

Vicon seeks savings on SEC reports

BY KEN SCHACHTER

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Vicon Industries Inc. has filed to terminate the registration of its common stock, exempting the Hauppauge company from reporting requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In a news release this week, Vicon, a maker of video security equipment and software, said it expects the deregistration will result in "significant cost savings" because it no longer will have to file periodic reports and meet SEC auditing requirements.

The board of directors judged that the costs "far exceed the associated benefits" to Vicon, according to the news release.

Vicon chairman and chief executive Saagar Govil did not respond to requests for comment.

Shares of Vicon rose 2 cents to close Wednesday at 8 cents on the OTCQB Venture Market. Twelve months ago the stock was trading at 42 cents.

Alon Kapen, a securities lawyer with Farrell Fritz in Uniondale, said a deregistered stock cannot be listed on a major stock exchange, but it could continue to be traded on over-the-counter markets.

"For them and their shareholders, the consequences won't be so severe," he said. "They'll still be publicly traded. There will just be less information about them."

Kapen said the costs of SEC reporting requirements can put a company at a "competitive disadvantage."

Vicon moved its stock to the OTCQB Venture Market on July 12 after receiving a delisting notice from the NYSE American exchange.

Vicon, whose systems are being used by police in Sinaloa, Mexico, the heart-



Vicon, led by Saagar Govil, wants to deregister its stock.

land of that country's drug cartels, is Long Island's 42nd largest public company based on 2017 revenue of \$26.7 million.

The company, which reported a net loss of \$7 million for the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2017, narrowed that loss to \$5.4 million in the 2018 fiscal year.

Kapen said securities laws allow companies with fewer than 300 stockholders of record to deregister their stock. As of Jan. 7, Vicon reported having 137 shareholders of record.

In March 2018, Centrex Inc., another Long Island company headed by Govil, acquired a controlling investment in Vicon.

After amassing the 46 percent equity stake, Govil joined the Vicon board and was named CEO.

Centrex, whose signature product is a motorized standing SmartDesk that incorporates a computer, a three-panel display and hand-gesture controls, lists Long Island City, Queens, as its headquarters on a Jan. 11 government filing and a Jan. 17 news release from the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

The company, which did not announce a move, previously listed Farmingdale as its headquarters.

HEATHER WALSH



The Lexus sedan offers sporty style, but Mazda, Jaguar and Tesla do a better job on technology features.

TOYOTA USA / DAVID DEWHURST PHOTOGRAPHY

Tech lagging behind rivals

ROAD TEST

BY ROBERT DUFFER

Chicago Tribune (TNS)

Has Lexus lost its way? This is the question I kept coming back to in the redesigned 2019 Lexus ES 350 midsize sedan. The seventh-generation ES 350 is a quiet, sophisticated ride in the Lexus way, but the technology hasn't kept up with the modern competition.

It has grown longer (2.6 inches), wider (1.8 inches) and a bit lower; the wheelbase has been stretched by 2 inches to give it a low and wide athletic stance. The giant trapezoidal grille looks good on this sedan, as does the LED light signature.

The more sporting profile is a direct challenge to avoid the fate of Buick late in the last century. The quiet cabin, familiar technology (read: outdated), muted mechanics and venerable reliability made these old faithfuls the chosen vehicle of older drivers. But Lexus knows older drivers don't buy as many new vehicles. In the last decade, Lexus has energized new buyers with more daring designs, sexier ad campaigns and an infusion of performance, from the gorgeous LC500 sports coupe

to the F Sport packages offered now on seemingly every Lexus, from the tried-and-true RX350 crossover to the LS full-size sedan.

Lexus graces the ES with more performance, as well. It drives fine. It won't take your breath away but also won't leave ES buyers hungry for more. Fuel efficiency is up 2 mpg to 26 mpg combined despite a modest weight gain.

The problem with the ES 350, more than its being a sedan, is the competition. From the Mazda6 to the Jaguar XE and the Tesla Model 3 — the bestselling luxury car of 2018 — the competitors do a better job of balancing refinement, performance and technology, which is the Achilles heel of Lexus.

The touch pad has gotten better, the available 12.3-inch display (\$3,000 as part of the navigation package) is clear, voice com-

mands are reliable and the 7-inch display in the instrument cluster simplifies everything. All the modern conveniences are there, but they are laid out in such a way that you don't want to use them.

Surely, owners will get used to it. But after a week with ES, my criticism of Lexus vehicles is still the same: It feels like "Pong" in a "Call of Duty" world.

Part of it is the mishmash layout of classic square buttons, odd round buttons and the presence of a CD player, with heated-seat buttons above it. Then audio circles above that. These tiny space oddities can be pushed in or popped out to scan or change audio source. You can do that from the touch pad and from the steering wheel controls, as well. But the steering wheel controls are another incongruity. Volume control is on the left side, under the controls for vehicle info, which includes audio access. But the tuning buttons are on the right side, under the controls for cruise control and other advanced driver-assistance systems.

Best set your audio preferences in the driveway. In our week with the vehicle, we weren't able to access a station list in any reasonable time frame. There must be a way in the settings, but by the time we got to the owner's manual we just wanted to be done with the touch pad and all the bleeping, scrollable iconography.

2019 LEXUS ES 350

- **Base price:** \$43,150
- **Price as tested:** \$50,434
- **EPA fuel economy:** 22 mpg city, 33 highway
- **Engine:** 302 horsepower, 3.5-liter V-6
- **Transmission:** 8-speed automatic
- **Competitors:** Tesla Model 3, Genesis G70, Cadillac CTS, Jaguar XE
- **Bottom line:** Behind the competition