

Reuters

**INTERVIEW-Salesforce sees bigger Asia Pacific sales
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By Vinicy Chan

****Customers mentioned: Citigroup, Merrill Lynch, Dell, Cisco****

U.S. Web-based business software provider Salesforce.com Inc said Asia Pacific will account for 10 percent or more of its total revenue soon, up from 9 percent in the third quarter, thanks to strong regional demand.

"The Asia-Pacific market is adopting 'software as a service'. We have over 90 percent year-on-year growth and we are the pioneer in that space," said Jim Steele, worldwide sales president of Salesforce.

"We are confident that Asia Pacific will contribute at a double-digit level," he told Reuters in an interview on Friday. San Francisco-based Salesforce posted record revenue of \$193 million in the third quarter ended in October, up 48 percent from the same period last year, with 73 percent of the total coming from the United States and 18 percent from Europe.

Steele also said the company planned to expand into markets in Latin America, the Middle East and eastern Europe, but gave no timetable.

Salesforce's current chief financial officer, Steve Cakebread, will become president in February with responsibility for boosting overseas sales.

"Cakebread will primarily advise on the international growth strategy. He is the strategy arm, and I am the executive arm," Steele said.

The company has about 38,100 customers, including Citigroup Inc , Merrill Lynch & Co Inc , Japan Post, Dell Inc and Cisco Systems Inc .

Salesforce was in talks with potential clients, mainly multinational companies involved in financial, insurance and telecommunications services.

"Financial services and insurance companies see tremendous value in IT. They are moving very quickly, contributing significantly, because they need information at their fingertips," he said.