



Canon's strong focus on Govt. Sector

RF integration: getting it all together

Front end integration in wireless networking applications

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PHOENIX, USA: The holy grail in wireless ICs is a cost-effective [one-chip solution](#). The challenge has been the integration of all digital and analog functions, including RF, on a single SoC. To date, this has only been accomplished for relatively low-power, short-range networks.

As the range increases, the amount of transmission power required also increases, requiring separate RF power components (power amplifiers, RF switches and RF filters). This determines the level of integration that can be achieved. Today, most wireless solutions utilize separate [RF components](#) to provide the transmission power required. However, things are changing.

Over the next five years, unit shipments for [wireless semiconductors](#) for PANs, LANs and WANs will increase at a CAGR of more than 20 percent, much higher than the CAGR for total semiconductor shipments. According to Semico Research Corp. there will be key segments such as WiMAX that will experience over 90 percent CAGR. That growth prospect is attracting new players who are hoping to get a piece of the action with innovative solutions.

These players include large, established manufacturers as well as small, startups.

"The market is ripe for revolutionary change," says Morry Marshall, Semico Vice President of Emerging Technologies. In a recently completed study called "*Front End Integration in Wireless Applications*" Marshall provides functional block diagrams to establish baselines for the level of integration provided by alternate solutions available today for Bluetooth, Wi-Fi and WiMAX networks. The study then forecasts the level of integration that will be achieved within the next five years for each of these applications, identifying the areas of opportunities.

Marshall argues "The very expensive 45nm and 32nm process technologies are not the only alternatives, there are some disruptive technologies that will pave the way for exciting growth."

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