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## **Sokudo Introduces Major Technology Advancements in New RF<sup>3S</sup> Track System for Immersion and Dry Lithography**

Kyoto, Japan — July 10, 2007 — Sokudo Co., Ltd. today unveiled its new RF<sup>3S</sup> coat/develop track system that delivers the technology and productivity requirements of 45nm and beyond immersion and dry lithography. Addressing the most critical scaling challenge for track systems, the RF<sup>3S</sup> provides <0.8nm, 3 sigma critical dimension (CD) uniformity and immersion defect density of <0.1 defects/cm<sup>2</sup>. Built on Sokudo's proven, high-reliability RF<sup>3</sup> platform, the RF<sup>3S</sup> delivers benchmark productivity with a throughput of 180 wafers per hour. Sokudo has multiple orders for its new RF<sup>3S</sup> systems, which are scheduled to begin shipping this month.

To provide excellent CD uniformity, the RF<sup>3S</sup> offers both biased heater and isothermal technology, depending on the application. Biased hot plate technology incorporates independently-controlled heater zones to precisely control temperature across the wafer, enabling optimized CD uniformity for post-lithography or etch. The system's isothermal solution uses Sokudo's proven Rapid Hot Plate (RHP) design for uniform plate temperature without the need for tuning to achieve uniform CD, with an option that adjusts for wafer warpage.

Key to the RF<sup>3S</sup> system's high productivity is its flexible coat cell design that allows up to four spin coat modules and up to six SDC (Sokudo Defect Clean) Soak modules. The SDC Soak modules, which utilize wafer cleaning technology from Dainippon Screen, remove defects before and after immersion exposure. The system's new ECO nozzle shortens develop time by more than 60%, while a faster transfer robot, a faster exposure system interface and reductions in module overhead time decrease wafer handling time and increase system throughput by 20%.

For improved availability, the RF<sup>3S</sup> employs integrated tool monitoring and diagnostics using the Applied Materials' NeXus™ real-time SPC (statistical process control) tool to perform split-second analysis of system conditions and immediately spotlight and monitor changes. The system also offers multiple options for integrated optical CD metrology for process monitoring.

“The RF<sup>3S</sup> combines the technology from both Dainippon Screen and Applied Materials to deliver world-class process and immersion defect control in coat/develop track,” said Takashige Suetake, CEO of Sokudo. “The RF<sup>3S</sup> builds on our established RF<sup>3</sup> platform, with over 200 systems installed, to provide customers with process capability and higher productivity for a broad range of immersion and advanced dry lithography applications.”

Sokudo Co., Ltd., headquartered in Kyoto, Japan, is a joint venture company owned by Dainippon Screen Mfg. Co., Ltd. and Applied Materials, Inc. Sokudo was established on July 3, 2006 for the development, manufacturing, sales and service of advanced coat/develop track equipment for semiconductor production. Further information on Sokudo can be found at [www.sokudospeed.com](http://www.sokudospeed.com).

**SOKUDO**



**RF<sup>3S</sup>**

\* RF<sup>3S</sup> press photo file (300dpi) available for download at URL:  
[www.sokudospeed.com/press/pr-photo/index.html](http://www.sokudospeed.com/press/pr-photo/index.html)

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