

Cabot Microelectronics Corporation
Third Quarter Fiscal Year 2015 Conference Call Script
July 30, 2015

Page 1 of 6

Good morning. With me today are David Li, President and CEO, and Bill Johnson, Executive Vice President and CFO.

This morning we reported results for our third quarter of fiscal year 2015, which ended June 30. A copy of our earnings release is available in the investor relations section of our website, cabotcmp.com, or by calling our investor relations office at 630-499-2600. A webcast of today's conference call and the script of this morning's formal comments will also be available on our website.

Please remember that our discussions today may include "forward-looking statements" that involve a number of risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from these forward-looking statements. These risk factors are discussed in our SEC filings, including our report filed on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2014. We assume no obligation to update any of this forward-looking information.

I will now turn the call over to David.

Thanks, Trisha. Good morning, everyone, and thanks for joining us.

This morning we announced financial results for our third quarter of fiscal 2015, and our results are consistent with the update we provided in our press release last week. As reported then, we experienced soft industry demand conditions during the quarter, and a couple of company-specific headwinds. The softness in demand is generally consistent with what we described when we reported results for our second fiscal quarter in April, and also in line with recent reports by some of our strategic customers and industry analysts.

We reported revenue of \$97.2 million, gross profit margin of 50.0 percent, and diluted earnings per share of 39 cents. Our results include a 140 basis point adverse impact on gross profit margin, based on our decision to write-off inventory related to raw material that we determined does not meet our quality requirements, and a higher effective tax rate primarily related to the jurisdictional mix of our earnings. The combined effect of these is an adverse impact to diluted earnings per share of approximately seven cents.

Despite this performance in the third fiscal quarter, year to date we have increased revenue by roughly two percent, gross profit margin by 370 basis points, and net income by approximately 26 percent. In addition, we are raising our full fiscal year guidance for gross profit margin to a range of 50 to 51 percent of revenue.

Bill will provide more detail on our financial results later in the call.

Let me start with our perspective on the global semiconductor industry environment. This year seasonal demand trends have differed from the trends the industry and our company have experienced over the past three years. We experienced stronger than normal seasonal demand in our first and second fiscal quarters, but weaker than normal seasonal demand in our third fiscal quarter. When we reported results for our second fiscal quarter in April, we described softening of orders for our CMP consumables products that we were seeing at that

time. Our third fiscal quarter performance reflects continuation of that softness through the rest of the quarter, and this is also consistent with what a number of others in the semiconductor industry are now reporting.

Further, reports from some industry analysts and strategic customers indicate that semiconductor device inventory levels remain somewhat elevated due to weaker than expected demand for smartphones, particularly in China, and further declines in demand for PCs. In addition, it appears that the slowing demand for some electronic devices is being compounded by weaker foreign currencies and challenging macroeconomic conditions.

In response to this, IC manufacturers seem to be appropriately monitoring and adjusting utilization rates. Based on all of this, some industry reports and certain customers are now calling for continued inventory adjustments; and therefore, soft near term demand.

We think that this means that we may see weaker than normal seasonal demand during our fourth fiscal quarter; recall that traditionally the September quarter has been a seasonally strong quarter for us. Later in the call, Bill will provide some commentary on our recent order patterns.

Despite the potential for continued soft near term demand, expectations for IC demand for the full calendar year appear stable. Industry analysts continue to forecast low double digit growth for smartphones, and for the automotive and industrial markets, and low to mid-single digit growth for the enterprise and IT markets, driven by cloud computing and demand for data centers, partially offset by continued contraction of the PC market. Reports and commentary at Semicon West earlier this month confirmed this view for the automotive and industrial segments, and sources also cited demand for solid state drives and specific smartphone product launches as additional IC demand drivers for this calendar year.

Now let me turn to our core IC CMP consumables business.

We continue to experience strong demand for our tungsten slurry products across a wide range of applications and technology nodes, and year-to-date our revenue from this product area is up approximately 13 percent compared to last year. We have been working closely with our strategic customers to support their transitions to 3D memory and FinFET for advanced logic IC devices. These applications require additional CMP steps, mainly in tungsten and dielectrics, which we have confidence will benefit our company.

3D memory and FinFET were prominent topics for discussion at Semicon West. Based on what we heard and know, there appears to be widespread confidence in the adoption of these technologies, although varying opinions on the timing of adoption. Reports indicate that IC manufacturers are actively investing for these transitions, and planning for ten and seven nanometer technologies. We are closely engaging with our strategic customers in support of their adoption of these emerging applications. Within this environment, we continue to see highly engineered materials and highly formulated products, like our CMP solutions, playing an increasingly important role in the continued growth, development and advancement of the semiconductor industry.

In support of this, and our strategic business initiatives of technology leadership and close collaboration with our customers, we are adding 300mm polishing capability to our cleanroom facility in Taiwan. This will supplement the existing similar capabilities we now have in both the United States and Japan, and will enable us to conduct product demos and development work faster and more efficiently in partnership with our customers. We continue to believe our global capabilities; resources and infrastructure are unmatched and differentiate our company as a leader within the industry.

During the quarter, we remained focused on the broad transformation of our dielectrics slurry product area. More specifically, we made further progress on commercializing our new higher performing dielectrics solutions, within our D9200 product series. We are now seeing validation of these efforts, as a number of customers are evaluating and qualifying these solutions, and we are encouraged by the positive customer feedback on performance across a range of technology nodes and on both 200 and 300mm platforms. Our customers are seeing better performance through significantly improved defectivity, and we believe they should also realize lower cost of ownership through greater dilutability. We believe we are beginning to gain traction with these new products, as we secured several new business opportunities during the quarter, and we look forward to supporting our customers' ramps in the future. Over time, we also look forward to securing more business in this product area. We anticipate that these new products can be a key growth driver for us, and also should improve the overall profitability of our company.

In the CMP polishing pads area, after achieving five consecutive quarters of year-on-year revenue growth, we experienced a decrease in revenue this quarter compared to the prior year. Despite the quarterly decrease, on a year-to-date basis revenue from our pads product area is up nearly six percent from last year. We continue to view CMP pads as an important growth vehicle for our company; however, this continues to be a highly competitive CMP application area. We are actively exploring other CMP polishing pad technologies to expand our product portfolio to address our customers' needs. In addition, we are also collaborating with our customers to provide optimized slurry and pad consumable sets, such as for barrier and dielectrics applications, which we believe can provide additional value to them.

In summary, despite the challenging quarter, we believe that our business fundamentals remain strong. Our focus is on continued profitable growth through close collaboration with our technology leading customers to provide higher performing and lower cost CMP solutions. We believe we are unique in our ability to offer a combination of innovation, quality systems and local expertise to help enable our customers' technology advancements, and that we are well positioned for continued success.

And with that, I will turn the call over to Bill for more detail on our financial results.
Thanks, David, and good morning everyone.

Revenue for the third quarter of fiscal 2015 was \$97.2 million, which represents a 10.3 percent decrease from the same quarter last year. This reflects soft global semiconductor industry demand and business loss in certain dielectrics slurries, which we have previously discussed. Year to date, revenue of \$314.0 million represents a 1.8 percent increase from the prior year.

Foreign exchange rate changes, primarily the weaker Japanese yen versus the U.S. dollar, reduced year-over-year revenue by \$2.0 million for the quarter and \$4.5 million year to date.

Drilling down into revenue by product area:

Tungsten slurries contributed 44.8 percent of total quarterly revenue, with revenue up 3.2 percent from the same quarter a year ago. This represents the sixth consecutive quarter of year-over-year revenue growth in Tungsten, with particularly strong demand from the memory segment.

Dielectrics slurries provided 22.9 percent of our revenue this quarter, with sales down 24.9 percent from the same quarter a year ago. The revenue decrease primarily reflects the loss of the lower performing, legacy dielectrics business we previously discussed. As Dave mentioned earlier, we continue to make progress on the commercialization of our new family of much higher performing dielectrics slurry products, which we believe will enable us to profitably grow this product area in the future.

Sales of slurries for polishing metals other than tungsten, including copper, aluminum and barrier, represented 17.4 percent of our total revenue, and decreased 13.8 percent from the same quarter last year. We believe the revenue decrease is primarily due to customer efficiencies and repurposing capacity for the next technology node.

Sales of our polishing pads represented 8.0 percent of our total revenue for the quarter, and decreased 11.7 percent from the same quarter last year. This decrease follows five consecutive quarters of year-on-year growth.

Data storage products represented 3.1 percent of our quarterly revenue. Our data storage revenue was down 29.5 percent from the same quarter last year on continued soft PC demand, and some business loss.

Finally, revenue from our Engineered Surface Finishes, or ESF area, which includes QED, generated 3.8 percent of our total quarterly sales. Our ESF revenue was down 4.3 percent from the same quarter last year.

Our gross profit this quarter represented 50.0 percent of revenue. This is up 230 basis points from 47.7 percent in the same quarter a year ago. Compared to the year ago quarter, our gross margin benefited from a richer product mix; with relatively more tungsten revenue and less from legacy dielectrics products. Other factors affecting gross margin were the benefits associated with foreign exchange rate changes, partially offset by lower sales volume and \$1.4 million, or 140 basis points, in higher costs associated with inventory write-offs related to raw material quality that Dave discussed.

Year to date, gross profit was 51.0 percent of revenue, which represents a 370 basis point improvement year-on-year, including a 45 basis point adverse impact of the material quality costs. Factors contributing to the increase in gross profit percentage were product mix, benefits associated with foreign exchange rate changes, and the absence of an asset impairment charge recorded last year. Taking into account our results through nine months,

Cabot Microelectronics Corporation
Third Quarter Fiscal Year 2015 Conference Call Script
July 30, 2015

Page 5 of 6

we currently expect our gross profit for the full fiscal year to be between 50 and 51 percent of revenue, including the material quality costs; previously, we had expected to achieve the upper end of our prior guidance range of 48 to 50 percent of revenue.

Now I'll turn to operating expenses, which include research, development and technical, selling and marketing, and general and administrative costs. Operating expenses this quarter of \$33.4 million were slightly higher than the \$33.2 million reported in the same quarter a year ago.

Year to date, total operating expenses were \$103.0 million, which is 6.0 percent higher than last year, primarily due to higher accruals for incentive compensation and costs associated with certain executive officer transitions that occurred earlier in the fiscal year, which we have previously discussed. We currently expect our operating expenses for the full fiscal year to be between \$135 million and \$137 million; previously, we had expected our operating expenses for the full fiscal year to be toward the upper end of our prior guidance range of \$132 million to \$137 million.

Our effective tax rate for the third fiscal quarter was 29.0 percent, compared to 24.1 percent in the same quarter last year. The increase is primarily related to the jurisdictional mix of our earnings. We currently expect our effective tax rate for the fourth quarter and the full fiscal year to be within the range of 20 to 22 percent. Previously, we had estimated 16 to 18 percent for the full fiscal year.

Diluted earnings per share were 39 cents this quarter. This includes the adverse impact of the material quality costs, of approximately four cents per share, and approximately three cents per share related to the higher effective tax rate compared to the same quarter last year. Diluted earnings per share were 53 cents in the third quarter of fiscal 2014. Year to date, diluted earnings per share were \$1.75, including the combined seven cent per share adverse impact of the material quality costs and higher tax rate. This represents an increase of 25.9 percent compared to \$1.39 last year, which included a six cent adverse impact associated with the asset impairment charge.

Turning now to cash and balance sheet related items, capital investments for the quarter were \$3.6 million, bringing our year to date capital spending to \$8.9 million. For the full fiscal year, we currently expect our capital spending to be within the range of \$12 million to \$15 million; previously, we had indicated a range of \$10 million to \$15 million. Depreciation and amortization expense for the quarter was \$4.6 million. We purchased \$15.0 million of our stock during the quarter, and we have approximately \$85 million of authorization remaining in our share repurchase program. We generated cash flow from operations of \$25.2 million, and we ended the quarter with a cash balance net of debt outstanding of \$172.4 million.

I'll conclude my remarks with a few comments on recent sales and orders.

During the third fiscal quarter, we saw a five percent decrease in revenue for our CMP consumables products, compared to the second quarter of fiscal 2015. Examining orders early in our fourth fiscal quarter, we see that orders for our CMP consumables products received in July are trending in line with the average rate in our third fiscal quarter. However, I would

caution, as I always do, that several weeks of CMP related orders out of a quarter represent only a limited window on full quarter results.

Now I'll turn the call back to the operator, as we prepare to take your questions.

That is all the questions we have this morning. Thank you for your time and your interest in Cabot Microelectronics.