

# GLOBAL SMT & PACKAGING

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# Interview— Jeff Timms, Microscan

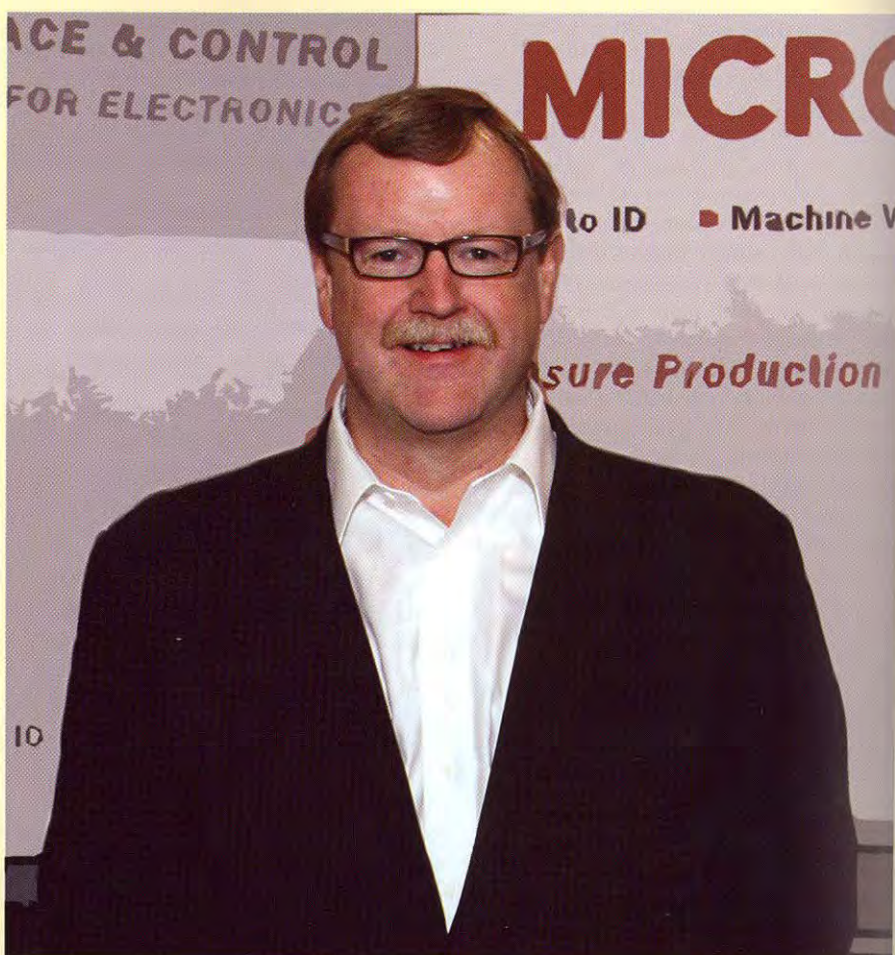
*Jeff Timms, president of Microscan since 2007, has been focusing these past two years on using his 25 years of business leadership in global technology and automation to bring the company to the forefront of the precision data acquisition and control solutions industry. Prior to Microscan, Jeff held senior management positions with both Siemens and Universal Instruments. Global SMT & Packaging's editor-in-chief Trevor Galbraith caught up with Jeff recently.*

**Q1. Can you give us a brief background description of Microscan?**

Microscan is a global leader in technology for precision data acquisition and control solutions, serving a wide range of automation and OEM applications. Founded in 1982, Microscan has a strong history of technology innovation that includes the invention of the first laser diode barcode scanner and the 2D symbology, Data Matrix. Today, Microscan remains a technology leader in automatic identification and machine vision with extensive solutions for ID tracking, traceability and inspection.

Microscan focuses on technologies of auto ID, machine vision and illumination, with application solutions ranging from basic barcode reading up to complex machine vision inspection, gauging and measurement. Our solutions help manufacturers around the world drive down cost and waste, automate critical manufacturing processes and increase yields.

We are a member of Spectris plc, a specialist technology-based instrumentation and electronics controls company.



**Q2. What has your goal been as president of Microscan?**

When I came to Microscan, my goal was to find a way to keep the company's profitable growth path going strong. What I learned was that the technology that got Microscan to where it was wouldn't—by itself—be able to keep the company moving forward. Our strengths were that we had a very high-end fixed scanning line and great customer relations. We needed to change our go to market strategy. Knowing we couldn't be all things to all people, we decided to focus on three markets—automotive, electronics manufacturing, and medical/pharmaceuticals. To address these markets properly, we

needed to fill in some gaps in Microscan's product portfolio. The way I saw it, we had three choices: we could design and build the new products we needed, we could partner with another vendor or we could buy a company. We ended up doing all three! We stepped up our design efforts, we partnered with a number of players and we completed an acquisition.

**Q3. Which company did Microscan decide to acquire? What benefit did this provide?**

We acquired the machine vision business from Siemens Energy and Automation, Inc., which consisted of a combination of technology from Computer Identics

and ID Matrix. Computer Identic had a great technology, but no channel. We have a great channel and were looking for this type of technology to supplement our portfolio. Luckily, we were able to purchase Data Matrix's asset in the package. We will leave the symbology in the public domain, but got some tremendous IP in the deal. We believe this acquisition has placed us firmly into the arena of top industry players. We are definitely getting noticed by top tier customers who did not necessarily give us their attention prior to this change.

**Q4. Are there more acquisitions in Microscan's future?**

We're letting the dust settle on this acquisition, but if you are not moving forward...you're actually moving backward. We are not going to sit still.

**Q5. At the recent APEX tradeshow, Microscan was demonstrating a new inspection solution specifically designed for the electronics marketplace. Can you tell me about it?**

The Visionscape® Smart Camera is a compact, all-in-one smart camera that is designed as an alternative to traditional AOI systems. The Visionscape® Smart Camera series combines a compact form factor with the broad applicability, versatility and proven performance of Visionscape® software. Designed for use in a range of applications, the Visionscape® Smart Camera provides a cost-effective, easily deployed solution for manufacturers to monitor quality control processes or identify and trace parts on production lines.

The innovative Visionscape® Smart Camera is a flexible solution that can be used for quality inspection, device metrology inspection, and full traceability. Visionscape® Smart Cameras stand

alone in their support of Track, Trace, and Control processes with full blown optical character recognition (OCR), optical character verification (OCV), and full reading of any barcodes or 2D symbols including the most difficult direct part marks (DPM). The advanced technology used in this

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system includes high-end machine vision algorithms and state-of-the-art high-speed multi-core dual processor smart camera technology. This fast and powerful system is not only simple and easy to use, program and operate, it is also totally transportable across a wide variety of applications throughout the factory—all at a fraction of the cost of traditional AOI solutions. The Visionscape® Smart Camera can be placed where it is needed, when it is needed, at a price that will fit even the most stringent of maintenance or support budgets.

**Q6. What benefit does Track, Trace and Control provide to a company's quality and manufacturing processes?**

Adding Track, Trace and Control (TTC) can improve outbound product quality in several important and measurable ways. Simply by catching potential problems in real time, you can inexpensively prevent problems from ever leaving the work cell or manufacturing area. Customers never see those problems, which means your customer service people never need deal with those issues. So instead of service and sup-

port issues, you have lowered costs. Today's expanding need for higher production output at even lower cost puts some tough demands on manufacturing teams. Many manufacturers and quality managers today depend on Microscan technologies—such as automatic identification and machine

vision—as the backbone for their TTC solutions. And TTC has been shown to pay for itself quickly, whether the focus is item level traceability, work in process tracking, or quality control. As a result, Microscan solutions are helping manufacturers around the world to cut cost, cut waste, automate critical manufacturing processes and increase yields. All very valuable elements in today's economic environment.

**Q7. Does Microscan have a global presence?**

Absolutely. Microscan is a preferred supplier to companies around the world. With multi-language websites and worldwide office locations, we offer comprehensive service and support, including online help, technical support, field services and multilingual documentation. Additionally, Microscan products are represented and supported through a global network of systems integration companies who specialize in automation solutions. The network includes more than 300 top automation integrators and value added resellers in more than 30 countries, with technology specialization in specific sub-channels and complementary product lines.

Thanks for your time, Jeff. We'll await more exciting innovations and news from Microscan.

—Trevor Galbraith.