

SMART Board(TM) Interactive Whiteboard Reaches 20-Year Milestone

LONDON, Jan. 12, 2011 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- SMART Technologies Inc. (Nasdaq:SMT) (TSX:SMA), a leading provider of collaboration solutions, announces the 20-year anniversary of the SMART Board interactive whiteboard. SMART conceptualized its touch-enabled SMART Board interactive whiteboard in 1986, and in 1991, its first commercial version of the product was launched. Since then, SMART has developed a comprehensive range of easy-to-use, touch- and gesture-enabled solutions that facilitate effective learning and collaboration. SMART's commitment to Touch Recognition, multitouch and gesture-driven systems ensures an intuitive user experience for both education and business users. With a portfolio of more than 65 issued patents and more than 385 patents pending, SMART continues to develop innovative products to meet the evolving needs of users. Its line of interactive whiteboards today includes the 400 series, the 600 series and the 800 series. It also has a line of SMART Board interactive displays and the SMART Table™ interactive learning center, as well as a variety of complementary products and services. According to Futuresource Consulting, an independent global research company that has tracked interactive whiteboard sales for more than nine years, SMART continues to lead the global interactive whiteboard product category with a 47 percent share as of September 30, 2010, more than double SMART's nearest competitor. Today approximately 8 percent of the world's classrooms have an interactive whiteboard. The adoption rates in the United Kingdom, United States and Canada are approximately 73, 36 and 26 percent, respectively, according to Futuresource Consulting. SMART Board interactive whiteboards are used by more than 1.5 million teachers and more than 30 million students worldwide.

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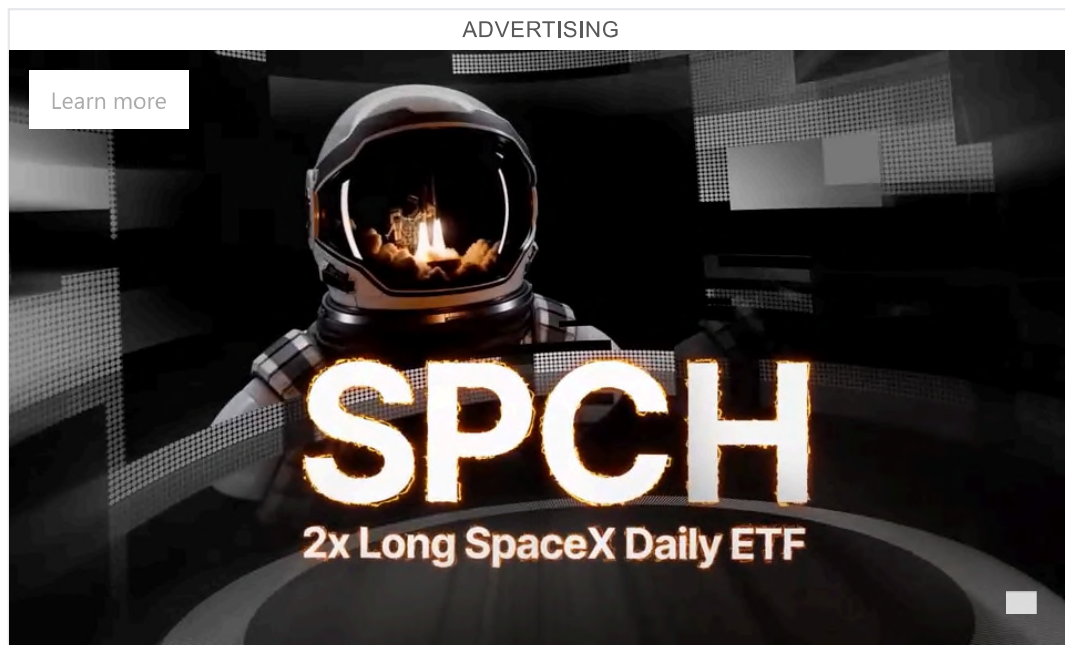


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Drawing on its long history of collaboration-focused research and development (R&D), SMART, in 2001, patented DViT™ (Digital Vision Touch) technology. Interactive whiteboards and interactive whiteboard systems with DViT technology use cameras embedded in the interactive whiteboard frame to detect and distinguish inputs made by a finger, fist, interactive whiteboard pen or other object. Optical touch technology offers many advantages over other touch technologies, including effortless zero-force touch, the ability to scale to large sizes and the ability to support multitouch and multiple users. Globally, SMART has been issued a broad portfolio of patents related to DViT technology with a significant number of patents pending. In 2010, SMART acquired New Zealand-based NextWindow, a leader in optical touch technology. With the addition of NextWindow products and patents, SMART is positioned to accelerate optical touch technology development to provide a broader range of products. For example, in October 2010, SMART launched the SMART Board 800 series interactive whiteboard, which provides the most natural and intuitive multiuser experience yet on a SMART Board interactive whiteboard. Using DViT technology, the 800 series will support a number of new features, such as multiuser, multitouch freestyle interaction, touch gestures and object awareness. In December 2010, SMART launched the new entry-level SMART Board 400 series interactive whiteboard, which also embeds DViT technology. With demand for touch-based and gesture-driven devices increasing, SMART brings more than two decades of R&D experience to this growing market. As the global leader in interactive whiteboards, the company continues to apply that experience to a wide range of integrated solutions designed to transform the way the world works and learns.



"As education and business customers around the world continue to adopt interactive technology into their classrooms, offices and meeting rooms, they increasingly demand easy-to-use, integrated solutions," says Nancy Knowlton, SMART's CEO. "With more than 20 years' experience in collaboration R&D, our commitment to continually evolving and providing easy-to-use, touch-enabled solutions is stronger than ever."

Research on Education Efficacy

Research from around the world confirms that using interactive whiteboards can increase student motivation and engagement, enhance teacher productivity and have a positive effect on student outcomes and often on student attendance and behavior. For example, the *Evaluation of the Primary Schools Whiteboard Expansion Project* from Becta (2007) says, "Where teachers had been teaching with an interactive whiteboard for two years and there was evidence that all children, including those with SEN [special educational needs], had made exceptional progress in attainment in national tests, a key factor was the use of the interactive whiteboard for skilled teaching of numeracy and literacy to pairs or threesomes of children" (p. 5, Becta). For additional research on education efficacy see smarttech.com/efficacy1 and smarttech.com/efficacy2.

About Interactive Whiteboard Adoption in Education

Many government initiatives globally are focused on both bringing interactive whiteboards into the classroom and enhancing teachers' ability to productively deploy them. From 2003 to 2005, for instance, the UK government provided GBP50 million to Local Authorities to acquire and deploy interactive whiteboards. In recent years, the Mexican government provided technology packages to fifth- and sixth-grade classrooms across Mexico. The packages included an

interactive whiteboard, projector, teacher computer and digital content, whether there was a classroom connection to the Internet or not.

Across the United States and Canada, individual schools and districts have been purchasing and deploying interactive whiteboards as budgets for technology product purchases and professional development for teachers allow. According to Futuresource Consulting, the number of interactive whiteboards sold to K-12 educators in North America increased from approximately 256,000 in 2008 to approximately 319,000 in 2009.

About SMART

[SMART Technologies](#) is a leading provider of collaboration solutions that transform the way the world works and learns. We believe that collaboration and interaction should be easy. As the global leader in interactive whiteboards, we bring more than two decades of collaboration research and development to a broad range of easy-to-use, integrated solutions that free people from their desks and computer screens, so collaborating and learning with digital resources are more natural.

The SMART Technologies logo is available at

Reader's advisory

Certain information contained in this press release may constitute forward-looking information or statements. By their very nature, forward-looking information and statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties, both general and specific, and risks that predictions, forecasts, projections and other forward-looking information and statements will not be achieved. We caution readers not to place undue reliance on these statements as a number of important factors could cause the actual results to vary materially from the forward-looking information or statements. We do not assume responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the forward-looking information or statements. Any forward-looking information and statements contained in this press release are expressly qualified by this cautionary statement.

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