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VeriSign's Chief Executive Resigns Abruptly

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN JOSE, Calif., May 29 (AP) — [VeriSign](#), which manages the dot-com and dot-net domain names registry, said on Tuesday that its chief executive, Stratton D. Sclavos, had resigned for undisclosed reasons.

Analysts were startled by the abrupt departure. The company gave little information about the reason for Mr. Sclavos's departure after 12 years as chief executive.

The shares rose 69 cents, to close at \$27.94.

William Roper Jr., the former chief financial officer of the government technology contractor Science Applications International Corporation, was appointed to succeed Mr. Sclavos, in a sign that the company is focusing on improving profits and reining in spending.

A VeriSign spokeswoman said on Tuesday that neither Mr. Roper nor Mr. Sclavos would be available to comment.

Mr. Sclavos also stepped down as chairman. The board elected Edward Mueller, former chief executive of the home furnishings retailer [Williams-Sonoma](#), to take his place as chairman.

Some analysts said Mr. Sclavos's resignation may have been fueled by disagreements with the board and the desire of directors to install fresh faces to appease investors looking for more cost-cutting and improved profit margins.

Others said Mr. Sclavos might have been forced out in a reaction to an aggressive acquisition strategy that did not always pay off for shareholders.

The sudden departure also raised more questions than it answered about Mr. Sclavos's possible role in stock options manipulation at the company.

VeriSign has said it needs to restate its financial results from 2001 through the first quarter of 2006, and expects to take up to a \$250 million charge, as a result of options practices. The company said an internal investigation found no evidence of intentional wrongdoing by current senior managers, including Mr. Sclavos, but scant details were released on Tuesday.

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