BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Yaskawa Electric invests in ReWalk exoskeleton

October 3, 2013 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



Singapore: Israel-based ARGO Medical Technologies has partnered with innovative robotics experts Yaskawa Electric, Japan, as it continues the global expansion of its ReWalk exoskeleton device which enables individuals with lower limb disabilities such as paraplegia to walk. Yaskawa has made a significant investment into the ReWalk exoskeleton technology and will also serve as the exclusive distributor for the ReWalk in Japan, China, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Korea.

"This strategic partnership will bring significant value through the synergy of Yaskawa's technology in the general field of robotics combined with our expertise in the human factors and treatment of spinal cord injuries," said ARGO CEO Mr Larry Jasinski. "We look forward to this mutually beneficial partnership as we enter a new phase of development and growth," he added.

This recent investment by Yaskawa is the largest single investment as ARGO closes its most recent round of fund raising which marks its largest to date. The new funding and partnership with Yaskawa will help advance the ReWalk infrastructure and technology for users and support company growth with the expansion of research and development and enhanced design to streamline manufacturing.

"I am proud to be part of such a transformative company and watch it evolve from the vision of Dr Amit Goffer who was inspired to develop the ReWalk based on his own personal story, to what is now a global exoskeleton leader," said ARGO chairman and SCP Vitalife managing partner Mr Jeff Dykan. "We are excited about this strategic partnership with Yaskawa as Argo continues to expand its global commercialization capabilities and bring the ReWalk to many more potential users around the world," he said.

"Robotics has the potential to change the world of healthcare and rehabilitation, and ARGO's know-how in the field will allow us to contribute to quality of life improvements of people around the world," said Yaskawa CEO Mr Junji Tsuda. "We are looking forward to developing and expanding this strategic partnership in the years to come as we strive to achieve the goals we set for ourselves in our Vision 2015," he added.

ARGO currently offers two ReWalk models - the ReWalk Personal, currently available in Europe and Israel and pending FDA review in the US; and the ReWalk Rehabilitation which is now available in Europe, Israel and the United States. Both models are designed to provide a customized user experience with on-board computers and motion sensors that restore self-initiated walking without needing tethers or switches to begin movement.