

20 Years at the Forefront of Raman Imaging

The Raman imaging company WITec celebrates its 20th Anniversary. It was founded in 1997 as a 3-person spin-off from the Physics Department of the University of Ulm and has grown into a company of 60 employees including the Ulm headquarters and its branch offices in Spain, China, Japan, Singapore and the USA. As reflected in the company's maxim "Focus Innovations" WITec's success is based on introducing new technologies and a commitment to maintaining customer satisfaction with high-quality, flexible and empowering products.

Through the past 20 years WITec has established itself as a world-renowned manufacturer of confocal Raman imaging systems that embody the notion of German quality. Even WITec's first production instrument, a Scanning Near-field Optical Microscope (SNOM/NSOM), continues to provide dependable, effective service. Dr. Julio Soares, Senior Research Scientist at the Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory, University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, says: "We are proud to be part of the history of WITec instruments by housing the very first of the WITec NSOM to be sold and that our laboratory helped on the further development of that instrument at the time. I think the fact the serial number one instrument is still running without hardly needing any technical support is an achievement in itself."

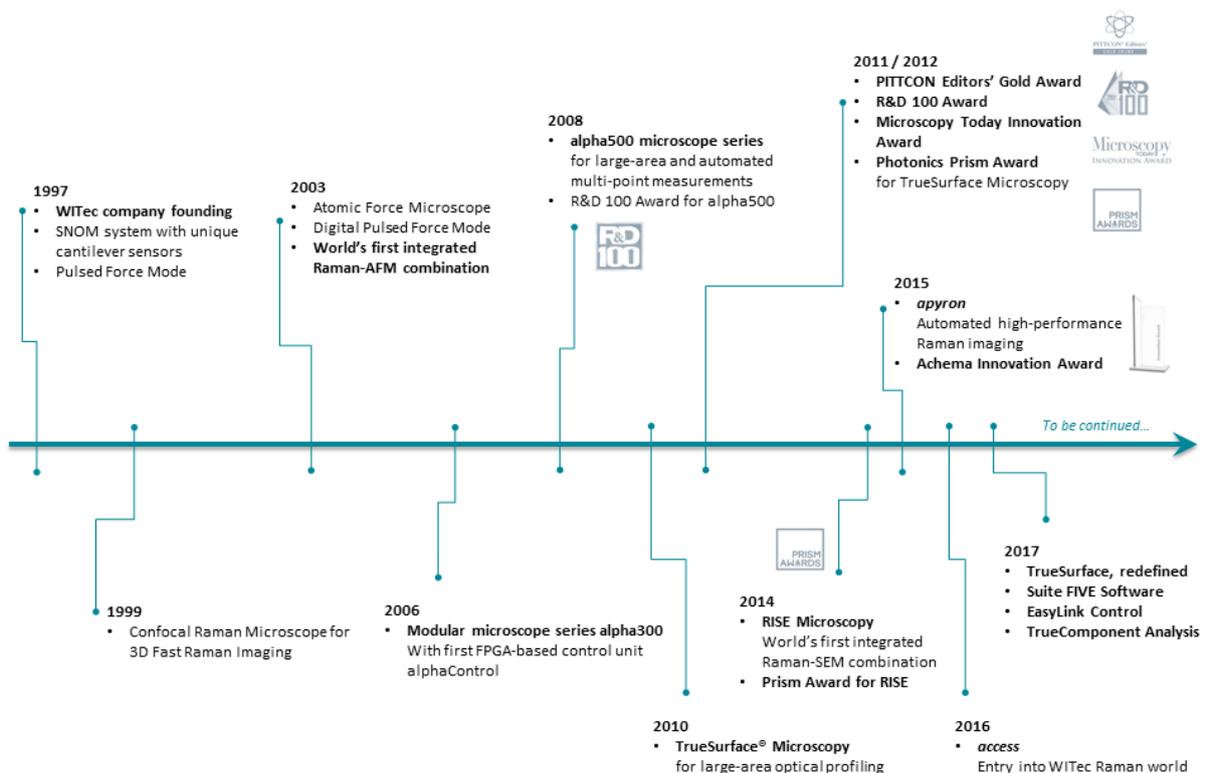
Dr. Olaf Hollricher, Director of Research & Development at WITec, says: "Remembering the history of Raman imaging in general and that of WITec in particular, the terms innovation and development come to my mind first. The past 20 years have brought incredible technological advances in Raman analysis. And this development has affected the analysis of many materials, ranging from semiconductors to textile fibers to cancer cells. We always pushed on development of new concepts of Raman imaging and techniques, for which we were recognized with numerous awards."

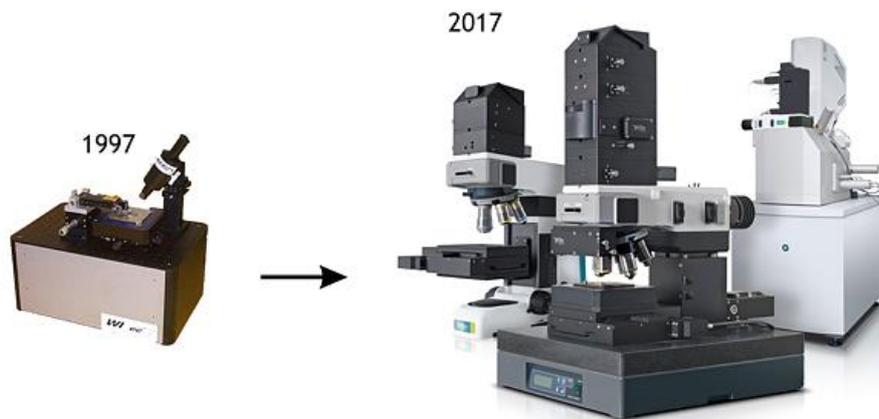
From the beginning, WITec's Raman microscopes have always been extremely fast, with integration times in the range of milliseconds per pixel. Back in the late 90s, integration times used to be one minute per pixel – thus WITec customers could measure far quicker than ever before. All WITec Raman imaging systems use the spectral information of a sample to produce an image that visualizes its chemical composition and structure. WITec was also the first to offer combined microscopes that allow for imaging of a sample with several microscopy

techniques that are integrated into one instrument. WITec's latest innovation in correlative Raman imaging instruments is the Raman Imaging – Scanning Electron (RISE) microscope that has now captured the attention of many in the SEM community.

Dr. Joachim Koenen, Managing Director, says: "WITec's success over the past 20 years is certainly satisfying. We have developed many new Raman imaging systems and techniques that we're proud of. Sharing and exchanging our know-how with scientific and industrial customers for so many years has been really exciting. Still, we have many ideas for the technical improvement of Raman imaging that have yet to be fully developed and implemented. So I'm eagerly looking forward to the future of working with our customers and the WITec family."

20 Years of Evolution in Raman Imaging at WITec





From 1997 to 2017:

First Scanning Near-field Optical Microscope (SNOM) (left) and WITec's current alpha300 Raman microscope family (right).

High-resolution versions of the images

<http://witec.de/assets/Press/WITec-Timeline-1997-2017.png>

<http://witec.de/assets/Press/1997-2017-microscopes-240dpi.png>

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About WITec

WITec is a leading manufacturer of confocal and scanning-probe microscopes for state-of-the-art Raman Imaging, Atomic Force Microscopy (AFM) and Scanning Near-field Optical Microscopy (SNOM) in addition to being the developer of the integrated Raman Imaging and Scanning Electron (RISE) microscopy. WITec's headquarters is located in Ulm, Germany, where all WITec products are developed and produced. Branch offices in USA, Japan, Singapore, China and Spain provide a worldwide sales and support network. WITec has been distinguished by its innovative product portfolio and a microscope design that enables combinations of the various imaging techniques within one system. An exemplar of the company's breakthrough development is the world's first integrated Raman-AFM microscope. To this day, WITec's confocal microscopes are unrivaled in sensitivity, resolution and imaging capabilities. Significant innovation awards such as the Achema Innovation Award 2015 for the fully automated *apryon* microscope and a Prism Award 2015 for RISE microscopy document WITec's enduring success and innovative strength.

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