



Applied Materials Introduces Next-Generation Reticle Inspection System

December 1, 1998

SANTA CLARA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 1, 1998--

High Productivity, High Sensitivity ARIS-i(tm)System Targets 0.18-Micron Generation Masks with Low COO, Advanced Technology

Applied Materials, Inc., a leader in providing the semiconductor industry with advanced inspection technology, announces a new ultraviolet wavelength-based reticle inspection system, the ARIS-i. Targeted for advanced reticles used in 0.18-micron and below device generations, the ARIS-i provides mask makers and semiconductor manufacturers with a high-productivity, low cost-of-ownership (COO) system with unmatched data handling capability.

The ARIS-i system's high-speed data handling capabilities and sensitivity down to 0.15 micron enable exceptional performance in the inspection of high density, complex reticles. The system is especially suited for inspection of reticles utilizing resolution enhancement techniques like advanced optical proximity correction (OPC) and phase shift. The system's improvements in data management give it the industry's fastest performance in critical die-to-database inspection, which compares the reticle's features directly with the reticle's design.

"The ARIS-i system places users at the forefront of mask inspection technology in finding the smallest, most critical defects, as well as handling huge data volumes generated by advanced generation devices. Our strategy of adding the newest image acquisition and data handling technologies to our proven image processing algorithms lets us move this system rapidly into the market with maximum technology and minimum risk to customers," noted Dr. Gino Addiego, president of Applied Materials' Process Diagnostics and Control Product Business Group.

"This system offers tremendous capability and a great value to customers producing 0.18 micron devices," Addiego added. "It works with any mask and handles all data streams at remarkably high speed. Our customers are extremely excited about this high-productivity solution for their mask inspection requirements."

Applied Materials is now demonstrating the ARIS-i to customers; the company has already received customer commitments for ARIS-i systems and units are scheduled to begin shipping in December 1998.

Applied Materials, Inc. is a Fortune 500 global growth company and the world's largest supplier of wafer fabrication systems and services to the global semiconductor industry. Applied Materials is traded on the Nasdaq National Market System under the symbol "AMAT." Applied Materials' web site is <http://www.AppliedMaterials.com>.