Sapphire 2010 Report

I-Micronews

Sapphire material market will exceed $200M in 2010 despite the downturn

Sapphire product is serving mainly 2 applications in the electronics field: GaN-based LED and RF devices, both for mobile phones (Silicon-on-Sapphire "SoS" technology). The sapphire substrate market for electronic applications has reached a market volume of approximately 9 million wafers (2" equivalent) for LED augmented by some 10's of thousands 6" and 8" wafers for SoS RF applications in 2009. Despite the 2009 economic situation and thanks mostly to LCD LED backlight applications, the c-plan sapphire wafer market grew +4% over 2009 compared to 2008 in the LED segment.

2" sapphire price as low as ever but shortage risk could generate turbulence

The price pressure on 2" remains critical and Yole Développement's models showed that most of the suppliers are having a very tiny margin on that material and some of them are even losing money in that business. The 2" price level, especially in Taiwan, was extremely low and the psychological $10 threshold has probably been reached. *"We are forecasting a ~ 5% price increase across the board. However, just like for cores, it will be unevenly distributed through the different diameters, with 2" price to increase up to 40% in 2010 while, on the other hand, we expect 3" and 4" price to remain stable compared to their low of 2009 and actually decrease another 20% compared to their ASP through 2009", explained* ***Dr Roussel****.*

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