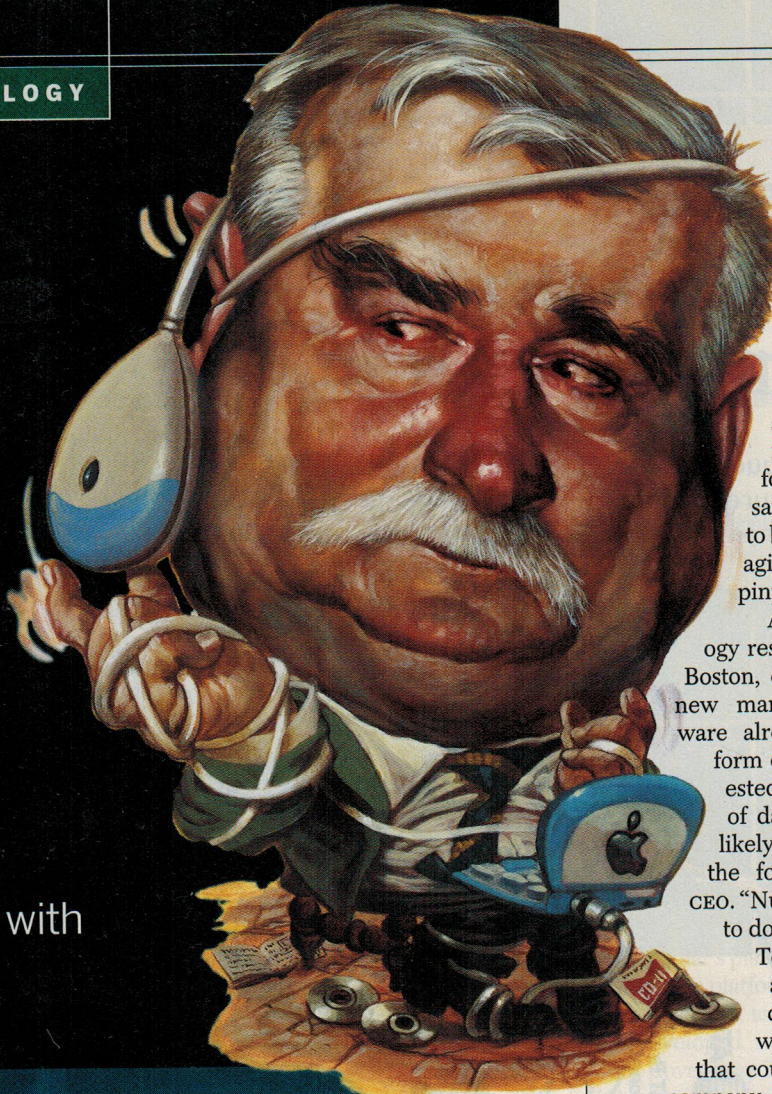


Where Lech Does Tech

Why is Polish hero Walesa signing on with a North Carolina software start-up?



grams still used by most companies, says Amar Gupta, an M.I.T. productivity expert. NuTech and such competitors as **BiosGroup** and **Searchspace** are counted among the pioneers of the next tech revolution. "This kind of software gives us the ability to analyze a lot of information a lot better," says Gupta. "Everybody has to be agile, and in order to be agile, you have to be able to pinpoint trends."

AMR Research, a technology research company based in Boston, estimates that 40% of all new manufacturing-related software already incorporates some form of AI. "Everyone is interested in analyzing large bodies of data to determine what is likely to happen," says McColl, the former Bank of America CEO. "NuTech has figured out how to do that." McColl joined NuTech's board in September and has invested in the company. He and Walesa will receive stock options that could prove valuable if the company successfully goes public.

Michalewicz says the 126-employee firm has almost 100 customers and is turning a small profit.

Michalewicz, who holds a business degree from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC), has worked in financial services at **Ernst & Young** and **Raymond James**. He met McColl in Charlotte, where Bank of America is based. Michalewicz's father Zbigniew is a product of Warsaw's famed schools of mathematics and a former chairman of the computer-science department at UNCC; he serves as NuTech's head scientist. Father and son, who immigrated from Poland in 1989, started NuTech with businessman Daniel Cullen. In April they were able to organize a meeting with Walesa through connections there. Walesa, who leads a foundation that promotes a free-market economy in Poland, says that although he is happy to be working with his countrymen, he joined NuTech primarily because he is passionate about the promise of its technologies, which he is studying avidly. "The science and technology NuTech represents," he says, "are the future of all companies." ■

By DESA PHILADELPHIA

LEADING POLAND TO DEMOCRACY brought Lech Walesa a Nobel Peace Prize and international acclaim, but he admits to a few regrets. One is that he was so busy throughout the 1980s and '90s that he "did not have the time to follow developments in technology closely." But he is catching up.

The first corporate board Walesa, 58, has agreed to join is that of **NuTech Solutions**, a closely held company founded three years ago in Charlotte, N.C., by a pair of Polish immigrants. NuTech creates software that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to boost efficiency in its clients' manufacturing, distribution and customer service. NuTech software allows **Ford** to find profitable new ways to sell vehicles that are coming off leases. It helps **Unilever** target inefficiencies in its supply chain. And it is being used to detect check and credit-card fraud at **Bank of America**—whose legendary former CEO, Hugh McColl, also serves on NuTech's board.

Most software firms, of course, promise to make their clients more efficient. But NuTech claims that its products—developed by using AI technologies such as neural networks, fuzzy logic and evolutionary computing—can monitor each player continuously in a supply-and-demand equation, consider the millions of ways each player's decisions impact the business and then suggest the best ways to fine-tune a client's operations. "All our products have the common characteristic of increasing profits and decreasing costs," especially in the targeting of prospective customers, says Matthew Michalewicz, 26, NuTech's chief executive.

One major bank uses NuTech software to examine millions of customers' deposit and withdrawal habits, complaint records, bounced checks and even the number of telemarketing calls they have received. The software predicts which customers are disgruntled and likely to take their business elsewhere. The bank then calls to say "We'd like to make things better for you."

That sort of pre-emptive analysis has been missing from the linear software pro-