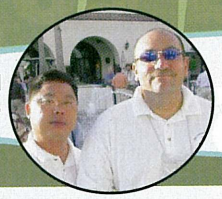
IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Andrew Yaung and Neal Greenberg.

An Interview with Neal Greenberg

by Marvin Mallon

This month's spotlight is on Schmartboard™, a California organization located in the city of Fremont, situated north of San Jose. The principal product of the company is a cleverly designed prototyping board. Although electronic componentry made a great leap forward in the 21st century, prototype technology lagged far behind. Hence, the creation and marketing of the Schmartboard.

Two friends joined forces to produce this new concept. Andrew Yaung, co-founder, President and CEO, began by founding Intellect Lab, an electronic engineering service firm and, prior to that, Shark Multimedia Inc. He holds a BS in Electrical Engineering from San Jose State University and an MS from Santa Clara University.

Schmartboard was spun off in 2005 from Intellect Lab where the concept of this high-tech prototyping board was invented in 2003. This privately owned corporation has five full-time employees in a manufacturing facility that they have outgrown. A search is underway for a bigger building to house and better serve their growth plans.

Andrew's partner at Schmartboard is Neal Greenberg. Neal also cofounded the company and serves now as Vice-President of Sales and Marketing. He is a graduate of William Rainey Harper College having obtained an AA degree in Applied Science. Additionally, he has a BS in Marketing from California Coast University.

In an interview with Neal, he responded to our questions about the present and future plans for the company.

Marvin: Neal, what are your most popular products and when were they introduced?

Neal: The SchmartBoard|ez™ family of products was released in September 2005 at the Demofall show. Demo is a show in which the most innovative products are launched. Previous products launched at Demo include Java 1.0, Tivo, and Palm. The SchmartBoard|ez is innovative because for the first time, anyone can hand solder SMT (Surface Mount Technology) parts. Whether it is a part with a tiny pitch such as 0.4 mm or has 200 legs, SchmartBoard|ez has made it possible for people to easily, quickly, and flawlessly hand solder the parts.

M: What gave rise to the creation of this line of products?

N: With increasing time-to-market issues and cost concerns in our fast moving world, we knew that there had to be a better way. We also realized that in the past, a prototyping board could save the engineer valuable time and money by allowing changes to be made quickly and inexpensively. But prototyping boards had not kept up with technology. Prototyping boards have existed for a long time, but as surface mount components have become smaller and smaller, these boards have not kept up with the technology and have not remained a practical tool for most applications.

M: Is there a newly developed product ready for release?

N: We have a new product called the Power SchmartModule that was released in mid-April. SchmartModules are functional circuits (such as RS-232) that one can add to a SchmartBoard circuit so that they don't have to "reinvent the wheel." The Power SchmartModule will allow one to add power in one of seven voltage options to a circuit. The suggested retail is $15.

Equally exciting is a contest to be announced on June 1st. The Second Annual Schmartie Awards is a contest to create schematics with bills of material that include SchmartBoards. The first prize will be $1,000. In addition, the winning circuit will be turned into an SchmartModule and the winner will receive a commission on every unit sold worldwide. *Nuts & Volts* and *SERVO Magazine* are our Media Sponsors.

M: Finally, what are the principal advantages of working with the Schmartboards?

N: As more and more components have gone from through hole to surface mount, great advances have been made in the ability to make smaller and more advanced electronic devices. The problem though is while circuit assembly of these parts for robots is easy, it has made hand soldering for prototypes and projects almost impossible. The SchmartBoard|ez has changed this. We can put a soldering iron in the hands of a 10 year old who has never even heard of a soldering iron ... in less than a minute the 10 year old will hand solder a 0.5 mm QFP (Quad Flat Pack) device as good as an experienced technician. SchmartBoard|ez has made it possible for everyone from a rocket scientist to the weekend hobbyist to hand solder SMT parts.

Nuts & Volts readers can request a free sample of SchmartBoard|ez technology at our website at **www.schmartboard.com**. **NV**

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