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SONY AND SHAFI CLEAN UP WITH DISHWASHER DEMONSTRATION

XCI-V3 Smart Camera Driven by SHAFI Software Can Deliver Ease of Use, Integration

ROSEMONT, Ill., (International Robots & Vision Show: SONY Booth # 710 & SHAFI Booth #1805), June 12, 2007 – Sony Electronics and SHAFI Inc. are

demonstrating a new technology that highlights the full potential of Sony's Smart Camera in robotics.

The demonstration will integrate two Sony XCI-V3 Smart Cameras with embedded PCs running SHAFI RELIABOT software to guide a Denso six-axis robot.

The two companies will feature this concept as part of the International Robots & Vision Show's featured "Hands-on Highway" exhibitions.

The use of Sony's Smart Cameras with software such as SHAFI's RELIABOT, or other complementary technologies, takes the capabilities of a traditional machine vision solution – which require a PC, capture card and camera – and combines them into a single plug-in module. The demonstration will show the use of these cameras with SHAFI RELIABOT PC to operate a robot that can pick plates from a kitchen sink and load them into a dishwasher.

This type of bin-picking application opens opportunities for a wide range of possible implementations in industrial applications including automotive manufacturing and packaging, according to Ken LaMarca, director of visual imaging products at Sony Electronics.

“Marrying the XCI-V3 Smart Camera to a robot running software like SHAFI’s RELIABOT PC software opens up amazing possibilities and opportunities that take machine vision and robotics to a new level,” said LaMarca. “This dishwasher demonstration shows both simplicity and power, giving non-technical staff in manufacturing environments the ability to take ownership much as they do with their consumer electronics at home.”

“The dozens of years invested in developing our RELIABOT PC software have set a new benchmark for user-friendliness that truly unlocks the potential of Sony’s Smart Cameras in robotic applications,” said Adil Shafi, president of SHAFI, Inc. “The XCI-V3’s compact form factor and open PC architecture operated by RELIABOT makes for a powerful value proposition that can transform many manufacturing operations.”

A New Vision for Robotics

Robots have long been a staple of manufacturing, but the ability to add easy-to-operate vision capabilities in a compact form factor such as the XCI-V3 Smart Camera offers something new. Having the PC embedded into the camera saves engineering costs for OEMs and floor space in the factory.

Sony’s XCI-SV3 Smart Camera features a high-performance AMD processor, Compact Flash™ memory storage, and extensive I/O connectivity via Ethernet, USB serial port and monitor out. It is compatible with both the Linux® and Windows® XPe

operating systems. The “Hands-on Highway” system runs the SHAFI software on the XPe system.

SHAFI RELIABOT PC software provides full robot guidance with 2D and true 3D vision (yaw, pitch and roll control). The easy-to-understand interface allows operators to start working with the solution after just 10 minutes of training. It supports 18 robot brands with multiple controller generations and virtually all communication protocols. Customizable screens and interfaces offer OEMs a wide variety of options to customize controls for specific applications.

The robotic system employs a Denso VM60B1D robot with an RC5 robot controller and uses National Instruments Vision Builder AI for machine vision and image processing.

“The dishwasher application is an example of how the easy-to-operate system quickly calibrates and trains robots to select different items and then bin-pick them from a kitchen sink and place them appropriately into a dishwasher. The core Sony/SHAFI system can be adapted to carry out many bin picking tasks with an appropriate robot,” said Shafi.

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Editor's Note: Your readers can obtain more information regarding Sony visual imaging products online at www.sony.com/videocameras. Members of the news media can obtain further information and digital images at Sony Electronics' news and information web site at www.sony.com/news.