

Company Contact:
Carol Higgins
Aquest Systems
Tel: +1-408-530-2503
E-mail: chiggins@aquestsystems.com

Agency Contact:
Kelly Picasso
MCA
Tel: +1-650-968-8900, ext. 127
E-mail: kpicasso@mcapr.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AQUEST SYSTEMS TO OPEN NO-WAIT-AMHSSM CENTER

Development Facility for Next-generation IC Fab Automation Capability

SUNNYVALE, Calif. and TAICHUNG, Taiwan, March 3, 2008—Aquest Systems, which is developing next-generation Automated Material Handling Systems (AMHS) for the global semiconductor industry, today announced the development of a multimillion-dollar No-Wait-AMHSSM (NWA) facility in Taichung, Taiwan. Located in close proximity to major IC manufacturers, the new facility, named NWA, will demonstrate the benefits of Aquest's FabEXTM-based AMHS for high-volume 300-mm IC fabrication. The NWA will be another critical step of implementing Aquest's No-Wait-ManufacturingSM vision—a vision for a family of products and services that provide IC manufacturers with a solution to significantly reduce or eliminate the unnecessary waits or delays that affect manufacturing productivity in an IC fab.

Expected to come on-line later this year, the new NWA will be in a dedicated 20,000 square-foot facility in Taichung, and will offer the full breadth of Aquest's FabEXTM hardware and software automation solutions, which will be installed to accurately simulate a 300-mm IC fab in production. Specifically, the NWA will simulate interactions with more than 48 different types of processing and inspection/metrology systems. This will involve 100 loadports as well as interfaces to stockers and fab-wide material control software. Over 300 meters of Aquest's FabEX Transporter and more than 18 FabEX Loaders will be installed in the NWA. A representative process flow will be utilized to quantify the expected impact of NWA on significantly reducing fab cycle time. Overall, the NWA solution is expected to improve the productivity of IC manufacturers with faster swap times, better response to burst capacity needs and a higher movement capacity per bay that exceeds 1,000 moves per hour—all with significantly shorter delivery times compared to conventional systems.

The NWA facility will develop, test and optimize NWA sub-systems and products in partnership with Tera Autotech Corporation and a major Japanese automation company. Tera Autotech is a Taiwan-based company that focuses on the engineering, manufacture and distribution of automation equipment and micro drills for various industries. The resulting Aquest products will be fabricated via manufacturing partners in Taiwan and Japan.

According to Aquest, in order to protect the unique aspects of the FabEX-based AMHS sub-systems and the NWA architecture, multiple international patents have been filed.

"We look forward to collaborating with Aquest to help commercialize the next-generation AMHS technology for advanced IC fabs, especially in Taiwan," commented Tera Autotech President, Leon Lee. "This partnership reflects our dedication to developing next-generation automation solutions to meet the IC industry's requirements to improve productivity."

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“Supporting Aquest and its partners in the development of this state-of-the-art facility here in Taiwan is a win-win situation,” stated Wen-Ke Yang, director-general of the Central Taiwan Science Park Administration, National Science Council, Executive Yuan, Taiwan, R.O.C. “We are confident that having this facility in Taiwan will help move the Taiwanese semiconductor industry forward—through next-generation automation systems designed to enhance productivity, and ultimately improved profitability for the IC manufacturer.”

Aquest President & CEO, Dr. Mihir Parikh, added, “Creation of the NWA is the first step in the establishment of various partnerships being consummated with major IC manufacturers for active involvement in the NWA facility and the development of the FabEX-based No-Wait-AMHS solution.” Such customer partnerships are expected to be announced shortly.

About No-Wait-AMHSSM

No-Wait-AMHS (NWA) is a critical step in Aquest’s No-Wait-ManufacturingSM vision. With its patented and patent-pending FabEXTM technology which transports wafer-containers, known as FOUPs, at high speeds (>3 meters/second), FabEX is significantly faster than conventional AMHS built from conveyors or overhead hoist vehicles. It also has the ability to move around curves, while minimizing vibrations with minimal particle generation. Finally, since FabEX does not need any vehicles, it provides the high capacity afforded by conventional conveyor systems. All of this, coupled with sophisticated internet-protocol (IP) technology-based controls and software, enable seamless integration into semiconductor fabs.

About Aquest Systems

Founded in 2004, Aquest Systems is the pioneer of No-Wait-ManufacturingSM (NWM) automation technologies for the worldwide semiconductor industry. A truly global company, Aquest employs a worldwide organization to efficiently leverage talent and resources in the United States, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and India. The company is privately held and headquartered in Sunnyvale, Calif. More information can be found at www.aquestsystems.com.

No-Wait-AMHS (NWA) and No-Wait-Manufacturing (NWM) are service marks of Aquest Systems. FabEX is a registered trademark of Aquest Systems.

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