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International Corporate Moves

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By Mary Ellen McCandless

Micron Technology, Inc. Expands Assembly and Test Facility in Singapore

In September, Micron Technology, Inc., a worldwide provider of advanced memory and image sensor solutions, announced the grand opening of its test and assembly facility expansion in Singapore. Micron Semiconductor Asia PTE Ltd. is a 264,778-square-foot expansion that houses state-of-the-art equipment for assembling and testing a wide range of high-density, high-speed memory components and modules.

"Micron's long-term success is influenced by our efforts to serve a variety of markets combined with our ability to develop new and innovative technologies," says Steve Appleton, Micron chairman, president, and CEO. "The \$250 million investment in our Singapore expansion reinforces Micron's ability to meet the growing demand for semiconductors throughout the expanding Asian marketplace."

"Micron is a world-class player in the DRAM business," says Heng Chee How, Minister of State for Trade and Industry and National Development in Singapore. "Its expanding presence in Singapore will enhance the vibrancy of our semiconductor ecosystem. Today, Singapore plays host to many operations in the semiconductor value chain, ranging from IC design, manufacturing, intellectual property management, to global or regional HQs. Our well established ecosystem is supported by more than 300 suppliers. We believe Micron's expansion, together with the ongoing investments by the other semiconductor players, will result in greater synergies, bringing forth many more years of steady growth in Singapore's semiconductor industry."

Micron's presence in Singapore also includes a sales and marketing office for all Micron® memory products in the Asia-Pacific region and a joint venture interest in fab operations at TECH Semiconductor. Micron and its subsidiaries employ approximately 19,000 employees world-wide with manufacturing facilities located in Italy, Singapore, Japan, the UK, and the U.S.

Environmental Software Providers opens Europe, Middle East, Africa HQ in Zurich

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Environmental Software Providers (ESP) recently opened its Europe, Middle East, Africa (EMEA) headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland. California-based ESP has recently experienced rapid acceptance of its enterprise environmental software solutions in the global marketplace, resulting in substantial growth in revenue and market share. Building on the company's initial expansion into Europe in 2003, the new EMEA headquarters will focus on serving the region's existing customer base of ESP software through support and training, and on expanding the company's sales operations throughout the region. The EMEA group currently includes staff in Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands, with plans to expand throughout the region over the coming two years.

"The opening of our EMEA office represents an exciting new chapter in ESP's history," says Alex Long, ESP co-founder and CEO. "The Zurich location will allow us to effectively serve the entire EMEA region. We are also fortunate to have brought on an extremely talented team of specialists throughout the region, and we're thrilled by the excitement that our expanded presence in EMEA has generated among Global 1000 companies located in this region."

VORTIS TECHNOLOGIES LTD. SECURES SCOTTISH FINANCING IN MOVE TO UK

Vortis Technologies Ltd, a wireless antenna technology company, announced in June that it had closed a seed round with an investors' group led by Scottish Enterprise, with participation from the Bank of Scotland and individual investors from the U.S. The deal provides seed capital on terms that enables the California-based founders to retain greater ownership and control and position the company more strategically for expansion into the European and other global markets. The deal will establish Scotland as the new operational and manufacturing headquarters of the Vortis business.

"We are extremely excited to partner with Scottish Enterprise and to participate in UK Trade & Investment's Global Entrepreneurs Programme," says James R. Johnson, co-founder of Vortis Technologies Inc. "The Silicon Valley financing model did not meet our needs. We have a strong intellectual property and technology which will allow us to raise most of our capital from immediate sales and strategic customers. Traditional U.S. venture capital financing would have diluted our company by forcing us to raise more money than we need. Instead, we were able to find UK financiers who were willing to make a limited initial investment and create a stronger equity position for us long-term."

Rather than provide financial incentives, the Global Entrepreneurs Programme (GEP) uses "dealmakers" who assist U.S. entrepreneurs in life sciences and technology with finding financing and setting up their companies in the UK. The dealmakers are experienced, serial entrepreneurs who assist U.S. entrepreneurs by connecting them to a range of resources in the UK. In this case, Silicon Valley-based dealmaker Jeremy Woan provided support to Johnson. The GEP is already working with 85 entrepreneurs, 21 of which have successfully developed businesses or opportunities in the UK.

"The Vortis deal demonstrates the quality of deal flow these organizations are able to provide," says Andy McNab of the High-Growth Unit at Scottish Enterprise. "Scotland is well positioned for seed funding, has a fantastic talent base and great facilities."

The deal provides \$500,000 in financing to Scotland-based Vortis Technologies Limited. Vortis has located its headquarters in Edinburgh, Scotland, including management operations, product development, manufacturing, sales and marketing.

Italian Candy Expands Manufacture of Refrigerators in the

Czech Republic

Candy Elettrodomestici recently put its new Conta factory manufacturing facility in Podborany in Northeast Bohemia into operation. Conta, which is a part of the international Candy group, has already invested nearly e50 million into refrigerator manufacture in the Usti region.

“The Czech government appreciates that this foremost European manufacturer of household appliances invests in the Czech Republic and is clearly so successful that it continues to expand,” says Martin Jahn, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic for Economic Affairs.

The Conta manufacturing plant already employs 600 workers and in coming years the company could hire another 200 to 250 employees.

“This year in spring the Conta manufacturing plant manufactured its millionth product in the Czech Republic,” explains Luigi Longoni, general director of the controlling Candy Elettrodomestici. “We have invested 200 million crowns [about US\$8.1 million] into the new building in the Podborany manufacturing plant and we plan on manufacturing a further half a million Candy fridges by the end of this year. At the same time we are working on a project for additionally increasing the manufacturing capacities in Podborany.”

Thanks to this expansion, in coming years the Conta manufacturing plant will be able to attain a manufacturing capacity in the volume of more than 800 thousand items annually, following which the factory in Podborany will become the main manufacturing center for Candy group refrigerators in Europe. This will result in additional large investments in properties and equipment for the factory.

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