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With a significant slowdown in new 300mm fab announcements and projections for capital spending in 2008 expected to decline by at [least 10 percent](#), one sector expected to post very strong growth through 2009 is used equipment, according to Semiconductor Partners in conjunction with Semico Research.

The market research firm believes that with the number of expected 200mm fab closures and operating fabs up for sale increasing, the availability of used equipment will grow from \$300 million in 2007 to more than \$8 billion in 2009.

“As leading edge digital memory and logic manufacturers build 300mm fabs for process technologies of 65nm or less, this will obsolete their 200mm fabs at 130nm or 90nm and some of their 300mm fabs at 90nm,” noted Morry Marshall, Partner – Strategic Technologies at Semiconductor Partners. “Analog and mixed signal manufacturers will have a need for these fabs to meet for expansion to satisfy the growing analog, mixed signal and RF markets. This creates an opportunity for companies that finance, resell or refurbish used equipment.”

It has long been anticipated that memory manufacturers in particular will need to close or switch products at 200mm fabs as they have become uncompetitive in the wake of drastic ASP declines of both NAND and DRAM over the last two years.

Other IDMs such as Texas Instruments, STMicroelectronics and Spansion have all realigned fab portfolios in an effort to boost utilization rates and close or sale legacy fabs in the last 12 months.

Demand for 200mm used equipment in particular has come from foundries in Asia, which have seen strong demand from customers requiring capacity at trailing-edge nodes and have sought to expand 200mm capacity where possible. TSMC in particular has been aggressive in adding capacity at its major 200mm facility in China in 2007 as well as other niche foundries such as Tower Semiconductor actively looking for 200mm used equipment to reduce capital expenditure requirements while adding capacity at its Fab 2 facility.

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