Power semiconductor market keeps growing despite challenging business Climate, according to IMS Research

Following a spectacular recovery in 2010, the power semiconductor discrete and module market grew by a more modest nine percent in 2011, according to a new report from IMS Research, recently acquired by IHS Inc. . 2011 was a year of two very contrasting halves. The high growth rate of 2010 was sustained in the first half of 2011, but demand started to tail off in Q2. Global business confidence took a knock when the Euro crisis hit in August. The power semiconductor market slowed in Q3 and then declined sharply in Q4, largely because of a prolonged inventory correction.

According to the new Power Semiconductor Discretes and Modules report, total power semiconductor revenues grew by nine percent to just under $18 billion in 2011. The market for power modules grew by 32 percent in 2011, much faster than that for discrete power semiconductors, which grew only three percent. The main drivers of the growth of power module revenues were solar energy, car production and consumer appliances. In contrast, discrete semiconductors are used in faster-moving goods such as televisions and notebook & desktop computers, so their sales respond quickly to changes in consumer confidence.

Against a background of pricing challenges and fluctuating demand and lead-times, Infineon remained the leading supplier of power discretes and modules, according to IMS Research. Other manufacturers whose share of the market grew included power module specialists Mitsubishi Electric, Fuji Electric and Semikron.

“Infineon further cemented its leadership in IGBTs and was the fastest growing supplier in the power MOSFET market,” commented Richard Eden, senior market analyst in the Power Management & Conversion Group at IMS Research. “Mitsubishi Electric maintained market leadership in power modules, enabling it to narrow the gap with Infineon in the total market.”

For the second year running, Japanese manufacturers benefitted from the strengthening value of the Yen, which inflated their revenue share in terms of U.S. dollars. Japanese suppliers now account for 51 percent of the power module market, up from 48 percent in 2010.

Top Ten Suppliers of Power Semiconductor Discretes and Modules Worldwide in 2011:

1. Infineon

2. Mitsubishi Electric

3. Toshiba

4. STMicroelectronics

5. International Rectifier

6. Fuji Electric

7. Fairchild

8. Vishay

9. Renesas

10. Semikron

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