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Semiconductor Insights Reveals Micron CMOS Image Sensor Innovation

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OTTAWA, March 15 /PRNewswire/ - Semiconductor Insights (SI), the leader in technical and patent analyses of integrated circuits and structures, today announced a breakthrough in CMOS Image Sensor (CIS) technology from Micron Technologies based on SI's analysis of two Micron sensors - the 1.3 mega-pixel MT9M111 and the 3 mega-pixel MT9T001. Standalone digital cameras, converged camera-handsets, automotive and machine vision applications, among others, are driving the demand for image sensors. There are two predominant technologies vying for dominance in this space - CMOS and CCD (Charged-Coupled Devices). "Cost and image quality are key to success in the imaging market. CMOS sensors have traditionally offered a cost advantage, while CCD sensors have led in terms of image quality", said Jenn Markey, SI's Vice President of Marketing. "However, these lines are blurring as vendors seek to capture a larger share of this burgeoning market. Micron's first sensors to market are cost effective and the 3 mega-pixel MT9T001 offers sufficient image quality for the mainstream digital still camera market."

The promise of a mass market in multiple areas has attracted several DRAM players to the fold including Micron, Hynix/MagnaChip, and Samsung. Coming from the DRAM space, these vendors are seeking to leverage their manufacturing prowess and diversify their operations. "Micron is the first DRAM vendor to bring mega-pixel CMOS image sensors to market. As well, Micron is the first CIS vendor to successfully deploy a pixel design that uses less than four transistors, delivering a 2.5 transistor pixel design in the sensors we've analyzed", said Markey. "Aside from eroding the light capture advantage of CCD sensors, fewer transistors also means lower power consumption and longer battery life for mobile applications. This puts Micron in a favorable position to grow its share of the image sensor market. As we begin our 2005 Insight Awards program, we have nominated Micron within our Most Innovative Image Sensor category and look forward to benchmarking Micron's technology to its CIS competitors."

- For more information on CMOS v. CCD Technology, check out SI's article in this month's EE Times at <http://www.semiconductor.com/EETimesImageSensors>
- Download our complimentary SI Insight Reports on the Micron MT9M111 and MT9T001 at www.semiconductor.com/hotprocess
- Check out our Image Sensor Subscription Service at <http://www.semiconductor.com/imagesensor> About the Insight Awards

Semiconductor Insights (SI) analyzes a thousand devices each year from the world's most innovative microelectronics companies. Occasionally, our analysts come across a device that changes the performance - cost equation of its segment with a new design or process innovation. In recognition of these corporate and individual feats, SI sponsors the Insight Awards with Semico Research Corporation. To nominate your device for the 2005 program, please contact Jill Perry at jillp@semiconductor.com.

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