



## **MSA CIO Recognized as Premier 100 Leader By Computerworld Magazine**

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### **Stephen Plut Honored for IT Creativity, Management Style and Business Savvy in Annual Awards Program**

PITTSBURGH, Feb 22, 2005 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Stephen Plut, Chief Information Officer for MSA, (NYSE: MSA), Pittsburgh, Pa., has been recognized by IDG's Computerworld as one of the business world's Premier 100 IT Leaders.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20050222/CLTU062> )

The award program, now in its sixth year, honors executives who manage internal IT organizations and demonstrate exemplary technology leadership in resolving a multitude of business challenges. Frequently they are recognized for their ability to mentor and motivate in ways that create a positive work environment, an ability to envision innovative solutions to business challenges, and consistent skills that enable them to effectively manage and execute IT strategies.

With full support from the MSA's Information Technology department, Mr. Plut and his team led several key initiatives at MSA in 2004, highlighted by a complex yet successful upgrade of MSA's SAP Enterprise Wide system. The upgrade, which involved 1,700 users in seven countries and 19 plant locations, was completed seamlessly and without disruption to any MSA's operations.

Through Mr. Plut's leadership, MSA's IT staff also developed a revolutionary "early warning" system enabling MSA distribution partners to proactively take steps to ensure customer orders are processed efficiently and on time.

"I make a point of asking questions like, 'Where does it hurt?' and 'How can we help?'" Mr. Plut said. "Service is the top priority when it comes to managing a successful IT department. Our focus is to enhance the overall functionality of MSA by overcoming any obstacle, be it our own or another that comes our way."

Recipients of the award were selected from a list of approximately 600 candidates. Honorees will be officially recognized at Computerworld's Premier 100 IT Leaders Conference, scheduled for March 6-8, 2005, at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort, Scottsdale, Ariz.

"This group of men and women has proven themselves through all facets of business. They think outside the box and do not cower away from difficult projects; rather, they embrace the struggle while foreseeing the opportunities it can bring in the future," said Don Tennant, editor in chief of Computerworld.

"Steve Plut and his team exemplify what it means to be an IT leader," said John T. Ryan III, MSA Chairman and CEO. "They have made significant contributions to MSA on many fronts, and under Steve's leadership, our IT department has evolved into world-class practice. We are very proud of this accomplishment and grateful for Steve's dedication to MSA."

Established in 1914, MSA is a global leader in the development, manufacture and supply of sophisticated safety products that protect people's health and safety. Sophisticated safety products typically integrate any combination of electronics, mechanical systems and advanced materials to protect users against hazardous or life-threatening situations. The company's comprehensive line of products is used by workers around the world in the fire service, homeland security, construction and other industries, as well as the military. Principal products include self-contained breathing apparatus, gas masks, gas detection instruments, head protection, respirators and thermal imaging cameras. The company also provides a broad range of consumer and contractor safety products through retail channels. These products are marketed and sold under the MSA Safety Works brand. MSA has annual sales of more than \$800 million, manufacturing operations throughout the United States and Europe, and more than 30 international locations. Additional information is available on the company's Web site at [www.msanet.com](http://www.msanet.com) .

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Mark Deasy of Mine Safety Appliances Company, +1-412-967-3357

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