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Teva at the Top of Generics

Eli Hurwitz's 30 year career with Teva came to an end when he stepped down as Chairman due to illess. The one time kibbutznik merged a number of small pharmaceutical companies into the kernel which became the world's largest generic company.

The acquisition of German Ratiopharm by Teva for Euro 3.6 billion marked the height of the career of its Chairman Eli Hurwitz. In the past few years Hurwitz successfully launched acquisitions in excess of $20 b. Hurwitz's career was one of a kibbutznik making good.

The first major business opportuntiy for Teva came during the Second World War Israel could not acquire pharmaceuticals and this offered an opportunity for rapid growth.

Teva began to expand geographically in the early 1980s. Eli Hurwitz, joined the company in a junior management position after graduating in economics and business administration from Hebrew Unversity in 1957, was destined to transform Teva into a global pharmaceutical powerhouse. He perceived an opportunity to penetrate the U.S. market when the federal Waxman- Hatch Act passed Congress in 1984. This legislation concerned generic drugs, treatments that have lost their patent protection. Also known as multi-source or offpatent medicines, generics are chemically identical to branded prescription drugs, but they are priced 30 to 70 percent less than patented versions.

Hurvitz used the generics segment as Teva's entree into the U.S. pharmaceutical market. In

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1985, the company forged an agreement with chemical conglomerate W.R. Grace to create TAG Pharmaceuticals, a 50-50 joint venture. In 1985, TAG acquired Lemmon Co., a Pennsylvania-based company. Lemmon became the sales and distribution arm for generics manufactured by Teva in Israel. Although CEO Hurvitz later said that "an Israeli who's coming to the States has a David and Goliath syndrome," he reminded himself that little David prevailed in that Biblical battle.

The potential Teva saw in Lemmon soon turned to profits; the U.S. venture's sales more than doubled from $17 Teva million at the time of its acquisition to about $40 million in 1987, by which time it was marketing seven generic versions of branded drugs.

The company's first major new drug, known as Copaxone, was discovered more than two decades earlier in the laboratories of Israel's Weizmann Institute, where doctoral student Dvora Teitelbaum was studying the use of synthetic proteins to quell multiple sclerosis attacks in animals. Together with Professors Michael Sela and Ruth Arnon, Teitelbaum spent 15 years isolating and researching the polymer COP-1 (later branded Copaxone).
Current global sales of Copaxone exceed $1.0 billion a year

Teva buys German Ratiopharm

Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, the global leader in generic drugs, said that it had reached a deal to acquire the German generic drug maker Ratiopharm, ending a nine-month battle that had pitted it against at least two other bidders, one of them thought to be the brand-name drug giant Pfizer.

Teva will pay about 3.6 billion euros — or nearly $5 billion — and expects to complete the transaction by the end of the year.

The deal will catapult Teva from fifth place among German generic players to the No. 2 spot.

Ratiopharm is a privately held company based in Ulm and it did not make the names of the bidders public. But, in winning Ratiopharm, analysts said, Teva topped the world's biggest maker of brand-name drugs, Pfizer, and Actavis, a generic maker based in Iceland.

"This transaction is perfectly aligned with our long-term strategy in which Europe is an important pillar and growth driver," the chief executive of Teva, Shlomo Yanai, said in a statement. "Ratiopharm will provide us with the ideal platform to strengthen our leadership position in key European markets, most notably in Germany, as well as rapidly growing generic markets such as Spain, Italy and France."

The combined company would have had in 2009 revenues of $16.2 billion, the statement said.

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Ratiopharm had global sales of 1.9 billion euros in 2008, nearly half of which were in Germany. But Ratiopharm also sells its products in more than 30 other countries, including established markets like Spain and Canada and emerging economies like Russia. Over all, it is the world's fifth-largest maker of generics, accounting for 3 percent of the global market, a report last year from BCC Research said.

For its part, Teva has been aggressively expanding its global leadership in generics, in part through acquisitions. Two years ago it acquired Barr Pharmaceuticals, an American company, for about $7.5 billion. And Teva has indicated that it planned additional deals.

Ratiopharm's parent company, VEM Vermögensverwaltung, put the company up for sale last year after the suicide of Adolf Merckle, who founded Ratiopharm in 1973.

Last month, the American drug maker Cephalon said it would buy another Merckle family asset, the Swiss generic maker Mepha, for an estimated $590 million.

Ratiopharm is an attractive target because Germany is the second largest generic market in the world, and Ratiopharm is the second biggest generics purveyor there. Germans spent about $7.9 billion on generics in 2009, according to IMS Health, a health information company..

In Germany, Ratiopharm is the second-largest generics purveyor behind Hexal, a part of the Sandoz division of the Swiss drug maker Novartis, but just ahead of another local generic-drug maker, Stada Arzneimittel, analysts said.

Ratiopharm specializes in drugs for cardiovascular, respiratory, central nervous system and metabolic disorders as well as in anti-infective medications.

Israeli high-tech mergers and acquisitions in 2009 - $2.54 billion

Average acquisition increases by 21 percent

The following summarizes merger & acquisition activity of Israeli and Israel-related high-tech companies in 2009. The following data are based on information derived from the IVC-Online Database, developed and maintained by IVC Research Center, which for more than 13 years has been at the forefront of Israeli high-tech, venture capital and private equity research. Additional details about Israeli high-tech

In 2009, M&A proceeds involving Israeli companies that were either acquired or merged, totaled $2.54 billion, 7 percent below 2008 levels ($2.74 billion), and 33 percent lower than proceeds in 2007 ($3.79 billion). The top ten deals in 2009 yielded $2.02 billion, 80 percent of the total for the year. Four deals exceeded the $200 million mark and five deals exceeded the $100 million mark.

Sixty-three Israeli companies were acquired or merged in 2009, a 28 percent drop from an average of 87 companies in the previous three years (82 in 2008, 87 in 2007 and 94 in 2006). However, average deal size in 2009 was $40 million, an increase of 21 percent from $33 million in 2008. VC-backed deals (28) totaled $1.55 billion, an increase of 3 percent compared to (35) $1.5 billion in 2008.

According to Koby Simana, IVC CEO "Notwithstanding the increase in average deal size, 2009 was successful for buyers due to a sharp decrease in company valuations." "Moreover" noted Simana, "We expect considerable M&A activity in 2010, providing attractive deals for companies eager to capitalize on the many current opportunities. From the standpoint of investors in high-tech companies, M&A deals will be welcome, even at moderate valuations, in order to receive an immediate payback."

The most noteworthy M&A deals of 2009 were Siemens' $418 million acquisition of Solel; Medtronic's acquisition of Ventor, estimated at $325 million; and IBM's $225 million acquisition of Guardium.

Israeli companies have also been acquirers of foreign companies, transacting 15 deals in 2009 for

a total of $380 million. This is a sharp decrease from 2008, which saw the completion of 39 deals valued at $9.5 billion (including Teva's acquisition of Barr Pharmaceuticals for $7.46 billion). The most active acquirer among Israeli companies in 2009 was Frutarom Industries, a producer of flavors and fine ingredients, which acquired three foreign companies for a total of $37 million.

Worldwide technology IPO markets were weaker in 2009, as in 2008. Only one IPO was made by an Israeli high-tech company during 2009. D-Pharm, a clinical stage biopharmaceutical company, raised $22 million on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange. No IPOs were made in 2008.
In the last decade high-tech companies raised some $17 billion from investors, compared to over $48 billion of capital received through M&A or IPO exits (a dollar ratio of three to one)

Hebrew University researchers developing 'breakfast of champions'

An organic approach to pest control – releasing super-sexed(but sterile) male insects to mate with their lady friends

An improved method for sustainable pest control using "super-sexed" but sterile male insects to copulate with female ones is being developed by agricultural researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The scientists thus hope to offer yet another efficient and promising avenue for supplying produce to the market by eliminating pests, without damage to the environment.

An assortment of chemicals, such as DDT, have been employed since early in the last century to control crop pests or carriers of diseases. However, this approach has led to the evolution of resistance to pesticides and has severely negative impact on human health and the environment.

As an alternative to the use of chemicals, Prof. Boaz Yuval at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment, is working on upgrading a veteran approach, known as the sterile insect technique. This method is currently employed against several dozen insect species. The principle is to rear millions of individuals of the species one seeks to control, separate the sexes, sterilize the males and release them into the field. It is expected that the sterile males will copulate with wild females, who will then be unable to lay fertile eggs, thus reducing the pest populations.

However, says Prof. Yuval, the process of rearing millions of male insects, sterilizing them and transporting them to the release site can severely affect their sexual competitiveness. The research in Yuval's laboratory at the Department of Entomology focuses on improving this technique, as applied to fruit flies and mosquitoes.

Prof. Yuval has studied the behavioral and physiological elements that define the factors that contribute to male sexiness, and subsequently has devised ways to confer these characteristics on sterile males.

One of these factors is nutritional status. Yuval found that feeding males on high protein diets significantly improves their sexual performance. Recently (in collaboration with Hebrew University colleague Prof. Edouard Jurkevitch and graduate students Adi Behar, Miki Ben-Yosef, Sagi Gavriel and Eyal Ben Ami) Yuval also found that the bacteria residing in fruit flies are important, and that the factory reared flies lacked the bacteria found in wild insects.
With this information in hand, Yuval and his colleagues are formulating a high-protein, bacteria enhanced "breakfast

of champions" which will be provided to males before their release, and significantly improve their sexual performance when released in the field. Their work is described in the ISME (International Society for Microbial Ecology) Journal.

Yuval believes that successful application of this approach can be applied to a variety of plant and animal pests, as well as to organisms that transmit human disease, thus making an important, organic and environmentally friendly approach to pest control.

Eilat to have Israel's largest wind farm

Eilat Ashkelon Pipeline Company wants to build a 50 MW wind farm at a cost of €50-60 million.
The company (EAPC) is initiating the construction of a wind farm for the generation of electricity in the Eilat Mountains. The wind farm will be largest of its kind in Israel.

EAPC CEO Amos Yaron says that the wind farm will generate 50 megawatts and will cost €50-60 million to build. He predicts that the project could be built within 2-3 years, unless there are unexpected bureaucratic delays.

Yaron said that EAPC wanted to build the wind farm using Israeli technology and equipment, and that it was in negotiations with two companies for this purpose. He told "Globes", "We want to send a message of moving over to renewable energy sources, and here, there is also good use of land resources."

The Israel Civil Aviation Administration is examining the plan because of the proposed site's proximity to air lanes. If it approves the plan, EAPC will build a wind measurement station at the site and open negotiations with equipment vendors at the same time.

EAPC's entry into the wind farm market could face regulatory obstacles, since it is a government company supervised by the Ministry of Finance. EAPC executives do not believe that the ministry will frustrate the project, in view of the importance of developing renewable energy projects.

Elbit Systems wins large Australian Army deal

Defense electronics company Elbit Systems Ltd. (Nasdaq: ESLT; TASE: ESLT) has won a $298 million (AU$331 million) Australia department of defense contract for a command and control system for the Australian Army.

Elbit Systems will supply, integrate, install, and support a Battle Group and Below Command, Control and Communications (BGC3) system for the Australian Army's Land 75/125 program.

The BGC3 comprises of a Battle Management System (BMS) for soldiers, vehicle mounted commanders, and headquarters/command post staff. It will enable the Australian Army to achieve a major portion of its defense network-centric warfare milestone of a networked brigade with cutting-edge technology in battle management and communications systems.

The contract will be filled over the next three years. The Israeli company won an international tender for the system.

Elbit Systems president and CEO Joseph Ackerman said, "Australia is a very important market for Elbit Systems, and we are extremely proud to be selected by the department of defense for this major program, one of the largest and most prestigious BMS programs in the world."

IBI analyst Gil Bashan said that this is really good news for Elbit Systems, which has not obtained such a large new contract for a long time. while the market sees a sharp fall in the company's growth in 2010 to 2-3%, IBI expects Elbit Systems to grow by 5-6%, and this contract reinforces that

position and reflects the strength of Elbit Systems. IBI also feels that the price of Elbit Systems's share is reasonable in relation to its profit potential. It gives a neutral recommendation of $66 per share.

Big brother may be watching as Israel embarks on CCTV project

The Public Security Ministry will be placing surveillance cameras and sensors in urban public areas, as part of its City without Violence program.
The ministry said it had released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a tender for firms who would oversee and advise the project, which would see the deployment of cameras and sensors in public areas.

Last August, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu unveiled details of a five-point plan to combat violent crime and alcohol abuse in Israel. The plan included stiffer penalties for violent crimes, greater regulation of the sale of alcohol and the use of CCTV cameras in dozens of cities.

According to the statement released Sunday, cameras would be placed in commercial and residential areas, as well as in educational institutions, public facilities, major junctions, parks, and any location the ministry said would be prone to vandalism, violence, or any kind of criminal activity.
The ministry statement claimed that the system would not hurt citizens' privacy and would comply with relevant legal standards.

The project is meant to deter and supervise, the statement said, as well as a control and enforcement tool to be used by municipal and national law enforcement.

Another aim of the new system, according to the Public Security Ministry, would be the gathering, analysis and distribution of information, as well as providing photographic evidence that would enable real-time intervention and crime prevention.
Netanyahu stated last August that Israel's "justice system is the best in the world but we can stiffen the penalties on violent criminals...criminals need to stay longer in jail, there shouldn't be a revolving door for criminals."

The plan also calls for adding special anti-violence education to school curriculum, as well as greater leeway for administrators to punish violent students.

Netanyahu said Israel will "limit the sale of alcohol after 9 P.M. We will legally ban the sale of alcohol in kiosks as well as in gas station. Whether it will be a general ban or just to those of a certain age is yet to be determined, but presenting an I.D. will be insisted on. We will also stiffen allowed drivers' blood-alcohol levels. Alcohol is a national epidemic. We are relatively low in alcohol consumption and violence, but we are on the rise and that trend must be stopped."

"In Britain, the birthplace of democracy, there are more cameras than in any other country and violence rates are going down...countries that have adopted the principles I am describing here have been able to reduce violence within a short span of time. This is practical work, and I have no doubt that we can do it.

LED company Net-Aye bought by Berkshire Hathaway unit

The companies did not give the dollar value of the acquisition, but the deal is estimated at several million dollars.

Kfar Saba-based Net-Aye Technologies was acquired by Berkshire Hathaway unit TTI Inc. Electronics components maker TTI, Inc. said last week that it acquired the specialized interconnect and LED distributor.

Net-Aye is a subsidiary of Bar-Tec Ltd. founded in 1998. TTI CEO and president Paul Andrews said, "Israel has been an important market for TTI for many years due to its significant growth in high-tech and the electronics industry. Net-Aye is a perfect fit given their strong relationships with

many of these customers."

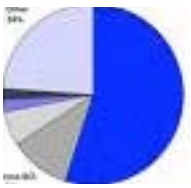
Avi Inbar is the owner and general manager of Bar-Tec.

The Net-Aye management team will remain in place with Amir Schor as general manager. Hewill report to Mr. Andrews during the 2010 transition.

The Israeli computer hardware market is projected at $2.2b. In 2010

Projections indicate that the Israeli Information Technology market will have a value of $4.9bn in 2010 and will grow at a five-year compounded annual growth rate of 6% to a projected $6.2b. in 2014. The Israeli IT market should have enough momentum from key sectors to expand over the 2010-2014 forecast period, thanks to relatively stable demand from defense and government sectors, and opportunities like financial services and small and medium-sized enterprises. Spending is forecast to resume single-digit growth in 2010, with a boost, particularly in the second half of 2010, from computer hardware tenders delayed from 2009.

The Israeli IT market has a number of positive fundamentals, which should keep it in positive territory during the five-year forecast period. Low computer penetration of around 30% offers potential for continued growth. High internet penetration and growing broadband penetration are drivers for the retail segment, while the financial services sector accounts for about 15% of Israeli IT spending.



In 2009, Israel's high-tech sector suffered as demand for high-tech exports dropped by at least 10-15%, with as many as 10,000 sector jobs feared to be at risk. This represented a major concern for the Israeli government given that high-tech accounted for around 10% of Israel's economy, with annual sales estimated at around $25b. Major information trechnology firms were retrenching in Israel, including SAP, Cisco and HP. IT is viewed as an important policy tool for the Israeli government's 2008-2010 socio-economic policy framework. In 2009 the National Economic Council recently submitted a policy agenda to the government, which specified two main policy tracks of reducing poverty and achieving balanced growth. The first track was expected to emerge as the main priority.

As part of its modernization agenda, the government is pressing ahead with various other strands of its government project. Among other initiatives, there has also been spending on computers in healthcare and the nationwide paperless court initiative. The e-government programme is leading to increased demand for computers, with the Israeli government reaching a supply agreements with vendors like Dell and HP.

The Israeli IT services market is competitive, with leading multinational competitors IBM and HP both estimated to have Israeli IT services market shares of below 10%. Following its merger with EDS, US giant HP was projected to take around 10% of the Israel IT services market last year. HP Israel's software division hosts HP's biggest research and development (R&D) centre worldwide, and the company also has significant production facilities in Israel.

Leading Israeli IT services vendors experienced mixed fortunes in 2109. Market leader Matrix reported wins in a number of key sectors including healthcare, financial services, defence and government. In Q309 Matrix reported 100% annualised growth in net profits, and 7% growth in operating profits on flat revenue growth. Ness Israel, by contrast, reported a 19% decline in revenues for Q209, although 30% of this was due to currency translation.

In 2009, enterprise software giant Oracle was in discussion with Israel Credit Cards Cal (ICC-Cal) concerning the future of a major computerization project being implemented by Oracle. Oracle initiated the project, to replace and upgrade ICC-Cal's computer systems, some 18 months ago. However, differences had apparently arisen

between Oracle and ICC-Cal concerning the project. Meanwhile, in 2008, Oracle rival SAP reached an agreement with Ness to purchase the latter's SAP sales and distribution division in Israel.

The Israeli computer hardware market, including desktops, notebooks, servers and accessories, is projected at US$2.2bn in 2010, up from US$2.1bn in 2009. The market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 5% over the forecast period to reach US$2.7bn in 2014. The Israeli government has launched various initiatives to increase computer and internet penetration.

Spending is expected to resume single-digit growth in 2010, after a contraction in 2009 due to the economic slowdown and unemployment hitting consumer demand for electronics goods. Household consumption moved into negative territory in 2009, with spending on household equipment down by 6.7% in Q109, and although BMI forecast a slight recovery in H209, trading conditions remained tough.

Israeli software spending is projected at $1.0b. in 2010, up from US$973mn in 2009. The packaged software segment is expected to grow at a CAGR of around 7% over the forecast period. Businesses were expected to remain cautious in H209, deferring investments, or looking for good enough solutions to immediate problems. However, there should still be several growth areas going forward. Spending on software is shifting towards the SME segment, which forms the mainstay of the Israeli business sector. Spend on enterprise solutions has grown since 2007, with reviving or emerging areas of opportunity including security, customer relationship management (CRM) solutions and business intelligence. In terms of verticals, the financial sector has been a mainstay of demand, with other key opportunities including defence and healthcare.

The IT services segment is estimated at $1.6b. in 2010, and this is expected to grow at a CAGR of 7% over the forecast period to reach $2.2b. in 2014. In 2009, there were reports of IT managers scaling back projects, and vendors will have to adapt to an environment where some projects are commissioned more in response to immediate needs.

Government and defence are two key sectors likely to be a continued source of opportunities, because the factors driving spending in each case are not particularly sensitive to economic vicissitudes. Another key area of opportunity is healthcare IT. Despite failing to capitalize in the past, Israel is starting to emerge as a desirable location for packaged applications and localisation services.

E-Readiness Israel's high PC penetration and the growing availability of broadband access mean that internet penetration is likely to continue its upward trajectory. The government has announced that it intends to make a big effort to narrow the digital gaps that manifest themselves across various demographic lines. Israel's strong broadband growth has long relied on a handful of developments across the market. These include the competition between Bezeq and the cable companies, with five major internet service providers (ISPs) vying for market share from both the corporate and residential markets, which enjoy high PC penetration rates, advanced telecoms infrastructure and minimal regulatory intervention. Another development likely to stimulate growth is the introduction of local loop unbundling (LLU), which will give alternative operators access to Bezeq's network and will stimulate much greater competition. LLU is due to be implemented by end of2009.

2nd Gen Biometric Security—A new, second-generation biometric security solution with technology developed by the Israeli military is installed in a 200-student Los Angeles school with other deployments poised for Philadelphia and New York City. Manufactured by FST21 Ltd., Tel Aviv, Israel, the SafeRise® System fuses best-of-breed biometrics and analytics and will be rolled out to new and retrofit high-rise, office, multifamily and multi-tenant markets.

SafeRise is a seamless and non-intrusive product that identifies user's facial characteristics, voice print and behavioral patterns. "This is the beginning of how people will gain access to buildings in the 21st century," said Avi Lupo, general manager, SafeRise Americas and a co-founder of the company with Major General (Res.) Aharon Zeevi Farkash, former head of Israeli Military Intelligence.

There's been keen interest by property managers and developers, who see it as an added edge and perfect perk for their properties. It's also an attractive source of recurring monthly revenue for monitoring companies.

"This is a unique technology developed for the Israeli Army," said Lupo. "It's a smart system that identifies people by the way they walk, talk, look and even what they drive. It can analyze voice patterns and stress levels. It's not just one technology, it's a fusion of technologies." The system is comprised of software and hardware, including a redundant on-site server; IP door controllers; high-resolution megapixel cameras; IP intercoms; electronic locks and more.

Video analytics use software algorithms that monitor areas of interest to detect movement or changes in a video stream. SafeRise includes a people counter, speed and density measurements and tailgating. It can recognize a tenant's voice to automatically open the door in response to speech and can automatically call a tenant when asked by a guest arriving at the door. License Plate Recognition (LPR) uses image recognition software algorithms to detect and read a vehicle's license plate number for parking lot access by authorized vehicles. Upon vehicle exit, it cross-references the license plate number with a database of authorized drivers. If an unauthorized driver is detected, a live monitoring center is called.

SolarEdge signs manufacturing agreement with Flextronics

SolarEdge Technologies, an innovative solar power harvesting provider, and Flextronics (NASDAQ: FLEX), a leading global Electronics Manufacturing Services (EMS) provider have announced that SolarEdge has selected Flextronics as its global manufacturing partner for high-volume production of SolarEdge's distributed PV power harvesting and monitoring systems.

The announcement came after six months of close collaboration between the two companies on preparing dedicated production lines located at Flextronics factory for the mass production of SolarEdge systems at exceptional quality. Production has commenced during the previous quarter and expected to reach an annual capacity of 200MW.

"As SolarEdge continues to rapidly scale to meet growing market demand, we are focused on forging first-rate partnerships that will support our promise of reliability and excellence to our customers," said Guy Sella, chairman, CEO and co-founder, SolarEdge. "Flextronics has an impressive global reach and a successful track record of quality manufacturing services for the solar industry. This partnership will help us more quickly answer customer needs for an effective solution to improve the performance of solar energy systems through panel optimized yield and monitoring."

"We are very excited to join forces with an innovative company like SolarEdge that leads the way into affordable solar energy production at grid parity", said E.C. Sykes, president, Flextronics' Industrial Market Segment. "We are all set to deliver a quality product at mass volumes. Flextronics is prepared to leverage its global resources including production and logistics facilities in Mexico, Hungary and China to support SolarEdge's strategic future growth."

SolarEdge provides holistic photovoltaic power

harvesting and monitoring technology to maximize the energy output and cost efficiency of solar PV units. The company works with industry-leading partners such as BP Solar, Schott Solar, GE, Gehrlicher Solar, Isofoton, HaWi Energitechnik, and many others to embed its technology into photovoltaic panels to increase their power output by up to 25 percent and provide superior monitoring and control, without increasing costs.

UAV co Aeronautics wins Polish Army deal

Aeronautics Ltd. will supply its Aerostar tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to the Polish Army for operations in Afghanistan. The contract is worth $30 million.

Aeronautics said that it bid against its two Israeli UAV rivals - Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd. (IAI) (TASE: ARSP.B1) and Elbit Systems Ltd. (Nasdaq: ESLT; TASE: ESLT) - in the tender. The company added that the tender process took 18 months, with the pace picking up in view of the Polish Army's increased operations in Afghanistan.

Aeronautics will supply the Polish Army with two Aerostar tactical UAV systems, which includes eight UAVs, ground control stations, and simulators. The company will also provide set-up support and training in Poland for a UAV squadron, which will operate in Afghanistan.

Aeronautics already supplies its Orbiter mini UAV to the Polish Army.

The Aerostar weighs 230 kilograms. It has a maximum operating altitude of 6,000 meters and a range of 250 kilometers.

Aeronautics is one of five Israeli UAV manufacturers. The company has ten subsidiaries, which specialize in developing photoreconnaissance, military communications, observation balloons, software and military electronics, and other systems.

Fast Company Names SolarEdge One of the World's 10 Most Innovative Companies in Energy for 2010

SolarEdge Technologies, an innovative provider of distributed solar power harvesting and PV monitoring solutions, announced today that Fast Company Magazine selected the company as one of the World's Top 10 Innovative Energy Companies for 2010.

SolarEdge was selected for its unique and innovative approach to boosting PV system output. SolarEdge's system, which incorporates a multi-string solar inverter, PowerBoxes™ which are per-module power optimizers, and module-level solar monitoring software, enables cost-efficient production of up to 25% more energy from any PV installation. The company attracted $23 million in funding last year, including an investment from GE Energy Financial Services. The company works with industry-leading partners such as BP Solar, Schott Solar and Isofoton, to embed its technology into photovoltaic panels to increase their power output.

"We are proud to receive this recognition of our cutting-edge technology and ability to quickly grow our company," said Guy Sella, CEO, Chairman and founder of SolarEdge. "Over the last year we've seen increasing demand for a way to optimize power harvesting and bypass inher-

Slow Drivers Down

A new Israeli invention called the SpeedCator can help parents ensure that their children drive at the proper speed. The SpeediCator, made by Lipman Science & Technology of Rosh Ha'ayin, is a car and driver monitoring device, designed to continuously and automatically record and store driving behavior and vehicle performance data, and monitor the vehicle's speed to alert the driver when set speed limits have been exceeded.

The device uses a miniature camera to take pictures of your car's speedometer and records speed, excessive accelerations, sudden breaks, distance traveled and more. It's easy to install, and is far less expensive than other monitoring systems on the market today, the company says.

Innovative companies in Energy for 2010

ent limitations of traditional PV systems without increasing costs, resulting in a growing number of installer, integrator, manufacturer and system-owner partners. We appreciate Fast Company validating the strength and innovation behind SolarEdge's technology as well as our ability to execute on the company's promise."

The Fast Company editorial team analyzed information on thousands of businesses across the globe, striving to identify creative models and progressive cultures. Overall, Fast Company ranked the Top 10 Most Innovative Companies in 24 categories.

"It was invigorating to engage with so many exciting new ideas and developments," said Fast Company editor Robert Safian. "Our goal was to offer a snapshot of the creativity at work in the global marketplace, and to inspire the Fast Company audience with illustrations of how powerful and effective business can be."

Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies issue (March 2010) is on newsstands now, and is online at www.fastcompany.com/MIC.

Weight loss diets reverse clogging of arteries

A two-year study led by researchers at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) found that healthy, long-term weight loss diets can significantly reverse carotid (main brain artery) atherosclerosis, a direct risk factor for strokes and heart attacks. The study is one of the first to prove the potential of moderate weight loss as a strategy to reverse atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) in overweight and mildly obese people.

According to the just published study in Circulation, the leading journal of the American Heart Association, the researchers used novel technique imaging of three-dimensional ultrasound at the beginning and after two years, measuring changes in carotid artery vessel thickening of plaque to determine whether diet can reverse atherosclerosis, a process that naturally increases with age.

The research team compared three diets among moderately overweight, mostly male, participants. The findings, using ultrasound, showed that after two years, there was a five percent decrease in average carotid vessel-wall volume and a one percent decrease in carotid artery thickness.

Compared to participants who experienced an increased carotid wall volume, those with decreases showed significantly greater weight loss (11.7 pounds vs. 7 pounds); decreased systolic blood pressure (6.8 mmHg vs. 1.1 mmHg) and an increase in apolipoprotein A1 (Apo A1), a marker of "good cholesterol" (HDL). These participants also had reduced homocysteine levels, an amino acid in the blood that is related to higher risk of stroke or heart attack.

This study was conducted in Israel by researchers led by Dr. Iris Shai, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, with the Nuclear Research Center in Dimona and Soroka University Medical Center in Beer-Sheva.

According to Dr. Shai, "Even if we experience some partial weight re-gain over time, long-term adherence to weight loss diets are effective for reversing carotid atherosclerosis as long as we stick to one of the current options of healthy diet strategy. This effect is more pronounced among mildly obese persons who lose more than 5.5 kgs. [12.1 lbs.] of body weight and whose systolic blood pressure decreases by more than 7 mmHg." Dr. Iris Shai is a researcher at the S. Daniel Abraham International Center for Health and Nutrition in the Department of Epidemiology at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Dr. Yaakov Henkin, a cardiologist at Soroka University Medical Center, who led the carotid measurements, explains that "the importance of these results is in the understanding that over two years, changes in carotid atherosclerosis are more strongly predicted by diet-induced changes in blood pressure than by changes in lipoprotein levels, which are commonly believed more impor-

tant for the coronary arteries."
Researchers studied 140 people (88 percent men, average age 51, Body Mass Index 30.4) who were randomly assigned to a low-carbohydrate, low fat or Mediterranean diet as part of the Dietary Intervention Randomized Controlled Trial-carotid (DIRECT) study.

The study conducted at the Nuclear Research Center required significant cooperation between staff, participants and their spouses. Workplace cafeteria managers worked with clinicians and nutritional advisers to transform the food service program and provide healthy food according to each of the low fat, low carb and Mediterranean diet regimens. Along with workplace nutritional counseling, trial participant spouses were educated on keeping to the diet strategy at home.

Given Imaging buys Sierra Scientific Instruments

Given Imaging Ltd. (Nasdaq: GIVN; TASE: GIVN) today signed an agreement to acquire Sierra Scientific Instruments Inc. for $35 million in cash from healthcare-focused private equity firm Water Street Healthcare Partners. Sierra Scientific develops gastrodiagnostic devices. The company expects to close the deal in early April.

Yokne'am-based Given Imaging develops the PillCam endoscopic camera for the esophagus, small intestine, and colon.

Los Angeles-based Sierra Scientific is a profitable company, without debts. Its unaudited financial report states that its revenue was $18 million in 2009. The company's products diagnose a range of gastrointestinal disorders, including gastro-esophageal reflux disease (GERD).

Study focuses on retinal implants

Israeli scientists say they are researching technology that might someday result in bionic retinal implants that can restore sight to vision-impaired people.

Tel Aviv University Professor Yael Hanein says she has completed foundational research that may merge retinal nerves with electrodes to stimulate cell growth. The research, she said, has so far been successful in animal models.

She's developed a spaghetti like mass of nano-sized carbon tubes, and using an electric current has managed to coax living neurons from the brains of rats to grow on the man-made structure. The growth of living cells on the nano substrate is a very complicated process, she said, but they adhere well to the structure, fusing with the synthetic electrical and physical interface.

a"Neurons like to form good links with our special nanotechnology, and we're now investigating applications for retinal implants," Hanein said. "Our retinal implant attempts to replace activity in place of the damaged cells and, in the case of retinal diseases, the damaged photoreceptors."