The international Consortium for the comercialisation of Nanoimprint

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EV Group (EVG), which has the world's largest installed base of nanoimprinting equipment, today announced the launch of a global consortium dedicated to commercializing advanced (NIL) technologies. NIL is a next-generation lithography method that utilizes a low-cost, high-resolution and large-area patterning process.

Known as NILCom, the consortium is a technology platform supported by an established infrastructure and qualified processes, including leading technology companies and research centers. Its mission is to establish a high volume manufacturing NIL platform in nano-electronics, data storage, life sciences and opto-electronics by creating a technology interface for qualifying and standardizing the related infrastructure.

"A recent report by Lux Research projected NIL to be the long-term winner among nanolithography platforms, and noted that toolmakers need to work together for our mutual interests," said Dr. Peter Podesser, chief executive officer of EV Group. "NILCom does that and more. We have assembled critical elements of the entire supply chain. Spanning North America, Europe and Asia, we will leverage NIL synergies and support accelerated market segmentation for key applications. With our leading companies and research centers of excellence, we will focus on providing total, high-volume NIL solutions, equipment and processes for chemicals, templates and leading IC manufacturers."

NILCom will facilitate transparency and availability of NIL requirements and infrastructure, including template standardization,

materials qualification and advanced metrology solutions. Devices and applications developed with NILCom technology can take full advantage of the most advanced and cost efficient pattern-replication methods, promoting an accelerated product commercialization path.

NILCom members include:

- Templates:

IMS-Chips/Institut für Mikroelektronik Stuttgart
Quantiscript Inc.
Transfer Devices Inc.

- Resist:

Micro Resist Technology GmbH
Toyo Gosei Co., Ltd

- Processes:

AMO GmbH
National Research Council of Canada's Industrial Materials Institute (NRC-IMI)
Waseda University

- Equipment:

EV Group
Applied MicroStructures Inc.

- Metrology:

Leica Microsystems AG

"Our investments in imprint lithography are already proving very beneficial as the technology is becoming ever more useful for low cost, high-throughput micro- and nanopatterning using polymers. Participating in the NILCom consortium allows us to accelerate the development of solutions in fabrication technologies for Canadian industry. Further investments are being planned as NRC-IMI has chosen to expand the nanoimprint R&D facilities and build a NIL Prototyping Centre dedicated to providing services to our client base," says Michel Dumoulin, Director of Advanced Materials Design at IMI. "Hot embossing, UV-NIL and micro-contact printing capabilities will be available at the centre, slated to open in 2005, allowing our clients to use their ideas into products in areas from bio-sensing to magnetic data storage."

Olaf Fortagne, corporate manager technology partnership at Leica Microsystems AG said, "Leica considers NIL to be a fast-growing business in areas of semiconductor and nano technologies. As a member of NILCom, Leica sees a strong demand for tools to process adaptation and standardization based on proven tool platforms."

"We welcome the opportunity to work with our partners in the NILCom consortium to deliver comprehensive solutions for nanoimprint lithography," said Andrew G. Zanzal, Quantiscript's vice president, business development. "Since sub-50nm imprint templates are a key enabler to this technology, we see great benefit to being closely aligned with other organizations working to advance the technology in this regime."
The official launch ceremony took place at NNT '04 - the 3rd international conference on nanoimprint and nanoprint technology - in Vienna, Austria on December 2.

Visit www.NILCom.org for more information on the consortium.

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