

IC Socket Market - Growth, Trends, Covid-19 Impact, and Forecasts (2023 - 2028)

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Report description:

The IC socket market is expected to witness a CAGR of 9.11% over the forecast period 2021-2026. The growing adoption of ICs, especially memory applications and their complexity increases due to increasing their functionality, are some of the major factors driving the growth of the IC test socket market. Recent advancements like 5G, IoT, Data Centers, RF devices, LPDDR5 DRAM, and Electric & Autonomous Vehicles, are expanding the studied market scope over the forecast period.

Key Highlights

The major characteristic requirements for test sockets by IC manufacturers in the current market is long insertion life without contact degradation. However, a long-life, high-performance IC test socket is at least ten times costlier. Providing for a removable interface is a significant reason for using a test socket and is essential for ease of assembly and cost savings in the IC manufacturing process.

With growing advanced applications, more and more functions are integrated into ICs with size reduction; hence, there is increased demand for higher frequency sockets to test larger BGA packages. IC tests are becoming a critical issue for the semiconductor industry. This places pressure on the testing supply chain and will result in new test & burn-in strategies, such as combining TBI and wafer-scale tests. IC packaging is also changing toward flip chips, and 3D chip packaging will also bring changes in the studied market.

Also, the growing adoption of ICs in products that are used in a harsh environment is further driving the demand for burn-in test sockets. Till now, IC test sockets are majorly used for measuring electrical characteristics; however, growing adoption in applications like Electric Vehicles and DRAM in data centers servers, have also fuelled the demand for testing temperature reliability and durability of ICs. This is fuelling the demand for burn-in test sockets.

Further, the advancements in the manufacturing process are also bringing development into the studied market. For instance, socket manufacturers invest tooling cost for generic packages and amortize the cost over tens of thousands of sockets. When it comes to custom packages, it is not profitable to invest initially and amortize over tens of thousands of sockets because the test need will be only for a few hundred sockets. Therefore, US-based Ironwood Electronics has developed a unique problem using a stamped spring pin contact technology that provides a robust solution for Burn-in & Test applications.

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Additionally, the increasing demand for power management and power-efficient products, and expanding industrial applications scope for analog ICs, are expected to drive the growth of burn-in test sockets over the forecast period.

IC Socket Market Trends

Consumer Electronics Segment is Expected to Have Significant Growth

Consumer electronics lead the market on account of the massive sales of laptops, smartphones, PCs, tablets, and other consumer electronic devices that incorporate integrated circuits. These electronic appliances are manufactured with some simple or complex circuits. Electronic components in these circuits are connected by wires or conducting wires for the flow of electric current through the circuit's multiple components, such as resistors, capacitors, inductors, diodes, and transistors. Due to the increasing sales of consumer electronics, IC sockets are expected to witness a greater adoption in these devices.

Sales growth in both smartphones and personal computing systems is being bolstered by increasing memory prices. However, the ongoing decline in shipments of standard personal computers, along with the slow growth of tablets, is aiding the mobile IC sales to override total personal computing sales over the forecast period.

In the consumer electronics industry, the demand for more precise results, along with smaller chips, is rapidly increasing due to ascending profit margins and reduced transportation costs.

With the miniaturization and fabrication of multiple technologies onto a single disk in consumer devices, like smartphones, tablets, wearable's, smart TVs, and gaming consoles, the need for IC's is expected to grow to evaluate the inputs into an actionable function, which can be then followed by the device. The rise in IoT also resulted in increased usage of chips for consumer electronic devices.

Asia-Pacific Expected to Have Significant Growth

Asia-Pacific is expected to have significant growth in this market. Various companies have almost reduced the product development period by half, owing to the changing consumer demands. This trend requires companies to continuously design and test products, driving the adoption of IC sockets.

Countries in the region, including China, have the most significant markets for the ICs and IC test sockets, owing to its dominance in the manufacturing of the global semiconductor industry, consumer electronic industry, and communication equipment, among others. The country is also one of the major investors in the global automotive manufacturing industry. Along with these, favorable government policies and initiatives and motivating many domestic players to increase their investment in the region. Further, the IC manufacturing business in China set to grow driven by a strong global IC market and increased market share.

Growing government initiatives are also fuelling the domestic IC market. For instance, the Chinese government raised around USD 23 to 30 billion to pay for the second phase of its National IC Investment Fund. The National IC Investment Fund, or Big Fund, was introduced in 2014 to support the semiconductor sector, and since 2015 China's semiconductor industry has been thriving.

Made in China 2025 policies clearly outline that the nation is aiming to raise its self-sufficiency rate for ICs to 40% in 2020 and 70% in 2025. Therefore, domestic China-sourced ICs will grow significantly over the next five years, especially for memory chips. More and more decisions made in China will be from local chip designers, which is beneficial for local vendors in the studied market. Such initiatives are expected to promote the demand for tests and burn ICs.

Although, presently, the IC test sockets consumed in China are mostly supplied by foreign vendors. However, local suppliers will have more opportunities for sales of higher-margin products in the future. However, the pandemic COVID-19 led by disruptions in supply chain and manufacturing operation is expected to hinder the market growth temporally.

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IC Socket Market Competitor Analysis

The IC Socket market is neither highly competitive nor has a limited number of players. The IC Socket market is witnessing many mergers and acquisitions among regional players. In the past few years, acquisitions have been one of the major growth strategies of the companies to increase their revenue share in the market.

March 2020: TE Connectivity Ltd announced the acquisition of First Sensor AG. This tech startup primarily develops and produces sensors for applications, including advanced electronics, pressure, and photonics for industrial, transportation, and medical industry. This acquisition will allow the company to leverage its combined expertise to provide a broader range of products, including sensors, connectors, and sockets. The company aims to leverage the acquisition as part of the growth strategy.

Additional Benefits:

The market estimate (ME) sheet in Excel format
3 months of analyst support

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