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Boffins claim nanowires are chip future

Faster than silicon

By [Nick Farrell](#): Wednesday 21 June 2006, 08:52

BOFFINS AT Harvard University say that nanowire transistors are four times faster than current silicon devices.

Chemistry professor Charles Lieber told techreview that this means that nanowires could be used to produce inexpensive, high-performance, flexible electronic circuitry for cell phones and displays.

He said that they could save space and further increase speed by allowing memory, logic, and sensing layers to be assembled on the same chip. So far the nanowires have not been touted for use with conventional transistors. If anything carbon nanotubes have been getting a bit of a better press.

Nanowires have regular structures and uniform electronic properties, which makes them a bit more useful for electronics. Nanotubes come in all shapes and sizes which makes them a little less useful.

The boffins admit that at this stage the speed difference between Nanowires and silicon is not enough to justify large scale manufacturing changes in traditional computing chips. However they could end up taking over the embedded chip market. μ

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