

# The China Post

Published Thursday, November 21, 2002

## Firm vows to eliminate paperwork

BY JADD CHENG

Special to The China Post

An American-based company with a recently opened Taipei office is offering a solution to the over-whelming and confusing paper trail often produced in the financial supply chain.

TradeCard Inc., a privately held company headquartered in New York City, has built an electronic platform that computerizes and tracks every part of a buyer-seller transaction, from the moment a buyer places an order to when a supplier halfway around the world fulfills the order.

Kurt Cavano, TradeCard's chairman and CEO, presented a prospectus of his company yesterday at an early-morning breakfast meeting of the European and American chambers of commerce at the Westin Taipei. About fifteen members of the Taipei business community, including representatives from the legal, banking and manufacturing sectors, were on hand for the presentation.

According to Cavano, TradeCard's platform allows buyers and sellers to "initiate, conduct and settle transactions" online, thus saving them time and money. Currently, the only way to track a transaction is to follow a paper trail of documents that is sent physically, typically to far-flung locations around the world. Using TradeCard's platform, clients can logon to a Web site and track every step of their purchase or sale.

"in an age of declining margins, buyers and sellers have to act more like partners, not enemies," said Cavano, who was in Taipei for the final stop of a weeklong, six-city Asian tour.

Cavano described the success the company has had in providing its services to large manufacturing firms with a presence in Asia.

One client of TradeCard, Wolverine world Wide, producer of the Hush Puppy and Merrell shoe brands, streamlined its supply chain using TradeCard's platform.

"They saved twenty cents per shoe made," said Cavano. "That may not seem like a lot to the typical consumer who pays US\$100 for a pair of shoes, but it is a huge saving for company making millions of shoes."

As the head of a start-up, which started providing a product in 2000, Cavano said his company will avoid the fate of Internet boom-era start-ups.

"There were two problem with companies during the Internet boom," said Cavano. "First, they tried to do much. Second, their products often only benefited one side of the supply chain, either the buyer or seller, never both."

TradeCard is currently basing its revenue model on transaction fees and subscription services, but it hopes to eventually migrate to a model similar to that used by credit card companies.

Cavano said that TradeCard opened its Taipei office to service demand from the island's apparel and computer hardware industries. He said that companies in these industries, many of whom conduct "indirect trade" with mainland China, would benefit greatly from the automation and the tracking that TradeCard provides.