
Final MEDEA+ conference signals Lighthouse R&D projects

by **David Manners, Budapest**

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MEDEA+ opened its final annual conference in Budapest today. It is the final conference because, next year, MEDEA+ becomes **CATRENE** which will take over the outstanding MEDEA+ projects and add some new ones.

The last Chairman of MEDEA+, and the first Chairman of CATRENE, **Jozef Cornu**, told the conference that one of the features of CATRENE would be so-called 'Lighthouse Projects' in which a number of R&D projects would cluster around a big goal.

"The target of a light house project is," said Cornu, "to create leadership positions for Europe in certain domains."

To that end they must be projects which would be recognized by the European public as socially desirable.

An example of a CATRENE Lighthouse Project is the development of a 3D television.

A MEDEA+ official told EW that the approach was urged on MEDEA+ by the European public authorities who recognize that the public might be lukewarm towards developing a new generation of lithography machines, but can be enthusiastic about technological goals in entertainment and in medical applications.

MEDEA+ and CATRENE needed to deal diplomatically with the public authorities after the pull-out from Crolles 2's basic CMOS R&D programme by NXP, Freescale and STMicroelectronics.

Asked if the authorities were upset by the pull-out, the official replied: "Much more than upset". However, a year of quiet diplomacy has got the authorities back on-side, and CATRENE is to be backed by the EC.

This is good news for Europe because, as Cornu pointed out in Budapest, 10 per cent of Europe's GDP is represented by sales of IT and communications (ICT) technology products, 20 per cent of GDP growth comes from ICT revenues, and 30 per cent of Europe's patents are in the field of ICT.

See also: [The Mannerisms blog](#), with chip industry musings from David Manners