

## **VDC PLATINUM AND GOLD BOARD VENDOR AWARDS, 2004-2005**

VDC has completed its evaluation of Merchant Embedded Board User Satisfaction Survey responses, conducted in conjunction with the preparation of Volume V (Industry Overview) of the *Merchant Computer Boards For Embedded /Real-Time Applications Intelligence Program – 2004*, and we are pleased to announce the Platinum and Gold Board Vendor Awards for 2004-2005. We are only awarding this status in a single category this year rather than in multiple categories, for reasons that will be explained below under “Methodology.”

Congratulations to all of our winners, for exemplary service to the industry!



**ACS-TECH80**  
**CURTISS-WRIGHT CONTROLS EMBEDDED COMPUTING (CWCEC)**  
**JK MICROSYSTEMS**  
**KONTRON AG**  
**MEASUREMENT COMPUTING CORPORATION**  
**MOTOROLA, INC., EMBEDDED COMMUNICATIONS COMPUTING**  
**RTD EMBEDDED TECHNOLOGIES, INC.**  
**SBS TECHNOLOGIES**  
**VERSALOGIC CORPORATION**  
**WINSYSTEMS, INC.**



**AAEON TECHNOLOGY, INC.**  
**ACROMAG, INC.**  
**ADVANTECH CORPORATION**  
**APPLIED DATA SYSTEMS, INC.**  
**ARCOM**  
**AXIOMTEK Co., LTD.**  
**CONCURRENT TECHNOLOGIES, LTD.**  
**CONNECT TECH, INC.**  
**DATA TRANSLATION, INC.**  
**DIAMOND SYSTEMS CORP.**  
**DIGITAL-LOGIC AG**  
**INOVA COMPUTERS**  
**INTEL**  
**MICROBUS PLC**  
**NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS, INC.**  
**PERFORMANCE TECHNOLOGIES, INC.**  
**PORTWELL**  
**THALES COMPUTERS**  
**THEMIS COMPUTER, INC.**  
**TRENTON TECHNOLOGY, INC.**

## Methodology

We have made several changes in our evaluation and awards methodology, which we believe are substantial improvements over the previous practice.

In the past, we awarded Platinum Vendor status to the top 5% of vendors identified as suppliers of three general classes of boards:

- Slot Single Board Computers;
- Embedded Motherboards; and
- PC/104 Family Modules.

The next 10% of identified vendors in each category were awarded Gold Vendor status.

We also awarded Platinum and Gold status to the top 5% and 10% of vendors in an “Overall” category, encompassing all types of boards.

Recently, as you know, there has been a wave of industry consolidation, which we expect to continue. As more companies now offer broader product lines that span the three separate categories listed above, these firms became more likely to dominate in several categories (assuming that survey responses were favorable). Therefore, we have elected to only award Platinum and Gold status in a single, all-encompassing category. This also improves the chances for smaller vendors and those that supply more niche-oriented markets to achieve recognition. Platinum status was awarded to the top ten vendors, and gold to the next twenty. Since more board categories are now included in the evaluation making more firms eligible for an award, this actually makes achieving Platinum or Gold status more difficult than it had been in the past.

We also redesigned both our survey instrument and our evaluation model to more accurately reflect customer satisfaction. We asked survey respondents to identify, from a list of twenty-five, the five non-technical criteria that they considered to be most important when selecting a board vendor. Respondents were then asked to identify up to five board vendors, and to rate each of these vendors on each of the 5 previously-selected “most important” criteria on a scale of 1 to 5. Scores for each criterion were averaged, and weighted according to the importance of each criterion as determined by the aggregate responses.

We found that the rankings of, and thus the weight given to, the various criteria had changed significantly from the most recent previous survey. This also had an effect on which companies received awards when compared to our last award cycle. Previous winners whose status has changed from Platinum to Gold, for example, should check the table on the next page to see how these rankings have changed.

**MOST IMPORTANT NON-TECHNICAL CRITERIA USED IN VENDOR SELECTION**

<b>RANK</b>	<b>2004-2005 CYCLE</b>	<b>2002-2003 CYCLE</b>
1	Reliable, Long-Lived Products	Product Availability/Delivery
2	Price	Price
3	Product Availability/Delivery	Reliable, Long-Lived Products
4	Technical Support (General)	Technical Support (General)
5	Experience/Relationship with Vendor	Experience/Relationship with Vendor
6	Supports an Industry Standard	On-Line Documentation
7	Few Changes/Revisions to Products	Post-Sales Support
8	General Service/Support	Programming Support
9	Programming Support	Warranty
10	On-Line Documentation	Supports an Industry Standard
11	Meets Delivery Schedules	General Service/Support
12	Post-Sales Support	Meets Delivery Schedules
13	Printed Documentation	CE Mark/Certification
14	CE Mark/Certification	"Cutting Edge" Technology
15	"Cutting Edge" Technology	On-Line Troubleshooting Guide
16	Reputation	Prompt Responses to Inquiries
17		On-Line Ordering

*Criteria cited by less than 10% of respondents have not been shown*