

Imagine Optic launches the SL-Sys™ neo for precision miniature optic testing

Imagine Optic announces the newest addition to the SL-Sys product family, the SL-Sys neo, for the precision testing of miniature optics used in popular consumer electronics devices.

San Jose, CA and Orsay, France January 21, 2008 – Imagine Optic, Europe's leading provider of wavefront analysis and adaptive optics technologies, proudly launched the SL-Sys neo this week at Photonics West in San Jose. The SL-Sys neo is a characterization system designed for testing the miniature optics and optical assemblies, typically composed of lenses between 1 and 12 mm in diameter, that are used in electronic devices including DVD players and digital cameras, including those used in mobile phones.

“The growing demand for higher quality images from consumer electronics that use small-diameter optics is fostering strong competition amongst manufacturers” says Samuel Bucourt, Imagine Optic's CEO “The SL-Sys neo allows industrial R&D teams to test new camera objective designs more efficiently and bring these new concepts to production faster.” This new product builds on the success of the SL-Sys liquid, currently being used by several manufacturers to characterize miniature liquid optics.

Most conventional lens characterization systems measure lens quality as a function of the optical element's Modulation Transfer Function (MTF) or, more simply, the aberrations and optical quality of the lenses only on axis or at a specific angle in the field of view. What makes the SL-Sys neo unique is that it provides a full optical characterisation of the lens or objective including the back focal length (BLF), effective focal length (EFL), best focal plane, total aberrations and optical quality as well as a complete 3-dimensional MTF on axis and anywhere in the field of view. This, combined with its ability to measure chromatic effects as well as field curvature and distortion (often the case at the outer edges of wide-angle lenses) provide the product's users with important competitive advantages.

On the production line, the SL-Sys neo enables users to conduct online quality control to identify defective optics and to locate the origin of the problem within the assembly. The system can be used to test and characterize both the optical assembly as well as the individual optical elements that comprise it. By testing the individual optical elements that make up the objective, defective pieces can be eliminated before construction – reducing costs and accelerating the workflow.

When asked how the product will benefit customers, Imagine Optic Cofounder and Vice President of R&D and Marketing said “The SL-Sys neo was developed to respond to the need for precision miniature lens characterization systems that can provide R&D programs with a decisive competitive edge.” He continues by adding “Our customers are faced with the challenge of satisfying an increasingly sophisticated clientele. Incorporating the SL-Sys neo into R&D programs and assembly lines will help manufacturers meet the demand for innovative functionality and faultless quality.”

The company will be providing demonstrations of the SL-Sys neo this week on stand 715 at Photonics West in San Jose, the world's premier showcase for optics and photonics products. For more information, please visit www.imagine-optic.com.

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About Imagine Optic

Founded in Orsay, France in 1996, the company is Europe's leading provider of Shack-Hartmann wavefront sensing technologies for adaptive optics, quality control and optical measurement. In 2005, Imagine Optic introduced the world's first X-EUV wavefront sensor to respond to customer needs in this synchrotron metrology and nanolithography and, in 2007, the company released a completely renewed version of its award winning HASO™ sensor line as well as adaptive optics and companion software packages. It continues to be a leader in research and development with projects currently underway in the domains of adaptive optics for high-power lasers and bioimaging as well as free space communications.

Imagine Optics' clients are among the world's top companies and include Sony, Nikon, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT, Thomson, Zeiss, NASA, the U.S. Air Force, Essilor, Thales Aliena Space, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, EADS, the European Southern Observatory, the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF), the European Space Agency (ESA), amongst others. In 2006, Imagine Optic realized a turnover of €2,4M and currently employs 23 highly qualified professionals in a variety of domains. If you would like to learn more about us, please visit www.imagine-optic.com.

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