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2015 Image Engineering Innovation Award Recipients Announced

The Society for Imaging Science and Technology (IS&T) and Image Engineering GmbH & Co. KG are pleased to announce that the 2015 Image Engineering Innovation Award (IEIA) is given to Javier Garcia-Monreal, Alex Kipman, Alexander Shpunt, and Zeev Zalevsky for the development of Breakthrough 3-D Sensing Technologies and Products.

The award recognizes the innovation in 3-D image sensing developed by PrimeSense and Microsoft and incorporated in the Microsoft Kinect sensor for the Xbox 360 game console. This breakthrough enabled users to control games by gestures and actions.

"This award recognizes four talented innovators, from four different organizations, who pioneered the image depth acquisition hardware and software used in the Microsoft Kinect sensor," says Ken Parulski, chair of the IEIA award committee. "Their creativity and teamwork enabled Kinect to become the first successful mass-market 3D camera, and the fastest-selling new consumer electronics product ever created."

3-D images are sensed using a color CMOS image sensor, which captures normal video images, and a separate Infrared CMOS image sensor, which simultaneously captures images of a speckle pattern created using a low-power IR laser and a diffraction grating. The reflected pattern is captured by the IR sensor and correlated with a reference pattern, to produce a depth map of the objects in the color video image.

The Kinect sensor sold 8 million units within the first 60 days of its introduction, making it the most successful 3-D camera. It uses depth sensing technology developed by Zeev Zalevsky at Bar Ilan University, Javier Garcia-Monreal at the University of Valencia, and Alexander Shpunt and his colleagues at PrimeSense in Israel, as well as gesture and face recognition software developed by Alex Kipman and his colleagues at Microsoft. This award recognizes the strong teamwork demonstrated by these four contributors and organizations.

The Image Engineering Innovation Award, sponsored by Image Engineering GmbH & Co. KG, and administered by IS&T, recognizes and honors efforts that lead to quality improvements or major positive changes in handling digital cameras and images. Image Engineering CEO Dietmar Wüller says that his company sponsors this award to recognize groundbreaking technologies and the engineers behind them. "Most of these technologies are developed by unknown engineers who work for big companies. We want to thank these innovators for the implementation of these technologies in products because that's what makes today's cameras work as well as they do."

Nominations Invited for 2016
Nominations for the 2016 Image Engineering Innovation Award are now being accepted. Individuals, worldwide, who have made substantial contributions in the areas described are eligible. The award may be shared by partners or a small team of individuals or even split between a maximum of 3 independent inventions/inventors. Both inventors and inventions/technical innovations may be nominated. If the inventor(s) is not named within the nomination, the award subcommittee will determine the inventor(s) to be cited. The deadline for nominations is October 1, 2015.

The recipients of the Image Engineering Innovation Award, selected by a committee under the auspices of IS&T, receive an engraved award and US$1,000 cash prize. The nomination form is available here: http://imaging.org/ist/membership/nominations/nominations.cfm.

About Image Engineering GmbH & Co. KG
Since 1997, Image Engineering has been the worldwide leading independent test lab for image recording systems such as digital and video cameras. Digital cameras are tested regularly according to ISO and DIN standards for well-known photo magazines and camera producers; mobile telephones, camcorders, television cameras and various other product groups such as cameras are tested for special demands in security, automotive, and machine vision areas. After the takeover of Esser Test Charts in 2006, Image Engineering developed into the market-leading producer of test equipment for digital imaging products. More than 260 different test charts are currently available for use in photo, video and broadcasting areas.

About the Society for Imaging Science and Technology (IS&T)
The Society for Imaging Science and Technology (IS&T) is an international professional non-profit dedicated to keeping members and other imaging professionals apprised of the latest developments in the field through conferences, educational programs, publications, and its website.

IS&T programs encompass all aspects of the imaging workflow, which moves from capture (sensors, cameras) through imaging processing (image quality, color, and materialization) to hard and soft copy output (printing, displays, image permanence), and includes aspects related to human vision, such as image quality and color. The Society also focuses on a wide range of image-related applications, including security, virtual reality, machine vision, and data analysis.