

3M Touch Systems Inc. Introduces MicroTouch Interactive Surface Technology; Flexible Touch Layer Laminates to Any Surface

Line Subhead

3M Touch Systems Inc. introduces a new touch technology platform - interactive surface technology (IST) - offering the ability to apply a touch interface to nearly any surface, completely expanding the possibilities of where touch can be implemented. 3M will display MicroTouch IST this week at the Society for Information Display trade show in Boston.

The new technology is an evolution of 3M's projected capacitive touch technology. Its unique design is based on the fact that the interactive touch surface is constructed of a flexible, polyester layer that can be laminated to the front of any surface, laminated to the back of any surface or applied to a contoured surface. The substrate for lamination can be plexiglass, polycarbonate, plastic, glass, laminated glass or any other nonconductive surface. In addition, MicroTouch IST can support "on display" use with LCD panels or "off display" use creating touch pad or button interface designs not using a display.

This new technology platform addresses the needs of traditional touch application segments, such as retail, point-of-sale, kiosks and industrial. It also expands the possibilities of touch for new emerging applications, such as outdoor environments, mobile and hand-held devices, and on- and off-display implementation for use in automobiles.

Emerging Applications for Touch

Mobile devices and hand-held computers with MicroTouch IST will be enhanced with new and different capabilities for these devices that can be activated with finger, stylus or gloved input.

Products used in outdoor environments can be supported with laminated stack-ups integrated with Vikuiti solar reflecting film for heat resistance or Vikuiti light control film for privacy. The ability to have a protective, replaceable front surface placed in front of a MicroTouch IST touch screen also is planned.

Opportunities exist for automotive designers to design in MicroTouch IST for on-display navigation systems or as part of an integrated center stack, center console and/or overhead controls. In addition, the flexible foundation of this technology - the polyester touch layer - allows off-display, button-like implementations under leather, vinyl, cloth or molded plastics.

MicroTouch IST's unique ability to underlay this touch layer behind any nonconductive material offers home appliance and home automation designers new ways to implement touch embedded in glass tables or countertops or as the actual interface for an appliance - with or without an LCD.

"Steadfast in our commitment to provide innovative touch solutions, the addition of this new touch technology platform continues to demonstrate our dedication to bring new and creative ways to solve today's industrial design challenges in order to deliver tomorrow's products, " said Terry Jones, general manager for 3M Touch Systems Inc. "Our customers continually request touch solutions that satisfy specific requirements for distinct environments. It is through the efforts of our continued pursuit to satisfy our customers that we were able to develop another new technology platform - interactive surface technology."

About 3M Touch Systems, Inc.

3M Touch Systems Inc., a subsidiary of 3M, operates globally and reports through 3M Optical Systems Division headquartered in St. Paul, Minn. For more information visit www.3Mtouch.com

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