



THE SPECIALIST

Dr. Lee Choon Heung has a wealth of experience accumulated through over 20 years in the technology industry. Having recently assumed his lead role at STATS ChipPAC, he aims to synchronise the company’s global operations and enrich their market portfolio.

Dr. Lee Choon Heung CEO & Chairman
/ STATS ChipPAC Pte Ltd

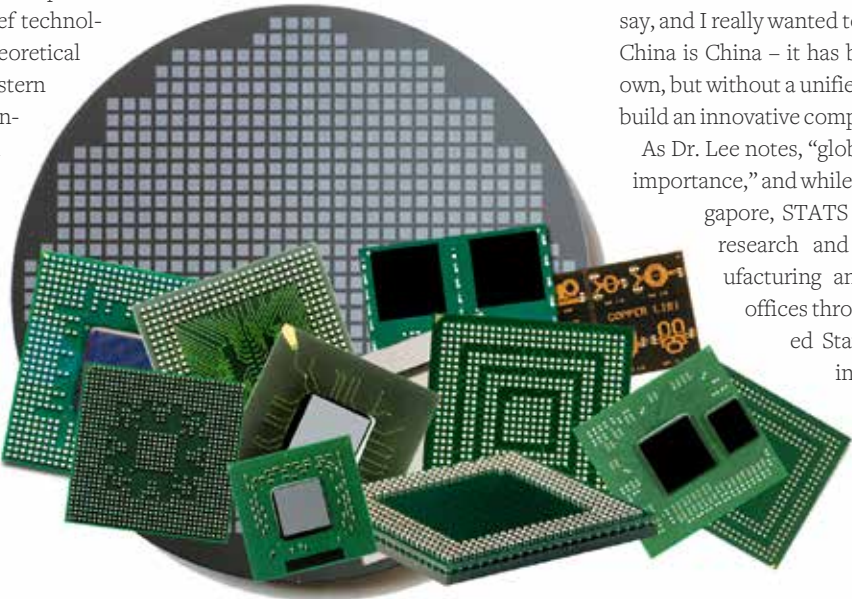
Dr. Lee Choon Heung is one talented man. The recently appointed CEO and Chairman of STATS ChipPAC and JCET Group CEO began his tenure in September 2018, bringing a wealth of expertise and veteran leadership to the company, with more than 20 years of extensive semiconductor packaging and test experience. With a CV that reads like an industry bible, prior to this appointment, Dr. Lee served in several senior management positions at Amkor Technology Inc. including head of its R&D centre, head of global procurement, group vice president, senior vice president and chief technology officer. He holds a Ph.D. in Theoretical Solid-State Physics from Case Western Reserve University, along with 59 industry patents, and has published 19 academic papers around the world. Impressed? JCET Chairman, Mr. Wang Xinchao certainly was. “We are excited about the opportunity to bring on board an industry leader of the calibre of Dr. Lee Choon he told the media back in September, “and we are confident in his ability to lead JCET as we continue our

growth in both technology and scale moving forward.” Semiconductor packaging, design and test services leader STATS ChipPAC is a subsidiary of Jiangsu Changjiang Electronics Technology Co, (JCET), one of the top semiconductor packaging and test providers in the world and the largest provider in China. With full turnkey services encompassing design and characterization, wafer bump, packaging and test, JCET

is a strategic partner for semiconductor companies across a broad range of markets and applications. The comprehensive packaging portfolio of JCET and its subsidiaries include discrete, leaded, laminate, flip chip, Molded Interconnect System, wafer level packaging and System-in-Package technologies, and Dr. Lee has made it his job to ensure fluid integration between them all.

“My first mission these past four months has been to harmonise all subsidiaries,” he says. “Integration has been an issue in the past, due to a bit of conflict between cultures you could say, and I really wanted to bring them together. China is China – it has been successful on its own, but without a unified mindset, it’s hard to build an innovative company strategy.”

As Dr. Lee notes, “globalisation is of utmost importance,” and while headquartered in Singapore, STATS ChipPAC has design, research and development, manufacturing and customer support offices throughout Asia, the United States and Europe. This international reach and network is key to the company offering, with ➔





Dr. Lee looking to his neighbours for inspiration as to how best grow operations in Singapore in the medium to long term, specifically when it comes to technology.

“International customers in China are totally different and have a very different set of standards for the manufacturing process. In terms of the quality criteria, hopefully we can set a similar standard that we can implement in China too, as one company. I was rather surprised at their levels of efficiency in terms of operations – not only do they have a lot of experience with first and second tier customers, they have been developing some great tech. My focus is to try to encourage this tech in Singapore first and subsequently enrich our market portfolio.”

Further opportunities on the horizon include telecoms, with RF tech a significant area of interest.

“We have engaged with one of the largest phone providers in Korea. Here in Singapore we have 5G, a totally different animal. New tech is developing in the industry and there are not many experts around: we want to develop 5G, ready for the coming years and position ourselves as number one in the world in RF tech.”

STATS ChipPAC customers “require a company that can enable their commercialization,” and while experimenting with RF needs and accumulating the subsequent knowledge is high on Dr. Lee’s list of priorities, developing a

skilled workforce remains an ongoing issue. As ever, he has a solution.

“I’ve been in the industry for more than 20 years or more and smart manufacturing implementation is the main point of difference I want to see,” says Dr. Lee. “Every government is focused on its labourers quality of life – and rightly so. However, as AI or 5G and other tech evolve, costs are getting higher while quality delivery needs to be maintained. Issues with quality involve a lot of invisible costs, from loop-holes to lab experiments and penalties. But more importantly, lose your customers trust and you’ve had it. There’s a lot of competition around too. To combat this, we are bringing in automation or ‘smart’ manufacturing. I am trying to push this concept alongside maintaining quality control.”

Having spent years on the side of the competition, Dr. Lee knows precisely how savage the industry can be. What sets STATS ChipPAC

apart from the rest? “Execution,” says Dr. Lee. “I can confirm that we excel in this area; however, we haven’t pioneered any tech for a while. In terms of operational excellence, we are the undoubted leaders. I am very proud of this, it’s a great advantage we have over our competitors.”

Supply chain competence is another area in which STATS ChipPAC thrives. With spending on materials in each segment all relying on the supply chain – more than 70 per cent of the cost – the company needs excellent supply chain management in place. As ever, the answer is strong partnerships, a far cry from the “master and slave” hierarchy of the 80s, says Dr. Lee, who has since tried to build up management relationships within these partnerships – CEO to CEO.

“It’s a collaboration model; how to work together to make a really healthy operation for the supply chain ecosystem. Help suppliers to cut costs and save some of our own. If you don’t make money, it’s hard to survive and support customers in the best way.”

According to Dr. Lee, the close of 2019 will see the end of a very tough year, but things are certainly looking brighter. “I’m trying to take leadership to the next level and ride shareholders return, taking care of our employees in the same way we look after our customers. I feel I can make a long-term contribution here for the rest of my life, training young people and making the company a success.”

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