



Cognex Corporation Promotes Robert Willett to Chief Executive Officer

NATICK, MA, March 17, 2011—Cognex Corporation (NASDAQ: CGNX) announced today that Robert Willett, the company's President and Chief Operating Officer, has been promoted to Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Willett will continue to report to Dr. Robert J. Shillman, who remains Chairman of the Board, and who will take on the newly-created role of Cognex's Chief Culture Officer.

"Since joining Cognex just three years ago, Rob has done a superb job of both managing our business during the 2009 downturn and in laying the groundwork for our company's record-breaking financial performance in 2010," said Dr. Shillman. "His leadership was instrumental in every key area, including choosing the strategic markets to pursue for growth, establishing our product development priorities and, finally, in guiding and motivating the talented team of Cognoids around the world to make it all happen. Rob is an immensely capable business leader and a true Cognoid who takes his work seriously, but who doesn't take himself seriously. He embodies our motto of 'Work Hard, Play Hard and Move Fast!'"

Dr. Shillman continued, "Although I have given up my responsibilities as the CEO of Cognex, I will continue to be very involved with the company. I will split my time between seeking out new technologies, markets and acquisitions that will help us grow in the years ahead. And, in my new role as Chief Culture Officer, I will work hard to maintain our unique corporate culture in every office around the world so that Cognex can continue to be a great place for smart, creative and hardworking people to build their careers."

In his most recent role as President and Chief Operating Officer of Cognex Corporation, Mr. Willett had management responsibility for sales, marketing, product development and operations for both of Cognex's two divisions (the Modular Vision Systems Division and the Surface Inspection Systems Division). As CEO, Mr. Willett will now also be responsible for the company's global Finance & Administration functions.

Mr. Willett joined Cognex in 2008 as Executive Vice President and President of the Modular Vision Systems Division. In 2010 he was promoted to President and Chief Operating Officer of Cognex, at which time he assumed the additional responsibility for its Surface Inspection Systems Division. Prior to joining Cognex he served as Group Vice President of Business Development and Innovation for the Product Identification business group at Danaher Corporation (NYSE:DHR), a diversified manufacturer of industrial controls and technologies, with annual revenues of more than \$10 billion. Prior to that role, he served as President of Videojet Technologies, a subsidiary of Danaher and a market leader in coding and marking products, with revenue in excess of \$500 million. Before joining Danaher, he was CEO of Willett International Ltd., a global coding and marking company that he sold to Danaher in 2003, and which was merged into Videojet.

About Cognex

Cognex Corporation designs, develops, manufactures and markets a range of products that incorporate sophisticated machine vision technology that gives them the ability to "see." Cognex products include bar code readers, machine vision sensors and machine vision systems that are used in factories, warehouses and distribution centers around the world to guide, gauge, inspect, identify and assure the quality of items during the manufacturing and distribution process. Cognex is the world's leader in the machine vision industry, having shipped more than 600,000 vision-based products, representing over \$3 billion in cumulative revenue, since the company's founding in 1981. Headquartered in Natick, Massachusetts, USA, Cognex has regional offices and distributors located throughout North America, Japan, Europe, Asia and Latin America. For details, visit Cognex on-line at <http://www.cognex.com>.

Certain statements made in this press release, which do not relate solely to historical matters, are forward-looking statements. These statements can be identified by use of the words "expects," "anticipates," "estimates," "believes," "projects," "intends," "plans," "will," "may," "shall," "could," "should," and similar words. These forward-looking statements, which include statements regarding business and market trends, future financial performance, customer order rates, cost controls, and growth and strategic plans, involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those projected. Such risks and uncertainties include: (1) current and future conditions in the global economy; (2) the cyclicity of the semiconductor and electronics industries; (3) the inability to penetrate new markets; (4) the inability to achieve significant international revenue; (5) fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates; (6) the loss of a large customer; (7) the inability to attract and retain skilled employees; (8) the reliance upon key suppliers to manufacture and deliver critical components for Cognex products; (9) the failure to effectively manage product transitions or accurately forecast customer demand; (10) the inability to design and manufacture high-quality products; (11) the technological obsolescence of current products and the inability to develop new products; (12) the failure to properly manage the distribution of products and services; (13) the inability to protect Cognex proprietary technology and intellectual property; (14) involvement in time-consuming and costly litigation; (15) the impact of competitive pressures; (16) the challenges in integrating and achieving expected results from acquired

businesses; (17) potential impairment charges with respect to Cognex's investments or for acquired intangible assets or goodwill; (18) exposure to additional tax liabilities; and (19) the other risks detailed in Cognex reports filed with the SEC, including its Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2010. You should not place undue reliance upon any such forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date made. Cognex disclaims any obligation to update forward-looking statements after the date of such statements.

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