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Labcyte Issued Broad European Patent Covering Acoustic Droplet Ejection and 25th U. S. Patent

Sunnyvale, CA, January 31, 2006 – Labcyte Inc. announces the issuance of European Patent EP 1337325. This broad patent covers many aspects of acoustic droplet ejection (ADE), an extremely precise and accurate technique that moves small volumes of liquid with sound. The new patent describes the use of ADE to access fluids in multiple reservoirs such as those of multi-well microplates. Pharmaceutical and biotech laboratories routinely use millions of these microplates for hundreds of applications. The patent also covers movement of the source of the acoustic energy to keep the focus of the acoustic beam at the fluid meniscus. This is a critical step for achieving high precision and accuracy with ADE.

The patent describes moving the source of the acoustic energy from one well to another and ejecting different fluids at rates greater than one second per fluid. In response to the need for rapid transfer from high-density plates such as those containing 1536 wells, Labcyte has commercialized systems that operate at much higher speeds. The newest Labcyte system, the Echo™ 555 liquid handler, can transfer as many as 640,000 different compounds in a single day.

The company also announced issuance of its 25th U.S. patent, No. 6,991,917. This patent describes spatial control of the acoustic delivery of cells from a carrier fluid. The technique can distribute cell-containing droplets to form an array of living cells for numerous biological applications.

“Labcyte continues to expand its portfolio of intellectual property,” said Dr. Elaine J. Heron, CEO of Labcyte Inc., “while developing as a strongly competitive and commercial company. Acoustic droplet ejection is quickly becoming the method of choice for transferring nanoliter volumes of drug candidates in high-throughput screening labs, and we are developing numerous additional applications.”

ADE transfers compounds directly to assay plates eliminating intermediate dilutions and the concomitant loss of compounds by adsorption to tips and well surfaces. Pharmaceutical researchers have proved that these losses can lead to failure to identify potential drugs. Elimination of the consumables associated with intermediate dilutions

also results in savings that approximate the cost of the instrument in one year. Labcyte Inc. provides two instruments that use ADE—the Echo™ 550 liquid handler, which is used in seven of the 10 top pharmaceutical companies, and the recently introduced Echo 555, which was designed for UHTS laboratories requiring very high throughput.

Labcyte Inc., headquartered in Sunnyvale, California, provides plastic laboratory supplies, as well as the new Echo 555 liquid handler and the award-winning Echo 550 liquid handler. The Labcyte acoustic liquid handling technology has broad applications in the life science including dispensing equipment, assay systems, particle manufacturing, reagent multispotting for MALDI imaging applications, and living-cell transfer devices. Labcyte has 25 issued U.S. patents, 1 issued European patent and additional international filings. For more information, visit the company's website, www.labcyte.com.

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