Applied Materials' HCT MaxEdge Wire Saws Qualified for Production by Leading Solar Wafer Manufacturers

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SANTA CLARA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sep. 21, 2009-- Applied Materials, Inc. announced today that its recently-launched **Applied HCT MaxEdge ™** wire saw is already in volume production at key customers in Europe and Asia for solar photovoltaic (PV) wafering applications. The MaxEdge system revolutionized wire saw technology with the industry's first dual-wire system, enabling significantly higher throughput and load capacity than competitive systems, while requiring much less factory floor space and fewer operators for equivalent megawatt output. MaxEdge systems have been qualified for production in as little as four weeks, rapidly meeting customers' stringent performance and quality specifications.

According to Dr. Patrick Markschläger and Axel Schmidt, managing directors of Wacker Schott Solar, "The MaxEdge systems are an important part of our commitment to delivering competitive, high-end products that meet the exacting specifications of our customers. Our excellent working relationship with Applied resulted in very successful start-up of the MaxEdge systems. We are confident that this teamwork will enable us to continue to achieve the world class yield and productivity we need to meet our customers' current and future roadmap requirements."

"We are experiencing strong demand for the MaxEdge technology, with over 40 systems shipped in the last three months," said Jean-Maurice Imbert, general manager of Applied's Precision Wafering Systems division. "The system's rapid market momentum shows that the technology is meeting the expectations of PV customers focused on both quality and cost. We worked closely with our customers to boost wafer output and to lower operating expenses – which are critical to making solar electricity competitive with grid power."

Launched in March 2009, the uniquely designed MaxEdge system delivers 50% higher productivity than the previous generation of wire saws by using two, independently-controlled 120µm diameter cutting wires. Advanced process control is used to lower wire tension, reducing wire wear and unplanned downtime, while maintaining wafer thickness uniformity and surface finish. Reduced tension also allows smaller diameter cutting wires to be used, resulting in significantly less silicon loss without compromising yield. For more information, please visit http://www.appliedmaterials.com/products/maxedge_3.html.

Applied Materials, Inc. (Nasdaq:AMAT) is the global leader in Nanomanufacturing Technology™ solutions with a broad portfolio of innovative equipment, service and software products for the fabrication of semiconductor chips, flat panel displays, solar photovoltaic cells, flexible electronics and energy efficient glass. At Applied Materials, we apply Nanomanufacturing Technology to improve the way people live. Learn more at www.appliedmaterials.com.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: http://www.businesswire.com/cgi-bin/mmg.cgi?eid=6054269&lang=en

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