

Ocimum creates niche with bioinformatics services

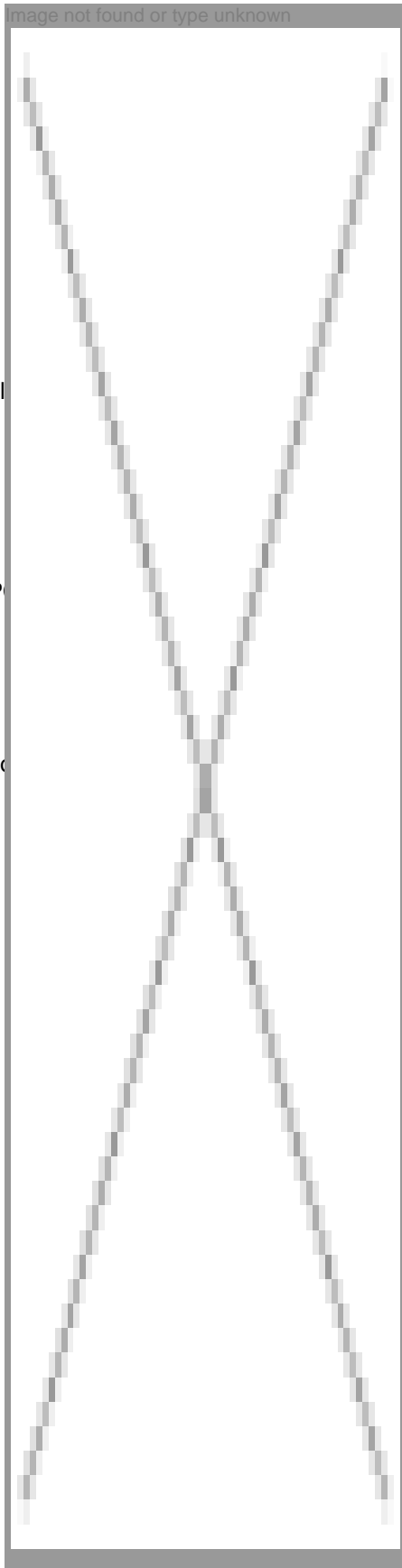
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Ocimum Biosolutions is an integrated life sciences R&D, enabling companies providing focused solutions for different steps of the genomics process chain.



After joining hands with Gene Logic, Ocimum Biosolutions offers a strong bioresearch portfolio including knowledge bases in genomics and solutions in toxicogenomics, pharmacogenomics and clinical genomics. Through the BioIT division, Ocimum provides expertly trained lab information management solutions for life sciences, niche bioinformatics services and products for genomic research such as gene expression analysis, advanced statistical analysis, gene function analysis, genome annotation, sequence comparison and EST analysis. The BioMolecules division produces microarrays and oligonucleotides. The Microarray division has been acquired from MWG Biotech, Germany and produces catalog OciChip arrays, custom OciChip arrays and offers microarray hybridization services. The oligonucleotides division, which has been acquired from Isogen Lifescience, Netherlands, makes standard and modified DNA, RNA

Ocimum Biosolutions has recently introduced a microarray-based test (research use only) for the latest version of the H1N1 flu. The microarray was developed on Ocimum's custom OciChip array platform three years ago when the first case of the avian flu outbreak occurred. This has been updated with the latest sequence information posted last week and the probes have been redesigned. This test will be available for use after completion of validation. Ocimum also provides an RT-PCR for use in India and Asia.

In line with its strategic objective to build a global network of service centers in close proximity to leading genomics researchers, Ocimum Biosolutions have launched genomic services on Affymetrix platform from Europe. Initially Ocimum will service gene expression studies on the Affymetrix platform from its facility at IJsselstein, The Netherlands. Within a couple of months, it will launch the entire facility.

The company has been awarded with two US patents one for its proprietary system and method for determining matching patterns within gene expression data and determining renal toxins and one US patent for molecular toxicology modeling to elucidate global changes in gene expression and identification of toxicity markers in tissues or cells exposed to a known renal toxin. The invention includes a database of genes characterized by toxin-induced differential expression that is designed for use with microarrays and other solid-phase probes.