

Science, Technology and Digital Award Winners Power New Economy With Innovation, Creativity



By Joseph P. Cabadas

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Michigan's businesses and industries are built and grow on a strong foundation of legendary inventors, scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs.

Their names are many, including Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, John Sheehan who helped synthesize natural penicillin, Daniel Gerber who created canned baby food, Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and William K. Kellogg who created ready-to-eat cereal, General Motors inventor and engineer Charles "Boss" Kettering, plus George S. Davis and Hervey C. Parke who founded Parke-Davis.

Some are household names, some are only remembered by historians, and some were college educated while others weren't (though in Ford's case, he built schools and colleges) — but their products changed the world.

That spirit of inventiveness, of pushing the boundaries of science, technology and even in the digital world lives on in Michigan. To honor those who are building the foundations for the state's future, *Corp!* Magazine inaugurated the Business of Science and Technology Awards in 2010 and this year has expanded it to include those whose Internet/software products are altering the way business is done.

Michigan has its reputation as a center of heavy manufacturing, but for decades it had a diversified economy. At the *Corp!* Magazine awards breakfast held Feb. 22 at the Michigan State University Management Education Center in Troy, the 25 "DiSciTech Honorees" for 2011 represent the new jobs of the future — including showing that manufacturing is not a thing of the past — and that the state is well-equipped to prosper in the new economy powered by science and technology.

MIST Innovations of Detroit provides network monitoring devices and security products, providing streaming video feeds to personal digital assistant and remote monitoring devices. Founded in 2004, the company's name stands for "Mobility, Information, Security and Technology," and in 2008 received the Edward Lowe Foundation "50 Most Companies to Watch" award. Automation Alley recognized MIST as an "Emerging Technology Company of the Year."

The company's latest product, MISTonDemand II, provides an instant picture of critical operations via a client's smartphone or PDA.

"We give an individual quality feedback on a real time basis so they can communicate very instructively and succinctly to their business partners," said Craig S. Capece, president and CEO. "We have a lot of proprietary technology that focus on the mobile delivery of video from surveillance infrastructures to handheld devices.

"MIST has benefits to the user by increasing their security infrastructure and improving productivity. The majority of our customers use our technology from the value-added, productivity standpoint, especially when they are trying to manage multiple locations."

For example, one of MIST's customers has 10 fast food restaurants in metro Detroit. Although the owner is very active and involved in his business, he can't physically be at all the locations at all times. Instead he uses MIST's product to focus in on his locations at key times, such as when cash is moved from registers to safes.

"At a peak times – at the lunchtime hour or the drive-through – restaurant owners can use our device to make real-time adjustments to their businesses based on flow," Capece said. "They can call and have additional stations opened up."

MIST Innovations focuses on the mobile experience with superior video delivery. Its technology is compatible with different cell phones, different operating systems and it has relationships with cellphone carriers, including Verizon and Sprint.

"We scaled our technology to provide the best video experience possible," Capece said. "There are many solutions on the market that can deliver video onto a handheld device but reliability is not there. It drops out or can only provide pictures with frames instead of full-stream live video... We also have an intense undertaking where we are always evaluating and tailoring our product to the next generation of operating systems coming out. So we are fully compatible with any new phones." Banks can use MIST's technology to supplement their existing security infrastructure.

"A few years ago a bank branch manager would spend the complete day at a branch," Capece said. "Today the nature of the business is they are spending more and more time outside of the branch calling on customers directly to generate business for the bank, but they can still monitor and manage activities inside the bank when they're not physically there."

Using MIST's product, managers can visually see any activity and with a simple phone call to the appropriate person make adjustment to their businesses.

MIST Innovations has more than 50 clients and is aggressively expanding its footprint nationwide.

Handheld devices will continue to evolve and within the next five years there should be a number of products available. "You are starting to see that with tablet-type devices and I think you will see an explosion in sophistication of devices that will become more simplistic and provide information without overwhelming the user," he said. "We will be able to provided video content to a particular individual that is very meaningful and instructive to them."

MIST Innovations was nominated for the *Corp!* Digital award by Jason Brown of PublicCity PR. Website: www.mistinnovations.com