Autodesk Inventor Helps Utility Scale Solar, Inc. Save Capital, Speed Development

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Digital Prototyping Helps Enable Clean Tech Company to Bring Its Revolutionary Sun-Tracking Systems to Market with Fewer Resources

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Apr 30, 2010 (BUSINESS WIRE) --Utility Scale Solar, Inc. (USS) is successfully using Autodesk Inventor software to accelerate development of its sun-tracking systems, while saving millions of dollars in capital investment.

USS credits Autodesk, Inc.'s (NASDAQ: ADSK) Clean Tech Partner Program, which provides software grants for emerging clean tech companies in North America, and Autodesk reseller KETIV Technologies for introducing the company to Digital Prototyping with Inventor and helping it reach its product development milestones so efficiently.

"The ability to use digital prototypes has significantly streamlined design and engineering here at Utility Scale Solar," said Peter Childers, president and CEO of USS. "With just one or two engineers using Inventor, we can accomplish the same amount of work in three months that it would have taken 10 engineers twice as long to accomplish.

While most solar companies have focused on designing better surfaces to collect solar energy, USS has focused on optimizing the performance of the sun-tracking equipment itself. This effort has resulted in the development of the company's Megahelion trackers and heliostats based on this new type of solar drive system. USS' drive system, whether in single-axis or dual-axis configuration, allows any type of solar application -- whether it's a photovoltaic array, thin film modules or a mirror reflector -- to smoothly and accurately follow the sun or reflect the sun onto a receiver, at lower cost and with better performance than existing mechanisms.

Since heliostat costs represent 30-50 percent of the initial capital investment for solar projects, cost-effective heliostats like the Megahelion are essential to making solar power scalable and economically competitive with other forms of power, such as coal or nuclear.

USS estimates that the efficiencies it has derived from Inventor software -- specifically, being able to go from initial product development phases to ready-to-manufacture in such a short time -- has allowed it to maintain business momentum and conserve two to three million dollars in capital. For example, the company uses Inventor to perform finite element analysis (FEA) simulation to test product performance and help prevent part failure, and has taken advantage of the sheet metal analysis capabilities to reduce component waste. USS uses Autodesk Vault Manufacturing data management software to securely control and distribute information among its engineers. USS also uses Autodesk Showcase software to more effectively communicate and market its solar energy collection products with photorealistic visuals.

"The result of our team using Inventor and its suite of tools," said Childers, "is that our core product has been fully designed and FEA test-driven under multiple operating stress scenarios, and is now ready to be manufactured."

"Time and money are precious commodities for emerging clean tech companies," said Robert "Buzz" Kross, senior vice president, Autodesk Manufacturing Industry Group. "We're proud to help companies like USS embrace Digital Prototyping so that they can reduce costs and bring their innovations to market sooner."

About the Clean Tech Partner Program

The Autodesk Clean Tech Partner Program grants software to early-stage clean technology companies to help them innovate more rapidly and get to market faster and at lower cost. Each Autodesk Clean Tech Grant recipient receives up to $150,000 of design software, including up to five licenses of AutoCAD Inventor Professional Suite, Autodesk Showcase Professional, Autodesk Vault Manufacturing, Autodesk Navisworks Manage, Autodesk Revit Architecture and Autodesk Alias Design. For more information, visit http://www.autodesk.com/pr-cleantech.

About Utility Scale Solar, Inc.

Headquartered in Palo Alto, Calif., Utility Scale Solar, Inc. provides advanced, low-cost drives, heliostats and sun-tracking systems to the worldwide solar power industry. For more information, visit http://www.utilityscalesolar.com.

About KETIV Technologies

KETIV Technologies is a leading Autodesk solutions provider with 25 years of experience delivering CAD software and services in California, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. Providing business consultation and support in a variety of fields, including manufacturing, civil engineering and process plant industries, KETIV's team of industry experts increases the profitability of engineering companies by helping them simplify the process of conceptualization, design and production.

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc., is a world leader in 2D and 3D design, engineering and entertainment software for the manufacturing, building and construction, and media and entertainment markets. Since its introduction of AutoCAD software in 1982, Autodesk continues to develop the broadest portfolio of state-of-the-art software to help customers experience their ideas digitally before they are built. Fortune 100 companies -- as well as the last 15 Academy Award winners for Best Visual Effects -- use Autodesk software tools to design, visualize and simulate their ideas to save time and money, enhance quality, and foster innovation for competitive advantage. For additional information about Autodesk, visit http://www.autodesk.com/pr-autodesk.

Editorial Note:

An interview with Utility Scale Solar is available on the Autodesk YouTube Channel at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HTBJmRFb4Vc.

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