

New Product News



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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IMAGE: [AtivaRankOrder_240dpi.jpg](#), or other Ativa photos provided

SUGGESTED CAPTION: Ativa's fully customizable touch-screen offers myriad information displays, button sizes, and voting options.

CUSTOMER APPLICATION: RF AUDIENCE RESPONSE & VOTING SYSTEMS

Fleetwood announces a new touch-screen based audience response system for advanced interactive meeting and electronic voting applications

Reply® Ativa is a high speed and scalable professional audience response system that centers on the WRS8200 wireless voting keypad. This handheld keypad employs a color touch-screen that can be configured to display anything from tailored keys/buttons to a full onscreen QWERTY keyboard for posting text messages during public meetings and special events. A smart card reader also assures secure user identification and data entry.

Holland, Michigan, USA – November 30, 2009 – Fleetwood Group, Inc., the USA's leading designer and manufacturer of RF audience response keypads, announces its latest audience voting system, *Reply Ativa®*.

The new Ativa audience voting system centers on the interactive WRS8200 wireless keypad that runs from a rechargeable lithium polymer battery and employs a large, backlit 3.2-inch QVGA color touchscreen that can display fully customizable key/button responses for any given interaction or voting opportunity. Text responses can be made via an onscreen QWERTY keyboard or SMS-style buttons, and an onscreen slider allows moment-to-moment responses (or impressions). Smart card support is also offered for secure user registration and data logging at sensitive events such as shareholder meetings or delegate voting sessions.

In operation, an Ativa base station – equipped with a RF transceiver, and housed in an enclosure roughly the size of a regular USB memory stick – plugs into a PC USB port from where it can form a secure 2-way wireless link with sister RF transceivers embedded into each of up to 15,500 uniquely identifiable Ativa WRS8200 wireless keypads over a range of up to 500 ft (about 150 meters).

The Ativa system is controlled by a PC software application that integrates seamlessly with Microsoft PowerPoint presentation software. This allows presenters or meeting technicians to instantly create audience polling slides and display the live results to the audience via a projector or display, and to the individual participant via the Ativa keypad's display screen.

"One of the most challenging aspects of getting such a large-scale response system to work reliably is that everything hinges on the speed and responsiveness of the wireless link," explains Pat Moody, VP of Sales & Marketing for the Electronics Division of Fleetwood Group responsible for manufacturing the Ativa product in the USA. "This link has to maintain its integrity even in hostile RF-dense operating environments where the system will have to cohabite with other active 2.4GHz sources of potential interference within a venue, such as Wi-Fi and Bluetooth."

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To achieve this, Fleetwood employs advanced and patented synchronized polling methods and pseudo-random frequency hopping RF protocols that include integrated WiFi avoidance features. This allows the USB base station to sweep around a venue, time synchronize and individually poll every single keypad of the thousands present within a matter of seconds. If the base station fails to get through to any one keypad, it will instantly retry on another frequency. An added benefit of this approach is that it also makes the Ativa platform highly resistant to unauthorized eavesdropping and interception.

"There is simply no room for error in a professional voting situation where every entry absolutely must be counted," continues Moody. "That's why we use our own patented RF protocols to establish the private network between the keypads and base station. These communications methods are robust and proven to work reliably time after time."

"Audience response is becoming a common feature of many public gatherings and events because it heightens participation, interest and retention levels of the attendees." adds Heather Waller, Product Manager for the Electronics Division of Fleetwood Group. "But audience response is evolving to be so much more than answering a multiple choice question at a special event. Audience response is now becoming a mainstay in more complex interactive environments such as governance meetings, medical education, focus groups, auctions, and more. We have to keep innovating and introducing products like Ativa because the market wants to use our systems in more diverse and sophisticated ways."

The Reply® Plus Model WRS8200 wireless handheld keypads and Model WRS97X base stations are manufactured by Fleetwood Group's Electronics Division in Holland, MI. Staffed with radio frequency experts and equipped for surface mount technique (SMT) manufacturing, this small business makes a big impact worldwide – especially in niche markets that demand electronic voting systems, focus group tools, group decision support systems, and student assessment devices.

About Fleetwood Group, Inc. (www.fleetwoodgroup.com)

Fleetwood Group, Inc. is a Christ-centered, 100% employee-owned, US company with a rich heritage and records of business achievement. In May 2006, Fleetwood was named by The ESOP Foundation as the #1 employee stock owned company among the approximately 2,000 wholly-owned and 11,000 partially-owned organizations in the USA (reference: ESOP Association, www.esopassociation.org). In April 2009, Fleetwood Group was named a finalist for *The Wall Street Journal* Top Small Workplaces 2009 award.

About Fleetwood Group Electronics Division (www.fleetwood-electronics.com)

All of Fleetwood Group's RF wireless electronics devices are designed and manufactured by its Electronics Division in Holland, Michigan, USA. The Division has a full suite of development, testing, and manufacturing capabilities that have been honed over its more than 35 years in the RF communications field, resulting in innovative products like [Reply® Wireless Audience Response Systems](#) (more info: www.replysystems.com). Reply® systems are used in conferences, seminars, classrooms, focus group facilities, TV studios, and event venues to quickly survey and report the opinions and/or knowledge of participants. The company currently produces approximately 1 million RF wireless devices per year in its ISO-9001 certified Holland, MI USA facility.

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