

Thorlabs Ultrafast Optoelectronics Products New Products Result From Mi-Light Interactions

At the October 8 Fall Colors Mi-Light Members Meeting, Janis Valdmanis, General Manager of Ann Arbor-based Thorlabs Ultrafast Optoelectronics, and early Mi-Light member, described how his division of Thorlabs has grown over the past couple of years. Thorlabs is the largest independent photonic product manufacturer in the world, with headquarters in Newton, New Jersey and over 1600 employees worldwide. The Michigan-based division was started in 2014 as a grass roots group to develop high-speed optoelectronic components and instruments. By the end of 2016, the Ann Arbor team will consist of 10 staff members, have released over 50 new products to the Thorlabs portfolio, and occupy 4,500 square feet of office, lab, and production space.

Janis explained that Thorlabs is dedicated to serving customers at all stages of the buying process. “This is what attracted me to Thorlabs from day one,” Janis notes, “and I see it play out every day throughout the company.” Thorlabs has also developed a feedback program called “Hungry For Your Thoughts” where customers can submit new product ideas directly to the founder Alex Cable. According to Alex, “We have developed a culture at Thorlabs that constantly seeks customer input. Thousands of our products are a direct result of customer suggestions.”

The Ann Arbor division is focused on developing a full portfolio of high-speed components and instruments for applications that range from 1 GHz to 100 GHz. Many accessories have also been introduced to provide a full selection of related products. It should be noted that one of the new products, the “Fiber Optic Black Hole” was a direct result of interactions with Dow-Corning at the Mi-Light networking events. “We anticipate that more interactions of this sort will result from our continuing membership and support of the Mi-Light Photonics Cluster,” says Janis.

- Modulator Drivers up to 40 Gb/s
- Fully Integrated Transmitters
- Modulator Bias Controllers
- Tunable Laser Sources
- EO Converters up to 70 GHz
- High-Speed Detectors & Receivers
- Electronic Variable Optic Attenuators
- Nanosecond Pulsed Lasers
- Fiber Optic Black Hole
- Microwave Cables & Adapters
- Torque Wrenches
- High-Speed Instrumentation

The logo for Thorlabs, featuring the word "THORLABS" in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving it a 3D appearance.

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