

Corporate and Product Background

Blackrock Microsystems, LLC (BRM) is a privately held company that provides the most advanced technology platforms for the neuroscience, neural engineering and neuroprosthetics industries worldwide. The Company, formed in 2008 after acquiring technology assets and engineering resources from Cyberkinetics Neurotechnology Systems, Inc., achieved profitability in 2009, and has rapidly become an industry leader.

History. The Company's heritage stems from the Department of Bioengineering at the University of Utah, where in 1988, Richard A. Normann, PhD and professor emeritus, invented the Utah Array™, a multichannel electrode that penetrates a millimeter-and-a-half into the brain to either excite or listen to many individual neurons at once. By 1997 the technology was refined for commercialization, at which time Professor Normann and industry consultant, Brian Hatt, formed Bionic Technologies. That company was sold to Cyberkinetics Neurotechnology Systems, where great strides were made in applying the Utah Array for human use as part of the BrainGate clinical trial.

The Solution. Neuroscience research is encumbered by mix-and-match components and complicated experiment setups that create time-consuming and expensive barriers to productive results. The realm of neuroscience experimentation is not hampered by the imagination of the researchers, but rather by the availability of tools to execute their experimental vision. To overcome these barriers, BRM has created the world's largest portfolio of turnkey solutions that facilitate acquisition, processing and analysis of electrical signals recorded from the brain and peripheral nervous system for use in primate, rodent and human research experiments. The Company leads the industry in systems cleared for human use by the United States Food and Drug Administration and the European Economic Area (CE mark).

How It Works. The Utah Array has become the benchmark for multichannel, high-density neural recordings from large populations of neurons. Once the desired electrode configuration of the Utah Array is determined, it is wired to a connector that serves as a link between the Utah Array and one of several data acquisition units – the NeuroPort™ System, the Cerebus™ System or the CerePlex™ Direct System – where processing and analyses of physiological signals related to experiment state events occurs in real time. Using proprietary software, signals are processed and visualized on a computer screen as the data is being acquired.

Benefits. For those conducting neuroscience research, BRM provides fully integrated systems that range from 'out-of-the-box' solutions, to fully customized systems where technical support is provided from the start to the end of an experiment. The Company is lauded for its technical support, product reliability, miniaturization and low-noise technologies, and its contract research partnerships with leading institutions worldwide.

The Company. BRM technologies are used in more than 500 installed locations worldwide, including Brown University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Oxford University and Tsinghua (Beijing). The Company is based in Salt Lake City, Utah. Additional information may be found at www.blackrockmicro.com.

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