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## **Victor firm targets cell-cams**

### **Maker of tiny motors hopes to ride boom in camera phones.**

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The staggering growth of cellular telephones with built-in digital cameras is opening big opportunities to a Victor company that spends its days thinking small — millimeter small.

New Scale Technologies Inc., which manufactures miniature ceramic motors powered by ultrasonic vibration, has launched a new division to focus on the fast-growing market for cell phone cameras.

Picture-taking phones are currently the world's hottest gadgets. More than 300 million cell phone cameras are expected to be manufactured this year, rising to 500 million by the end of 2007, analysts say.

New Scale's new division targets an important change in technology. Most cell phone cameras are sold with fixed optics — lenses that do not move. But newer models will offer autofocus and optical zoom, just like a typical film or digital camera. To fit inside the ever-shrinking cell phone body, those features call for smaller and less power-hungry motors.

Enter New Scale, offering motors with diameters of less than 4 millimeters to cell phone camera manufacturers or their suppliers. The Ontario County company's patented line of Squiggle motors has typically run about 10 or 11 millimeters in diameter.

The company has had discussions with some of the heavyweights in the industry and gotten encouraging feedback — enough to establish an ambitious agenda targeting sales of 30 million motors globally. If successful, New Scale expects significant growth in its base of about nine full-time employees.

"Certainly if we achieve our objective, we're talking about hundreds in the Rochester area," said David Henderson, president of New Scale.

The company's motors make use of so-called piezoelectric technology. An electric charge vibrates a nut supported by a ceramic material. The vibrations subsequently rotate a mating screw in a tiny assembly. The advantages are fewer parts, smaller sizes, greater precision and less ambitious power requirements.

New Scale is working to line up manufacturing and marketing partners, further refine its design and advance other aspects of the project. Pilot manufacturing would likely remain in the greater Rochester area.

Photography isn't the only potential market for New Scale's work. The company is also looking at using miniature motors in medical devices that can be implanted in the body. For instance, many companies are studying gadgets that would use pumps to dispense medicine.

New Scale is right to think about moving fast, an expert in the mobile photography field says. Manufacturers are gradually introducing camera phones with higher resolution.

"And along with higher resolution comes a demand for digital camera quality, which means better optics," said Tony Henning, who follows the mobile imaging industry for The Future Image Inc. of San Mateo, Calif.

New Scale is also doing the right thing by approaching partners for help, said Richard DeMartino, assistant professor of management at Rochester Institute of Technology and an expert in entrepreneurship.

It would generally be too expensive and time-consuming for a small company like New Scale to approach each potential customer individually, he said. The company is better off working with a supplier or systems integrator, he added. And "the best thing to do is have some sort of intellectual property you can leverage that no one can reproduce," DeMartino said.

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