



A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE

Plan ahead when collating a bill of materials to flag up components with end of life issues. Addressing potential problems at the design stage ensures they won't affect your ability to get product to market in the future



I'm putting together a bill of materials with a number of semiconductors that will probably become obsolete in the next few years, but my customers plan to use this system for ten to twenty years. What steps can I take to set up a long-term solution?



You've already taken the first step toward the successful long life of your project by asking this question at the design-in stage. There are answers that will save headaches, time and money for years to come. Here are the first steps to take:

1. Review your bill of materials (BOM) to determine the current and projected health status of all components.
2. Contact the original manufacturer to determine the status of parts that could be discontinued.
3. Contact the manufacturer – or one of their authorised distributors – to get pricing, services, programs and options that best match your needs.
4. For products where an end-of-life (EOL) notice has been issued, develop a projection of your long-term requirements.

5. If there is funding available to place an EOL order, decide how many months of support this will offer and what longer-term support you may need.
6. Place an EOL order from the original manufacturer or authorised distributor.
7. If you need additional long-term support, consider a custom solution from Rochester Electronics.

Taking these steps can help to avoid various pitfalls. If you wait too long, you risk missing the opportunity to plan for any EOL purchase and may face total re-design, massively increasing time and costs. Projects that require re-certification and government approvals are subject to even further delays, costs and efforts.

Faced with these issues, it can be tempting to find product through brokers and independent distributors, however quality and reliability are a serious concern. Parts that are counterfeit or damaged by poor handling and storage have the potential to cause great loss of revenue, reputation and safety.

Rochester Electronics was established to address the trend which sees system lifecycles getting longer and component lifecycles getting shorter. Its solution relies on quality, guaranteed components authorised by the original manufacturers.

Two plan-ahead programs are available. Rochester's long term supply (LTS) program provides a solution for customers who require a guaranteed extended supply of products. All products are traceable and qualified from the original manufacturer to maintain quality. Working with customers, Rochester helps to determine long-term needs and then proposes a best fit solution. This may include secure product storage in the company's bonded finished device facility or class 10,000-wafer bank.

Alternatively, Rochester's bill of material (BOM) review program provides a free-of-charge EOL analysis to identify products and solutions. The report shows life cycle status for each part, as well as Rochester's inventory and manufacturing capabilities. Ongoing reviews are conducted periodically to identify new products, status and servicing capabilities. This service is ideal for OEMs looking to proactively plan for obsolescence and to protect their long-term product needs.



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