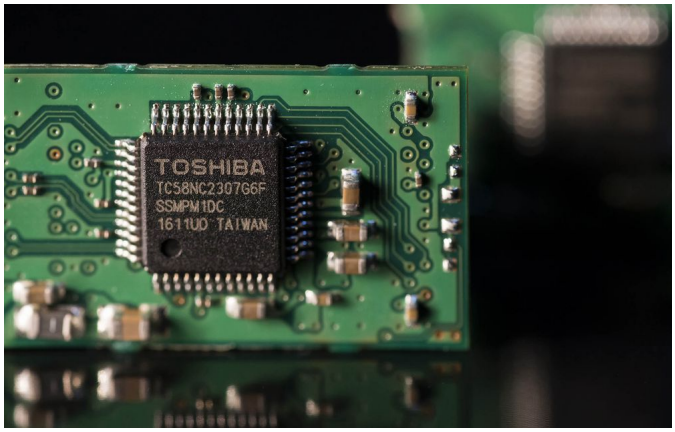
According to Japanese public broadcaster NHK Apple might team up with Foxconn to invest in the Toshiba semiconductor business-- specifically by a 20% stake in the company worth "at least several billion dollars."



The broadcaster adds such a plan allays Japanese government concern over the transfer of sensitive technology to investers deemed a "potential risk to national security." It also keeps Toshiba under US and Japanese control, since the Japanese company would maintain a partial stake in the unit.

Bloomberg adds to the story, saying Foxconn (aka Hon Hai) could control as much as 30% of the semiconductor unit should the bid be accepted. Foxconn reportedly already offered $27bn for the company, but its ties with China can sour the deal due to security concerns.

News of the Apple-Foxconn plan come as Western Digital insists for exclusive negotiating rights, since the storage maker says sale of the unit violates a previous joint venture contract. Other entities bidding for the Toshiba unit include Broadcom (whose offer reportedly reaches $18bn) and the Japanese government (who promises to make a $4.6bn investment).

Semiconductors are a profitable business for Toshiba, but the company is need of quick cash after a $7bn dollar writedown in US nuclear unit Westinghouse Electric.

Go Apple Considers Bidding for Stake in Toshiba Chip Business (Reuters)

Go Toshiba Pares Losses on Reports of Apple Investing in Chips (Bloomberg)

Go Apple, Google, Amazon in Bidding War for Toshiba NAND Unit?