Contacts
Jeff Harris
Senior Storage Architect
Ciara Technologies
T: (905) 501-8697 Ext. 206
jharris@ciara-tech.com

Johanne Moreau
V.P. of Marketing
Ciara Technologies
T: (514) 798-8880 Ext. 6105
jmoreau@ciara-tech.com

CIARA TECHNOLOGIES ANNOUNCES ITS ENTERPRISE BLADE SERVER SYSTEM BASED ON INTEL® XEON™ PROCESSOR

Intel Developer Forum, San Jose, California, Sept 16, 2003 – Ciara Technologies today announced the introduction of a new Enterprise Blade Server system, which is based on Intel® Xeon™ processors. This represents the next generation of blade server that will be used for the consolidation of disparate server functionality into a cohesive, scaleable, centrally managed system. Medium to large enterprises will be able to take advantage of this blade server to efficiently manage their server requirements, and in turn reduce administration costs and system downtime.

The Ciara Enterprise Blade Server system, based on the Intel Enterprise Blade Server Family 7U rack mount chassis, can fit up to 14 server blades. The server blade supports dual Intel Xeon™ processors with 533 MHz system bus and up to 8 GB of ECC memory, along with 2 on-board bays for IDE hard disks or optional SCSI hard disks. The Ciara Enterprise Blade Server system certainly offers the processing power to handle multiple enterprise applications, from web/edge server to mid-tier apps to back-end databases, all within one system enclosure.

The new system is designed for high availability with built-in redundancy and hot swap capabilities. The redundancy is built into the chassis backplane, as well as the power modules and fan blowers. Hot swap capabilities also exist for the power modules and fan blowers, plus the server blades and other plug-in modules have hot plug capabilities. Another key requirement of blade servers is manageability. The Intel Enterprise Blade Server Family incorporates manageability, with a dedicated management processor on each server blade, that reports to a centralized hardware management module in the system. Intel provides a graphical web-based console to control and monitor this management function. In addition, the system comes with deployment manager software, which controls the automated installation of Operating Systems on the server blades (supporting Windows and Linux), along with updates and patches to the Operating Systems.

The communication between server blades is via a Gigabit Ethernet backplane, which is controlled by a dedicated switch module in the system. With a standard Gigabit Ethernet interconnect, the blades communicate as if they were on a LAN, thus requiring no special software to interoperate. The switch management is also incorporated into the central management console for the system. The blade server is thus a physical consolidation of servers on a Gigabit LAN into a centrally managed system. Another critical element of LANs today is centralized storage. The Ciara Enterprise Blade Server system has the ability to connect a Fiber Channel SAN storage array, using optional Fiber Channel interface cards on the server blades connected to a Fiber Channel switch module.

Ciara is demonstrating its Enterprise Blade Server system with connection to Ciara's VXSTOR iSCSI storage array, through the Gigabit Ethernet switch module. Rather than creating a Fiber Channel SAN, Ciara is demonstrating an IP-SAN, which has the same functionality of a Fiber Channel SAN, but uses standard IP technology. As such, an IP-SAN reduces the costs for storage networking equipment, as well as the costs for installation and administration. With centralized storage, the benefits are similar to the blade server in that disparate direct-attach storage is consolidated into a flexible, scaleable, centrally managed resource. By using software virtualization, the central storage array becomes a logical storage pool accessible to any of the server blades, allowing for the efficient sharing or exchange of data between servers.

The Ciara Enterprise Blade Server is an excellent solution for medium to large enterprises looking to integrate their server functionality, and decrease their Total Cost of Ownership at the same time. The Ciara Enterprise Blade Server system uses the latest Intel blade server technologies to accomplish this solution. As Robert Ahdoot, Ciara's President states, "We have seen the benefits that a blade server system brings to the corporate market, and now with the introduction of Intel's Enterprise Blade Server Family, we know we have the right technology."

Ciara also believes that centralized SAN storage is a critical element to add to the blade server solution. It not only benefits the enterprise applications of today, but the combination lends itself to Web Services as they become more predominant. It is a scaleable architecture investment that will grow with an enterprise's application requirements.

About Ciara Technologies:

Ciara Technologies is a world-class computer systems provider. Ciara designs, develops, manufactures, markets, services, and supports a variety of computer systems. These systems include desktop and mobile computers, graphic workstations, rack-mounted and tower servers, networked storage and the newly acclaimed VXRACK™ Cluster Technology, VXSTOR™ iSCSI storage system and the revolutionary Ciara-NetPC™.

The company's state of the art servers, supercomputer clusters and iSCSI storage solutions are based on the Intel IA32 and IA64 architectures and utilize Microsoft Enterprise Operating Systems as well as Linux Operating Systems. We are proud to be recognized by Intel as an "Intel Premier Provider".

Ciara Technologies also provides end-to-end manufacturing solutions, delivering world-class quality and support to medium and large OEMs primarily in the communications, computing and industrial markets. Ciara is at the forefront of the computing industry due to its commitment to leading or bleeding-edge technology, cost-effective manufacturing and unparalleled customer service.

Incorporated in 1984, Ciara has achieved 19th year in the Information Technology field. Ciara products are UL, CE, CSA, DOC and EPA certified. All are products are built under the ISO 9001 standards and regulations. The growth of Ciara enabled us in February 2003, to move to an ultra-modern plant of 576,000 sq ft, with the capability of producing more than 500,000 units per year. We are now the largest Canadian manufacturer of Intel based computers.

For additional information, visit the company's website at www.ciara-tech.com or www.vxstor.com

* The referenced products and/or brand names in this press release are trademarks of their respective owners.

* Product specifications are subject to change without notice.

###

9300 Trans-Canada Highway
St. Laurent, QC, H4S 1K5
T: (514) 798-8880 - F: (514) 798-8889
www.ciara-tech.com