



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Gruden and PTG Offer Australia's First Integrated Specialised Web Usability and Design Team**

**Sydney, Australia, 15 April 2004** - Gruden and The Performance Technologies Group (PTG), announce a strategic alliance that combines the two specialist firms to offer Australian businesses a unique blend of tightly integrated web usability, research and performance centred design with graphic design, development, CMS and implementation services.

#### **A unique offer**

The alliance is a natural progression for the two companies as they have already worked together on a number of high profile corporates and government agencies including Vodafone, Department of Commerce and QBE Mercantile Mutual. The close relationship overcomes the traditional division often exists between usability and graphic design teams.

"We're all very excited about the strategic alliance as it allows both companies to move into a unique space within the market," said Gruden's Managing Director, Todd Trevillion. "Some of our competitors claim to do usability, but this is the first time in the Australian market that two specialist firms have come together to offer usability, design and development services, each playing to their strengths. It's a very strong position to place ourselves in."

Craig Errey, Managing Director of PTG, explained, "Usability is about much more than the 'look and feel' of the application - it goes way beyond the graphics. For us, graphic design is the important hook to get you in, while usability is making sure you can actually get things done. Through our alliance with Gruden, we offer our clients an end-to-end solution where the specialist teams in usability and graphic design / development work side-by-side. Gruden makes sure it looks good, PTG makes sure it works well - together we offer clients the best solution."

#### **Building on continued business success**

The move follows a successful start-up phase for the two Australian companies that have not only survived the dotcom bust, but grown their businesses, at a time when many others have failed. Gruden, established in 1995 to deliver highly graphical designs and secure, robust browser-based applications, has seen a 30 percent increase in new clients and new projects in the last six months. PTG began business in 2000, focusing on performance centred design, has doubled revenue almost every year since start-up. There are 30 staff across the two companies with plans to grow.

The two companies now share studio space at 35 Clarence St, Sydney.

## **Growth areas**

The companies see business process automation, enterprise content management, application frameworks that integrate existing and new systems and performance based usability design as the main areas of growth in the Australian market.

Both companies are partners of NZ based company Straker Interactive, developer of the powerful Shado MX enterprise content management system (CMS) and application framework. Gruden is the Premiere partner in Australia.

“We see that delivering enterprise wide CMS, intranet, extranet and business applications is a huge growth area for us. Companies are seeking solutions for business process automation and application frameworks that integrate with existing and new technologies,” said Trevillion.

Over the last 18 months PTG has moved its focus from usability testing to performance centred design, which now accounts for 80 percent of its business.

“People now realise that the usability of an interface is critical for its success. Organisations that are in the same business can have very similar products and services and customers find it difficult to tell them apart. Therefore the customer experience of the website is a key area for competitive differentiation and maintaining customer loyalty, particularly in the banking and telecommunications sectors. Strong usability and design is critical as self service is a growing trend where organisations move their customers to more cost effective channels offering faster and more convenient value added services, like the web,” said Errey. “If you don’t get it right the first time, your customers will go somewhere else”.

## **About Gruden**

Gruden is one of Sydney’s leading online development agencies, specialising in enterprise wide content management systems, website and intranet/Extranet design, development and implementations services.

## **About PTG**

PTG is a professional group of consultants, many of them psychologists, specialising in improving business performance and customer experience with technology. They are market leaders in usability and performance centred design for online solutions.

## **For more information:**

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