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July 21, 2008

Editor's Note: *One of the nice things about writing a service in a odd little niche like nanotechnology is you get to talk to some interesting people with novel approaches to expanding the average business model.*

I called up CVD Equipment Corp to talk about its business in the past and its plans moving forward. But during the conversation, I got sidetracked when the vice president of business development, Karlheinz Strobl, started telling me about CVD's new strategy to grow its business.

At this point, CVD-- short for chemical vapor deposition--is a designer and manufacturer of standard and custom state-of-the-art equipment used in the development, design and manufacture of advanced electronic components, materials and coatings for research and industrial applications. The company offers a broad range of chemical vapor deposition, gas control and other equipment that's used by customers to research, design and manufacture semiconductors, solar cells, carbon nanotubes, nanowires, light-emitting diodes (LED), microelectromechanical systems and industrial coatings.

Although it's been having some success with its First Nano division, its real growth sector in the past year or so has been solar. It doesn't matter to me where it's getting its growth; the fact is it's growing and it's in a very good spot for long-term success.

Strobl began telling me about CVD's newest effort in commercialization acceleration for startups. It's a great strategy for a company that's long on scientific and engineering expertise and has a strong reputation in research labs. This would be a kicker to its growing line of product services and may provide some big-time profits if it finds some good partners.

Plus, this model may very well catch on in the nanotech sector now, when venture capital is tight and investors are leery of the time it takes to get a scientifically derived product to market.

Allowing startups, small companies or even divisions in larger companies get to the "go-no go" stage more quickly and cost effectively is what new R&D management is all about. This is likely to be a much more commonplace strategy moving forward, and this pioneer is leading the way.

CVD Equipment Corp Helps Shorten Firms' 'Lab to Fab' Time

By Karlheinz Strobl

Every day we're reminded of the needs for improved energy generation, energy savings, material performance and greener, more-efficient technologies.

Solutions for these needs are necessary to enable the continued growth of the worldwide economy and to decrease

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environmental pollution. Many of these solutions are being explored by entrepreneurs in the emerging solar, nano and other green-energy-related markets.

The success of these entrepreneurs depends in part on their ability to successfully raise appropriate startup funds through one or more rounds of funding from the early stage investment community and subsequently on their ability to deliver on the promises made in order to raise these funds.

Traditionally, the funding is used to hire additional people and purchase capital equipment and materials to develop the project internally. This is a slow, risky and laborious process.

CVD Equipment Corp (NSDQ: CVV, www.cvdequipment.com) has been in the technology innovation business for more than 26 years. During that time, it's designed and manufactured many systems to customer-provided technical specifications in the semiconductor, nano, solar, LED and other markets.

Recently, CVD announced it will offer, to qualified customers, commercialization acceleration support services, in addition to its traditional next-generation equipment design and manufacturing services.

This new service is in line with our vision to enable tomorrow's technologies today. It allows both entrepreneurs and investors to get an independent, thorough, technical and business scale-up feasibility review of a proposed business concept.

If it's determined that CVD can add significant value, then it's mutually beneficial for both parties to work together to lower the investment risk by shortening the development process cycle. This reduces capital investment necessary to reach the commercialization phase for a given company.

For these qualified companies, CVD plans to partner with them exclusively in their field and will add it's related intellectual property, technical know-how, design, manufacturing and in-house proof of concept capabilities to develop the pilot and production equipment needed.

CVD anticipates that these joint partnerships will assist entrepreneurs in selling their ideas to investors, and it will enable investors to get more-qualified, key technical expertise and faster scale-up results, leading to a reduction in overall risks and a greater return on their investments.

We'll be selective in choosing the right opportunities for such ventures, and although we don't expect a perfect record, we expect our extensive technical expertise and our own complementary intellectual property to enable us to be successful more often than most investors can be in core new tech markets.

CVD will entertain opportunities at the co-partnering level only if it truly believes in both the feasibility and execution strategy of a given business opportunity and that we can make a significant difference to the likelihood of success.

We anticipate, over time, the selected business opportunities will lead to accelerating our business growth through follow-on production system orders as our partners increase their production volumes. CVD will increasingly benefit from both follow-on orders and from a return on its initial investments in these ventures.

Entrepreneurs now have a choice to explore partnering interests with CVD, either before or after another round of funding, and have the option of approaching investors as a joint team, therefore strengthening the credibility of the proposed venture.

Prospective investors will have the option of requesting the entrepreneurs they fund to explore joint partnership options with CVD as an alternative to sinking much of the investment capital into staffing, plants and equipment when it could be better spent focusing resources on prototypes or R&D.

Karlheinz Strobl is vice president of business development at CVD Equipment Corp.

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