

Semiconductor Metrology/Inspection Equipment Outperforms Overall Equipment Market For Only The Third Time in 10 Years Says The Information Network

NEW TRIPOLI, PA, February 6, 2012. . The Semiconductor Metrology/Inspection Equipment Market grew 24.8% in 2011 while overall semiconductor equipment grew 9.3%, marking only the third time in 10 years, according to the report "**Metrology, Inspection, and Process Control in VLSI Manufacturing**", recently published by The Information Network, (www.theinformationnet.com) a New Tripoli, PA-based market research company.

"For 2011, the Semiconductor Metrology/Inspection market outperformed the overall semiconductor equipment market, as it did in 2008 and 2005, growing only 24.8%, compared to an overall growth rate of 9.3% for the front-end equipment market according to preliminary findings," noted Dr. Robert Castellano, president of The Information Network.

Historically, sales of process control tools have mirrored sales of the entire front-end equipment market. Prior to 2003, metrology/inspection sales outperformed the overall front-end equipment market in six out of eight years.

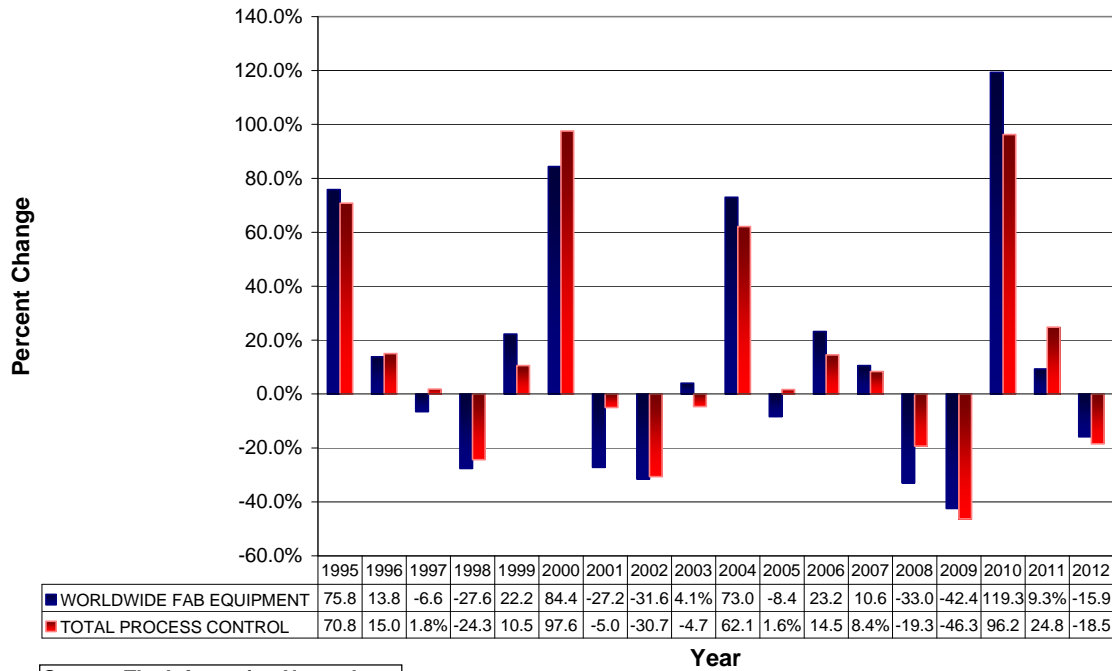
In 2006, metrology/inspection revenues grew 14.5% compared to 23.2% for the total front-end equipment sector. In 2007, metrology/inspection revenues grew 8.4% compared to 10.6% for the total front-end equipment sector. In 2008, metrology/inspection revenues decreased 19.3% while the total front-end equipment sector decreased 33.0%. In 2009, metrology/inspection revenues decreased 46.3% while the total front-end equipment sector decreased 42.4%.

Semiconductor yields reached a level that sampling of wafers was relaxed in 2006, as end users (semiconductor manufacturers) found ways to minimize capital expenditures.

For 2011, the top three metrology/inspection suppliers were KLA-Tencor, Hitachi High Tech, and Applied Materials.

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PROCESS CONTROL VERSUS TOTAL EQUIPMENT MARKET



Source: The Information Network

The Information Network is a leading consulting and market research company addressing the semiconductor, LCD, HDD, nano, and solar industries.

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