Sony's Representative Inventions Supporting Stacked Multi-Functional CMOS Image Sensors

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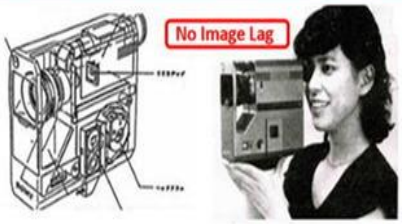
Pinned Photodiode Adopted for Back-Illuminated CMOS Image Sensors

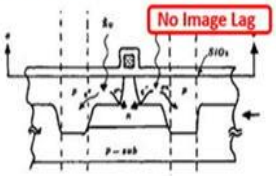
The history of Sony's inventions of image sensors goes back to the CCD era. Above all, Pinned Photodiode is a technology that contributes to improving the performance of back-illuminated CMOS image sensors, and the history of inventions and product development are as below.

In 1975, Sony invented a CCD image sensor that adopted a back-illuminated N+NP+N junction type and an N+NP+NP junction type Pinned Photodiode (PPD) (Japanese patent application number 1975-127646, 1975-127647 Yoshiaki Hagiwara). In the same year, inspired by such structure, Sony invented a PNP junction type PPD with VOD (vertical overflow drain) function (Japanese Patent No. 1215101 Yoshiaki Hagiwara). After that, Sony succeeded in making a principle prototype of a frame transfer CCD image sensor that adopted the PNP junction type PPD technology, having a high-impurity-concentration P+ channel stop region formed near a light receiving section by ion implantation technology for the first time in the world, and its technical paper was presented at the academic conference, SSDM 1978 (Y. Hagiwara, M. Abe, and C. Okada, "A 380H x 488V CCD imager with narrow channel transfer gates", Proc. The 10th Conference on Solid State Devices, Tokyo, (1978)). In 1980, Sony succeeded in making a camera integrated VTR which incorporated a one-chip frame transfer CCD image sensor that adopted the PNP junction type PPD. President Iwama in Tokyo, Chairperson Morita in New York, at the time held a press conference respectively on the same day, which surprised the world. In 1987, Sony succeeded in developing a 8 mm video camcorder that adopted, for the first time in the world, the interline transfer CCD image sensor, which incorporated "PPD having a high-impurity-concentration P+ channel stop region formed near the light receiving section by ion implantation technology" with VOD function, and became the pioneer of the video camera market. The PPD technology that has been nurtured through such a long history is still used in back-illuminated CMOS image sensors.

Sony original 570H x 498 V one-chip FT CCD Image Sensor with Pinned Photodiode, July 1980



P+NP Junction Pinned Photodiode



On July 1980, Iwama Kazuo at Sony Tokyo Press Conference and Morita Akio at New York Press Conference announced the one chip CCD video camera with the 8 mm VTR in one box.

See the Original 1978 Publication of the Pinned Photodiode Sensor

Y. Daimon-Hagiwara, M. Abe, and C. Okada, "A 380Hx488V CCD imager with narrow channel transfer gates," Proceedings of the 10th Conference on Solid State Devices, Tokyo, 1978; Japanese Journal of Appllied Physics , vol. 18, supplement 18–1, pp. 335–340, 1979

High quality picture of SONY CMOS Imager is also based on SONY HAD (Pinned Photodiode).

These figures shows (1) Excellent Blue Light Sensitivity (2) Low Surface Dark Current and (3) NO Image Lag Features of the P+NP junction type Pinned Photodiode.

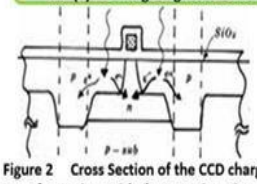
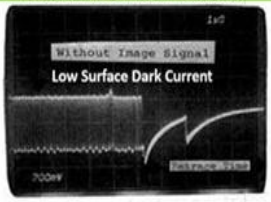


Figure 2 Cross Section of the CCD charge Transfer Region with the P+NP junction type Pinned Photodiode (PPD)



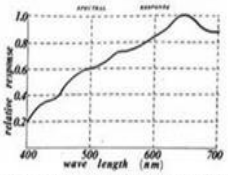


Figure 13 Spectral Response of the P+NP junction Pinned Photodiode (PPD) with the excellent blue light sensitivity

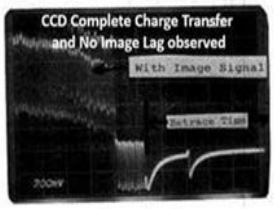


Figure 14 Comparison of CCD image sensor output signals with and without image signal.

Pinned Photodiode and Sony Hole Accumulation Diode (HAD)

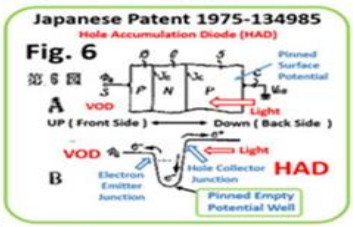
PNPN junction Transistor type Pinned Photodiode

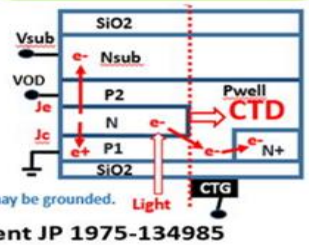
Visit https://www.j-platpat.inpit.go.jp/ and put the patent number 1975-134985

File	1975-134985	Filed	1975/11/10
Public	1975-058414	Public	1977/05/13
		Grant	1983/10/19

Patent Claim in English Translation

(1) In the semiconductor substrate (Nsub), the first region(P1) of the first impurity type is formed, (2) on which, the second region (N) of the second impurity type is formed. (3) The charge (e-) from the light collecting part (N) is is transferred to the adjacent charge transfer device (CTD). (4) Both are placed along the main surface of the semiconductor substrate. (5) In the solid stare image sensor so defined, a rectifying Emitter junction (Je) is formed on the second region (N) of the light collecting part (N) . And (6) Collector junction (Jc) is formed by the second region (N) and the first region (P1), forming a transistor structure (P2NP1) (7) Photo charge is stored in the Base region (N) according to the illuminated light intensity, and transferred to the adjacent CTD. The solid state image sensor so defined is in the scope of this patent claim.





Yoshiaki Hagiwara, Japanese Patent JP 1975-134985

Pinned Photodiode defined in JPA 1975-127647 by Hagiwara in 1975

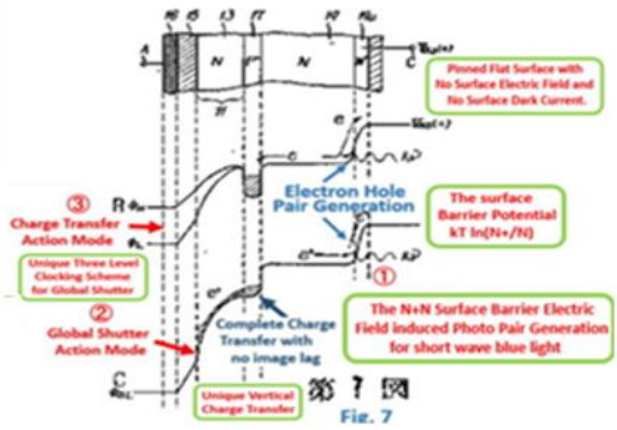


Fig. 7