Web Site Update

This document represents Springthrough’s proposal to move the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) web site into a new content management system such that all visitors to the site will have a rich and consistent experience.

Additionally, the site will be integrated with the conference registration and proposal sites along with capturing more information about members of the CIES organization.
Web Site Update
PROPOSAL FOR CIES

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION | UPDATING THE CIES WEB SITE................................................................. 2
SECTION 1 | ABOUT US ...................................................................................................... 3
SECTION 2 | OUR PROCESS ................................................................................................. 5
PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN............................................................................. 8
SECTION 3 | PROPOSED PROJECT SOLUTION................................................................. 9
SOLUTION APPROACH ................................................................................................. 10
Design Solution ............................................................................................................. 10
Hosting Solution ............................................................................................................ 10
ONGOING SUPPORT .................................................................................................... 11
SECTION 4 | ROUGH COST BREAKDOWN ...................................................................... 12
Custom System Development Phase 1 ......................................................................... 12
Custom System Development Phase 2 ......................................................................... 13
OTHER COSTS .................................................................................................................. 13
ESTIMATED ONGOING COSTS .................................................................................... 14
SECTION 5 | CLOSING ........................................................................................................ 15
Terms............................................................................................................................... 15
Signoff ............................................................................................................................ 15
INTRODUCTION | UPDATING THE CIES WEB SITE

The Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Inc., is in the process of soliciting vendors to update their website to improve the consistency of the overall experience for current and potentially new society members while making it easier for conference attendees to register and review proposals that will be presented. CIES was chartered in 1956 “to foster cross-cultural understanding, scholarship, academic achievement and societal development through the international study of educational ideas, systems, and practices”. CIES is a global society with over 200 academics, students, and practitioners.

Currently, the CIES group has a main website where all members of the society can share information, learn how to participate in meetings, understand the history of the society, read the newsletter, and participate in special interest groups. CIES also puts on an annual conference and sometimes regional conferences to help the society members come together, learn, and share ideas around educational systems and practices. Attendees of these conferences visit a conference website which is created by the sponsoring university. In addition to the sponsoring university’s website, there are separate registration and proposal submission sites, each with its own unique login.

CIES is now interested in improving the experience for the conference, registration, and proposal sites that will be accessed for the yearly conference, creating a more user friendly experience. There is a desire to also capture more membership information beyond what is collected at the journal web site. As part of their vendor selection process, CIES has asked Springthrough to submit a proposal to address all these current concerns. This document is based on conversations between CIES and Springthrough and presents information about Springthrough, our processes, and what we believe is the best solution to meet CIES’s needs. Springthrough is excited to start work with the CIES on their web sites. We know that we can offer the best development, implementation, and support for all the required elements on this project. Thank you again for considering Springthrough.
SECTION 1 | ABOUT US

Ten years ago Michael Williams and his three partners started Springthrough Consulting, Inc. with the mission of delivering and supporting practical, cost-effective IT services and solutions that would allow businesses to focus on their core objectives. In 2005, Michael bought out his three partners to become the sole owner and CEO of Springthrough.

Since its inception, Springthrough has grown from four consultants to over forty four full time employees spanning many different technical, creative, and financial disciplines and the company is steadily continuing to become a leader in the Midwest market. As our team has grown, so have our product offerings and areas of expertise. We currently have four primary divisions servicing over one hundred clients who focus on Custom Development, Interactive & Web, Platform Services & Business Solutions, and Core Infrastructure Services. As a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner we have additional specializations in Microsoft Dynamics GP (Great Plains), Microsoft Dynamics CRM, Microsoft SharePoint, Microsoft Projects Server, Business System Integrations, Business Intelligence and Enterprise Web Development.

Springthrough’s Custom Development team is made up of some of the highest-end developers and consultants in the Midwest with certifications in the latest business technologies and best practices. With expertise spanning MS .NET Development, Ruby and PHP, this team focuses on everything from simple custom reports to end-to-end custom systems, software and products. Our Custom Development team works hand in hand with our Interactive division which brings innovative ideas, creative elements and applications, and branding to elevate our partner’s message to the widest audience possible. Springthrough’s Interactive group focuses on bringing together the premiere software development talent with creative, marketing, and customer facing user interface and experiential design with all the modern multimedia technologies including rich web applications, iOS applications, mobile software for the Android and Windows Mobile 7 platforms, 3D mobile projection software, Microsoft Surface, Augmented Reality, interactive Flash experiences and Search Engine & Social Media Marketing. Our team has a unique combination of talented and experienced design and technical expertise that blends well with Springthrough’s enterprise technology experts. This interconnection of our teams guarantees that the solutions we deliver to our clients are not only visually impressive and intuitive but functionally innovative and powerful.

Springthrough’s Platform Services group focuses on business systems such as Microsoft’s Dynamics GP, SharePoint, Dynamics CRM, and a variety of other end-to-end solutions. This team is composed of certified...
software and financial professionals who not only assist with clients business and financial processes but also perform installations and configuration, support local user groups, seminars, and perform training.

Lastly, our Core Service team specializes in managing our clients technology infrastructure including their hardware, software, purchasing and licensing to proactively eliminate issues before they impede our partners businesses and to assist them in scaling up their environments. From large scale project-based IT such as virtualizing entire business environments to specialized complex hardware implementations, this group brings certified experts, industry best practices and a direct approach to demystify technology to allow our clients to sleep at night.

In 2008, Springthrough put in roughly forth-three thousand hours of billable work. In 2009, this grew to fifty-two thousand hours and in 2010 Springthrough logged fifty-five thousand two hundred hours. These projects ranged from interactive design projects for web, kiosk and mobile platforms to custom development, enterprise reporting and business system implementations all done in-house with Springthrough’s full time employees. Springthrough has worked with many local West Michigan companies as well as a multitude of national and international companies. A sampling of some local clients who rely on a variety of our services includes Rockford Public School District, AssurancePlus Group, Celebration! Cinema, KeenDeals, City of Grand Rapids, Amway, Meijer, and Metro Health. Nationally, Springthrough has done projects for Disney, MGM Casinos, 1Love.org, and a variety of projects with partners around the country used by major organizations worldwide.

At our core, Springthrough is a local West Michigan technology firm which prides its self on creating lasting relationships with our business partners. We are proud to say that we never lost a client once we started a project with them. We believe the key to that success has been how we listen and engage with our partners to understand their business and needs. It is our belief that building this trust is essential to the success of the projects that are critical to both our organizations. We thrive on finding the most effective solutions to difficult problems. We work to become an extension of your business and your team. We are deeply passionate about technology and want to recommend the best tools, pre-existing or custom, to supply a clean intelligent solution. Our goal is to relieve the burden of managing technology to allow you to focus on core business objectives.
SECTION 2 | OUR PROCESS

Springthrough’s team lives by a core methodology that allows us to deliver a superior level of quality while maximizing our ability to be agile to adapt to the needs and timelines of our clients. At the beginning of every project we assign a Project Manager who works closely with the core project team to define the roles and responsibilities of all the people who will be responsible for the success of the project. Our Project Managers can fulfill the role of project lead for large, multi-group projects or, at a minimum, manage the design and development activities within Springthrough.

Springthrough believes in regular communication with the core team to track progress of activities, answer outstanding questions, address shifts in focus, and resolve any road blocks that may arise. As part of our process for every project, we create a web-based SharePoint portal as a central repository of all project materials, timelines, tasks and issues logs throughout the course of development with our clients. This allows all parties involved on both sides to work off the same materials and avoid inconsistent documentation and communication that can cause confusion and delays. This encompasses all project materials including change orders, content requirements, creative assets, issue logs, business process diagrams, technical specifications, and project plans.

For all projects of a certain size Springthrough goes through a discovery process whose ultimate goal is a functional and design specification document that specifically quantifies the requirements for all functionality at every step of the project. The result is a living document which is continuously updated throughout the project and serves as a full documentation roadmap of the solution at project closure. The goal of the process at project launch is to develop a common understanding of the solution for all members of the client and project team, identify any unknowns, provide answers to questions, and eventually arrive at a finalized design and technical direction. This understanding informs the concepts, architecture, and designs used in the project and are keys to its success. Where appropriate, activities such as focus groups and usability studies are carried out in this phase of the project to make sure the decisions match the goals of the project and the expectations of the clients. Eventually, we validate our understanding and produce a finalized functional and design specification. With this functional and design specification and the sign-off of the client, the project team can accurately breakdown the overall work into a phased or parallel development schedule and confidently meet the delivery timing for key pieces of the project such as the system integration components or the interactive elements on the new online store.
Throughout the course of the project, Springthrough tracks the progress of all tasks and subtasks using Microsoft Project Server. Once the design and development teams begin to release assets and code into our test environment, we will use the web portal to track and remediate any issues or changes identified through testing and the project management process. From these two sources, we can effectively monitor status and health of the overall project and make critical decisions to ensure meeting the milestone dates.

Springthrough’s Interactive creative team follows a process that scales with our clients requirements and project size. On all web-based and customer facing projects Springthrough’s designers begin with a design discovery session that includes key decision makers on the client’s side. The purpose of the discovery session is to gather the clients overall metrics, vision, and goals for the design and establish firm requirements. Following discovery and requirements gathering on larger projects our design team begins an interactive prototyping and wire framing phase utilizing the Axure software platform. This enables clients to not only visualize the layout and structure of interface elements throughout the site, but to use them and experience the flow before the graphic branding elements are added.

By applying the rigor of industry standard UI/UX heuristic evaluation against each facet of the user experience, we ensure end-users are able to quickly and easily find what they are looking for and navigate the site to its designed goal without confusion.

Pending approval of the prototype workflow, Springthrough’s design team enters the branding phase, using a combination of digital “mood boards”, documentation from discovery, and established wireframes to wrap styling elements around the entire project. Through an interactive approval process with our clients we make sure to deliver a professionally styled and visually impactful online presence.

The Springthrough development team follows a two week sprint schedule for all changes. Once the core foundation is in place, our development team will release iterative changes to allow our clients to watch the project evolve and to demonstrate the progress of the project. Springthrough enables the client to provide near real-time feedback as the project progresses and ensures we are aware of requested adjustments prior to delivery for final testing. This key phase of our progress helps guarantee the team is delivering code of the highest quality, while our developers independently perform their own unit tests at the most granular level to test specific functionality of the code as it is compiled.

At the end of our development and design process, Springthrough performs its own internal QA testing to validate the system delivered matches everything in the function and design specification. Once Springthrough has signed off internally on the system, we will perform a complete System Integration Test as well as User
Acceptance Test to validate delivery of the entire product. Through this process, we work closely with CIES and any partners to prioritize and remediate issues found.

Once CIES has signed off on all the testing, the project team moves forward to implement the solution on a specific schedule determined by the core project team. Springthrough will remain tightly engaged during and after the implementation process to help monitor the health of the site and resolve any additional potential issues. Following successful implementation and project closure, Springthrough moves to a maintenance/support schedule for the finished product.
PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section is a top-level outline of the typical process for developing and deploying a web site of this nature. This is presented here to provide a guideline for implementation. A detailed implementation plan will be developed and shared as part of the functional and design development process.

1. Proposal
2. Project Discovery
   2.1. Project Kick-off
      2.1.1. Define roles, contacts, responsibilities
      2.1.2. Identify audience – review demographics and research
      2.1.3. Identify required site functionality
      2.1.4. Set goals and timelines
   2.2. Ideation/Brainstorming
   2.3. Wire Framing and Prototyping
      2.3.1. Heuristic UI/UX review
      2.3.2. Review results with team and apply learning
   2.4. Interactive Designs and Reviews
   2.5. Functional and Design Specifications Development
      2.5.1. Select design direction
      2.5.2. Architect comprehensive solution
3. Design & Development
   3.1. Sign-off on Specifications
   3.2. Build Design Collateral
   3.3. Develop Final Solution in Content Management Solution
   3.4. Regular Design and Functional Audits
   3.5. Release Sprints for Testing
4. Testing
   4.1. Soft Launch for CIES Testing
   4.2. Modifications based on Feedback
   4.3. User Acceptance Testing
5. Implementation
   5.1. Final Sign-off and Launch
   5.2. Training and Documentation
6. Project enters Maintenance Stage
SECTION 3 | PROPOSED PROJECT SOLUTION

The current CIES web site at [http://www.cies.us/](http://www.cies.us/) is the main site where all members of the society can share information, learn how to participate in meetings, understand the history of the society, read the newsletter, and participate in special interest groups. Each year, CIES puts together a conference and the university selected as the host organization for the conference is responsible for creating a conference web site. Today, a conference web site exists at [http://cies2011.mcgill.ca/CIES_2011_Montreal/CIES_2011_Montreal.html](http://cies2011.mcgill.ca/CIES_2011_Montreal/CIES_2011_Montreal.html) which is hosted by the Faculty of Education at McGill University in Montréal, Québec, Canada. This means that every year, the web site for the conference will have a different user experience from the main site. This is also true for the web site where proposals are stored for the conference as well as where the public would go to register to attend the conference ([http://www.certain.com/system/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=0x9602428647](http://www.certain.com/system/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=0x9602428647)).

Finally, members of CIES currently have all their membership information stored at the University of Chicago Press (the Journal) where members register for access to journal material.

The current situation has several drawbacks such as:

- Every year a completely new conference site must be created by the sponsoring university.
- Every year members of the society must “learn” the new conference site to find the information they are interested in.
- The host organization must do substantial work to setup the new conference web site including any integration required for membership information and access to the registration and proposal web sites.
- There are a significant number of issues every year for the staff supporting the conference to help members correctly register for the conference and resolve any confusion due to all the different web sites involved.
- Members who register for the conference must retain multiple user names and passwords for all the different web sites they have to utilize for the conference.
- CIES is missing valuable membership information through its current dependency on the Journal.
- The Journal has no real motivation to change the membership information they are collecting for the benefit of CIES.

After reviewing feedback, CIES is now interested in improving the experience for the conference site, registration site, and proposal submission site, all while capturing more membership information beyond what is collected at the journal web site. In addition, it was determined by CIES that it would be beneficial for all CIES web sites to have a consistent presentation and design to make the web site experience better for all CIES members. Through conversations and review of the current sites, Springthrough is recommending the following changes to improve the experience on the web for all members of CIES as well as reducing the administration required by staff and the organization to support the multiple sites. The project is being broken into two phases to allow CIES the ability to evaluate both aspects of this engagement and manage the cost and scope of the project.
• Phase 1
  ▪ Create the conference site within the same CMS. This would eliminate the need for host organization to create a new site and provide for a consistent experience for the members of CIES. With the new system, the conference site could be re-styled by the hosting university as needed each year. Similar to above, these changes would be fairly easy for the volunteers or staff of CIES to update on the conference site, and it would help keep the site within a consistent, high level template year-to-year.
  ▪ Create a member account feature which gathers all the CIES membership information.
  ▪ Integrate the conference registration and proposal sites such that there is one user name and password which provides access to all these sites. The user name and password would be associated with the member account information captured above.

• Phase 2
  ▪ Take the current CIES main site and put it into Springthrough’s Content Management System (CMS). This would make it easy for volunteers or staff of CIES to update and maintain the CIES site without requiring any software engineers or IT staff.
  ▪ Ensure that the design for all CIES is consistent so members have a much easier time interacting with all sites.

SOLUTION APPROACH

Springthrough believes the optimal solution for CIES is to build a web site using Springthrough’s Content Management System (CMS). A license of Springthrough’s CMS solution will provide comprehensive site management features built on a .Net platform that allows for customization and growth. Springthrough would develop integration between the CMS system and CIES’s conference registration web site and the site where proposals are submitted. Updates, enhancements, and support for this CMS solution will be provided by Springthrough consistent with our standard practices done for all current clients utilizing this solution tool. This platform can provide all the capabilities needed for CIES’s goals

  Design Solution

Springthrough would work with CIES to incorporate their existing site design (colors, logo, and fonts) across all sites by creating templates in the CMS tool. Part of the front end development process will include discovery and determination of key search engine optimization and search engine marketing goals and will include code and content auditing, consultation, and corrections.

  Hosting Solution

The hosting solution recommend by Springthrough is Rackspace Cloud. Their highly scalable environment services forty-thousand customers around the world. Utilizing a redundant virtual cloud plan, Rackspace
could ensure there are no outages. Within this cloud environment, it would be easy for CIES to instantly or automatically scale the available servers to support expected and unexpected traffic surges due to specific events. The solution would be architected to leverage Rackspace Cloud’s redundancy so no service or information is lost. In addition, with Rackspace Cloud, it is very easy for Springthrough’s team to spin up test and staging environments to perform certain tasks and test enhancements without compromising the live site and affecting customers. Springthrough would work closely with CIES on implementation with Rackspace Cloud and provide actionable plans for data retention and disaster recovery.

**ONGOING SUPPORT**

Springthrough will provide a detailed support agreement for this project as we near the project completion date. We will do this on a yearly contractual basis ensuring ongoing partnered support and continuing success of this solution for CIES. After delivery and sign-off for this project, any changes requested by CIES for the site will occur through Springthrough’s Change Request process at the normal rate ($135/hr) on a monthly basis.
SECTION 4 | ROUGH COST BREAKDOWN

In Springthrough’s analysis of this project and the solution proposed, a cost estimate was created to try to reflect what we felt was a good approximate for CIES. The model provides a spread based on how accurately Springthrough can deliver the outlined solution for the hours spent on the different components. This spread is derived from the most complex and least complex scenarios after engagement based on our current information. Costing information is generally dialed in upwards or downwards based on the functional design and specification phase with the final approved documented requirements and project plan.

Phase 1 of this engagement is focused on the conference web site and its integration to the registration system, how member demographic information is retrieved and stored, and integration with the proposal system. Phase 2 is additional work to pull all the CIES web sites under a single content management system.

**Custom System Development Phase 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Detail</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Rate/hrs</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Function Design Specifications</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design UI/UX</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$6,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Template Development/Content Entry</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$9,450</td>
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**System Integration Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Detail</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Rate/hrs</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integration with Registration and Proposal Sites</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$9,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Account Management Functionality</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$6,075</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Integration Testing</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$4,860</td>
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<tr>
<td>User Acceptance Testing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$4,050</td>
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**Site Setup Tasks**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Detail</th>
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<th>Rate/hrs</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Server Configuration</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$1,350</td>
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### Custom System Development Phase 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Function Design Specifications</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$2,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Design UI/UX</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$5,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Template Development/Content Entry</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>User Acceptance Testing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$4,050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
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<td>$135/hr</td>
<td>$2,700</td>
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</table>

**Total Estimated Cost**

|                  | 190   | $25,650 |

### Other Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>License Software</th>
<th>Number of Processors</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Springthrough CMS</td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

|                  | $5,000.00 |

### Custom Development Phase 1 Subtotal

|                  | $52,245 |

### Custom Development Phase 2 Subtotal

|                  | $25,650 |

### License Subtotal

|                  | $5,000  |

**Estimated Grand Total for Project**

|                  | $82,895 |
## Estimated Ongoing Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MAINTENANCE TASK</strong></th>
<th><strong>COST</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Web Site Maintenance Cost</td>
<td>$1,350/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Includes training, content entry assistance, SEO help, and minor adjustments)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Server Maintenance Cost</td>
<td>$675/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Server patches and load monitoring)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rackspace Cloud Post Go-live estimated cost</td>
<td>$850/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Cost is dependent on site activity and load)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated Monthly Total after Go-live</strong></td>
<td>$2,875/month</td>
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## MARKETING FEATURE ENHANCEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MARKETING FEATURE ENHANCEMENTS</strong></th>
<th><strong>COST</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimating 2 Feature adds per year with each taking sixty hours a piece to develop at $135 per hour rate.</td>
<td>$8,100/feature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated Yearly Promotion Cost</strong></td>
<td>$16,200/year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 5 | CLOSING

On the behalf of the Springthrough team, we want to thank you for the opportunity to work on this project. As we review our history of successful projects and solutions that we have excelled at as an organization, we see this project is one that we have the skills, knowledge, and industry expertise to provide an exceptional product solution for CIES.

Terms

Springthrough’s standard billing terms are Net 15, with invoices emailed (or mailed) out bi-monthly. This proposal is valid for 30 days. If not signed within the validation period, all prices are subject to change.

Travel, when necessary, is billed at half the hourly rate plus the Standard US Mileage Rate.

All source code, documentation, and collateral material developed specifically for CIES during the course of this project, will be owned by CIES. Requests made for any of the aforementioned items will be processed as quickly as possible. If Springthrough is required to routinely fulfill requests for such material, project management fees may apply.

Signoff

Due to the length of this project this document will live throughout the life of the project, and will be updated as there are minor changes to any business logic to accommodate the core objectives of generating a workspace file.

The signature below agrees to the project direction and design of the application as outlined by this document. Any fundamental change to the application will be accompanied by a change order that must be approved by Price Sentinel management to change the scope of the project.

By signing below, CIES agrees to engage with Springthrough on a time-and-material basis for the terms outlined above. Please note that items determined “out-of-scope” do not fall within this contract and will be billed separately. All work deemed “out-of-scope” will be discussed with, and pre-approved by an authorized CIES representative.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND FAX BACK TO SPRINGTHROUGH AT (866) 894-0216:

Accepted by:  
Title:  
Date:   

3/22/2011