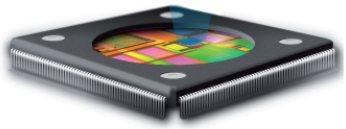
Written by Marco Attard
21. October 2011

"Big.Little processing" is name ARM gives to the concept behind the Cortex-A7 MPCore-- a chip for use as either a secondary processor or in low-end sub-$100 smartphones.



Designed to have as small a footprint as possible, ARM says the Cortex-A7 is one fifth the size of the Cortex-A8 processor (the single-core version measures all of 0.45mm²) and is built using a 28nm process, while being 5x more energy-efficient.

The Cortex-A7 is designed to work in tandem with the Cortex-A15 MPCore-- with big.Little processing selecting the right processor for the right task according to performance requirement. ARM claims this system will allow for entry level devices in the 2013-2014 timeframe with the equivalent processing performance to current high-level smartphones.

ARM Partners supporting the technology include Broadcom, Compal, Freescale, HiSilicon, LG Electronics, Linaro, OK Labs, QNX, Redbend, Samsung, Sprint, ST-Ericsson and Texas Instruments.

Go ARM Unveils big.Little Processing