Chiplets On the Rise

2020 Heterogeneous Integration Roadmap Symposium

David C. Kehlet, Research Scientist
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The Case for Chiplets

“It may prove to be more economical to build large systems out of smaller functions, which are separately packaged and interconnected.”

Gordon E. Moore

13rd Page of Moore’s 1965 paper, “Cramming more components onto integrated circuits”
Chiplets on the Rise: Early Days and the Mother of Invention
Chiplets on the Rise: Early Days

Intel to make 14-nm FPGAs for Altera
By Rick Merritt 02.26.2013
SAN JOSE, Calif. – Intel Corp. will build FPGAs for Altera Corp. using its 14-nm FinFET process technology in a deal that turns up the heat on TSMC in foundry and Xilinx in high-end FPGAs.

Source: EE Times

Altera and Intel Extend Manufacturing Partnership to Include Development of Multi-Die Devices
Collaboration Will Optimize Integration of 14 nm Tri-Gate Stratix 10 FPGAs with Heterogeneous Technologies into a Single System-in-a-Package
San Jose and Santa Clara, Calif., March 26, 2014 – Altera Corporation (Nasdaq: ALTR) and Intel Corporation today announced their collaboration on the development of multi-die devices that leverage Intel’s world-class package and assembly capabilities and Altera’s leading-edge programmable logic technology.

Source: Intel

Digital focused PDK & Intel EMIB
Arria 10 Legacy

Arria 10 on TSMC 20nm, the generation preceding Stratix 10 on Intel 14nm

= Thousands of wires between Core & Transceiver Columns:
  Data Tx, Rx
  Clocks
  Configuration
  Control

The Necessities of Stratix 10

Historical Challenges of 2013

- **Die Disaggregation**: How to separate a Monolithic FPGA into chiplets?
- **Heterogeneous Integration**: How to integrate Transceiver chiplets built on TSMC 20nm with the Intel 14nm main die?
High-Density Packaging

Standard Flip-Chip Packaging Technology

High-Density Packaging Technology

IO/mm/layer = 28-34

FCXGA, FCCSP

IO/mm/layer = 250

EMIB

Silicon Interposer

High-density packaging technology provides 7-8x IO density increase
Intel
Embedded
Multi-die
Interconnect
Bridge
(EMIB)
AIB Die-to-Die Physical Interface

**AIB:** Common chiplet wide parallel physical interface
- **Advanced Interface Bus (AIB)**
- AIB is a clock-forwarded parallel data transfer like DDR DRAM
- Advanced Packaging with a 2.5D interposer like CoWoS* or EMIB
- AIB is PHY level: OSI Layer 1
- Build protocols like AXI*-4 or PCI Express* on top of AIB
Early Days and the Mother of Invention

Takeaways

Advanced packaging technology enabled new thinking about SoC microarchitecture

- Die disaggregation
- Heterogeneous integration
- Die-to-die interface with high bandwidth and low latency gives near-monolithic performance
Chiplets on the Rise:
Intel’s FPGA Transceiver Leadership
Mid 2015: Altera started a parallel development for a new transceiver chiplet

Had to mechanically and electrically drop-in with the same Stratix 10 main die – seeds of standardization

First 56Gbps transceivers in the FPGA industry, first 56Gbps product at Intel
Intel’s FPGA Transceiver Leadership Takeaways

Able to add powerful new capability to an existing SoC

Chiplet approach allowed organizational flexibility in execution: parallel team did not defocus main die team

Released this mid-life kicker to Stratix 10, ahead of cycle with the next FPGA development
Chiplets on the Rise: DARPA CHIPS and Standardization
“In CHIPS, we’re working with Intel on some of their integration strategies … so that you can do that composable design.”

DARPA’s ERI director Bill Chappell

Source: IEEE Spectrum 7/2018
Plug and Play Standard: AIB Die-to-Die Interface

**IEEE Spectrum 7/2018:** “Intel CTO Mike Mayberry says that Intel will provide its Advanced Interface Bus (AIB) royalty-free.”

Chiplets (die assembled into a Multi-Chip Package) need a standard interface for reuse and interoperability: **AIB**

AIB adopted by US Government DARPA CHIPS performers over competing SERDES concepts

- Fundamental to the US Government’s Heterogeneous Integration strategy

Purpose is to grow an ecosystem of interoperating chiplets

**AIB Promoters Agreement Organizations**

- Ayar Labs
- The Boeing Company
- Cadence Design Systems Inc.
- eSilicon Corporation
- Georgia Tech Research Corp.
- Intel Corporation
- Intrinsix Corp.
- Jariet Technologies, Inc.
- Lockheed Martin Corporation Advanced Technology Laboratories
- National Technology & Engineering Solutions of Sandia, LLC
- North Carolina State University
- The Regents of the University of Michigan
- Synopsys, Inc.
SANTA CLARA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Ayar Labs is pleased to announce that it’s been selected as Intel’s optical I/O solution partner for their recently awarded DARPA PIPES research project. In the first phase of the project, the Ayar Labs TeraPHY™ chiplet will be co-packaged with an Intel FPGA using the AIB (Advanced Interconnect Bus) interface.
AIB Public Specification and Hardware Open Source

Advanced Interface Bus (AIB) Specification

2019.9.18
Revision 1.2

AIB Public Specification includes:
- Electrical specs, bump array mechanicals, data/clock/ control signal definitions, reset handshaking, JTAG

Available at https://github.com/chipsalliance/aib-phy-hardware

AIB Open Source Hardware on GitHub
- Register transfer level (RTL), netlists, generic cell library
- Purpose: reduce development cost

Available at https://github.com/chipsalliance/aib-phy-hardware
DARPA CHIPS and Standardization
Takeaways

Government stepped in when industry could not make a standard on its own

DARPA Leadership inspired us to develop not-originally-planned benefits: hardware open source
Chiplets on the Rise:
Chiplet Ecosystem
Growing AIB-Based Chiplet Ecosystem

Chiplets in production with Intel® Stratix™ 10 FPGAs
- L-Tile 17G SERDES, H-Tile 28G SERDES, E-Tile 58G SERDES

New chiplets with Intel® Agilex™ FPGAs
- F-Tile 112 Gbps serializer /deserializer (SERDES)
- P-Tile PCI Express* (PCIe) Gen4
- R-Tile PCIe Gen5 and Compute Express Link* (CXL)
- Custom intellectual property (IP) via Intel® eASIC™

Industry adoption
- Jariet Technologies 64Gsamples/s ADC/DAC chiplet
- Ayar Labs photonics chiplet
- Others coming soon
Intel and CHIPS Alliance

Intel joined the CHIPS Alliance in December 2019

With Intel contributing AIB as a royalty-free CHIPS Alliance specification and CHIPS Alliance hardware open source project, the industry benefits from the CHIPS Alliance objectives:

“The mission of the CHIPS Alliance is to develop high-quality, open source hardware designs relevant to silicon devices and FPGAs.”

“By creating an open and collaborative environment, CHIPS Alliance shares resources to lower the cost of development.”

CHIPS Alliance Members:

1. Source: chipsalliance.org
Chiplet Ecosystem Must Have #1: PHY IP

**Excellent progress on AIB PHY IP:**

- AIB Open Source enhancements: multi-chip simulation testbenches, both SoC and chiplet interfaces
- AIB IP announced from eSilicon and Blue Cheetah Analog Design
- Research into Automated Physical Design Generation to reduce process porting costs
Chiplet Ecosystem Must Have #2: Availability of Advanced Packaging Technology

Need generally available Advanced Packaging Technology!

“Large” business opportunity is needed to interest providers of Advanced Packaging Technology

How can the semiconductor packaging industry reduce the barriers?

- Could you be the “MOSIS” of packaging?
  - MOSIS is a multi-project wafer provider that lowers the per-project cost of masks
- Could you offer MCP design and prototypes for under $100K?
- Could you make a Google-type offer?
Chiplets on the Rise Summary

Advanced packaging technology inspired new thinking about SoC microarchitecture

Chiplets enable faster system development serving a broader range of applications

General availability of advanced packaging technology $\rightarrow$ stronger chiplet ecosystem $\rightarrow$ better value we can provide