

**Majority of UK businesses miss out on instant messaging benefits because of security fears**  
***74% say IM could provide collaboration benefits, yet 72% ban it because of security concerns***

**London, UK – 10 July 2008** - Research released today by instant messaging experts, ProcessOne, revealed that 72% of UK businesses have banned the use of public instant messaging (IM) software, such as MSN, AIM and Yahoo!, because of security fears. These fears include the ability for employees to download the software without the IT department's knowledge and potentially use it to send confidential information outside the business. This is despite the fact that 74% of those surveyed say that they think IM could provide valuable collaboration benefits to their organisation; indicating that at the moment, security fears are overriding the opportunity that UK businesses have to increase collaboration and business productivity.

"It is a shame that more businesses in the UK aren't taking advantage of the benefits that instant messaging can bring," said Mickaël Rémond, CEO of ProcessOne. "Many organisations are torn between wanting to maximise security or gain collaboration and productivity benefits, and clearly maintaining security is winning at this point. However, businesses need to ask themselves whether taking such a knee-jerk reaction as completely banning the use of IM is really the best option for the company."

The concern about the security risks of allowing public IM use within the organisation was widespread, with 88% of IT directors saying they were concerned. In fact, over half (56%) said that their organisation was worried about losing sensitive business information through IM conversations. However, despite this, only 12% of those surveyed said that their company kept an audit trail of IM messages sent by employees using free public IM software. Considering the increasing number of regulations which specify that all communication, including instant messages, needs to be kept, this means that 88% of UK businesses are potentially at risk of not complying and will have no way of confirming if confidential information was sent outside the business using public IM.

When questioned further about their organisation's reaction to the need to keep audit trails of IM conversations in order to comply with regulations, over one third (38%) of IT directors said that their business had banned the use of public IM outright. 21% said that their company is using a private IM system, instead of public IM, so that audit trails can be kept. Some businesses had a more extreme reaction with 15% not allowing any type of instant messaging because they thought it was too difficult to keep reliable IM conversation audit trails. More worrying, however, was that, 8% of IT directors said that their business doesn't bother to keep track of IM message audit trails at all because they think the process is too complicated, and 10% did not know that audit trails needed to be kept.

The research also found that about half of IT directors thought that staff would be reluctant to use a corporate IM tool instead of using the public IM software that they were used to, leaving them with little choice but to ban IM completely if they were concerned about security.

"Clearly, everyone recognises the benefits that IM can bring. However, the challenge will be for businesses to look for strategies that enable them to reap the rewards without putting themselves at risk of a security breach," said Mickaël Rémond, CEO of ProcessOne. "While corporate IM tools are changing and becoming more user friendly, the best solution is to find a way to allow employees to use whichever solution they are most comfortable with, while providing a way for businesses to enforce their IT policies to protect the organisation and ensure that audit trails are kept. Only by finding a strategy that allows this level of flexibility can businesses hope to maximise their security, as well as their collaboration and productivity."

The research was conducted by independent market research company Vanson Bourne and was a survey of 100 senior IT decision-makers from enterprises of 1000 or more employees. For further details of the survey, please contact Spark Communications on (0)207 436 0420

**About ProcessOne**

Founded in 1999, ProcessOne is a specialised creator of high performance instant messaging solutions. The company actively develops the instant messaging server ejabberd and offers a high level of commercial support throughout the world. ProcessOne is one of the principal providers of instant messaging solutions and real time communications services.

ProcessOne's solution has become the benchmark in the deployment of high performance instant messaging solutions. Solutions are for enterprises who want to deploy an internal instant messaging solution with or without interconnection with existing networks (MSN, Yahoo!, AOL). They are also for online communities that want to improve the services offered to its users. Known for its robustness under heavy loads, the solution is deployed with important clients around the world for building personalised services (Meetic, Portugal Telecom, SIPPhone, Nero) and today has over 30 million users.

For further information please visit : <http://www.process-one.net/>