

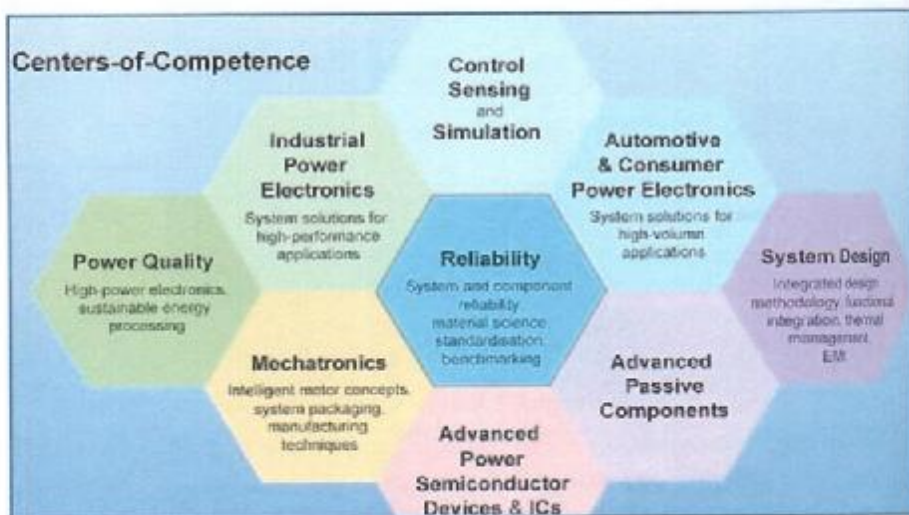
European centre for power electronics established

ECPE (Engineering Centre for Power Electronics) is a new registered association headquartered at the ETC (Energy Technology Center) in Nuremberg/Germany. Founding members are Conti Temic, Epcos, Infineon Technologies, NMB-Minibea, Semikron International, SEW-Eurodrive, Siemens and STMicroelectronics. The aim of ECPE is to boost Europe's strength and its leading role in key power electronics application areas. Membership is open to all European companies including European subsidiaries of abroad companies.

Today's and future key application areas include energy generation, energy distribution, intelligent use of energy and - covering all of these - energy conservation. The new association intends to extend Europe's competitiveness with respect to North America and Asia. "Power electronics is key for the whole power distribution infrastructure, it is also key for energy savings in the range up to 30%, and it is an enabler for intelligent systems of the future," says ECPE's chairman Leo Lorenz. "And all these applications should be covered also in the future here in Europe, particularly with regards to automotive and industrial electronics."

ECPE (www.ecpe.org) is divided into two organisations - ECPE e. V. (registered association) and ECPE GmbH (company with limited liability).

Power electronics in Europe does not have the publicity of the popular microelectronics or the hype associated with nanotechnology, thus it needs some kind of lobbying. "ECPE e. V. will establish a European-wide network not only with politics, but also with the society in general and make them aware of the power electronics benefits as well as attract students for this subject," explains Lorenz. Additionally ECPE e. V. will in charge for the organisation of conferences and workshops, promotion of R&D projects and publications and granting of scholarships. It will initiate and control various basic research projects and targeted pre-competitive developments through its own funds and in close co-operation between industry and scientific institutes and universities. First projects are planned for launch by autumn 2003. For all of the viewed areas of technology and applications ECPE will allocate main areas of competence throughout Europe. "In the medium term we will establish a pool of roughly hundred researchers and engineers out of the graduates in the various European universities dealing



(Above). Planned ECPE Competence Centres throughout Europe

(Right). ECPE's founding members (left to right) Ulrich Kirchenberger (STMicroelectronics), Daishiro Konomi and Manfred Schlenk (NMB-Minebea), Leo Lorenz (Infineon), Richard Veith (Epcos) and Heinrich Heilbronner (Semikron)
Photo: AS



with power electronics, who will work on multi-disciplinary projects initiated by our members," expects Lorenz.

ECPE GmbH is in charge for providing private as well as acquiring public funding

for selected R&D projects, for definition and monitoring of research projects and for creation of know-how and IP rights which will be available to the principal partner companies in form of licenses. AS