Lotus launches public beta testing for new release of Notes and Domino - code-named Rnext

Lotus Development Corporation, an IBM company, has released the first public beta test version of the next release of Notes, Domino, and Domino Designer. The new release, code-named Rnext, represents a fundamental shift in development methodology for Lotus. For the first time, Lotus will seek customer participation at an earlier stage in its software development cycle. The aim is to deliver the highest quality product when Rnext goes to market. The beta code can be downloaded immediately from www.notes.net. The Rnext beta release includes increased collaborative capabilities and innovations for application developers, while providing significant improvements in administration, standards integration and performance. According to Steve Davis, chief technology officer of Collaborative Learning Network, an Advanced Lotus Business Partner, "I have been very impressed with the stability of Rnext Preview. I would consider this release far more polished than any other preview release I have seen. It is evident that Lotus is keenly focused on delivering a high-quality product, and I look forward to the next beta and the final release."

--- Lotus' comprehensive beta testing program improves quality "Lotus' comprehensive beta testing program will improve the quality of the final version Rnext and is clear evidence of our commitment to customers. "Rnext marks the evolution of our Notes and Domino product lines and a comprehensive beta testing program is extremely important to Lotus, as quality feedback helps ensure we're going to market with a solution that customers will value. "Australian customers are invited to participate in the Rnext beta testing program. They can visit www.notes.net to download the beta version of Rnext." Duncan Hewett Regional Manager, ANZ Lotus Development

--- Successful technology innovations from previous versions of Notes and Domino will be part of the foundation of Rnext. Notes and Domino is the core of Lotus' messaging and collaboration portfolio, complemented by technologies such as Lotus Sametime, QuickPlace, iNotes Web Access, and Mobile Notes, and closely integrated with IBM software technologies such as WebSphere, DB2 and Tivoli management software. Notes and Domino, with over 78 million users, are at the heart of many of the world's busiest corporate Intranets, extranets, and messaging systems. Lotus recognises the value of customer input and plans an extensive beta program for Rnext. This will let Notes and Domino customers begin early internal beta testing and pilot projects. Customers will be able to work in concert with Lotus during the development cycle, influencing product design and affording them longer timelines to plan their future enterprise-wide upgrades. According to Jeanette Horan, executive vice president of worldwide development and support, Lotus Development Corp., "Today's beta release is just the beginning of a rigorous testing program for Rnext. Notes and Domino is the world's number one messaging and collaboration platform, and Lotus is committed to providing our customers with the highest quality products. Our continuing mission is to ensure that our customers and partners feel confident in their Lotus investment, so we've designed an extensive beta testing program that will not only allow our customers to get an early look at Rnext, but will also allow Lotus to incorporate massive amounts of customer feedback into the final product." Availability The Notes and Domino Rnext beta 1 release is available now from www.notes.net. The Domino server beta is available for Microsoft Windows NT and Windows 2000, IBM AIX, Sun Solaris/SPARC, and Linux (IA-32) server platforms. The Notes client beta is available for Windows 32-bit operating systems and Macintosh clients. The Domino Designer beta is available for Windows 32-bit operating systems. Additional Domino server platform support, including IBM OS/400 and IBM OS/390 will be added in future beta updates. Final pricing and availability of Notes and Domino Rnext will be announced at a later date. ENDS   About Lotus Development Lotus Development Corporation, founded in 1982, is a subsidiary of IBM Corporation. Lotus sets the standard for truly innovative software products and services that reflect the company's unique understanding of the new ways in which individuals and businesses must work together to achieve success. Lotus is redefining the concept of conducting business through practical knowledge management, e-business and other groundbreaking ways of connecting the world's ideas, thinkers, buyers, sellers and communities via the Internet. Lotus markets its products in more than 80 countries worldwide through direct and extensive Business Partner channels. The company also provides numerous professional consulting, support and education services through the Lotus Professional Services organisation.