



Analytical Instrument Industry Report

Otsuka and InfoMetrix announce strategic pact on UV/VIS/NIR instrumentation

OTSUKA Electronics Ltd. (Osaka, Japan) and InfoMetrix Inc. (Seattle, WA) last week announced a strategic relationship under which the two companies will work together, "to develop and market intelligent UV/VIS/NIR instrumentation for laboratory and process markets".

InfoMetrix says that it is contributing, "its 12 years of consulting and software development experience to the joint venture" while Otsuka, "provides its unsurpassed expertise in UV/VIS/NIR spectroscopy with its Photal line of instruments for on-line and laboratory applications".

Dr. Brian Rohrbach, president of InfoMetrix, claims that the new Photal/InfoMetrix line represents, "the next step in analytical chemistry ... the combination of chemometrics software and first-class optics can make the chemist five times more productive". He explains, "the purpose of spectroscopy is not to collect and store spectra, but to use spectral data to make decisions ... chemometrics gives us the tools to derive the precise information

we need for this task".

Otsuka's director of world-wide strategic business planning Dr. John MacKay told *AIJ Report* that the firm, "has one of the world's largest installed bases of diode arrays in chemistry laboratories". He notes that Otsuka has been successful by tailoring its leading edge technology to meet customer needs.

As an example of a novel application, MacKay cites the use of the firm's MCPD 1000 instrument, a 512-element photodiode array product spanning the 300 to 1100nm range, for predicting the octane number of gasoline. "The conventional ASTM method" says MacKay, "is time-consuming, involves expensive and maintenance-intensive equipment, requires skilled labour and is not suited to on-line monitoring". With multi-variate chemometrics software, UV/VIS/NIR spectra enabled the octane rating to be determined quickly and accurately.

InfoMetrix was founded in 1978 by Bruce Kowalski, professor of chemistry at the University of Washington and director of CPAC (Seattle, WA).

Rohrbach acquired the company in 1985 and focused its efforts on producing commercially-applicable software, "that ushers in a new realm in computerized analysis by converting complex data patterns into decision-making information".