



Toshiba to champion configurable technology

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ARC International and Toshiba Corporation have entered into a strategic collaboration intended to grow the worldwide semiconductor industry's adoption of configurable technology. Under the terms of the agreement, Toshiba Corporation has taken a multiyear licence for ARC's ARChitect processor configurator, which offers a comprehensive set of design tools and resources using a drag-and-drop graphical user interface (GUI). The companies will also collaborate on development of a next generation version of ARChitect that is more closely suited to Toshiba's Media embedded Processor (MeP), Toshiba's proprietary configurable processor, thereby opening up the benefits of configurability to a wider range of customers.

MeP, the core of Toshiba's media-centric processors, offers a 32bit configurable, asymmetric multiprocessor design that can be customised to support diverse media applications, including products in the high-growth digital consumer market integrating video and audio functionality.

Toshiba will leverage a version of the ARChitect processor configurator that has been customised to MeP, which will advance the development of Toshiba's next-generation system-on-chip (SoC) based on MeP.

Jim Feldhan, founder and President of Phoenix-based Semico Research Corporation, an independent semiconductor industry research organisation, said: 'The Toshiba-ARC strategic collaboration is the latest indicator of how configurable processor technology is quickly broadening its appeal throughout the semiconductor industry'.

'We project that by 2010 annual shipments of SoCs incorporating a configurable core will reach 1 billion units'.

'The work of companies such as Toshiba and ARC is one of the catalysts driving this trend, as is the ability of configurable cores to enable a very high degree of differentiation in the end device'.

'This is critical to keeping down the overall development cost of consumer products, which is an important success factor in today's price-sensitive markets'.

Yutaka Murao, Senior Fellow and General Manager for Telecommunications and Custom LSI business at Toshiba's Semiconductor Company, said: 'We see strong potential needs for configurability among customers in multiple media-oriented application arenas, and believe that Toshiba should provide customers with the most versatile platform'.

'Collaboration between the industry leaders in configurability will promote execution of this mission'.

Carl Schlachte, President and CEO of ARC International, commented: 'Collaboration with Toshiba in the field of configurable processors is a landmark event in ARC's history'.

'We are honoured to have such a trusted relationship and confident of the impact this will have on the consumer electronics industry'.

'This strategic collaboration underscores the increasing adoption of configurable technology by world leaders'.

'By working together, Toshiba and ARC can help our customers be successful in meeting their business goals by using semiconductor products that are better suited to the requirements of tomorrow's markets'.

'ARC looks forward to working with Toshiba and growing this best-in-class relationship in the coming years'.