



A Passion for Precision.

TOPTICA Photonics AG
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Press Release

March 07, 2008

TOPTICA turns 10

On the route to Europe's leading laser and photonic company

Although TOPTICA was not started in the often-quoted garage, it was an empty apartment suite situated in an old industrial building next to TuiLaser AG. Equipped with vague expectations about their first product and a project of the German government, Dr. Wilhelm Kaenders and Dr. Thomas Weber started the development and manufacturing of scientific grating-stabilized diode lasers (DL 100). It was February 17, 1998, the hour of birth for „TuiOptics GmbH“, the legal forerunner entity to TOPTICA.

„From its beginning the company was deeply embedded in the international research community and has benefited from the fast development and tremendous success of atom cooling. After all this area was honored by three Physics Nobel prizes during the last 12 years“, tells Wilhelm Kaenders. „Professor Ted Haensch and two of his co-workers, Claus Zimmermann – now Professor at Tuebingen University – and Andreas Hemmerich – now Professor at Hamburg University – have supported the development activities from the very beginning and gave advice for subsequent products.“ The basic model DL 100 and its successors, the semiconductor amplified and frequency doubled diode laser systems started their long successful march in atomic physics and quantum optics all around the world. For the first time researchers – also in the emerging-world countries – could take advantage of purchasing state-of-the-art diode laser technology allowing a new level of experiments beforehand only available to the experts.

During the subsequent years various technological breakthroughs achieved with scientific products could be transformed by the young company to industrial applications. For example in 1999 TOPTICA together with Nichia presented the first commercial violet diode laser system in the world. Over the years, TOPTICA's matured products are today routinely used in printing technology, confocal microscopy, optical data storage or lithography.

As Thomas Weber continues with the list of industrial activities: „Our cooperation with Professor Masud Mansuripur of the Optical Sciences Center, Tucson, Arizona lead us to the development of a versatile optical testbed for optical media that was soon successfully sold to customers like Polaroid, Seagate, LG or BAYER. Today one of its

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10 years TOPTICA – company building in Graefelfing (Munich)



The founders and managing directors Dr. Wilhelm Kaenders (l) Dr. Thomas Weber (r)

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successors at TOPTICA, the Husky-Drive, defines the worldwide reference for the quality control of Blu-ray discs and we are expecting a nice future for it.“

The latest activity at TOPTICA in the field of „Ultrashort pulse fiber lasers“ was started the same way as the company began years ago: in cooperation with Prof. Alfred Leitenstorfer (then TU Munich, now University Konstanz) breakthrough laser technology was quickly transferred into real world commercial products. Today also here scientific and industrial laser versions are introduced to the market and start to change the face of the industry.

While the small and young TOPTICA team started to harden their scientific lasers for industrial applications, already 2 years after incorporation the growth of the company became faster than expected. As a consequence in 2001 the company prepared itself for future investments and converted its legal status and name to „TOPTICA Photonics AG“.

Today in the 10th year since its foundation TOPTICA has more than 80 employees, a wholly-owned subsidiary in the USA and is proud to look back on an average growth rate of 25 % per year. Core markets are still Quantum Optics and spectroscopy, THz generation, ultrafast applications, biophotonics, semiconductor inspection and optical data storage. The company is still privately held and driven by the founders, by the management team and the dedicated employees – and last but not least by the enthusiasm to push technology to the limits of physics in favor of the customers and their applications. The slogan „A Passion for Precision.“ is the shortest summary for a wide product portfolio: highly precise, spectrally tunable and excellently focusable photons, CW or pulsed, for all applications beyond material processing.

TOPTICA celebrates its 10th anniversary on April 17, 2008 with a grand reception and review presenting highly respected and well-known scientists and technologists to report about their latest applications in front of invited customers and friends.

TOPTICA Photonics AG develops, manufactures, services and distributes technology-leading diode and fiber lasers and laser systems for scientific and industrial applications. Sales and service is offered worldwide through TOPTICA Germany and its subsidiary TOPTICA USA, as well as all through 13 distributors. A key point of the company philosophy is the close cooperation between development and research to meet our customers' demanding requirements for sophisticated customized system solutions and their subsequent commercialization.

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