

## Sofant aims to revolutionise smart phones and tablets

16<sup>th</sup> November 2012

**Sofant Technologies specialises in highly compact, reliable, low power antenna and RF micro-electro-mechanical systems (RF-MEMS) solutions.**

The company is bringing to market a miniature antenna technology predicted to transform the performance of smart phones and tablet PCs, making poor reception, dropped calls, and short battery life things of the past.

The company was co-founded by Ahmed El-Rayis, Tughrul Arslan, and Nakul Haridas, and now has an experienced CEO, Sergio Tansini.

The technology is the result of over seven years research and development at the University of Edinburgh. The spinout of the company was supported by Edinburgh Research and Innovation (ERI), the commercialisation arm of the University which, as a shareholder in Sofant, will continue to provide support as the company moves into a commercialisation phase.

Sofant addresses a large and growing market; smart phones have now overtaken PCs, with an estimated five billion units to be manufactured over the next five years, or 40 new phones every second. Sofant aims to license its designs to global smart phone manufacturers and is projecting a turnover of over £10m in year five.

Sergio Tansini, CEO of Sofant, explains: "Antenna design has not kept pace with the rapid evolution of smart phone technology. New communication protocols, such as LTE and 4G, mean more pressure than ever on existing antenna technology, further impacting smart phone performance and user experience. Smart phone and tablet users expect to be able to make and take phone calls while browsing the web, send texts while downloading emails, and stream data while uploading videos to YouTube.

"The reality is that, until now, the antenna has acted as a bottleneck to performance in mobile devices. As a result, every new generation of smart phone performs less well than its predecessor, resulting in dropped calls, lost signals, weak connections, slow internet and battery drain. Sofant's high performance miniaturised steerable antenna will change the performance and user experience of smart phones forever."

Sofant has integrated three core technologies to create the world's smallest smart antenna. The family of two designs comprise the tunable RF MEMS modules and Sofant Intelligent Software. The technologies can be licensed individually or as a single smart micro antenna system. The company has already licensed an early technology demonstrator to a large OEM and attracted considerable interest from many leading manufacturers.

Sofant participated in Scottish Enterprise's Proof of Concept Programme which enabled it recruit a strong advisory board, analyse the market and develop a prototype. In June the company was awarded a SMART grant of £100k, and secured equity investment from West of Scotland business angel syndicate Kelvin Capital.

Earlier this month Sofant announced its appointment to a €1.5 million EU FP7 project, ARMOURS, led by Spanish telecoms company ACORDE Technologies. This is a two year project, to contribute to the development of Galileo PRS (Public Regulated Service), which is intended to provide a vital layer of protection against cyber-terrorism and service disruption for many of Europe's critical public services. Sofant's role on the project is to develop low cost miniature steerable antennae that can be

incorporated into portable devices as well as the uniforms used by police, intelligence services, customs officials, coast guards, peacekeeping forces and rescue teams.

**Deal Information:**

**Deal Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012

**Company:** Sofant Technologies

**Sector/Activity:** Micro-electronics

**Main Investor:** Kelvin Capital, SMART AWARD

**Advisers:**

Young Company Finance tracks and reports on early stage high growth companies in Scotland.

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