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NEWS

Architectural Applications Driving Growth in External AC-DC Power Market

Corona, California, February 16, 2011 – Led by the emerging architectural segment as well as the more traditional communications, computer, consumer, portable medical and lighting segments, the external ac-dc power supply industry will experience a number of significant opportunities and threats, as manufacturers scramble to design and produce products for the latest demanding high tech applications. The outlook for the worldwide ac-dc external power supply market is expected to remain strong over the next several years, as evolving power architectures, smaller form factors, more efficient designs and improved power management technology combine with growing application demand to create new opportunities.

The introduction of light-emitting diode (LED) lighting as an application for external power supplies represents a significant development for the industry. LEDs are growing in popularity because they are following the major trends in the lighting industry, which include a strong demand for lighting equipment which is smaller, smarter and more colorful. Signs present the greatest area of opportunity for LEDs and bring a number of important advantages to the market. In about 24 to 36 months, external ac-dc power supplies conforming to the recently-adopted EMerge Alliance 24-Vdc power standard for commercial and industrial buildings will become the new growth engine for this market.

In a development that could have a significant impact on the manufacturers of external power supplies, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) has initiated a project to establish a standard smart dc power supply that could eventually eliminate the need to carry around multiple power adapters. In order to see this project through, the IEEE initiated a working group called P1823 whose goal is to develop a specification for what it calls a “universal power adapter for mobile devices” – shortened to UPAMD. Eventually, UPAMDs could be fitted as standard in homes, hotel rooms, trains, aircraft and cars so that a dc supply becomes as ubiquitous as the mains. The establishment of an industry-wide standard is viewed by many as a critical step toward the replacement of brand- and model-specific analog power adapters with digital power supplies that can be used and reused with multiple devices.

One of the more visible threats to the external power supply market comes from the growing use of universal serial bus (USB) power in the consumer electronics market. Examples of this can be seen in cell phones, MP3/MP4 players and ebook reader markets. The USB has effectively replaced a variety of other interfaces such as serial and parallel ports and poses a serious threat to lower wattage external power supplies. In addition, the introduction of wireless charging pads, the growing use of Power-over-Ethernet (PoE) and the eventual emergence of dc power are also expected to provide external ac-dc power supplies with significant competition.

Among the areas examined in this 93-page report are the architecture and packaging trends affecting the industry, as well as a thorough discussion of new and emerging technologies and components, advances in standby power management, relevant business partnerships and alliances, potential threats and the latest regulatory developments and standards. The report also contains over 25 tables and illustrations, depicting a variety of new and emerging technologies, packaging solutions, product introductions, efficiency standards and other relevant information. The focus of this comprehensive analysis provides decision makers with an insightful look into the current and future opportunities and threats available in the external ac-dc market.

Darnell Group is the leading source for worldwide strategic information covering the full spectrum of power electronics, energy storage and generation. The company specializes in the economic/business analysis of emerging power markets and technologies. Complete information on the Tenth Edition of “External AC-DC Power Supplies: Economic Factors, Application Drivers, Architecture/Packaging Trends, Technology and Regulatory Developments” is available at: <http://www.darnell.com/externalacdc/>

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