

Semico: Wafers Aren't All Fun and Games

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Ease of life electronics may be popular with consumers, but they aren't the only things keeping the industry's wafer requirements strong, according to a recent report from Semico Research Corp.

“Consumer products and automotive applications are continuing to fuel growth of companies producing devices catering to entertainment and lifestyle ease,” said Joanne Itow, managing director at Semico, in a statement.

“These end markets, which Semico refers to as the 'fun and games' sector, are still far behind in semiconductor sales revenues when compared to the traditional ‘bread and butter’ computing and cell phone markets,” she continued. “Semico’s analysis of the traditional markets, indicates the manufacturing needs are different from the bulk of the semiconductor market.”

The highest value chips in PC’s, cell phones and workstations are being supplied by semiconductor giants such as Intel, Samsung, and Texas Instruments, the firm noted. On the other hand, Semico said there is another 60 percent of the market that will continue to grow and provide opportunities for small- to medium-sized semiconductor companies, pushing overall wafer demand.

According to Semico’s research, wafer demand reached 103.7 million 200mm equivalent wafers in 2004, up 26 percent from 2003. Between 2004 and 2009, wafer demand will grow at a compound annual growth rate of 8.8 percent, the firm expects.

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