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Samsung beats Intel in the semiconductor market for the first time in years

Mihai Matei Reading time: 2 minutes

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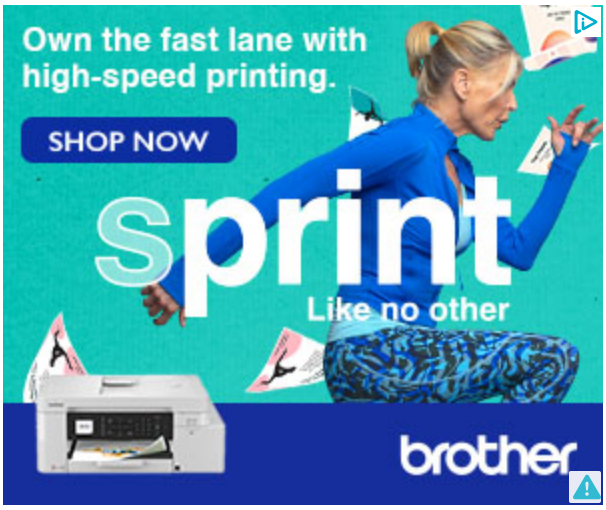


Last year, after lagging behind Intel for a few years, Samsung's semiconductor business finally recorded higher revenues than its US rival. Samsung's semiconductor revenues overtook Intel's for the first time since 2018.

The Korean tech giant had a 12.3% semiconductor market share and recorded $73.1 billion in revenue in 2021 (via *Gartner*). Intel dropped to 2nd place with 12.2% and $72.5 billion in revenue.

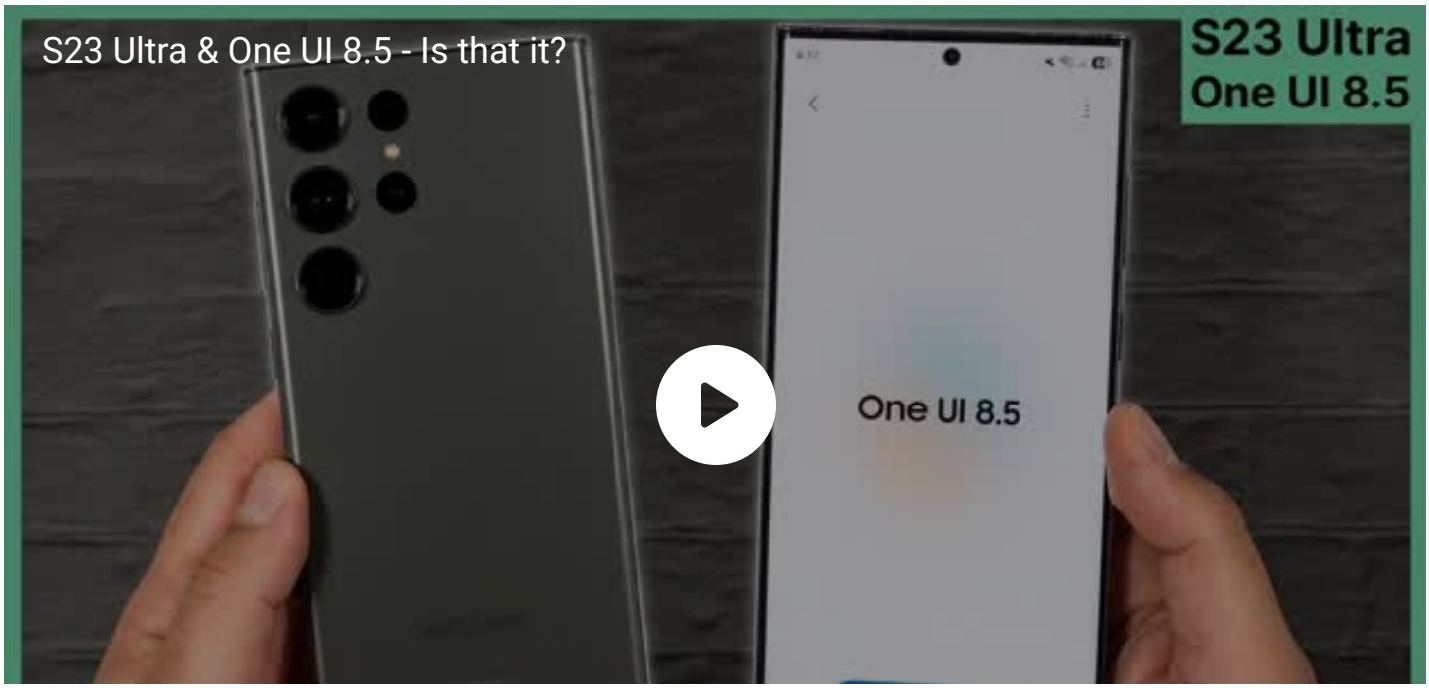
SK Hynix took 3rd place in 2021 with a share of 6.1% in the semiconductor market. Qualcomm was 5th with 4.6%, MediaTek was 7th (3%), Nvidia climbed to 9th place with 2.8%, and AMD also gained four spots to enter the top 10 semiconductor giants with 2.7% market share.

Table 1. Top 10 Semiconductor Vendors by Revenue, Worldwide, 2021 (Millions of U.S. Dollars)

2021 Rank	2020 Rank	Vendor	2021 Revenue	2021 Market Share (%)	2020 Revenue	2020-2021 Growth (%)
1	2	Samsung Electronics	73,197	12.3	57,181	28.0
2	1	Intel	72,536	12.2	72,759	-0.3
3	3	SK Hynix	36,352	6.1	25,854	40.6
4	4	Micron Technology	28,624	4.8	21,780	31.4
5	5	Qualcomm	27,093	4.6	17,664	53.4
6	6	Broadcom	18,793	3.2	15,754	19.3
7	8	MediaTek	17,617	3.0	10,988	60.2
8	7	Texas Instruments	17,272	2.9	13,619	26.8
9	10	NVIDIA	16,815	2.8	10,643	58.0
10	14	AMD	16,299	2.7	9,665	68.6
		Others (outside top 10)	270,354	45.4	214,982	25.8
		Total Market	**594,952**	**100.0**	**470,889**	**26.3**

Source: Gartner (April 2022)

According to the report, DRAM sales accounted for 27.9% of all semiconductor sales last year. Revenues were up 33.2%.



Other market segments also grew in 2021 compared to 2020, contributing to a higher semiconductor demand. The wireless communications market, which includes smartphones, increased by 24.6%. The automotive segment outperformed all others with 34.9% YoY growth.

China loses semiconductor revenue while South Korea tops the charts

Per country, South Korea recorded the highest growth in the global semiconductor market with a 19.3% share, thanks to memory sales.

China's global semiconductor share declined from 6.7% in 2020 to 6.5% in 2021. Huawei's semiconductor company 'HiSilicon' experienced a massive drop of 81% in revenue, from $8.2 billion to $1.5 billion over one year.

Analysts attribute HiSilicon's massive losses to its parent company, Huawei, and the heavy sanctions imposed by the United States government.

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First Samsung device: SGH-A800

Mihai is a blogger and column writer at SamMobile. His first Samsung phone was an A800 which took a lot of beating, and a part of him still misses the novelty of the clamshell design. In his free time, he enjoys watching shows, documentaries, and stand-up comedy; listening to music, taking walks, and occasionally playing old(er) video games.

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