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Microchip Technology Launches QVGA Graphics Solution for Cost-Sensitive Embedded Display Applications

Free Graphics Library and New Daughter Board Make It Easy to Add Graphical User Interfaces to Any Design

CHANDLER, Ariz.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

Microchip Technology Inc. (NASDAQ: MCHP), a leading provider of microcontroller and analog semiconductors, today introduced a QVGA Graphics Solution for implementing graphics display and control into cost-sensitive graphical user interface applications. Available today, this easy-to-use offering comprises a free, highly optimized graphics library and source code; third-party library support; low-cost, full-featured development tools including the new Graphics PICtail(TM) Plus daughter board; and PIC24F 16-bit microcontrollers.

The free graphics library and code provided by Microchip enable two- and three-dimensional objects, such as circles, text, rectangles, buttons, meters, windows, progress bars and more, along with images, animation, and touch screen capabilities. These graphics features allow engineers to easily implement and customize graphical user interfaces with faster time to market, low risk development and lower total system cost. In addition, Microchip's third-party partners, Segger (www.segger.com) and Ramtex (www.ramtex.dk), offer compatible graphics libraries which reduce software development time and provide greater flexibility in graphical user interface development.

Microchip's new Graphics PICtail Plus daughter board provides a complete hardware and software development environment for concept, evaluation and low-risk product development. The daughter board includes the Thin Film Transistor (TFT) Liquid-Crystal Display (LCD) module that supports 320 x 240 (QVGA) graphic resolution and 65,000 colors. The board is designed to plug into Microchip's Explorer 16 development board, a tool used to evaluate the features and performance of the 16-bit PIC24 microcontrollers and dsPIC33F digital signal controllers, and the new PIC32 32-bit microcontrollers.

The QVGA Graphics Solution has been designed to operate with any of Microchip's PIC24F 16-bit microcontrollers and future PIC24H 16-bit microcontrollers, 16-bit dsPIC(R) Digital Signal Controllers (DSCs), and 32-bit PIC32MX microcontrollers. These PIC24F devices provide a parallel master port interface, 4 - 8KB of RAM and 16 - 128KB of Flash program memory, which allow for fast, efficient communication to LCD panels and maximum flexibility in supporting different LCD panel options. Using the 28-pin PIC24F microcontrollers, for example, enables high performance, an extremely small footprint and lowered total system cost.

According to iSuppli, more than 3.1 billion units of small and medium LCD panels were shipped in 2006, and of which, more than 0.7 billion units came from action matrix LCD. The active matrix LCD (TFT) continues to see healthy growth, and it is expected to grow to more than 1.1 billion units by 2009. This rapid growth is primarily driven by aggressive price reductions, the continual shift to color displays and demand for simplified operation and visually appealing data format in display-type applications, such as consumer, automotive, industrial and financial markets.

"With the new Graphics PICtail Plus daughter board, along with the free graphics library and application notes, Microchip makes it easy for engineers to take advantage of broad market trends by adding graphics displays or touch screens to their designs with minimal development time and cost," said Mitch Obolsky, vice president of Microchip's Advanced Microcontroller and Architecture Division.

Possible Applications

Microchip's new graphics display options are ideally suited for graphical user interface markets and applications, such as home appliances including refrigerators, cooking ranges and washing machines; consumer electronics including any end product with a user display interface; medical including portable ECG monitors, portable glucose monitors and home blood pressure monitors; and industrial including point-of-sale terminals, UPS/power supply displays and test and measurement equipment.

Pricing & Availability

The Graphics PICtail Plus daughter board is available now for $135.00 USD each. The graphics library, application notes and additional design resources are available today at no cost at www.microchip.com/graphics. Samples and volume-production quantities of any of Microchip PIC24F 16-bit Flash microcontrollers can be ordered today at http://sample.microchip.com and www.microchipdirect.com, respectively. For further information, contact any Microchip sales representative or authorized worldwide distributor, or visit Microchip's Web site at www.microchip.com.

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About Microchip Technology

Microchip Technology Inc. (NASDAQ: MCHP) is a leading provider of microcontroller and analog semiconductors, providing low-risk product development, lower total system cost and faster time to market for thousands of diverse customer applications worldwide. Headquartered in Chandler, Ariz., Microchip offers outstanding technical support along with dependable delivery and quality. For more information, visit the Microchip website at www.microchip.com.

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**Photo and Block Diagram available through editorial contact**
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