

Industry Leaders Discuss the Role of the Internet and Programmable Logic

Xilinx Webcasts from DAC '99 present the views of industry leaders.

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This year at the Design Automation Conference (DAC) '99 in New Orleans, Xilinx presented Webcasts of prominent leaders in our industry—another industry first. There were talks by John Chambers (CEO of Cisco Systems), Scott McNealy (CEO of Sun Microsystems), Aart de Geus (CEO of Synopsys), Geoffrey Moore (author of *Crossing the Chasm*), and Wim Roelandts (CEO of Xilinx).

Geoffrey Moore spoke on the emerging system-on-a-chip market. "One of the most exciting things that Xilinx has brought to the market is this notion of a reprogrammable chip that can be functionally changed and modified after shipping. This is particularly attractive in my view for people in the hand-held device markets, notably wireless phones, but increasingly in the Internet appliance market currently infiltrating our lives.

"The challenge for the systems provider, who is deploying a service, is that the appliances become an expensive consumable. God forbid there's a bug in one of these things and you have to do a recall on the product. What's exciting to me about the Xilinx offering is that as the technology moves forward and the customer wishes to increase their subscription in a service, someone at a remote systems management monitoring console can actually reprogram the device, live, without the customer having to do anything.

"This is going to be extremely compelling to the systems houses. And these houses with hand-held devices that will need modification, may very well be the "crossing the chasm" target segment that pulls the system-on-the-chip

market into the marketplace. In that case, I would see Xilinx providing the platform product."

John Chambers compared the Internet revolution to the industrial revolution. Plus he offered a five-year look ahead. "Voice will almost ride for free in a connection with voice and video over a single network. Imagine the challenges the major phone companies will have when 90 percent of their revenues and profits will become commodities and be free. The Internet will level the playing field between big companies and small companies. There will be a globalization of companies and resources at a pace that we're just beginning to understand. Almost every electronic device in our home, in our work, in our cars, or even on our bodies will be networked."

Chambers noted that the Internet will change the attitudes of business and the business principles; it will be viewed as the competitive advantage; change and rapid adaptation to change will become key requirements for corporate culture. It will be an era where business must lead and government must follow. In short it will change everything. To quote their primetime commercial, he asks, "Are you ready?"

When asked about the importance of programmable logic in his future product plans, Chambers responded, "Very simply, it's extremely important to our future in terms of cost-of-ownership and flexibility for our customers." 