

Apple to Start Using Own Chips in 2021?

Written by Frederick Douglas
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Apple plans to replace the Intel processors currently powering Mac computers with own chip designs, Bloomberg reports-- specifically processors based on the A14, the yet-to-be-confirmed chip powering the next generation iPhone.



According to anonymous sources familiar with the matter, Apple is working on three Mac processors based on the A14. Taking care of production is Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), the same manufacturer behind the current range of iPhone and iPad processors. As to when the first hardware featuring the processors will hit the market, Bloomberg points at a possible 2021 date.

Apple computers used to run on own chips until 2006, when the company inked a deal with

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Intel. Since then Intel provided chips for other Apple products, such as iPhone modem chips. However Apple has been moving towards having full control of hardware, leading to moves such as the acquisition of the Intel modem business the settling of a long-running legal battle with Qualcomm over patent licensing practices.

Making PC hardware will not be easy for Apple, mind-- Bloomberg says the first Apple-designed Mac chips will feature 12 cores, as divided between 8 high-performance "Firestorm" cores and 4 energy-efficient "Icestorm" cores. Such a combo might be ideal for energy-efficient, always-connected mobile devices, but it tends to fail to match the power of x86 processors. As such, it should come to no surprise Apple will reportedly first debut the processors in a consumer laptop, as opposed to a high-end MacBook Pro or iMac.

Bloomberg first reported Apple had plans to return to own chips for Mac computers back in 2018.

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