

MELLES GRIOT

Overview

Melles Griot Inc. is a leading global supplier of photonics products including optical components and systems, lasers, laser measurement instrumentation and opto-mechanical hardware.

The company is one of the world's largest suppliers of OEM optical components and systems, offering over 20,000 catalog products, with manufacturing or distribution facilities in 41 countries, serving industries as diverse as semiconductor manufacturing, biomedical, metrology, and telecommunications.

Based in Carlsbad, California, Melles Griot is a subsidiary of Johannesburg, South Africa-based Barloworld Scientific Co., with annual revenues of over \$4 billion and some 23,000 employees around the world.

The Melles Griot Optics Group is based in a 35,000-square-foot facility located on Science Parkway in Rochester, New York. The Optics Group is led by Vice President and General Manager David Smith, and employs over 100 workers.

Supplying the elements used to create, transform and detect light, Melles Griot Optics Group provides standard and custom-engineered optical components, multielement lenses, and contract-manufactured assemblies to Original Equipment Manufacturers all over the world.

The company's mission is to supply optical enabling technology that allows industry to move from scientific possibilities to product realities.

History

For 30 years, Melles Griot has taken a leadership role in supplying products that enable the practical application of light. As the photonics marketplace grew, so did the company, becoming a worldwide manufacturer and distributor of optics, lasers, opto-mechanical hardware, and instruments.

Melles Griot began with optics, pioneering the field of catalog sales with its industry-leading Optics Guides. Today, it is a major supplier of standard and custom optical system elements to Original Equipment Manufacturers around the world.

Melles Griot also is the world leader in gas lasers and is at the forefront of semiconductor and solid-state laser technology for industrial and research applications.

Recognized for its multi-colored helium neon lasers, it also specializes in helium cadmium, air-cooled ion, and frequency-stabilized laser technology. In addition, diode-pumped solid-state lasers and custom diode laser based subassemblies and systems enable the company to meet the broad spectral requirements of its customers.

Complementing these laser technologies, the company offers a complete selection of laser power and energy meters and beam diagnostic equipment.

Situation Analysis

In February 2004, Melles Griot Optics Group commissioned its new Coating Technology Center. This new facility includes four advanced high-volume vacuum deposition systems, including plasma-assisted evaporation; and a 900-square-foot Class-1000 lens-inspection area.

At the heart of this new facility is the industry's most advanced multilayer coating system, the Leybold SYRUSpro™1100, one of only a few in North America. The SYRUSpro1100 is specifically optimized for precision lens-coating applications down to 193 nm. The SYRUSpro 1100 sets a new world-class standard for advanced vacuum evaporation systems and compliments the already significant coating capability and capacity at Melles Griot Optics Group.

This new coating facility greatly enhances the Optics Group's ability to produce the world's most uniform, high-performance, high-damage-threshold coatings at competitive prices.

The announcement of the new coating technology center was preceded by a significant business expansion in 2003.

In August 2003, in a move to consolidate and strengthen the company's product portfolio and to enhance customer access to its advanced optical engineering team in Rochester, Melles Griot announced the completion of a major reorganization.

Earlier in 2003, Melles Griot Optics Group also commissioned their new 1,600 sq. foot Class-1000 contract assembly clean room optimized for manufacturing electro-optical assemblies for clients.

The OEM industrial optics portion of the Photonics Components Group, an over \$8 million business previously located in Carlsbad, California, was relocated to the Optics Group in Rochester. The move created over 35 jobs and resulted in the investment of some \$3 million for new equipment.

At the time, Melles Griot CEO Blake Fennell said the company made the move because its global OEM optical customers needed more sophisticated products and support to achieve their business goals.

Melles Griot Optics Group is one of the most advanced providers of sophisticated optical systems in the world, located in Rochester — a city with an unmatched optical engineering history and manufacturing infrastructure, the CEO added.

Ultimately, the move positioned the company for continued growth of its optics business and the advancement of related technologies.

Conclusion

Melles Griot Optics Group is a critical member of Rochester's optics, imaging and photonics cluster.

Growing from some 70 employees to more than 100 employees over the past year, researchers with the Melles Griot Optics Group have made it clear to the Rochester community and others that they are vital to the overall success of their parent company.

Melles Griot Optics Group is a vital and talented part of Melles Griot Inc., with technological know-how that is unmatched anywhere else in the company and in few places in the world. Economic developers in Rochester would do well to keep this important fact in mind as they look to help Melles Griot Optics Group grow and expand in the months and years to come.