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ULIS debuts I2C infrared sensor Pico384E™

New 17-micron thermal sensor with standard serial link simplifies IR camera designs, enhancing compatibility with large-scale visible camera production

ULIS will show Pico384E at SPIE DSS in Baltimore, April 24 – 26, 2012 at stand 1711

Veurey-Voroize, France, April 24, 2012 - ULIS, a manufacturer of high-quality infrared (IR) imaging sensors for thermography, security & surveillance, automotive and military applications, announces today the launch of Pico384E™, a new 17-micron pixel size thermal sensor with I2C, the standard Inter-Integrated Circuit link used in many of today's electronic devices. I2C makes IR sensors compatible with the large-scale production processes used in visible cameras.

By adopting design techniques widely used in consumer electronics, ULIS will make IR technology more accessible to new entrants to the thermal camera market. According to a ULIS market survey, demand for uncooled IR sensors (microbolometers) are expected to grow from 300K units in 2011 (where the military market represents 37 per cent) to 3.8M units in 2020.

"ULIS has made sure that Pico384E responds to the demands of thermal camera manufacturers, making IR sensors easier to handle and integrate," said Jean-Luc Tissot, technical director at ULIS. "By adopting design techniques widely used in the consumer electronics industry, ULIS is reducing the complexity of IR sensors and making high performance IR technology more accessible and affordable. Bringing simplicity to IR technology will create more opportunities for IR applications in existing and emerging markets. We are pleased to be among the leaders in this trend."

Pico384E, a 17-micron pixel pitch uncooled IR sensor, is suitable for compact IR cameras used in high-end military and professional applications that require high thermal sensitivity. High sensitivity lets users perceive smaller objects at longer distances. Applications include long-range surveillance, Thermal Weapon Sights (TWS), ground vehicle situation awareness, handheld goggles and IR capability to UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle).



"Battery life-time of portable IR systems is very important to a variety of our customers. ULIS' engineers have managed to achieve halving the power consumption - from 110mW for a 384x288/25-micron microbolometer to less than 60mW for Pico384E (analog output, 50Hz frame rate)," added Tissot.

With an I2C bus speed, Pico384E operates up to 400kHz as defined in the I2C specification. It has a NETD (Noise-Equivalent Temperature Difference), an important parameter for evaluating image quality, in the range of 40mK, and a thermal time constant under 10ms. This gives the IR sensor a good factor of merit score in the range of 400 mK.ms.

ULIS will demonstrate the Pico384E at SPIE DSS in Baltimore, April 24 – 26 at stand 1711.

About ULIS

ULIS, a subsidiary of Sofradir and GE Equity, specializes in the design and manufacture of high quality infrared imaging sensors for thermography, security & surveillance, automotive and military applications. It enables makers of consumer electronics and infrared equipment to produce low weight, low power consumption and cost-effective thermal cameras in large volume.

ULIS ranks among the top three for uncooled infrared (IR) sensors delivered. It is the only company out of the top three to use amorphous silicon-based technology that provides unusually high uniformity, a key parameter for high-resolution imaging. Due to its amorphous silicon technology, a robust and reliable semiconductor material proven for its industrial production capacity, the company also achieves large-scale production, which is enabling it to meet the growing demand from existing commercial and emerging markets.

ULIS is located in Veurey-Voroize, near Grenoble, and employs 140 people. For more information, visit: <http://www.ulis-ir.com>