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3.5 billion audio amplifiers to ship in 2021, with significant growth from new markets

Growth in audio amplifier chip sales will be driven by new markets as existing ones mature. Competition among suppliers of audio amplifiers, together with a slowing of smartphone sales, is helping to drive new technology, new research by SAR Insight & Consulting has found.

Three-and-a-half billion audio speaker amplifiers are expected to ship in 2021, which will contribute to accumulated revenues more than \$12 billion over the last 10 years. This is the headline figure from SAR's latest report *'Audio Power Amplifiers, Market Growth, Channel Count, Amplifier Types, Input Type, Class, Speaker Protection'*, but the bigger picture is a little more complicated, and reflects the growth in new technology.

"The audio amplifier market grew rapidly from 2010 to 2016 spurred on by their use in growing device markets such as smartphones," the report's author Peter Cooney said. "The market remains a significant revenue stream for many suppliers, but growth has slowed dramatically. Unit shipments are expected to plateau over the next few years, with total revenues falling slightly."

Smartphones continue to be by far the largest market for audio amplifiers, and significant growth occurred as the 'speakerphone' market grew, and designs moved to stereo speaker devices (which typically use one amp per speaker). However, that growth is now starting to stagnate as the smartphone market reaches maturity. As a result, vendors are looking to other markets—such as automotive, smart home and wearable devices—for future growth.

In its sister report *'Audio Power Amplifiers, Vendors and Customers SHARES'* SAR analyzes the market shares and customers.

"Texas Instruments remains the leading audio amplifier vendor, retaining the number one spot from 2012 to 2020," Peter said. "However, it has lost significant market share over the years, especially to rivals such as Cirrus Logic, Maxim Integrated and others, which have had more success in smartphones and other markets."

Many other vendors, which are successful in multiple device markets, supply audio amplifiers, including: Awinic, Goodix, Infineon, and more recently Qualcomm.

Many of the largest customers for audio amplifiers include the largest smartphone vendors. Apple continues to be the largest user, closely followed by Samsung, and of these vendors have products other than smartphones that use audio amplifiers, e.g., laptop computers and speakers.

The customer base is changing with many Chinese smartphone brands moving up the ranking. Xiaomi is one of note, seeing major growth in smartphone shipments but also many other devices that use audio amps such as smart speakers and TVs. Chinese brands now account for approximately 40% of total amplifier usage.

'Audio Power Amplifiers, Market Growth, Channel Count, Amplifier Types, Input Type, Class, Speaker Protection' and **'Audio Power Amplifiers, Vendors and Customers SHARES'** from SAR Insight and Consulting contain in-depth analysis of the microphone component market. The study is published as part of its Audio Signal Chain service.

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