need to resort to other tools to solve the problem. In the past, a boot failure caused by an operating system problem usually required a complete reinstall of the operating system and associated software, often resulting in data loss. Imagine LAN's CPR for XP/2000 helps to alleviate the need for an OS reinstall. The product self-boots from the included CD and provides access to tools to repair Windows 2000 and XP operating systems. In worst-case scenarios where a reformat and reinstall are needed, the product allows access to hard-drive data for backup purposes.

Both wired and wireless network issues can consume a technician's valuable time. A network sniffer

## technical summary

- ➔ **01 COMMUNIQUE I'M INTOUCH 3.0**  
Based on a billed services model, enables remote control of PCs over broadband connections even through firewalls.
- ➔ **AMERICAN MEGATRENDS AMIDIAG SUITE 2.0**  
Self-booting CD offers battery of tests for all of a computer's subsystems. Useful even when a PC can't boot from its hard drive.
- ➔ **GFI LANGUARD NETWORK SECURITY SCANNER 3**  
Scans IP addresses for security flaws and open ports. Includes robust scripting support, allowing automated scheduled scans.
- ➔ **IMAGINE LAN CPR FOR XP/2000**  
Provides tools for repairing Windows 2000 and Windows XP operating systems. Self-booting CD allows system backup before complete reinstalls.
- ➔ **NETWORK INSTRUMENTS NETWORK OBSERVER 8.2**  
Software-based sniffer examines packets of wired and wireless networks. Captures data for long-term trending and locating network bottlenecks.
- ➔ **POWERQUEST DRIVE IMAGE PRO**  
Takes snapshots of partitions for making backups or transferring contents to a new hard drive. Suitable for drive upgrades or replacement.
- ➔ **POWERQUEST PARTITION MAGIC**  
Enables engineers to create, resize and move partitions of established systems. Handles multiple OSes even on a single drive.

aids network troubleshooting tasks. Network Instruments addresses that need with Network Observer 8.2, an all-in-one software-based sniffer for trending and troubleshooting wired Ethernet networks and 802.11a/b wireless networks. The product allows technicians to capture network traffic and diagnose problems with packets, which can be caused by faulty wiring or hardware on the wired side or signal-strength problems on the wireless side.

Solution providers often encounter systems that have run out of drive space. Simply installing a larger hard drive is only part of a complete solution. Technicians can turn to Drive Image Pro and Partition Magic from

PowerQuest to simplify hard-drive maintenance issues. As the name implies, Partition Magic allows technicians to work with drive partitions by resizing and moving those partitions. Drive Image Pro provides the ability to take a snapshot of a hard drive's contents for either backup purposes or to move that information to a different hard-disk drive, simplifying drive replacement.

Solution providers will find the tools presented here to be valuable allies in solving complex problems while presenting contract-based preventive maintenance revenue. After all, the best approach to a problem is to prevent it in the first place.

GO TO [CRN.COM/TESTCENTER](http://CRN.COM/TESTCENTER) FOR MORE ON SOLUTION PROVIDER TOOLS



#### PRODUCT REVIEWS

To learn more about the ins and outs of the products participating in this roundup, read their individual, in-depth reviews online.

#### BEST PRACTICES

Go online to find out about Test Center-recommended best practices for troubleshooting.