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NAND flash was 2004's hottest chip sector, says Semico

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LONDON — NAND flash memory was the fastest-growing of any semiconductor market in 2004 according to Semico Research Corp. (Phoenix, Ariz.) Revenues jumped 80 percent from the previous year to \$7.2 billion, the company said.

This figure is 10.7 percent larger than the \$6.5 billion value given for 2004 by World Semiconductor Trade Statistics, Semico said. However, Semico asserted that its research is rigorous and reconfirmed the larger number. Even so, NAND flash did not overtake NOR flash, which ended 2004 at \$9.1 billion in revenue. These two technologies account for 91 percent of all nonvolatile memory revenues. ROM, EPROM, and EEPROM revenues each accounted for less than \$1 billion in revenues.

Samsung led the pack in total nonvolatile as well as in NAND, owing to its dominant 54 percent share of NAND revenues, Semico said. This company was able to take \$2 billion of the \$3.2 billion growth in 2004's NAND market. Spansion displaced Intel as top ranked NOR vendor despite Spansion's eroding share toward the end of the year. The top spots in ROM, EPROM, and EEPROM were taken by Macronix, Oki, and Atmel, respectively, Semico said.

"It is just astounding how NAND technology continues to grow, even in a year where it suffered a price collapse," said Jim Handy, director of Semico's nonvolatile memory service, in a statement. "Although there were only eight NAND suppliers in 2004, their dedication to satisfy the incredible hunger of the consumer markets for this new technology supported this astounding level of growth."

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