



Nightside earns industry honours for cutting-edge sports lab

Press release, 15-Oct-08, Nightside Test Design, Christchurch, New Zealand: Christchurch-based test engineering specialist Nightside Test Design has taken top category honours at the Australasian EDN Innovation Awards for its ground-breaking work with the world market leader in protective field hockey apparel, OBO.

At the awards ceremony in Sydney on Tuesday night, Nightside was awarded first place in the 'Best application of test or data acquisition equipment' category, for the development and integration of a high-speed image and data capture facility for OBO.

Nightside beat out three Australian companies for the honour, which marks the second major recognition for the company this year, following a finalist placement in The Export NZ Canterbury Export Awards in July.

Nightside's managing director, Peter Brown, says the win is a significant achievement for the New Zealand company, identifying the uniqueness and technical difficulty of the project.

"When OBO came to us, there were no known precedents within the sports equipment arena of companies putting a test facility of this nature in place. The award goes a long way in validating the creativity and innovation of the project team," he says.

Having only emerged from the Canterbury Innovation Incubator in late 2006, Nightside is already accumulating recognition and success for its specialised test engineering solutions.

The company is a member of the National Instruments (NI) Alliance Partner Program - an international network of consultants, systems integrators, and product developers that help bring NI technology to new applications and markets.

The new OBO test laboratory was developed collaboratively with Nightside as a state-of-the-art facility equipped with a high-speed video camera and sensor equipment to capture and analyse the impact of balls shot by a high-pressure cannon at up to 160km/h.

The shock attenuation of the impact is recorded frame by frame by a high-speed Mikrotron video camera and other sensors at over 2,000 frames per second, allowing highly detailed analysis of the data and images around the impact zone.

"Until recently, similar testing has been limited to the automotive industry and the military sector," says Brown. "However, through Nightside's innovation, OBO's in-house facility has set a new standard in the testing of protective sports equipment."

Reuben Parr from OBO says the system has been very successful to date in testing a range of helmets and masks from different sporting codes, including cricket, softball and hockey.

Results have shown a large difference in the performance of different products and different materials. For example, polycarbonate face masks have proved to be far stronger than the steel-wire face masks currently used in a number of sporting codes.

About Nightside Test Design

www.nightside.co.nz

Founded in 2001, Nightside is one of New Zealand's largest specialised test engineering businesses. With offices in Christchurch and Auckland, the company offers a wide spectrum of products and services to clients throughout New Zealand and internationally.

Nightside provides independent test engineering solutions as an alternative to having an in-house department.

Nightside's professional services cover the full product development lifecycle from design to production, including software testing, production testing, embedded development, industrial control, measurement and data logging.

Nightside is a member of the National Instruments (NI) Alliance Partner Program - an international network of consultants, systems integrators, and product developers that help bring NI technology to new applications and markets. As one of only three Certified Alliance Partners in New Zealand, Nightside uses NI LabVIEW, LabWindows/CVI, and TestStand, along with the NI data acquisition and control hardware to provide automated solutions for manufacturing production test applications.

About the 2008 EDN Innovation Awards

The EDN Innovation Awards recognise and reward excellence in electronics design, manufacture and testing from New Zealand and Australian companies. The awards are presented to companies demonstrating technological innovation and design creativity.

This year the awards were presented in six categories, with one overall winner:

- Best student project
- Best application of test or data acquisition equipment
- Best application of a microcontroller
- Best application of RF design
- Best application of programmable logic
- Best application of analogue design
- Best application of computer/boards and buses (New)
- Best application of design software (New)

There will also be an Award for the best overall project

The 2008 EDN Innovation Awards were held 14th October, 6.30pm, at L'Aqua, Cockle Bay, Sydney.

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