NOVELLUS SHIPS 100TH SABRE SYSTEM TO TSMC

NOVELLUS SHIPS 100TH SABRE SYSTEM TO TSMC

SAN JOSE, Calif., May 13, 2002—Novellus Systems Inc. (Nasdaq:NVLS), the productivity and innovation leader in advanced deposition and surface preparation processes for the global semiconductor industry, today announced the achievement of a significant milestone—the shipment of its 100 th SABRE ® Electrofill (TM) system to leading foundry, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (TSMC). Marking a major inflection point in the history of the SABRE system, the TSMC delivery underscores Novellus' dominant share of the electrochemical deposition market, and further accelerates the company's lead over its nearest competitor.

Since its introduction in June 1998, successive generations of Novellus' SABRE system have been deployed as the copper electroplating tool of choice by eight of the world's top 10 copper device manufacturers. Several factors account for this steady and widespread adoption. Performance, reliability and extendibility down to future process generations are the chief purchasing considerations that have ensured Novellus' segment dominance. Of equal importance, however, is high availability, and with its record of demonstrating greater than 90 percent availability in high-volume manufacturing, SABRE continues to prove its worth as a low-risk choice for semiconductor manufacturers wishing to expand their copper-based chip production.

SABRE is an advanced electrochemical deposition system used to create void-free copper interconnects in extremely narrow, high-aspect-ratio features, and without backside contamination. It is also the first copper electroplating system designed specifically for the high-volume production of semiconductor devices. Using a combination of proprietary technology and advanced chemistries, SABRE delivers the production capacity and repeatability needed to produce copper interconnects with aspect ratios as high as 8:1, and geometries as small as 0.10 micron.

Commenting on the milestone shipment, John Chenault, Novellus' executive vice president for worldwide sales and service operations, paid tribute to the company's long association with TSMC, crediting such relationships for igniting the innovation that results in successful tools such as SABRE. "While SABRE was the catalyst that sparked the industry's accelerated move to copper interconnects, it is leading companies such as TSMC that have validated the underlying technology with their production ramps. We're grateful for the pivotal role they've played in the shift to copper dual damascene manufacturing, and we look forward to our continued role as a key supplier."

"Safe Harbor" Statement under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995: The statements regarding (i) the acceleration of Novellus' lead over its nearest competitor in the electrochemical deposition market, (ii) the SABRE system's extendability down to future product generations and (iii) Novellus' anticipated continuing role as a key supplier in copper dual damascene manufacturing, as well as other matters discussed in the news release that are not purely historical data, are forward-looking statements. Actual results could differ materially. The forward-looking statements contained in this news release involve risks and uncertainties including, but not limited to, a competitor possibly introducing a system more competitive with the SABRE system that would diminish the SABRE system's market share, unforeseen technical problems with the extendability of the SABRE system to future product generations, continued or deepening industry and economic slow downs or recessions that could curtail the electrochemical deposition market, as well as other risks indicated in Novellus' filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Novellus assumes no obligation to update this information. For more details relating to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ from the forward-looking statements contained in this news release, and risks to Novellus' business in general, please refer to Novellus' SEC filings, including the company's most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2001.

About Novellus Systems:

Novellus Systems Inc., an S&P 500 company, manufactures, markets and services advanced deposition and surface preparation equipment for today's advanced integrated circuits. The company's products are designed for high-volume production of advanced, leading-edge semiconductor devices at the lowest possible cost. Headquartered in San Jose, Calif., with subsidiaries throughout the United States as well as in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Ireland, Israel, Italy, India, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan, Novellus is a publicly traded company on the Nasdaq stock exchange (Nasdaq: NVLS) and a component of the Nasdaq-100 Index ® . Additional information about the company is available on Novellus' home page at www.novellus.com

---