

PRESS RELEASE:
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ESA AWARDS WEARABLE COMPUTING COMPANY SENSOVO

Sensovo, a young startup company from Germany that currently develops a wearable tactile navigation system, won the European Space Agency (ESA) Innovation Prize 2013 in the European Satellite Navigation Competition. The award ceremony took place in Munich during the European Space Solutions Conference between the 5 - 10 November 2013. The international team, led by CEO Jan Walter Schroeder, constructed a belt which navigates via vibration instead of using a screen or audio instructions. For a wearer the belt becomes like a sixth sense and destinations can be headed for intuitively. This solution for way finding will revolutionize personal navigation adding a new segment to the market of wearable computing.

Many people can benefit from this innovative way of navigation, such as tourists, emergency services, cyclists, motorcyclists, and the visually impaired. 'The range of applications that can be implemented with tactile navigation is limited by imagination only', says head of communication at Sensovo, Manuel Salvador. The young startup plans to enter the market by optimizing their system for the geocacher community (www.geocaching.com). Geocaching is an outdoor activity and an advanced form of treasure hunting. At a later stage new applications will be added. The design of the device also allows integrating the technology in other accessories, such as an arm band or bicycle helmet. Ulrich Strauss, responsible for improving the design and functionality of the device says, 'Wearable computing is the future and we will soon see more and more electronics integrated into our clothes. This is just the beginning!'

The product that Sensovo developed is a technical intersection of geolocation (GNSS), navigation, wearable technologies, tactile or haptic feedback, and ubiquitous computing. It can be used for navigation without distracting audio-visual senses. A mobile phone application allows defining landmarks or sightseeing points which are sent via Bluetooth to the navigation belt. The device then uses vibration motors to indicate the direction of the preset target destinations. Those vibration motors, similar to the ones in a mobile phone, are built into a belt that can be comfortably worn around the waist under normal clothes and invisible from the outside.

For more information about tactile navigation please visit: www.sensovo.com

Email: jan.walter.schroeder@sensovo.com
Web: www.sensovo.com

Notes for Editors

- Sensovo team members are from Germany, Spain and Azerbaijan and have background in business administration, electrical and software engineering. Three of the entrepreneurs are about to complete their PhD in engineering related fields.
- Jan Walter Schroeder studied Medical Informatics in Heidelberg and Heilbronn with the specialisation Management in Healthcare. He worked for SAP, the Aerospace Research and Technology Centre (CTAE) in Spain, the Community of Ariane City (CVA) and Roche Diagnostics in Switzerland before starting his PhD in Biomedical Engineering in the UK.
- Ulrich Strauss got a degree in business administration in Darmstadt before studying Software Engineering in Heilbronn. He gained hands on experience in business administration as the founder and shareholder of a Whisky and Cigar store and is one of the founders of the webpage testing company UIInspect.
- Rashid Bakirov studied computer science and electrical engineering at the university in Siegen before starting his PhD in datamining in Bournemouth. After that Rashid was consultant in data analysis and forensics at PricewaterhouseCoopers Germany. Currently Rashid is completing his PhD degree in data mining at the Bournemouth University.
- Manuel Salvador holds a degree in computer engineering from the University of Granada in Spain. After finishing his studies he worked as Software Developer for more than one year in the R&D Foundation for Free Software and started his PhD at Bournemouth University in 2012.
- The initial idea to create the company emerged in October 2010 by the CEO Jan Walter Schroeder. His vision was to create a sixth sense in form of a wearable tactile vibration device for various practical scenarios.
- The team was finalized in July 2012 consisting of Jan Walter Schroeder (Germany), Ulrich Strauss (Germany), Manuel Salvador (Spain) and Rashid Bakirov (Aserbaidshan)
- Three team members of Sensovo founded one or more startups. Two of those startups succeeded (UIInspect.me, AndaluciaPeople.com)
- The European Satellite Navigation Competition (ESNC) aims to support innovative entrepreneurs to create added value for satellite navigation in everyday life. This year ESNC celebrated its 10th edition of the event. More info: www.galileo-masters.eu