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The Global Semiconductor Industry Analysts

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Chipmakers Expand R&D Amid France's New AI

French President Emmanuel Macron last week launched a bold new AI strategy, backed by up to €1.5 billion (about $1.84 billion) government funding over the next five years. Key players like Fujitsu, Samsung and DeepMind also announced they are establishing increased AI research in the country.

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MRAM Uptake Spurs MCU Design

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Chipmakers Expand R&D Amid France's New AI Push

LONDON — French President Emmanuel Macron last week launched a bold new AI strategy, backed by up to €1.5 billion (about $1.84 billion) government funding over the next five years. Key players like Fujitsu, Samsung and DeepMind also announced they are establishing increased AI research in the country.

The strategy states data is a key competitive advantage in the global AI race, and it is therefore essential to have a data and AI policy if France and the European Union wish to attain the goals of sovereignty and strategic autonomy. It says this is especially significant to counter the dominance of digital giants in China, Russia and the United States, which have built up their positions by focusing on data collection and use and have a considerable head start.

Intel Could Lose Apple Business On Two Fronts

SAN FRANCISCO — A report that Apple's long-rumored transition away from Intel chips to its own Arm-based processor for Mac computers could happen as soon as 2020 sent the largest U.S. chip company's stock price down more than 6 percent Monday (April 2). According to at least one industry analyst, the potential loss of the processor socket in Macs is only one of two threats facing Intel's business from Apple.

"I think there is a double threat to Intel. Intel will also likely lose Apple's modem business once Apple integrates a modem into its mobile SoCs, which will likely be in the same time frame," said Jim McGregor, principal analyst at Tirias Research, in an email exchange with EE Times. The Bloomberg news service first reported Monday plans to move Macs to custom, Arm-based Apple processors. Such a move would be consistent with Apple's moves in recent years to become more vertically integrated.

Alibaba IoT Platform Partners With NXP For Automotive

LONDON — AliOS, the operating system for IoT solutions developed by China's Alibaba Group, has entered into a partnership with NXP to install the AliOS system and NXP's automotive infotainment solution in "millions of vehicles" in China by 2020.

The collaboration will help build a smart cockpit enhanced by multi-screen display, artificial-intelligence-driven interaction and secure over-the-air (OTA) updates, according to the companies.

Alibaba is said to be aiming to connect 10 billion devices by 2023 on its IoT network, and it appears to be creating the ecosystem to develop this, with partnerships announced in recent months with STMicroelectronics, MediaTek and others.

MRAM Uptake Spurs MCU Design

TORONTO — As magnetoresistive random access memory (MRAM) gathers steam as an emerging option with increasingly more cost-effective applications, the ecosystem is also emerging to support it.

eVaderis recently announced co-development efforts on an ultra-low-power microcontroller (MCU) reference design using GlobalFoundries's embedded MRAM technology on the 22-nm FD-SOI (22FDX) platform. Together, the companies are looking to support a wide range of low-power applications such as battery-powered Internet of Things (IoT) products, consumer and industrial microcontrollers, and automotive controllers.