

**QUICK HITS**

**FLIR'S SPANISH BUY SIGNALS NETWORKING PROMISE**

Infrared imaging company Flir Systems Inc.'s purchase of a Spanish software company this week could position Flir for big sales in a hot new area: sensor networks.

Wilsonville-based Flir purchased Ifara Tecnologias SL, based in Madrid, for about \$11 million.

The 20-employee company, whose revenues were not disclosed, is a small acquisition for Flir, which closed 2007 with more than \$779 million in revenue, and a profit of nearly \$137 million, or 89 cents per share. Flir employs around 1,700, including about 350 in Wilsonville.

Ifara develops tools for sensor networks. The networks are used for security and surveillance in locations such as airports, petrochemical production sites, and other places where high security is critical.

Flir has been integrating Ifara's technology into its own systems for about two years, said Tony Trunzo, Flir's senior vice president of corporate strategy and development. Ifara will continue to develop new products both for Flir and for sale to other companies. Its technology will become a standard feature in many of Flir's products for commercial and government use, including military systems.

The Department of Homeland Security recently ran a pilot project on the Arizona-Mexico border to test a security system that incorporated a sensor network as a virtual fence.

The project, built by The

# Chinese company to sell electric cars

## Automaker to visit Portland to promote plans

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A Chinese automaker with plans to sell an all-electric sedan will visit Portland early next week with an eye on doing big business in the region.

Three executives with BYD Auto Co. of Shenzhen, China, will meet with various groups during a three-day trip starting Monday. The trip includes meetings with the Port of Portland, area auto dealerships, and representatives from Mayor Tom Potter's office, according to Jin Lan, who promotes relationships with Chinese companies through his Vancouver consulting firm, Octaxias Co.

"This is an excellent opportunity we bring to the city of Portland," Lan said. "We want to bring the best of China to the market."

BYD Auto is a subsidiary of BYD Co., the world's biggest maker of mobile-phone batteries. BYD broadened into automaking in 2003, when it bought Shaanxi Qinchuan Auto Co., according to the company's Web site.

Company officials said during the North American International Auto Show in Detroit in January that BYD plans to sell hybrid cars in the U.S. by 2010.



COURTESY OF OCTAXIAS CO.

Local businessman Jin Lan, right, wants to help import Chinese electric cars.

While BYD also produces hybrid and gas-fueled models, it's the company's all-electric initiatives — such as its F3e sedan — that piqued the interest of Lan.

Beginning Monday, Lan and his partner in recruiting BYD, Merle Greenstein, chairman of Tulalatin-based International Development Association, will play host to three BYD officials: Paul Lin, marketing manager; David Zhou, regional manager; and Kingkaid Hu, sales assistant.

BYD did not respond to an e-mail request for comment.

Lan said they plan to speak with port officials about importing cars through the Columbia River channel. Greenstein said he has also arranged meetings with local auto dealers — the names of which he declined to disclose — about potentially becoming the company's first retailers in the United States.

"They want to find an area to test on 50 cars," Greenstein said. "I sat

down with them and convinced them the best place to do this is Portland, Oregon."

There's evidence to support that notion.

The auto-shopping Web site Cars.com on Wednesday released its "Green Index" ranking the top markets for hybrid-fuel vehicles. Portland ranked second. Nearly 4.8 percent of all new car searches on the site were for hybrids, coming in behind San Francisco's 5.6 percent.

The city's first "earth friendly vehicle" dealership, EcoMotion, opened in September on Sandy Boulevard. The company has sold 308 vehicles — about 60 of which were all-electric, said Steve Scharer, EcoMotion's general manager.

"The market's going to be huge when we get a freeway speed, four-wheeled vehicle," said Scharer, whose electric models now reach about 35 mph.

Greenstein said BYD's electric car — which he and Lan have test-

driven — can reach the 60-70 mph range.

Tim Kutscha is co-chairman of the Oregon Electric Vehicle Association, a roughly 400-member group of mostly hobbyists who have converted their own cars into electric vehicles. He said the Portland area is willing to accept electric cars, perhaps more than other parts of the country.

"I think Portland has this sense of community and wanting to make the world a better place," Kutscha said.

The city already has an early start on the necessary infrastructure for electric vehicles. Portland General Electric hosts an electric-charging station outside its offices at the Portland World Trade Center. The OEVA lists three others across the city on its Web site.

Steve Corson, a PGE spokesman, said the electric utility has been invited to meet with the BYD officials next week to discuss charging stations.

"It's certainly an issue we're interested in and something we've been talking about both at the state level and city level," Corson said.

Josh Thomas, a port spokesman, said port officials will meet with BYD. The port already has a robust auto import business: Its three auto import facilities handled nearly 450,000 autos in 2007. Each vehicle brings an estimated \$318 economic impact to the region.

Mila Greisen, the director of international affairs for Mayor Tom Potter, said city officials have scheduled a meet-and-greet with BYD on Wednesday. The city is interested in discussing adding electric vehicles to its fleet, she said.