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Unit Shipments of Bluetooth-Enabled Equipment to Double by 2015

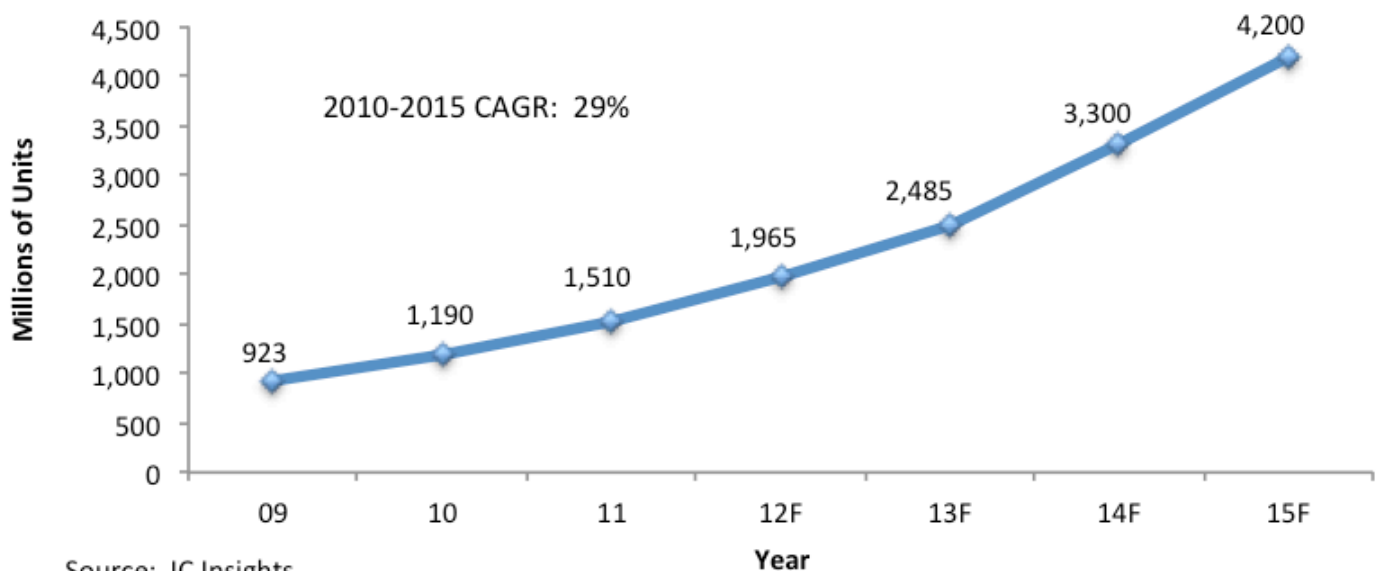
New uses of Bluetooth 4.0 low-energy standard set the stage for second wave of growth.

After a decade of rapid growth mostly in cellphones and consumer electronics, Bluetooth wireless connection technology is now pushing into a broader range of applications in personal area networks (PANs). The Bluetooth Special Interest Group (SIG) has expanded its marketing campaign to start a second major wave of growth in wireless PANs serving healthcare, smart energy, home systems, and other uses. These new applications, enabled by a Bluetooth low-energy (BLE) standard, are expected to fuel higher growth, which will more than double the number of Bluetooth connections shipped between now and 2015, according to the new *Update* to IC Insights' *2012 IC Market Drivers Report* (see Figure).

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Bluetooth-Enabled Equipment Unit Shipment Forecast



Bluetooth module shipments increased from virtually nothing in 2000 to 948 million units in 2008, based on data contained in the *2012 IC Market Drivers Report*. Unit shipments then fell slightly in 2009 as the global recession put a large dent in the sales of Bluetooth headsets. *Cumulative* shipments of Bluetooth modules exceeded 1 billion units in 2006, surpassed the 2 billion mark in early 2008, and then crossed the

4 billion mark in 2010. Moreover, single-year unit shipments exceeded the 1 billion mark for the first time in 2010, with nearly 1.2 billion delivered. In the new update report, IC Insights has slightly adjusted its forecast upward for Bluetooth-enabled systems, with 4.2 billion units expected to ship in 2015, the final year of the forecast. Over the 2010-2015 timeperiod, unit shipments are expected to grow at the rate of 29% per year, according to the forecast in the new mid-year update.

Part of Bluetooth's overall success is its applicability to a large array of consumer and business products. Bluetooth can now be found in every major end-use market category: communications, computer, consumer, automotive, industrial (including medical), and military systems. That translates into a high-volume opportunity for system growth.

In healthcare applications, interfaces have been established for wirelessly connected thermometers, heart-rate monitors, weight scales, blood glucose meters, and pedometers. New Bluetooth 4.0 BLE links can enable wearable low-energy sensor devices to routinely transmit readings to a patient's smartphone, which then can send the data to doctors and caregivers. Previously, many of these kinds of devices could not connect to Bluetooth because they required too much power.

The main applications for Bluetooth technology remain cellular phones (and related wireless headsets), PDAs, and laptop computers. However, a large and growing market application for Bluetooth technology is in automobiles. Many of the leading automobile manufacturers have stated that Bluetooth will play a key role in establishing telematics applications. Given that approximately half of all cellphone calls originate from cars, and that countries increasingly are banning the handheld use of cellphones while driving, hands-free calling in automobiles is expected to become quite common. This application is a perfect fit for Bluetooth. Another application for Bluetooth in automobiles is the wireless streaming of stereo audio signals from a portable music player or cellphone to a car's sound system.

Report Details: 2012 IC Market Drivers

Additional details and a revised forecast for the PC, automotive, cellphone, wireless networking, and digital television markets can be found in IC Insights' *Update to its 2012 IC Market Drivers Report—A Study of Emerging and Major End-Use Applications Fueling Demand for Integrated Circuits*. The report examines many of the leading system applications for ICs and evaluates the potential growth for new applications that are expected to fuel the market for ICs through 2015. Price: \$3,090 for individual user; \$6,190 for multi-user corporate license. To review additional information about IC Insights' new and existing market research products and services please visit our website: www.icinsights.com

About IC Insights

IC Insights, Inc., based in Scottsdale, Arizona USA, is dedicated to providing high-quality, cost-effective market research for the semiconductor industry. Founded in 1997, IC Insights offers coverage of global economic trends, the semiconductor market forecast, capital spending and fab capacity trends, product market details, and technology trends, as well as complete IC company profiles and evaluations of end-use applications driving demand for ICs.

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