

## Media release

### **Double accolade for innovative local mobile solution business** ***Contrast Media named finalist in TUANZ Innovation and Microsoft Partner Awards***

Auckland – 9 August 2010, Contrast Media and its HardLink platform have brought mobile tagging to the centre stage by becoming a finalist in two prestigious New Zealand awards.

The company has been named a finalist in the TUANZ Innovation Awards “Commerce” category and in the Microsoft Partner Awards “Online Services Partner of the Year” category. Contrast Media CEO, Chris South, is excited by the achievement and says this is an outstanding result for the start-up business.

“We’ve got a team of experts dedicated to delivering next-generation mobile solutions and it’s fantastic that their efforts are being recognised through these awards.

“Kiwis are known for their innovation and every new wave of growth and success has been driven by new ideas and technology. As an Auckland-based company, awards such as these show what Kiwis are capable of achieving.”

Contrast Media is providing the bridge to instantly link the real world to the online through the innovative use of mobile tagging.

Contrast Media’s HardLink platform enables the creation and management of multiple types of two-dimensional barcode-like tags that can be added to items such as magazines, billboards, bus shelters, store fronts, T-shirts and product packages. When the tag is ‘snapped’ by a user’s mobile phone camera, the user is instantly taken to a website, video content, maps, social media or contact information via the device’s web-browser. HardLink enhances and adds value to the mobile tagging process through its market segmentation, reporting and security features.

South believes now is the time for mobile tagging to come into its own with the aid of Contrast Media’s HardLink platform, delivered on the Microsoft Azure cloud.

He says, “Everyone absolutely loves mobile tagging and HardLink when we give them a demo, within 10 minutes people are dreaming up new ways of using the technology.

“The possibilities are endless. Museums can display tags next to exhibits that, when snapped, link the user to a video, displayed in the user’s language of choice, explaining how the artifact was discovered. Public transport companies can provide tags at bus stops to allow users to view up-to-date bus schedules. It’s fascinating to see what ideas businesses come up with to boost productivity and enhance business processes.”

South believes that the rapidly growing presence of mobile tagging is leading to some very innovative applications in the market.

“With the social media phenomenon, it won’t be long before we see huge growth of personal mobile tags, such as links to blogs or contact information from business cards, as well,” says South.

Currently the number of mobile data subscribers is around one billion worldwide and this is expected to rise to more than 2.8 billion by 2013. Morgan Stanley predicts that mobile broadband usage will outpace desktop usage globally within five years.

"The popularity of iPhones, Windows Mobile, Android and BlackBerry devices is accelerating along with the uptake of mobile internet usage. More than two million mobile devices on New Zealand's primary mobile networks support the minimum requirements for using a tag reader, reinforcing that this is an area that provides huge opportunity for growth.

"It's exciting to be at the leading edge of delivering technology that alters the way consumers use mobile devices. We see huge potential and are passionate about providing expertise and technology to help accelerate our clients into the mobile engagement and commerce space," says South.

Ends

**About Contrast Media:**

Contrast Media is at the forefront of helping companies connect the real world to the virtual through its innovative solutions.

Contrast Media enables its clients to dynamically engage with consumers, through rich interactive digital experiences that are measurable and effective. Contrast Media delivers solutions that help its clients' brands and messages break free of the constraints imposed on them by the real world.

The Contrast Media team consists of a group of industry experts from the media, business, mobile and technology worlds. This wealth of experience uniquely places the company to provide the latest in leading-edge concepts and technologies, delivered with world-class reliability.

Contrast Media has been nominated as a finalist, for its HardLink platform, in both the 2010 TUANZ Innovation Awards and the 2010 New Zealand Microsoft Partner Awards.

For further information visit [www.contrastmedia.co.nz](http://www.contrastmedia.co.nz)

**About HardLink:**

HardLink is a complete end-to-end solution that provides everything a business needs to easily run a Mobile Tagging campaign, from creating Mobile Tags, through to campaign management, device capability information and full reporting.

For further information visit [www.hardlink.co.nz](http://www.hardlink.co.nz)

**About Mobile Tagging**

A Mobile Tag is a two-dimensional barcode, designed specifically to be 'Snapped' by a mobile device. Mobile Tagging allows a consumer to be instantly taken to a website, video content, maps, social media, contact information or even dial a phone number on their mobile phone when they 'Snap' a Mobile Tag. The consumer doesn't need to type anything to immediately engage with a brand or product.

Tags can be used almost anywhere – for example on posters, in print, on the back of a bus, at an exhibition, on T-shirts, in storefronts or even on a television screen.

There are no charges to install or use Tag Reader software on a mobile phone. However, the Mobile Tagging experience uses the consumer's data plan for which standard mobile data rates will apply.