

Corporate Communications Department
1 Sony Drive
Park Ridge, New Jersey 07656

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jim Leal
Sony Electronics
(408) 955-4469
jim_leal@mail.sel.sony.com

Pat Kelly
Mueller/Shields
(415) 487-7132
pkelly@muellershields.com

SONY SQUEEZES 1 BILLION BITS OF DATA ON A SQUARE INCH OF TAPE

Future Generation Advanced Intelligent Tape (AIT) Technology Sets Record for Areal Density

SAN JOSE, Calif., May 11, 1999 – Sony today announced a breakthrough in tape recording density, by demonstrating the ability to store one billion bits of data on a square inch of tape. This achievement was made possible by incorporating the first use of magneto-resistive (MR) heads in a helical scan tape mechanism. This achievement demonstrates the viability of Sony's next generation of AIT (AIT-3), which will provide 100GB of uncompressed data in a compact media cartridge and 3.5" drive form factor.

“The high capacity achieved using MR head technology, combined with the proven design of helical scan and high reliability of Advanced Metal Evaporated media, position Sony to deliver new AIT solutions for years to come,” said Steve Baker, general manager for tape streamer products, Core Technology and Network Company, Sony Corporation, Japan.

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The one billion bits per square inch achievement is nearly double the density of DDS-4, which is the highest density tape format available today. This was achieved primarily by switching from conventional inductive recording heads to magneto-resistive heads. Magneto-resistive heads provide a significantly higher signal-to-noise ratio than inductive heads. Through many years of research, Sony overcame major technical obstacles to achieve this innovation, including supplying DC bias current to the MR heads in the drum and reducing the noise produced by contact between the MR heads and the fast running tape. Sony is unique in the tape industry, because it invests heavily in the research and development of all major components required to successfully deliver innovative products to market.

“Sony is committed to expanding the AIT format every two years and this tape density breakthrough demonstrates that we have the capability to deliver on that product roadmap schedule,” said John Woelbern, senior marketing manager of tape streamer products for Sony Electronics’ Component Company. “AIT stands out as an achievable tape technology family with a seamless compatible roadmap to the future.”

Sony recently announced the new AIT-2 drive with 50GB capacity and 6MB/sec. transfer rate (uncompressed). The next member of the AIT family, AIT-3, is expected to provide 100GB of native capacity (200GB with compression) and a 12MB/sec native sustained transfer rate (24MB/sec. with compression). Each generation offers full read- and write- compatibility with previous generation products.

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Sony Squeezes One Billion Bits of Data on a Square Inch of Tape/Page 3

Sony Electronics Inc. Background: Based in San Jose, Calif., the Tape Streamer Products Division of Sony Electronics' Component Company markets tape drives and autoloaders through OEM, industrial distribution and reseller channels.

Editor's Note: For information regarding Sony computer products your readers can call 1-800-352-SONY. On the internet you'll find Sony at <http://www.sony.com/storagebysony>.