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IBM SWIFTLY FILLS LOTUS POSTS<< IBM TodayCategory: FINANCIAL NEWS KEYWORDS: IBM-LOTUS

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10< ^AP-IBM-Lotus<,0689<^IBM Swiftly Fills Lotus Posts<< NEW YORK (AP) _ Moving quickly to replace Lotus DevelopmentCorp. chief executive Jim Manzi, IBM on Friday named two executivessteeped in Lotus' communications products to lead the softwarecompany. Michael D. Zisman will become chief executive officer andJeffrey Papows chief operating officer of Lotus, which IBM boughtlast summer for \$3.5 billion, the software industry's largestacquisition. They jointly will represent an ``Office of the President'' withZisman focusing on strategy and Papows on operations. They willreport to John M. Thompson, IBM's senior vice president in chargeof software products. Their appointment is a sign of the importance IBM places onLotus' communications products, particularly the Notes program thatprovides sophisticated handling of databases and electronic mailconversations. Thompson said he didn't want to downplay Lotus' other personalcomputer products, particularly office programs that are now beingupdated. ``But Notes is the fundamental area and so I think it'sappropriate that both Mike and Jeff come from that," Thompson saidin a telephone conference with reporters. Both men have been with Lotus for less than two years and justbecame Lotus senior vice presidents last week. Due to cost-cuttingthat started before IBM's takeover and the elimination of redundantposts afterward, Lotus has shed many senior executives this year. Another left Friday: Robert K. Weiler, senior vice president ofthe desktop business group and international sales. Deborah Besemer was named to take his place but with a newtitle, senior vice president of worldwide sales. Lotus' sales forcewill remain separate from IBM's although some IBM representativeswill transferred to Lotus. For International Business Machines Corp., swift decisions aboutwho's in charge at Lotus were important for both image andoperations and because software firms' single most valuableresource, programmers, can disappear quickly. Thompson met with several Lotus executives Thursday, the dayafter Manzi announced his resignation, to decide on succession.Rather than bringing in IBM executives, Thompson reiterated hisbelief Cambridge, Mass.-based Lotus should remain autonomous. Lotus customers and analysts have been particularly interestedin developer Raymond Ozzie, who led the creation of Lotus Notes. Hehad not been heard from since his benefactor Manzi resigned butissued a statement Friday reiterating his commitment to Notes. ``Jim has been a strong supporter and trusted friend for morethan a decade," Ozzie said. ``His championing of Notes has beeninstrumental in establishing it as the defining networkapplication. As a tribute to Jim and all that he's done for ourproduct, the development team and I remain focused on deliveringNotes Release 4." Asked if Ozzie would stay at Lotus to

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