PIEPS chooses Energy Micro Gecko MCU for use in market’s first GPS avalanche monitor

Energy Micro confirmed that its EFM32 Gecko Cortex-M3 MCUs have been chosen by PIEPS GmbH for use in its top-of-the-range handheld avalanche transceiver, the PIEPS VECTOR.

Frequent back-country travelers and professional mountain guides rely on avalanche transceivers in the event of an emergency. In normal operation regular handheld devices provide beacon functionality should the user run into trouble, and a receive mode helps rescuers conducting a search.

The new PIEPS VECTOR is the most advanced product of its type. The VECTOR introduces the possibility to record and display the user’s location on a live map like a standard GPS and is a maintenance-free four-antenna beacon with rechargeable batteries. The device uses vector triangulation to pinpoint exact position and walking directions; the GPS-map displays and records exact co-ordinates for use either in emergency search or for later use on PC or laptop.

PIEPS chose Energy Micro's EFM32GG990F1024 microcontroller as the heart of the VECTOR for its combination of ultra-low power and 32-bit Cortex-M3 processing power. The Giant Gecko MCU with USB also feature an array of energy friendly standby modes and autonomous peripherals, ideal for preserving battery life in critical applications such as the VECTOR.

Markus Florian, Sales Director for Central Europe at Energy Micro said, "We are proud to be able to help PIEPS in producing a world-beating avalanche transceiver product. It's inspiring to have been part of a project that could potentially help to save many lives. The Cortex-M3 Gecko MCUs were designed to combine outstanding performance with extreme energy efficiency – and when used in the VECTOR these attributes will be tested to the extreme."

The PIEPS VECTOR is a handheld device that weighs around 200g and is a little larger than a smartphone. It is equipped with an ultra-sensitive -160dB SuperSense® GPS, and runs from a Li-ion battery. Working at a beacon frequency of 457kHz, the device has an exceptionally long range of 70m.

Energy Micro's Gecko microcontroller portfolio consists over 240 ARM Cortex-M device variants based. Benchmarked to consume just a quarter of the energy of competing 8-bit, 16-bit and 32-bit MCUs, the EMF32 Gecko series can extend the lifetime of a typical rechargeable battery, such as those used in the PIEPS VECTOR, by at least 300 per cent.

www.energymicro.com [1]

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