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Bold Creativity: Promoting OLED Panels Around the Globe

Starting from Zero — A Tale of Market Development

Clearly different from incandescent light bulbs and LEDs, Organic Light-Emitting Diodes (OLEDs) *1 will radically change the concept of lighting. These luminous flat panels are just 2.3mm thick, produce almost no heat and require very little energy. Thanks to their many outstanding features, they are expected to become the next generation of environmentally conscious lighting sources. For this reason, worldwide lighting manufacturers have taken an interest in this new field — one that is forecast to be worth several hundred billion yen within a few years. Among these market entrants, one company — Lumiotec Inc.*2 — is employing a unique means of market development to compete against major companies. Lumiotec is in fact now targeting Europe's high-value design markets as well as niche markets where special lighting applications are very important. This article focuses on Lumiotec's efforts to develop the market from the ground up.

Winning Over Europe with Design Value

OLED panels are extremely thin, very light and produce almost no heat. Since the material is not limited to conventional shapes, manufacturers can devise innovative and endless possible applications. According to Keita Maruyama, in charge of general marketing at Lumiotec, "This type of lighting is a world novelty, so we'll start by telling the people what OLEDs are and what makes them unique. We'll also emphasize the design angle, showing them how much freedom of design they'll have."

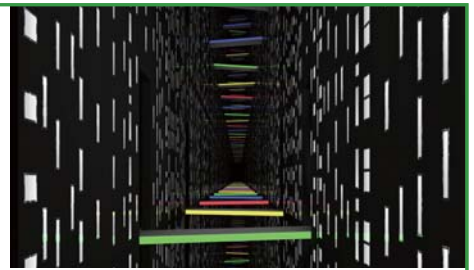
Since the material itself is currently still expensive, Lumiotec determined that instead of entering the general consumer electronics market and competing against the major players with their OLED panels, they would target markets that value ingenious design and ease of use. For this purpose, they set their sights on the design, fashion, art, culture and high-tech categories, initially targeting Europe due to its constant attention to design and functionality in products.

To start, the company partnered with an Italian designer and in April 2011, took part in their first exhibition at *Salone Internazionale del Mobile di Milano**3 with the goal of promoting OLED lighting around the world. "During the fair, the atmosphere that permeates Milan makes you feel like you're taking part in an immense theater scenario that floods all over the city with the latest and best worldwide design. People gather here from all over the world. It's a perfect opportunity," says Sara Milesi, international supervisor of the Lumiotec Marketing Group. Lumiotec's exhibit had a dramatic impact on visitors and was widely covered by major media in the design and building industries.

Milesi deserves much of the credit for Lumiotec's success at the Italian event, putting her linguistic abilities to good use and demonstrating the appeal of OLEDs to visitors in five languages. She spoke about her thoughts: "I wanted people to feel the tremendous impression I had when I first saw OLEDs. My aim is to make the entire world understand the potential of OLED lighting." Milesi is working hard to become a mediator between Japan and the rest of the world. Her work has yielded excellent results, including cooperation with European and American corporations and membership in the *Associazione Italiana Di Illuminazione* (Italian Lighting Association). Alongside such industry giants as a world-famous fashion designer and a world-renowned auto manufacturer, Lumiotec participated in a gala party hosted by the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan as the only Japanese corporate sponsor. This was thanks to Milesi's outgoing nature and tireless efforts to proactively build relationships within the Italian community in Japan. Now when people speak of OLEDs, Lumiotec is considered on an equal footing with the world's three largest light manufacturers*4.

Filling Needs, Boosting Brand Names

It has been less than 18 months since OLEDs were first mass-produced, and OLED lights are still not well known. Precisely because of this, it is essential to expand the market through powerful proposals. Maruyama, who has developed the market from scratch says, "It's important that clients have a concrete image of OLEDs, or we'll get nowhere. So we take the OLEDs' advantages — they don't produce much heat, they're thin, they're light — and explain them in terms of how they answer customers' needs. To start with, we



Milano Salone exhibit (concept image) planned for the 2012 event. Based on the high acclaim received at last year's exhibition, the 2012 fair will be staged in the most exclusive venue, "Super Studio Plus."

visit them frequently and find out exactly what they don't like about the product they're currently using. The proposals of OLEDs begin from there."

Recently, Maruyama met with a Japanese broadcasting station and a local manufacturer of lighting for stage and studios, and started developing lighting equipment for television studios. The halogen lights generally used for studio lighting generate a lot of heat, and the people in front of them end up dripping with sweat. Since OLED lighting doesn't produce much heat, we showed the customer that it would resolve this issue. We also told them that, since the material itself is a flat surface, they could easily make adjustments to the lighting without using reflector boards, and that the OLEDs consume less power and need replacing less frequently. We were able to unite the viewpoint of the broadcasting station with the knowledge possessed by the lighting manufacturer and succeeded in building the studio lighting using OLEDs. This time, by considering the client's potential needs, we could solve their problem and show them a new opportunity. We want to boost the brand name in this way, by portraying the image that "Lumiotec can change the way you work."

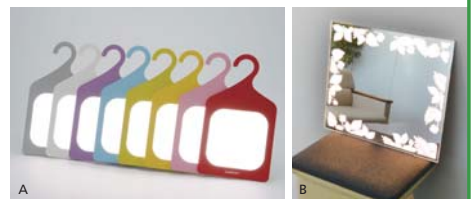
Back when Maruyama worked in the sales department at MHI, his thorough understanding of a wide range of technologies and proposals allowed him to sell products in response to different customers' needs, as well as propose a various range of contracts (EPC business, maintenance, and others). He didn't stop at sales, but also worked on joint development projects with customers. Using the flexibility he gained from these experiences, he is now selling applications for OLEDs.

Lighting the World, Changing Illumination

OLEDs have just begun to gain attention. Lumiotec regards the current situation as the first step, making every effort to expand awareness of OLEDs. The company is now also moving into industrial fields, such as lighting for cars, airplanes and cruise ships, and hoping to see OLEDs soon used in households. As the OLED panels are a product with lots of possibilities, Lumiotec is considering a vast range of sales methods, declaring nothing off-limits.

In conclusion, Maruyama adds, "I am very glad that something I am working on is a 'global first.' As this market is still completely undeveloped, even newcomers like us feel like they have a chance. My biggest dream is making Lumiotec become the world's number-one company in producing OLEDs."

Maruyama's and Milesi's passion will make OLEDs a familiar sight and will continue to illuminate the world.



A: "HANGER" — winner of the 2012 "red dot design award" — an internationally renowned prize

B: Backlit "OLED Mirror Light" features the OLED thickness of just 2.3mm

C: OLED lighting equipment for studio use mentioned in the article

*1: OLEDs are extra light and ultra thin surface emitting lighting panels. Their light generates almost no heat; is not glaring, and being completely free from Mercury and UV emissions is environmentally conscious. OLED panels are the next-generation energy-saving light source that will help reduce CO2 emissions.

*2: Lumiotec is the world's first company specialized in the development and sale of OLED lighting panels, mass produced since 2011. Lumiotec, established in 2008, is a joint-venture of MHI, Rohm Co., Ltd., Toppan Printing Co., Ltd., and Mitsui & Co., Ltd.

*3: Milan Furniture Fair, held every April in Milan, Italy. It is the largest design fair in the world and attracts about 300,000 visitors over six days.

*4: Philips (Netherlands), Osram (Germany), and General Electric (U.S.) All are long-established lighting manufacturers who deal extensively with incandescent light bulbs, fluorescent light, and LED.