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GPS in Digital Cameras

Vincotech supplies GPS antenna modules for Japanese compact camera

Munich, Germany – November 18, 2008 – Vincotech, a leading manufacturer of GPS receiver modules, antenna modules and telematics platforms, is the supplier of a custom GPS antenna module for one of the first GPS enabled compact cameras. The antenna module of the A1035 series is based on a Vincotech standard product and was specifically adapted to the customer’s needs in terms of mechanical dimensions, antenna characteristics and firmware.

„Geotagging“ is the buzzword for new generations of applications in the consumer market. An ever growing number of these applications offer useful information by providing the coordinates of a position. Especially in the field of digital cameras, this feature is gaining increasing importance and popularity. Today, every user of a camera knows that date and time are stored with the picture. The fact that position can also be detected and stored is only known to and used by professionals – so far. With the extensive spread of Internet applications that can turn positioning information into a graphical presentation on a map, the task of pinpointing where a picture was taken becomes trivial. For this task, all additional information for a given picture, e.g. the position, is stored in the so-called exif (Exchangeable Image File Format) part of the header of a normal JPEG or TIFF file. This information is then easily retrievable for each single picture stored on a memory card (an 8Gbyte SDcard in the new 13 Megapixel high-resolution camera generation can store about 1,200 pictures in jpeg with exif meta data).

Vincotech is one of the first module manufacturers to be selected for such an application. Rainer Sendrowski, CEO of Vincotech, Germany, is proud of the success: “This was achieved thanks to the close cooperation between the Kanematsu Corporation, Vincotech’s distributor in Japan, and the camera manufacturer. The key factor was a very close coordination between them and us during the course of this project.” Only via this very close cooperation was it possible to quickly and effectively overcome all the challenges within the relatively short development period of less than 6 months. The main focus during

this process was on the seamless integration of the module into an already defined camera body, on the tuning of the antennas and of the receiver sensitivity within a challenging electro-magnetic environment, and in very low power consumption.

Using GPS in a camera body is a challenge that is not to be underestimated. Along with the requirements for lowest current draw – GPS functionality is to have but a minimum impact on the lifetime of the battery of the camera – the emphasis is on a fast availability of position. Based on a vast experience in high frequency technology, Vincotech was able to achieve not only an optimized adaptation of the GPS building block and the antenna to the environment in the camera body, but also a perfect tuning of the GPS block and the antenna to each other. When taking images users like to have information assigned immediately to the position on the captured data. Due to the characteristics of the GPS system, it can take quite a while to evaluate the coordinates; i.e. when the camera was turned off for a long period or after a flight. Therefore, the camera offers a special help menu informing the user about the status of the evaluation of the coordinates and the current satellite data. The user can thus obtain real-time information as to the acquisition of the position and its storage along with other picture information.

In the future we will see more and more GPS functionality in digital cameras. Based on the experience in this project and with the cooperation with a well-known manufacturer, Vincotech sees itself in a strong position to face the upcoming challenges of new camera generations: fastest availability of a position anywhere on the globe with even further reduced power consumption.

For further information on Vincotech's GPS modules please visit us at: www.vincotech.com/gps.

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The Vincotech Group, a Gores Group company, develops and manufactures subsystems and electronic components and offers manufacturing services geared to help customers to master complex challenges in electronics integration. Vincotech's extensive portfolio encompasses standard and tailored solutions, engineering services, and technical support for customers worldwide. These products and services contribute to sustainable, environmentally sound solutions that help modern society embrace mega-trends and explore new avenues.

With approximately 600 employees worldwide, backed by vast experience and a long history in electronics integration, Vincotech leverages these assets to help customers achieve maximum market success.

To learn more about Vincotech, please visit www.vincotech.com.

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The Gores Group, LLC, founded in 1987, is a private equity firm focused on acquiring controlling interests in businesses which can benefit from the firm's operating experience and flexible capital base. The firm combines the operational expertise and detailed due diligence capabilities of a strategic buyer with the seasoned M&A team of a traditional financial buyer. The Gores Group maintains offices in Los Angeles, Boulder and London. For more information, please visit www.gores.com

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