Superior Sound Amplifies Quality of Life for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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Autodesk Names Cochlear, Creator of the Baha Hearing System, as Inventor of the Month for February 2009

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Feb. 27 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Autodesk (Nasdaq: ADSK) has named Cochlear Bone Anchored Solutions, a division of Cochlear Ltd (Cochlear) and a global leader in the development and manufacturing of implantable hearing solutions, as Autodesk Inventor of the Month for February 2009.

Cochlear successfully used Autodesk Inventor software to develop a digital prototype of the Baha bone conduction hearing solution. The Baha system uses direct bone conduction to transfer sound to the cochlea, the auditory center of the inner ear. This method has the advantage of bypassing the outer and middle ear -- which might be blocked, damaged or otherwise impaired -- when transmitting sound vibrations to the inner ear. As a result, individuals with hearing loss can experience clearer sound in everyday situations like phone calls and group meetings.

The Inventor of the Month program recognizes the most innovative design and engineering advancements made by the extensive community using Autodesk Inventor software -- the foundation of the Autodesk solution for Digital Prototyping. A digital prototype is a realistic 3D digital simulation of the entire end product that is used to design, visualize and simulate a product before it is built, reducing the necessity of constructing physical prototypes.

Precise Digital Prototyping

"To design the bone conduction implant and the external sound processor that constitute the Baha system, we need to be able to precisely design, engineer and manufacture parts on the scale of one hundred-thousandths of a millimeter," said Daniel Radberg, senior design engineer and CAD manager at Cochlear BAS, which is responsible for the Baha product line. "Autodesk Inventor is invaluable in helping us achieve that precision by giving us detailed 3D views of our products before we've built anything."

Traditional hearing aids use air conduction to transmit sound through the ear canal. However, people with a damaged middle ear cannot benefit from this type of device. The Baha system, by contrast, uses a titanium implant in the skull bone behind the ear. An external sound processor snaps onto the implant, transmitting sound vibrations from the outside world directly to the cochlea, bypassing damaged or problematic areas.

This direct transmission route provides several important advantages when it comes to sound quality. While conventional hearing aids over-amplify sounds to compensate for the damaged or blocked area, the Baha re-routes the sound naturally, thereby eliminating the annoying feedback and occlusion often associated with traditional air conduction hearing aids.

"Cochlear is making great strides toward improving quality of life with their innovative hearing solutions," said Robert "Buzz" Kross, senior vice president, Manufacturing Industry Group at Autodesk. "We are pleased that Inventor software has been able to play a role in helping Cochlear transform 3D digital concepts into reality for consumers."

About the Autodesk Inventor of the Month Program

Each month, Autodesk selects an Inventor of the Month from the more than 800,000 users of Autodesk Inventor software, the foundation for Digital Prototyping. Winners are chosen for engineering excellence and groundbreaking innovation. For more information about Autodesk Inventor of the Month, contact us at IOM@autodesk.com.

About Cochlear BAS

Cochlear BAS engages in the research and development, manufacturing and marketing of bone conduction hearing solutions. Headquartered in Gothenburg, Sweden, the company markets its products in Australia, the Americas, Asia Pacific and Europe and is a division of Cochlear Limited. For additional information about Cochlear, visit www.cochlear.com.

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc., is a world leader in 2D and 3D design software for the manufacturing, building and construction, and media and entertainment markets. Since its introduction of AutoCAD software in 1982, Autodesk has developed the broadest portfolio of state-of-the-art Digital Prototyping solutions to help customers experience their ideas before they are real. Fortune 1000 companies rely on Autodesk for the tools to visualize, simulate and analyze real-world performance early in the design process to save time and money, enhance quality and foster innovation. For additional information about Autodesk, visit www.autodesk.com.

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