

Competing technologies – silicon vs. disks

For decades, semiconductor memory makers (most recently, flash memory makers) have predicted that their devices will become more economical than hard disk drives for storing computer data, because Moore's Law says that their density will double every one and a half to two years at no increase in cost. However, disk drive storage density has also been increasing at roughly 60 percent per year for decades, with the result that for large units of storage, disks are still more economical. This is a case of "dueling technologies" in which two competing technologies move forward rapidly, neither of them reaching an unsurpassable limit.

Some storage technologies have been supplanted by semiconductors. For example, floppy disks—removable storage units that use magnetic storage media—are no longer sold, because removable flash memory devices are sturdier, smaller, cheaper, and hold more data.

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