

WINNER OF THE BEN STURGEON AWARD 2004

Mike Brownlow was awarded the Ben Sturgeon Award in 2004. He started his academic career at University College, Oxford, where he read engineering science, specialising in electronics and information engineering, receiving his MA in 1984. In 1988, he was awarded the Oxford University best engineering graduate project for his work on a speech recognition system. In 1988, he went to Edinburgh University where he studied microelectronics receiving an MSc with distinction in 1989 for a thesis on, 'Analogue VLSI for Neural Networks'. He returned to Oxford where, at Linacre College, he started to work for his DPhil. During this time he undertook consultancy work for a number of companies on time-of-flight optical range sensors. Later, as a Principal Researcher on neural network technology, he co-authored a feasibility report for Sharp Laboratories of Europe on the use of neural network technology for domestic appliances. He was awarded a DPhil in 1993 with a thesis entitled 'Time of Flight Optical Range Sensor'.



Mike Brownlow

On leaving university, Mike joined Sharp Laboratories of Europe in 1993 where he continued his work on neural network control. His first task was to facilitate the move to production of a microwave oven, which he had designed at Oxford University. This was the first use of neural network control for domestic appliances in the UK and the work resulted in an exhibit in the Science Museum. Mike also won a Sharp Corporation Best Invention Award for a neural network control system.

In 1994, Mike turned his attention to LCDs and was the principal author of a feasibility report which outlined the key technical milestones in the development of display-based applications of poly-silicon TFT technology. As leader of a small team in Europe developing the first commercially viable prototype system LCD, he was responsible for fostering close cross-cultural links with business groups and personnel in Sharp Japan. Mike was awarded the Sharp Corporation, 'Outstanding Contribution to Business Award' for the multi-format and multi-driver system LCD technology which the group had developed.

In 2000, Mike was appointed Director of the System Display Group at Sharp Laboratories of Europe. The group comprises a European Design Centre for global corporate-customer support for mobile LCD design-in, together with long and medium term R&D into next generation System-LCD technologies using CG-Silicon. The group was established following successful commercialisation of CG-Silicon TFT LCD technology within Sharp. The European Design Centre was the first of a global network of design centres, which have subsequently been established. As Director, Mike was responsible for initially establishing the model of operation between various groups across Sharp to enable close customer support and design-in methods for Sharp's European display business. The commercialisation was the culmination of almost 10 years R&D. Currently, the R&D activities within the group are also expanding into next-generation RF-enabled interactive display devices, based on advanced TFT processes under development.

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