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CNEX Labs Partners with Microsoft to Boost Storage Performance for the Cloud with Open-Channel SSDs

Industry leaders driving adoption of storage technology optimized for data centers

SANTA CLARA, Calif. – August 8, 2017 – Tuesday at Flash Memory Summit 2017, [CNEX Labs, Inc.](#), a private semiconductor company providing solid-state storage controllers and software for cloud, hyperscale, and enterprise data centers, announced an initiative in collaboration with Microsoft to standardize cloud-optimized Open-Channel Solid State Drive (SSD) technology amidst growing industry support for the ground-breaking approach to non-volatile storage at hyper-scale.

“Microsoft is collaborating with CNEX to develop Open-Channel SSD technology, ensuring it meets the demanding requirements of a cloud-first world,” said Kushagra Vaid, GM, Microsoft Azure Hardware Infrastructure. “Together we’re excited to open this collaboration to industry partners with the aim of developing a robust ecosystem for this game-changing technology.”

“CNEX is proud to be working closely with Microsoft, Broadcom and other industry leaders to bring Open-Channel SSD technology to market, and we look forward to even wider industry collaboration as we produce an industry standard specification,” said Dr. Alan Armstrong, CEO and Co-Founder of CNEX Labs. “CNEX’s state-of-the-art PCIe SSD controllers are built from the ground up with native Open-Channel SSD support to achieve unprecedented performance with low and deterministic latencies, and we have made significant investments in host software – including to [LightNVM](#), the Linux subsystem for Open-Channel SSDs – to provide a launch pad for the broad adoption of this break-through storage advancement.”

“Broadcom is excited to participate in the Open-Channel SSD initiative,” said Ed Redmond, senior vice president and general manager of the Compute and Connectivity Division at Broadcom. “With LightNVM host software, developed by CNEX, running on Broadcom’s

NetXtreme S-Series high performance ARM cores, our customers can now provide IO determinism over NVMe-oF. This will enable more predictable QoS and application performance resulting in rapid adoption of Open-Channel SSD.”

Product announcements and demonstrations at this year’s Flash Memory Summit highlight a maturing Open-Channel SSD technology ecosystem, including:

- Broadcom NetXtreme S-Series SOC with Open-Channel SSD support and NVMe over Fabrics connectivity (*booth 729 Hall B*)
- OakGate Technology SSD test appliance featuring the company’s Storage Validation Framework software, now with Open-Channel SSD test capability (*booth 807*)
- SerialTek BusExpert Micro II PCIe/NVMe Protocol Analyzer with Open-Channel SSD command decode support (*booth 635*)
- CNEX Labs Open-Channel SSD Reference Design and Linux LightNVM host software (*CNEX FMS Suite, demonstrations available by appointment*)

Solid-state storage is experiencing explosive growth in cloud infrastructure due to its significant advantages in throughput, latency, and power consumption. However, in large multi-tenant cloud environments with demanding, varied workloads, optimizing performance while also achieving low and predictable latencies is a challenge due to IO collisions and background processing performed by each SSD. Open-Channel SSDs expose the internal parallelism of SSDs and provide greater control of the underlying physical media by the host, enabling a more centralized, software-defined intelligence to manage IO scheduling and data placement to achieve more deterministic I/O performance.

The Open-Channel SSD standards initiative will be open to participation by member companies beginning in Q4 of 2017, with a specification release targeted in the first half of 2018.

About CNEX Labs, Inc.

CNEX is a privately held company founded in 2013 and funded by venture capital and strategic investments from Fortune 500 companies in storage and networking. CNEX delivers innovative storage system solutions in the form of semiconductors and software, partnering with solid-state storage manufacturers and data center customers to develop revolutionary NVMe and Open-Channel SSD controller ASICs that deliver high-performance with low and predictable latency, scalability, and flexibility for software-defined-storage. CNEX controller products are key to

accelerating the capabilities of big data compute and analytics for the next generation of cloud, hyper scale and enterprise data centers. For more information, please visit www.cnexlabs.com.

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All statements included or incorporated by reference in this release, other than statements or characterizations of historical fact, are forward-looking statements related to trends in the market for our solutions and services, opportunities for our company in 2017 and beyond, and future product capabilities. These forward-looking statements are based on our current expectations, estimates and projections about our industry and business, management's beliefs and certain assumptions made by us, all of which are subject to change. Forward-looking statements can often be identified by words such as "projects," "anticipates," "expects," "intends," "plans," "predicts," "believes," "seeks," "estimates," "may," "will," "should," "would," "could," "potential," "continue," "ongoing," and similar expressions and variations or negatives of these words. These forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future results and are subject to risks, uncertainties and assumptions that could cause our actual results to differ materially and adversely from those expressed in any forward-looking statement. The risks and uncertainties that could cause our results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements include the continued expansion of our product line, customer base and the total available market of our products, the continued growth in demand for our products, the continued, increased demand for industry standards-based technology, our ability to react to trends and challenges in our business and the markets in which we operate, our ability to anticipate market needs or develop new or enhanced products to meet those needs, the adoption rate of our products, our ability to establish and maintain successful relationships with our OEM partners, our ability to effectively compete in our industry, fluctuations in demand, sales cycles and prices for our products and services, our success converting design wins to revenue-generating product shipments, the continued launch and volume ramp of large customer sales opportunities, and our ability to protect our intellectual property rights. In addition, current uncertainty in the global economic environment poses a risk to the overall economy as businesses may defer purchases in response to tighter credit conditions, changing overall demand for our products, and negative financial news. Consequently, our results could differ materially from our anticipated results due to these general economic and market conditions, political events and other risks and uncertainties. All forward-looking statements in this press release are based on information available to us as of the date hereof, and we assume no obligation to update these forward-looking statements.

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