SUCCESS STORY | FAIRCHILD

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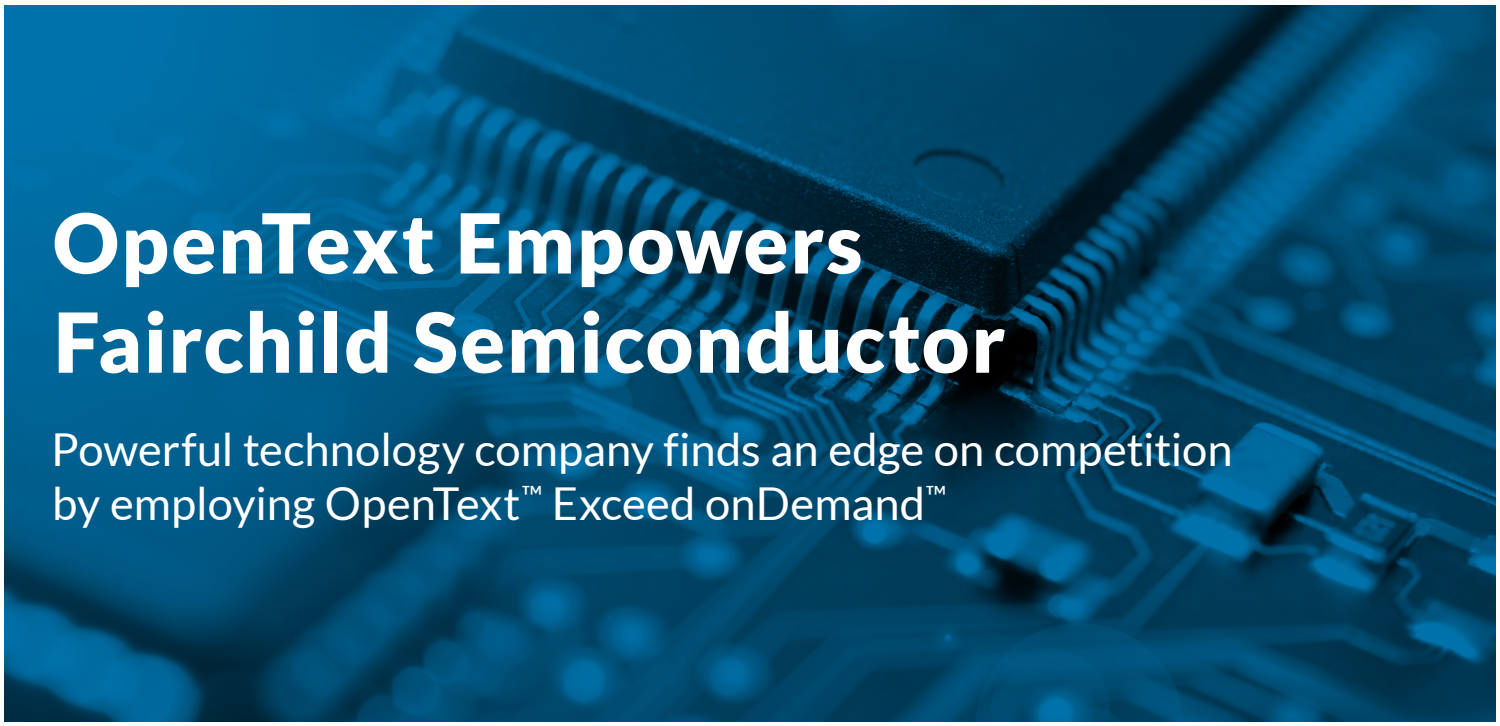


OpenText Empowers Fairchild Semiconductor

Powerful technology company finds an edge on competition by employing OpenText™ Exceed onDemand™

Fairchild Semiconductor, The Power Franchise®, is the leading global supplier of high performance products that efficiently convert, control, and condition power. Fairchild offers the broadest portfolio of components for use in every conceivable electronics application, from smart phones to plasma screens and PCs. The company is always on the lookout for ways to get an edge on the competition by working faster, smarter, and more efficiently. Tools that can provide that edge are highly valued by the organization and its employees. The mobility, performance, and management functionality offered by OpenText Exceed onDemand, a powerful, ultra-thin multi-tiered PC X Server, fits well into this philosophy.

"Design wins are made or broken by hours sometimes," says David Joy, CAD/Systems Engineer at Fairchild Semiconductor, emphasizing the importance of getting to the finish line first in the semiconductor business.

"A customer may ask three or four competitors to design a device for a specific application, and the first one to bring it to market with the right specifications is the one that wins the contract. It can be a risk, since there are potentially millions of dollars of investment in every part." Joy became convinced that Exceed onDemand would benefit Fairchild when he first saw the solution at the Design Automation Conference. "I brought back a demo kit. Once we got it set up and running, I quickly realized this was a product we wanted to continue with." He's been championing Exceed onDemand ever since.

Mobility a Major Productivity Enhancement

Design engineers at Fairchild, much like any similar workplace, spend time initiating and running multiple simulations of circuit integrations. The simulations can take hours to complete, sometimes running over the course of several days.

INDUSTRY

Electronics, Semiconductors

CUSTOMER

Fairchild Semiconductor

CHALLENGES

- *Finding newer, better ways of working in a highly competitive industry*

SOLUTION

- *OpenText™ Exceed onDemand™*

BENEFITS

- *Shaves crucial hours and even days off design cycles, enabling Fairchild to maximize design simulations time*
- *Saves in start-up, hardware, and ongoing human resource costs*

This makes it vital for engineers to know as soon as possible if there are any problems with a simulation, so corrections can be made, and it can be restarted. This is not a major challenge when the engineer is sitting at his or her desk at the office, but if a simulation derails in the evening or over the weekend, often no one finds out until the next morning. Exceed onDemand eliminates this productivity gap with its unique suspend and resume feature allowing engineers to continue monitoring simulations on evenings or weekends without having to go back to the office.

"Exceed onDemand is a productivity enhancer. A simulation can run for hours or days," says Joy. "With the suspend and resume feature, engineers can set up the simulation, suspend the session, and go home for the night. At home, they can quickly connect over the web after dinner to take a look at the simulations, make adjustments, or end the simulation and start a new one with different parameters.

"Weekends are even more crucial. No one wants to come into work on a weekend, but they don't mind spending 10 minutes checking on a simulation from home. That way, the company can save two days of potential lost time if a simulation does need to be restarted over the weekend.

The suspend and resume feature also has uses within the office. "For instance, if an engineer has to go to a meeting where a simulation they are running might come up for discussion, they can suspend the session, go to a conference room, and show the simulation to someone else—all they have to do is resume the session remotely," says Joy.

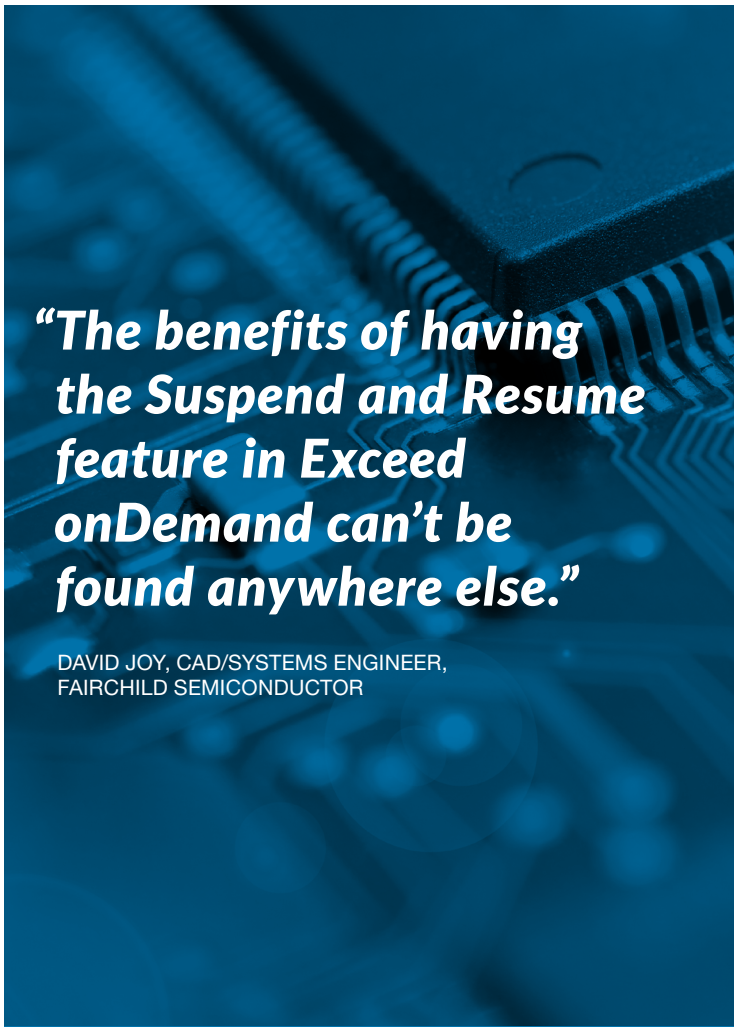
"This tool helps us keep our design simulations on track, an essential element in getting our products to market quickly."

Remote Management Allows Worldwide Deployment at Significant Cost Savings

Another advantage of Exceed onDemand is that it allows Fairchild to efficiently operate remote design centers, potentially saving travel costs. Over the past year, the company has set up a number of remote design centers in several states on the East Coast to complement those already in place. Exceed onDemand has been installed on company servers in several locations across the United States and is deployed and managed from Maine. The engineers at the remote locations use a laptop or desktop computer and an internet connection from the company.

"Instead of hiring an IT person to be at every site that has a handful of engineers, we give each engineer an account on our main system and they come in over the internet to do all of their design work," says Joy. "That represents huge savings for us. We've been able to reduce our costs in support resources and a lot of hardware too. In our scenario, all we need are laptops or workstations for the users and a good network connection back to the mother ship.

"Consider in this cost savings equation, the IT person's salary per year, plus potential need to purchase servers, other network gear, and infrastructure costs. Add that up, and the cost savings could be significant," he says.



Unrivalled Performance Wows Users

"Exceed onDemand outperforms any other product we've used before, especially over low bandwidth connections," says Joy. "Hands down, Exceed onDemand beats everything over a slower network. I can start a Cadence® session from my desk in Maine (the software resides on a server in another part of the country), and it's almost like being there. It's remarkable compared to what it was like before we deployed Exceed onDemand."

Benefits Enhance Company

"I tell everybody about Exceed onDemand all the time. I say, 'it's really good; you've got to try it,'" says Joy. "Exceed onDemand definitely meets our needs." Though there are only several dozen users, Joy sees potential for growth, mainly because when other departments see Exceed onDemand in action, they inquire about their own rollouts. When Exceed onDemand was implemented in the company, the changes were vast and exceedingly beneficial. Above and beyond company expectations, Exceed onDemand has truly made a substantial impact on Fairchild Semiconductor.

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