

# EMPOWERING SURGEONS

Starion's novel *Thermal Welding*<sup>TM</sup> platform heats up venture and corporate investors' interest at recent Medtech Insight conference.

by Ronald C. Trahan

**S**TARION INSTRUMENTS, headquartered in Saratoga, Calif., has developed unique products for diverse hemostasis applications. These surgical devices are based on *Thermal Welding*<sup>TM</sup> technology—which fuses vessel and tissue structures closed, thus effecting hemostasis. Using a proprietary temperature-and-pressure profile that modifies protein molecules, a high-integrity seal is formed *with minimal thermal damage to surrounding tissue*. Additional heat and pressure then cuts the tissue. Each seal and division takes only a few seconds to complete. As a result, Starion's *Thermal Welding* instruments are easy to operate, work safely near delicate or critical tissue, and have a wide range of surgical applications. For example, Starion's laparoscopic Thermal Ligating Shears (TLS<sup>TM</sup>), facilitated by double-action jaws, allow a surgeon to grasp, dissect, and manipulate, *as well as seal and divide tissue*—but with the same tactile feel of commonly used laparoscopic instruments, and without the need for multiple instrument exchanges. All required regulatory clearances for distribution and sale of released products in North America and Europe (CE) have been secured. Starion's products have been used in thousands of cases representing more than 30 different open and endoscopic surgical procedures, including radial artery and saphenous vein harvests, tonsillectomies, thyroidectomies, gastric bypasses, nephrectomies, prostatectomies, hemorrhoidectomies and a variety of pediatric laparoscopic surgeries.



Kirt Kirtland is President/CEO of Starion Instruments Corp.

“Sales are ramping up nicely, and we've reached several significant milestones, including a licensing agreement with Guidant, and we have established a strong and growing distribution channel in the U.S. We are aggressively moving into the cardiovascular, general surgery, ENT, urology and OB-GYN markets,” says Kirtland, who spent four years aboard the fast-attack nuclear submarine ‘USS Flasher’ as a lieutenant and is now a captain in the U.S. Navy Reserve. “Medtech Insight's conferences have proved to be a critically important showcase for our opportunities.”

Stanford grad Kirtland (B.S., '79, and MBA '89) has been at Starion for three years. In the summer of 2001, then 45-year-old Kirtland was recruited to be President and CEO of Starion by Thomas J. Fogarty, MD, an internationally recognized cardiovascular surgeon, inventor, entrepreneur and venture capitalist. Dr. Fogarty has founded or co-founded more than 30 companies in the medical device or services fields.

“Starion needed a well-rounded senior executive who understood how to lead,” recalls Dr. Fogarty. “What's impressive about Kirt is the wide variety of experiences that make up his commanding persona, the numerous challenges he's had to master over the course of his Navy and business careers, and the habit of pointing the way that he's developed in meeting those tests—from regulatory and quality-control issues, to human resource and operations dilemmas, to marketing and financing hurdles. But what I find most special about Kirt is that he has no need to lead. He'd rather point the way, and he's proved time and again that people respond favorably to that sort of leadership style.”

Starion investors include Dr. Fogarty, WTI Ventures, J&J Development Corp., Atherton Ventures, Tyco Ventures, and St. Paul Venture Capital. The Company has raised nearly \$18 million in venture capital. □

**Investment In Innovation (In<sup>3</sup>): A Preview of Early-Stage Medical Technology Companies  
The Westin Copley Place Hotel, Boston, Massachusetts, October 21-22, 2004**

Medtech Insight's In<sup>3</sup> conferences have drawn a total of more than 3,300 senior execs from the investment community and major medtech companies, and have featured more than 410 innovative early-stage presenting companies. In<sup>3</sup> Boston will, once again, feature a new group of over 50 early-stage medical technology companies seeking partnering and/or investment.

To register for this conference, please call 949-219-0150 or 888-290-2225 (toll-free in the U.S.), send an email to [in3@medtechinsight.com](mailto:in3@medtechinsight.com), or register online at [www.medtechinsight.com](http://www.medtechinsight.com).

**What leading investors are saying about their participation at Medtech Insight's In<sup>3</sup> events:**

*“I recently attended my first Medtech Insight meeting. In just two days I got a comprehensive education about what's at the leading-edge in medical technology. Equally important, I got the opportunity to get a feel for the management of the companies in which I was interested. I highly recommend Medtech Insight's conferences.”*

Jeanne Cunicelli  
Partner  
Bay City Capital Partners  
San Francisco, California

*“There are more and more investor conferences being offered, so I have to be selective. Medtech Insight's are at the top of my list. I get great value for my investment of time and money: top-shelf emerging companies presenting in the kind of environment that allows me to engage them in a meaningful manner if I choose.”*

John Deedrick  
Managing Director  
Accutive Medical Ventures  
Rochester, Minnesota

*“Medtech Insight conferences attract high-caliber companies, so it gives me a rare chance to see dozens of potentially outstanding investment opportunities in just a day and a half. I know I'll be making maximum good use of my time by attending a Medtech Insight meeting.”*

Chris Stenzel  
Senior Vice President  
Kaiser Permanente Ventures  
Oakland, California

*“Medtech Insight's conferences have filled a real void for the investment community by providing a first-class forum for early-stage companies to get in front of VCs and corporate investors. This is a great opportunity to evaluate a broad array of innovative medical technology companies at one event.”*

Chris Wagner  
Director  
KPMG Corporate Finance  
Atlanta, Georgia

**Ronald C. Trahan is President/CEO of Ronald Trahan Associates Inc. ([www.ronaldtrahan.com](http://www.ronaldtrahan.com)), a public relations/investor relations firm that serves big and small companies, both public and private.**