



For Immediate Release

82 Degrees Tech Announces Alliance with Tampa Bay Technology Forum
Organization re-brands to become Suncoast Technology Forum

Sarasota, Fla. December 1st, 2009 - The Board of Directors for 82 Degrees Tech, a four-year-old technology advocacy group for companies creating and developing technology in Sarasota and Manatee counties is pleased to announce a strategic partnership with the Tampa Bay Technology Forum (TBTF) beginning January 1, 2010. This powerful alliance will position our respective organizations for significant growth in membership and greatly enhance the value delivered to our business community. To reflect this alignment, 82 Degrees Tech has initiated a re-branding of the organization to emerge as the Suncoast Technology Forum.

Martin Guice, Chairman of the Board of 82 Degrees Tech, stated, "This new alliance is not a merger or acquisition, but simply an affiliation that will result in numerous benefits to both organizations; to their members and the local area economy. We are excited about this partnership and have much to do to prepare for our official launch, including the announcement of a vast array of new programs, opportunities and a preferential membership offer for our current members."

Though the name will change, what will not change is the organization's relentless focus on accelerating the technology ecosystem in Sarasota and Manatee counties. To foster a vibrant technology industry in the area, the new Suncoast Technology Forum will continue to concentrate its efforts in support of technology professionals and their businesses across multiple business sectors. These efforts will include attracting and retaining top industry talent and deeper collaboration with area schools and universities to develop the highly skilled workforce the area will need to support a growing high tech sector well into the future.

One of the greatest benefits of aligning with the TBTF is that membership in the Suncoast Technology Forum will now provide dual enrollment in the TBTF (and vice versa) providing access to more than 100 high-quality events each year and other valuable resources and opportunities for networking and volunteering. For current and future members that have set their sights on expansion into the Tampa market, this alliance presents an opportunity to access over 450 TBTF organizational members from the multi-county area served by the TBTF.

In addition to events that the Suncoast Technology Forum will continue to host, members will now have access to an expanded list of relevant and valuable business initiatives such as the CIO/CTO Network, CEO Advisory Forum, Emerging Companies Network, Professional Women's Network, Sales Executive Network and other affinity groups.

According to Ravi K. Ghai, Public Relations and Marketing Chair for 82 Degrees Tech, "Coincident with this new alignment will be a complete re-branding effort starting with the new name of the organization. The name **Suncoast Technology Forum** was chosen to reflect our unique southwest Florida location and to acknowledge our alliance with the TBTF organization. Stay tuned as we plan several press releases, articles and more e-mail communiqués on this exciting evolution."

About Suncoast Technology Forum

The Suncoast Technology Forum, founded as 82 Degrees Tech in 2005 by a group of local entrepreneurs, professionals and the Sarasota and Manatee economic development organizations, is a professional association whose mission is to accelerate the technology ecosystem in Sarasota and Manatee counties.

About Tampa Bay Technology Forum

Founded in 2000, the Tampa Bay Technology Forum (TBTF) is a professional association whose members work together to make the Bay area a place where technology and innovation thrive. TBTF's 450+ member organizations represent more than 45,000 employees include technology entrepreneurs, business and community leaders, investors, government representatives, researchers and educators. For more information, visit www.tbtf.org.

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