

Taiwan IT giant Foxconn beaten in solar cell deal

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Inventec Corp, a leading Taiwanese notebook maker, said Thursday it had beaten IT giant Foxconn in buying a local solar cell company after offering a higher price at the last minute.

The firm said will pay Tw\$5.06 billion (\$174 million) for a 47.97 percent stake in E-Ton Solar Tech, amounting to Tw\$22 per share, the two companies said in a joint statement.

"Inventec's investment will be a great help in improving E-Ton's financial structure," they said.

The deal came as a surprise as Hon Hai, Foxconn's parent, said in a public statement little more than 24 hours earlier it would spend Tw\$4.04 billion, or Tw\$20 per share, on a 45 percent stake in E-Ton.

Hon Hai said it had already reached a preliminary agreement with E-Ton when informed by the solar cell maker late Wednesday it had decided to sell the stake to Inventec, state-affiliated Central News Agency reported.

"Price is not the sole factor that matters. In many cases, honesty and trust are much more important than price," Hon Hai chairman Terry Gou was quoted by his spokesman as saying, according to the agency.

E-Ton reported a deficit of Tw\$2.5 billion in the nine months to September, mainly from losses on an investment in Adema Technologies, a US-based maker of components for the [solar industry](#).

Despite the losses, observers said E-Ton could be a wise long-term investment as Taiwan has estimated its solar energy industry will be worth up to Tw\$200 billion by 2020.

The island's parliament has passed a major [renewable energy](#) bill aimed at adding between 6,500 and 10,000 [megawatts](#) of installed energy from renewable sources over the next 20 years.

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