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**Industry Leaders Like Amazon.com Join eePulse's
Revolution in Employee Communication and Measurement**

*Clients come to company in Ann Arbor's IT Zone
for Knowledge to help Employees and Companies Grow*

ANN ARBOR, MICH. – May 16, 2000 – A Michigan company is the first application service provider to offer an organizational effectiveness tool that uniquely combines measurement and communication. The company, eePulse, chose to join the burgeoning technology landscape in Ann Arbor's IT Zone even as it keeps a pulse on other fast track businesses around the world.

Whether in the Windy City or the Sunshine State, eePulse's clients benefit as technology provides managers with a new way to improve their effectiveness. In addition to helping its clients reduce employee absenteeism and turnover, eePulse helps its clients, like Amazon.com, improve feedback and communication.

Chief Executive Officer Theresa M. Welbourne, Ph.D. founded eePulse in 1997. Formerly known as Valour Inc., eePulse.com grew from Dr. Welbourne's research on fast-growth companies, which she started at Cornell University. Now as an Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management at the University of Michigan Business School, Dr. Welbourne continues her research as part of its Samuel Zell and Robert H. Lurie Entrepreneurial Institute as well as through her company, eePulse.

"Our Measurecomsm tool combines measurement with communication so that eePulse puts critical, real-time data in the hands of today's fast-paced businesses," Dr. Welbourne explained. "The 'ee' in eePulse.com stands for employee, energy, electronic, the link between employers and employees, and everybody, everywhere."

Scott Pitasky, Director of Strategic Growth for Amazon.com said, "We use eePulse in a number of our businesses." He added, "eePulse has given us exactly the right tool to collect and assess how things are going in real time. It provides quantitative trend data that lets us see what's happening within a group and calibrate the experience across businesses."

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Clients don't have to purchase software or install anything on their hardware. Measurecomsm is Web-based, using push technology to link the eePulse.com website to its clients' e-mail system. This use of new technology enables eePulse to offer greater flexibility to provide highly customized service to its customers.

Although eePulse delivers a standard set of weekly questions, it can be personalized to reflect a specific change or problem a company is facing. "Results from one week's pulse, or even current corporate changes, may lead a client to recognize the need to ask a different question," Dr. Welbourne added. "The unique strength of eePulse lies in the fact that it requires interaction with a corporation and its employees."

Indus Group President Bob Felton sought out the feedback that eePulse provides before, during and after his company's initial public offering. Using eePulse, Felton succeeded in keeping employees informed during the IPO process while allowing access to their honest feedback.

"Employees were concerned with many things during and after the offering," Felton explained, "Asking specifically tailored questions, eePulse helped alert me to a morale problem in a location where new management had been assigned. The feedback gained was invaluable in keeping employees part of the process and productive," he added.

How organizations benefit from eePulse

The data collected by eePulse can predict employee performance as well as provide a tool to help managers reduce turnover and absenteeism. In addition, the feedback system that eePulse provides helps organizations to develop better first-line supervisors and managers. Dr. Welbourne explained, "Our new 'pulse process' leads to increased efficiency. It highlights what processes are working and where there are issues and problems. The 'pulse process' reinforces the positive while providing an early indication of trouble so managers are alerted and can intervene to critical problems."

By enhancing the ability of HR professionals and management to help employees in the early stages of a problem, eePulse effectively prevents an issue from causing employees to leave the company. eePulse also provides HR departments the tools necessary to work with management in addressing issues in a timely manner, using accurate and up-to-date information.

"We are evolving and growing to help our clients meet the demands of the 21st century workforce," said Dr. Welbourne. "We're offering a service businesses have never had access to and providing management with results they never imagined possible. In essence, we're bringing about a HR revolution."

A new way to take your pulse

Employees are sent a weekly e-mail, linking them to their personalized eePulse communication. Dr. Welbourne’s research uncovered the fact that employee performance is driven by “energy level” or the degree to which individuals are energized by their jobs. Therefore, using a simple question format, eePulse asks employees to rate their “pulse,” or energy level. Based on a 1 to 10 scale, pulse answers range from “not doing much, not having fun” to “overwhelmed by work and need help.” The beauty of eePulse is that the entire process literally takes two minutes to complete and becomes part of a weekly routine.

Unlike other traditional surveys, answering higher on the pulse scale isn’t necessarily better. In fact, Dr. Welbourne’s research shows that pulse monitoring at work is similar to pulse checks while exercising. Just as in exercise, the goal is to strive for a pulse rate that helps maximize efficiency and reduce variance from week to week.

In addition to the pulse rate, the eePulse team asks employees for comments about their work environment. These open-ended comments allow “fast companies” to find out what is important to today’s workforce. Unique to eePulse, the open comments lead to results not available through close-end survey or pre-determined questions.

The staff at eePulse responds personally to employee comments, allowing the process to function as an immediate focus group, obtaining follow-up data and demonstrating to employees that their input is critical to the overall success of the company. Because eePulse is web-based, HR professionals may also respond to individual employees without knowing their identities.

The completed pulse is sent back to the eePulse staff who analyze the data for each employee and the company overall. Results are organized by categories and reported back to the client. The benefit comes from tracking the pulse data over time, by department or for the company overall. The charts provided to management look similar to the type of data received when implementing total quality initiatives. Trends, with control parameters, are viewed over time, allowing managers to understand whether the variance is “normal” or “out of range” and requiring intervention.

About eePulse

Founded by Dr. Theresa Welbourne in 1997 and based in Ann Arbor, Mich., eePulse helps employees and organizations analyze and improve their performance. Thus, eePulse has created a new standard in employee communication. Its Web-based Measurecomsm product uniquely combines measurement and communication. Companies currently working with eePulse to meet its goal of “taking the pulse of everyone, everywhere” include Amazon.com, Citigroup, Cornell University and Inktomi, Inc. Additional information can be found at www.eepulse.com.

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