Intel Sets Pact With Luxottica

BY ANGELA CHEN

Intel Corp. will collaborate with Luxottica Group SpA to produce smart eyewear, another expansion of the semiconductor company's push into wearable technology.

The first product from the companies’ multiyear research-and-development collaboration is expected to be launched in 2015.

Luxottica, an Italian maker of premium and sports eyewear, is best known for brands such as Ray-Ban, Persol and Oakley. The Intel collaboration isn’t its first foray into smart eyewear. In March, Luxottica said it would work with Google Inc. to create designs of Google Glass. Luxottica pledged to include the Ray-Ban and Oakley brands in the collaboration.

The company also said it would help with distribution by offering Google Glass products through retail stores such as LensCrafters and Sunglass Hut, which it owns.

Chips made by Intel, based in Santa Clara, Calif., run most personal computers and servers used in data centers. Now the company has set its sights on the wearable tech market.

This month, Intel revealed details of a computerized bracelet called MICA it developed with the fashion label Opening Ceremony.

Intel will supply the chip for Google's Google Glass next year, replacing a processor from Texas Instruments Inc. In addition, Intel will promote Glass to companies such as hospital networks and manufacturers, while developing new workplace uses for the device, according to a person familiar with the matter.

“The growth of wearable technology is creating a new playing field for innovation,” Intel Chief Executive Brian Krzanich said in a written statement Wednesday.

Intel was late to the mobile market, and Mr. Krzanich, who became Intel's chief executive in May 2013, is determined to avoid the same fate in wearable technology. Since Mr. Krzanich’s appointment, Intel has targeted wearables with products that use an ultrasmall processor called Quark, a tiny circuit board for wearable devices called Edison, and a chip called SoFIA that combines a processor with cellular communications.