

NEWS RELEASE

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MICROCOSM AWARDED CONTRACT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PLUG-AND-PLAY INERTIAL MEASUREMENT UNIT

For Immediate Release

EL SEGUNDO, CA, February 3, 2006 – Microcosm, Inc., an aerospace engineering firm in El Segundo, California, today announced the award of a Phase I Small Business Innovative Research contract for the development of a plug-and-play interface for an inertial measurement unit (P&P IMU) for spacecraft. The work is funded by the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) and will be done in coordination with the AFRL Space Plug-and-Play Avionics working group.

According to Dr. Richard Van Allen, the Director of the Microcosm Space Systems Division, “The goal of this work is to dramatically reduce the time and cost associated with spacecraft integration. The plug-and-play interface allows spacecraft components to be connected much the same as peripherals on your personal computer. You can plug a mouse, a memory stick, or a printer into the USB port on your computer, and the computer knows what the device is and what data to exchange with it. We are working on achieving the same level of integration in order to enable what has been called the ‘6-day spacecraft.’” The idea of the 6-day spacecraft is to be able to assemble, test, and be ready to launch a spacecraft within 6 days of identifying a mission need.

Under prior and on-going contracts Microcosm created a working prototype plug-and-play attitude control system for spacecraft using internally-generated standards. The goal of the current project is to create a bread-board P&P IMU based on MEMs devices with an interface that meets a set of collaborative industry standards and provides software that contains the necessary calibration, test, and algorithmic data. The hardware will ultimately be integrated into AFRL's Responsive Space Test Bed that is intended to demonstrate the technologies necessary to create truly responsive, low-cost space missions.

About Microcosm, Inc.

Microcosm is a small business specializing in space mission engineering and the development of technologies and methods to facilitate more responsive space missions at substantially reduced costs. Microcosm's three primary business areas include the Scorpius[®] family of Responsive, Low-Cost Expendable Launch Vehicles; Autonomous Guidance, Navigation and Control Systems; and Space Mission Engineering, Architecting, and Cost Modeling.

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