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ULIS seeks larger slice of infrared sensor market

ULIS and CEA/Leti join forces in a EUR 26m R&D project to develop a new line of infrared sensors for applications enhancing energy efficiency

Veurey-Voroize, France, 6 September 2011 - ULIS, a manufacturer of high-quality infrared imaging sensors for thermography, security, automotive and military applications announced today that the company will collaborate with CEA/Leti, a leading international technology research center, in a project to develop and market a new line of infrared (IR) sensors.

Budgeted at EUR 26m, the R&D project will enable ULIS to accelerate the development of a new line of infrared sensors, and thus bring products targeting applications that enhance energy efficiency to the market more quickly.

The new line of IR sensors is designed to fill an unmet need in applications seeking to achieve maximum efficiency in the everyday use of energy, for example heating systems. Existing single-element IR sensors (pyroelectric sensors), like those used in buildings to detect motion, lack the technological capability and quantity of pixels to provide complex data. This includes an inability of these single-element sensors to detect the number of people in a room, particularly if those present are immobile.

"ULIS is delighted to be teaming up again with top researchers from CEA/Leti on this R&D project," says Jean-François Delepau, managing director at ULIS. "With the additional resources, we will be able to take a significant stride forward in developing new product lines targeting applications in markets seeking energy efficiency. The budget will enable us to accelerate the build-up of our technology portfolio, advance materials research, and expand our resources. As a result of the project, we expect ULIS to win a major share in the market for smarter low-resolution IR sensors, and thus significantly strengthen our market positioning in infrared."

Today, ULIS specializes in making large volume IR imaging sensors that can produce high quality and video-format IR images. Unlike ULIS' current lines, the new low-resolution IR sensors will have considerably fewer pixels, 1000 – 10,000, as they will not be required to produce a viewable image.

The energy saving applications ULIS will target for the new IR sensors include improving the management of heating, cooling and lighting systems, as well as people flow in public places. The products will also be suitable for security



(access control and surveillance), safety (fire detection), and healthcare (infrared endoscopy) among others.

The IR sensor project is scheduled to run four years. Within this period, ULIS plans to have prototypes as well as finished products ready and available on the market.

As a result of expanding its business activities through this new line of IR imaging sensors, ULIS expects to increase its headcount by 50 per cent. The new business line is expected to generate a 40 per cent growth in revenue.

About ULIS

ULIS, a subsidiary of Sofradir, specializes in the design and manufacture of high quality infrared imaging sensors for thermography, security, 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 is ranked #3 in the world for Infrared (IR) sensors delivered. The company achieves large-scale production due to its amorphous silicon technology, a robust and reliable semiconductor material proven for its industrial production capacity of 200,000 per year. It is the only company out of the top four in the world to use this silicon-based technology to make IR imaging sensors.

ULIS is located in Veurey-Voroize, near Grenoble, and employs 130 people. For more information, visit: <http://www.ulis-ir.com>

About CEA/Leti

Located in Grenoble, CEA/Leti (Electronics and Information Technology Laboratory of the French Atomic Energy Commission) is at the leading edge of European research in microelectronics, microtechnology and nanotechnology. It employs close to 1600 people and deposits approximately 265 patents per year. With 37 start-ups created or in the course of creation, it is one of the most important partners of the industrial world. For more information visit: <http://www.leti.fr/en>