Newsletter Contents:

FLE Moves Into New Office Space

Bill Lawson, Steve Treadwell, Curtis Josey, Steve Spano, Nathan Rider, Laura Katz, Asia Backman, Brian Reiss, Andrew DiPietro

On February 25th 2005, Finger Lakes Engineering (FLE), the Ithaca Downtown Partnership, the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, and our clients, participated in the Ribbon Cutting ceremony of our new office location at 119 South Cayuga Street Suite #200, Ithaca NY.

FLE's move to larger space was precipitated by the increase in clients we experienced in 2004, due in part to the addition of a business development staff tasked with the expansion of the Central New York customer base.

Finger Lakes Engineering leased and renovated a 3600sq.ft office space enhancing the firms ability to continue to serve its growing client list in Central New York and across the United States. This office space includes engineering, administration, and lab facilities for developing high performance digital/analog designs.

FLE currently employs 6 full-time design and development engineers, a PCB layout design engineer, and a management staff consisting of a Director of Business Development, Engineering Project Leader, Office Administrator, and the company President.

Finger Lakes Engineering specializes in the design and development of embedded control systems utilizing microprocessors and FPGA/CPLD Devices. FLE frequently assist clients with engineering support including schematic design and capture; mechanical modeling; FPGA design; PCB layout and routing; assembly, and bringup/test of the new system.

RoHS/WEEE: Compliance Directives

By Steven M. Spano, President and Principal Consultant

Electronic components such as microchip or transistors, and devices as simple as relays and switches have at least one thing in common: these components are fabricated with potentially hazardous materials.

These hazardous materials include:

Hazardous Substance
Lead – Pb
Mercury - Hg
Cadmium - Cd
Hexavalent Chromium Cr (VI)
Polybrominated biphenyls – PBB
Polybrominated diphenyl ethers - PBDE

The European Union (EU) has enacted Directive 2002/95/EC also called the RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances) initiative which becomes effective on July 1, 2006. Additional legislation being enacted is the WEEE (Waste Electric and Electronic Equipment) Directive further aimed at dealing with end-of-life toxins present in electronics

The aim of this legislation is to significantly reduce the amount of the hazardous materials (shown in the chart above) in both electronic components and assemblies that enter the European Union. This legislation has been enacted as a method to help reduce both environmental contamination (from recycled/disposed electronics) and human health hazards.

Any American company seeking to sell products within the EU must abide by Directive 2002/95/EU on and after July 1, 2006. The United States Government has not adopted the RoHS initiative to date; however the RoHS directive may still impact your company's business operations.

The RoHS directive therefore affects nearly all major device manufacturers in the world whose components are placed in electronics to be sold in the EU.

It is important for every company to consider the effects that RoHS may have on their business and engineering operations. Even if a company does not ship products to the EU, it may be affected by RoHS.

Component suppliers such as Phillips, Samtec, Texas Instruments, Micron, TDK, Xilinx, Altera and many other companies have been working towards RoHS compliance. For a component vendor, this means retooling their production to reduce the concentration of the identified hazardous materials in the devices that they distribute. Most of the RoHS devices are issued unique part numbers to allow them to be designed into EU devices for July 1, 2006 compliance. It is reasonable to anticipate that vendors will not want to maintain two tooling/production sets and two part numbers for the RoHS and non-RoHS devices significantly past 2006.

What may occur is that vendors will begin to obsolete the non-RoHS devices as more countries outside the EU adopt RoHS-like guidelines. This is already occurring in the U.S.A. on a state-by-state basis. California, for example, is planning on issuing their own contaminant guidelines based on the RoHS standard. As individual states begin to pass contaminant guidelines, more and more companies may be forced into RoHS compliance even if they do not ship to the EU and even if no US Federal legislation is in place.

The impact that RoHS will have on engineering designs and product deployment could include:

1) RoHS may require a requalification of a design using the RoHS compliant parts
2) A design may have to be re-engineered to support the RoHS compliant parts
3) The different chemical makeup of RoHS parts may require an additional "learning curve" for PCB assembly houses to re-tool soldering processes.

Finger Lakes Engineering is currently working with affected clients to help them understand how RoHS may impact their designs. FLE is provided both re-engineering services and device qualification services to these clients.

If your company's designs are not sold to the EU, please consider the implications RoHS directives may have for your organization.

Additional Links on RoHS:
http://www.newark.com/services/rohs/rohs_facts.html
http://www.doublecode.com/rohs/
http://www.pb-free.info/survey/2.htm

Client Profile: CountMeIn, LLC

By Laura Katz, Director of Business Development

www.CountMeInLLC.com

CountMeIn LLC, located in Mt. Prospect Illinois, is a leading developer of innovative time and attendance tracking systems for small business applications.

CountMeIn provides their customer's with a Window's based time and attendance tracking system, based on the companies proprietary LightningID fingerprint identification engine; a biometric data collect device that authenticates uses and quickly captures accurate data – all without timeclocks, cards, and PINs commonly associated with timecard systems.

CountMeIn LLC has recently developed a suite of five customizable fingerprint recognition systems, which utilizes its award winning software, Timecard Monitor and allows any company from a small 2 person operation to a large multi-departmental, multi-location organization to cost effectively implement their software system. Each package includes the award winning Timecard Monitor, time and attendance software, which seamlessly links with Intuit's QuickBooks, and other leading payroll products or services, for fast, accurate payroll preprocessing and Lightning ID fingerprint identification engine. The new packages are: Timecard Monitor Lite, Lite+Scheduling, Standard, Pro and Premier. Each level adds new features that allow increasing complex business rules, reporting capabilities, additional systems and workstation users. The most basic edition, Timecard Monitor Lite, retails for less that $300 and enrolls up to 50 employees; making this a cost effective method to eliminate buddy-punching and the error-prone task of payroll preprocessing. And, every version of Timecard Monitor provides necessary documentation for wage and hour law compliance.

CountMeIn LLC was started by Norman and Judith Katz, entrepreneurs whose other business interests included a chain of daycare centers. The Katz's realized that their business needed a secure way that employees and parents could come and go, while keeping track of employee's time. Norman initially used identification cards that gave building access and tracked employee's time, but later decided that finger print recognition would give his company the security it needed, accurately track employee's time and eliminated the cost and hassle of replacing lost or forgotten ID cards. Fingerprint recognition also eliminated the problem of employee fraud from "buddy-punching", the practice of co-workers punching each other's time cards, which drains company's profits. The cost of biometric software has dropped significantly and its ease of use has increased.

Finger Lakes Engineering and CountMeIn have worked together since January 2004 on the development of a series of new hardware devices that the company is adding to their product line.

Finger Lakes Engineering designs USB Control Appliances for CountMeIn, LLC. These control boards provide enhanced functions for CountMeIn's applications allowing the company to better utilize their installed based of USB networks. FLE has developed USB appliances that provide user feedback for their company's time tracking systems, the ability to open/close electronic door locks at secure entryway's, and complete hardware control systems for their biometric attendance systems.

Finger Lakes Engineering is currently executing a production agreement with CountMeIn, LLC to provide volume quantities of assembled and tested control boards for their products.

For more information on CountMeIn, LLC or its products please contact: Neal Katz, VP at: (800) 958-8779 or Neal@CountMeInLLC.com

Curtis Josey, Promoted to Project Leader

Finger Lakes Engineering
119 South Cayuga Street
Suite #200
Ithaca, Ny 14850

PHONE:
(607)-277-1614

FAX:
(800)-835-7164

General EMAIL:
info@fl-eng.com

FLE's President:
steve@flconsult.com

Dir of Business Development:
laura@flconsult.com

WEB:
WWW.FL-ENG.COM

Contributing Reviewers:

Lloyd Johnson PMP, PBA
Principal Consultant
AM&T; Binghamton, NY
(607)-774-0022

Curtis Josey has been promoted to Project Leader at Finger Lakes Engineering.

As Project Leader, Curtis is playing a key role in managing both internal project execution and communication between FLE and our clients. His position will ensure that Finger Lakes Engineering continues to respond quickly to our client's changing needs while we provide timely design deliverables and updates as our business continues to grow.

Curtis has an A.S. degree in Computer Science from Corning Community College and is working towards and a B.S. degree in Computer Science from Capella University and project management certification credentials; also from Capella. Curtis also holds a Microsoft Certified Professional certificate (MCP) as well as Oracle certification.

Finger Lakes Engineering: Vision, Mission, Values

Vision: To be the first choice engineering service provider for the most innovative companies in the world, to provide an ethical and flexible work environment for our staff, and to continually invest in our community.

Mission: To develop relationships with companies who use electronics technology and help them achieve a superior marketplace advantage by providing complete hardware design services from concept through production on a fixed cost quote.

Values:
- Treating each client as if they are our most important customer
- Open and timely communications with our clients and employees
- Maintaining the confidentiality and security of client information
- Treating our employees with fairness, respect, and accountability
- Continued business growth through reinvestment of profits

finger lakes engineering

119 SOUTH CAYUGA SUITE #200
ITHACA, NY 14850