

# Three-Dimensional Integrated Circuits

## Challenges and Opportunities

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# NanoCAS Lab at Stony Brook



- Established in 2011
- 3 PhD students
- 2 MS students
- 7 MS alumni
  - Employment at
    - Intel, NVIDIA, Hynix, Marvell,
    - Continue PhD
- Several undergraduate researchers
  - URECA, senior design
  - ECE Honors Program

<http://nanocas.ece.stonybrook.edu>

# Research at NanoCAS Lab

## Research Themes

### Energy-efficient circuit design

- Number 1 design objective for almost *any* application
- “Power Wall”
- “Dark Silicon”

### Application Domain

- ASICs, microprocessors
- Low power portable processors
- Implantable ICs

### Emerging integrated circuit technologies

- 7 nm by 2022 seems to be the end of traditional CMOS scaling
- Moore’s law 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary



# Energy-Efficient Circuit Design

## Low Power Clocking

- Clocks consume significant power
  - 20% to 60% of the total power
- Application to **low power SoCs**, **embedded/mobile computing**



## Reliable Power Delivery

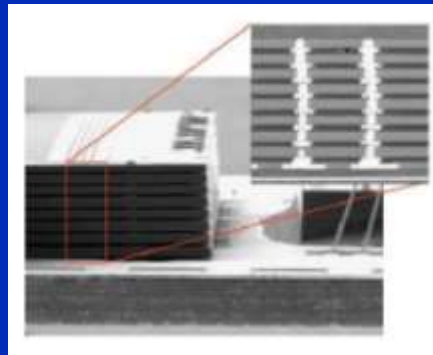
- Modern SoCs demand **high current at low voltages**
  - 1 Volt to 0.4 Volt
- Power delivery is critical

Industrial liaisons from Freescale  
Semiconductor, AMD, TI

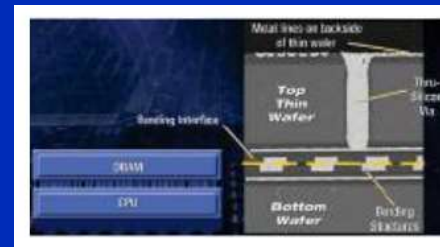
# Emerging IC Technologies

## Three-dimensional (3D) integration

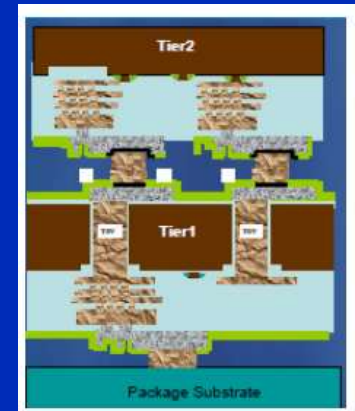
- “An industry game changer” according to SEMATECH



Source: Samsung



Source: Intel



Source: Qualcomm  
- Fabless company



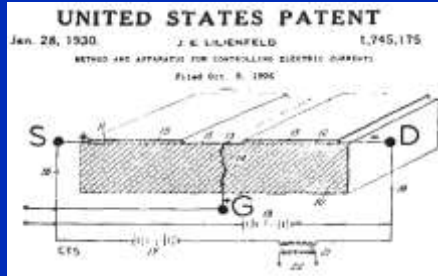
• CAREER Grant

# Outline

- **Motivation**
- **Background**
- **Recent Research Results in 3D ICs at NanoCAS Lab**
- **Conclusions**

# A Brief History

Conceptual transistor,  
by J.E. Lilienfeld, 1926



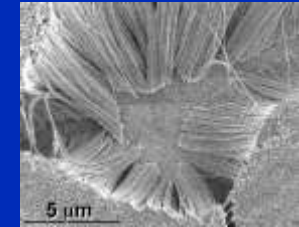
ENIAC, "the Giant  
Brain," 1946



First transistor, 1947



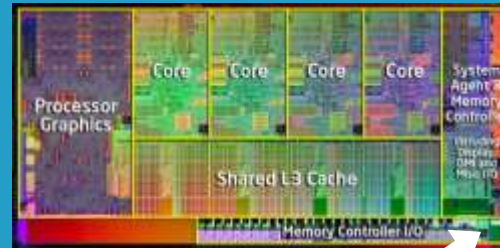
Electronics + biotechnology, ?



Electronics + nanotechnology, ?

Functionality

Intel Core i7, 2014



Moore's Law

Monolithic era

First IC, 1959



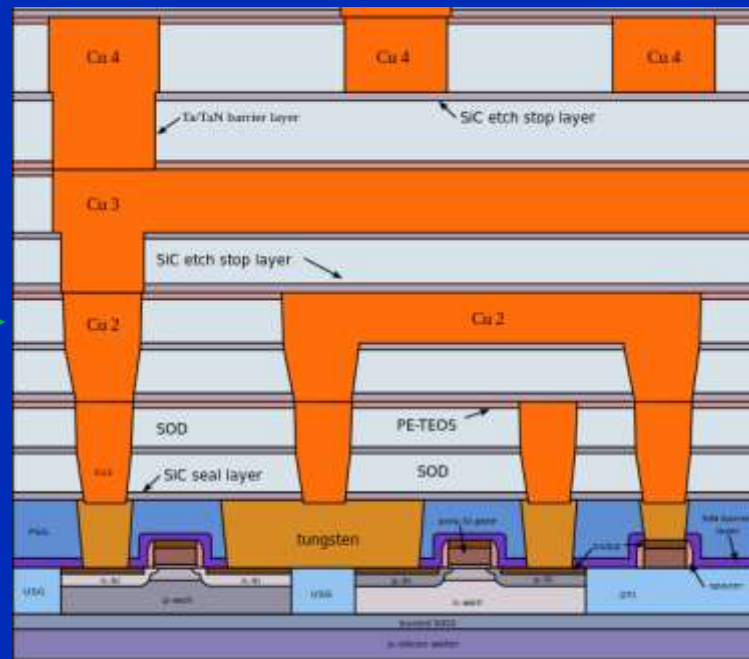
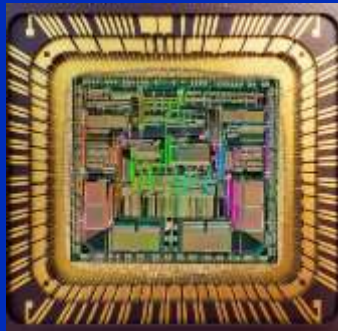
Number of devices



# Nanoscale Circuit Design

## • Transistors

## • Interconnections



Global  
Interconnects

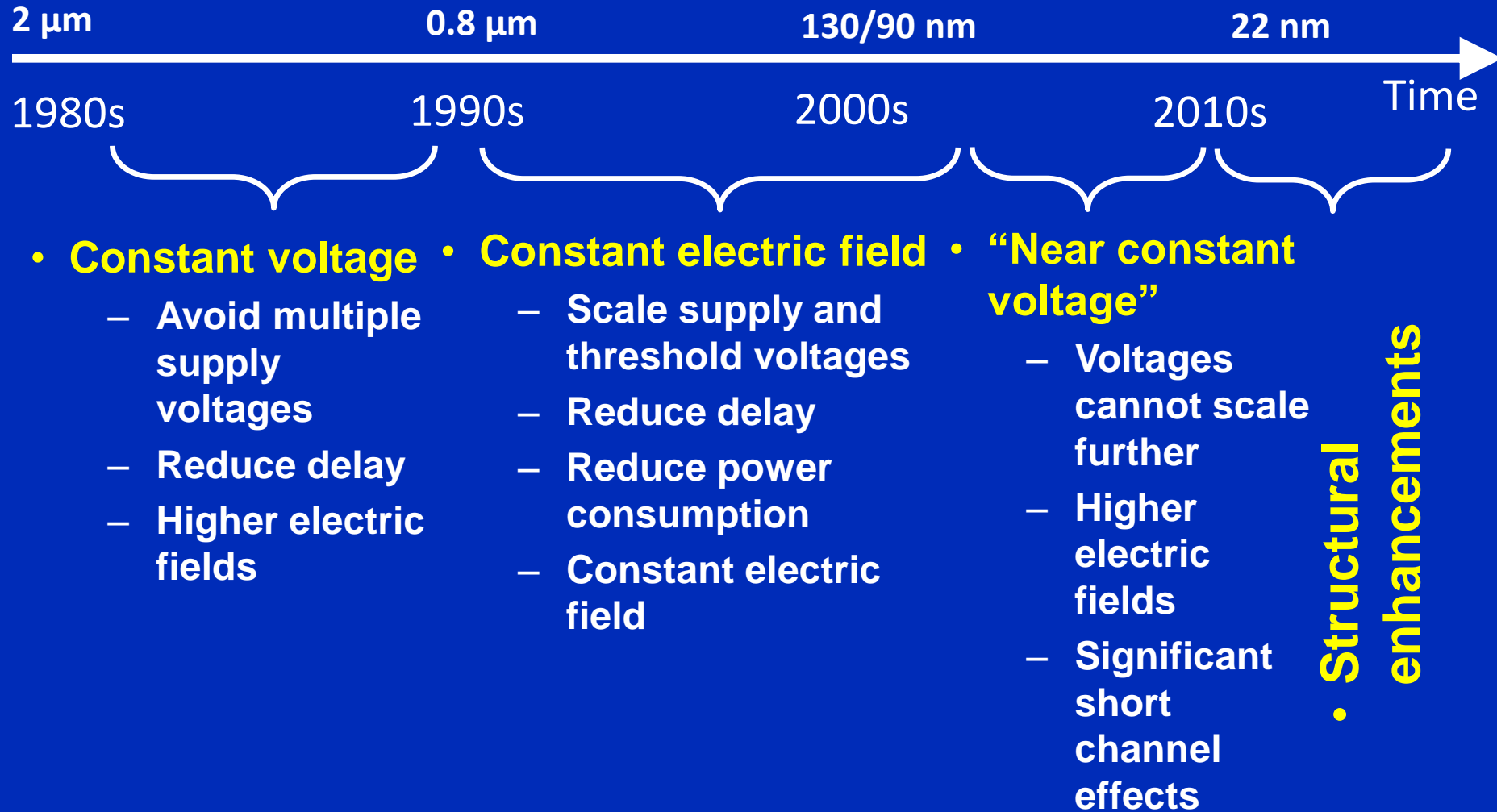
Local  
Interconnects

Transistors

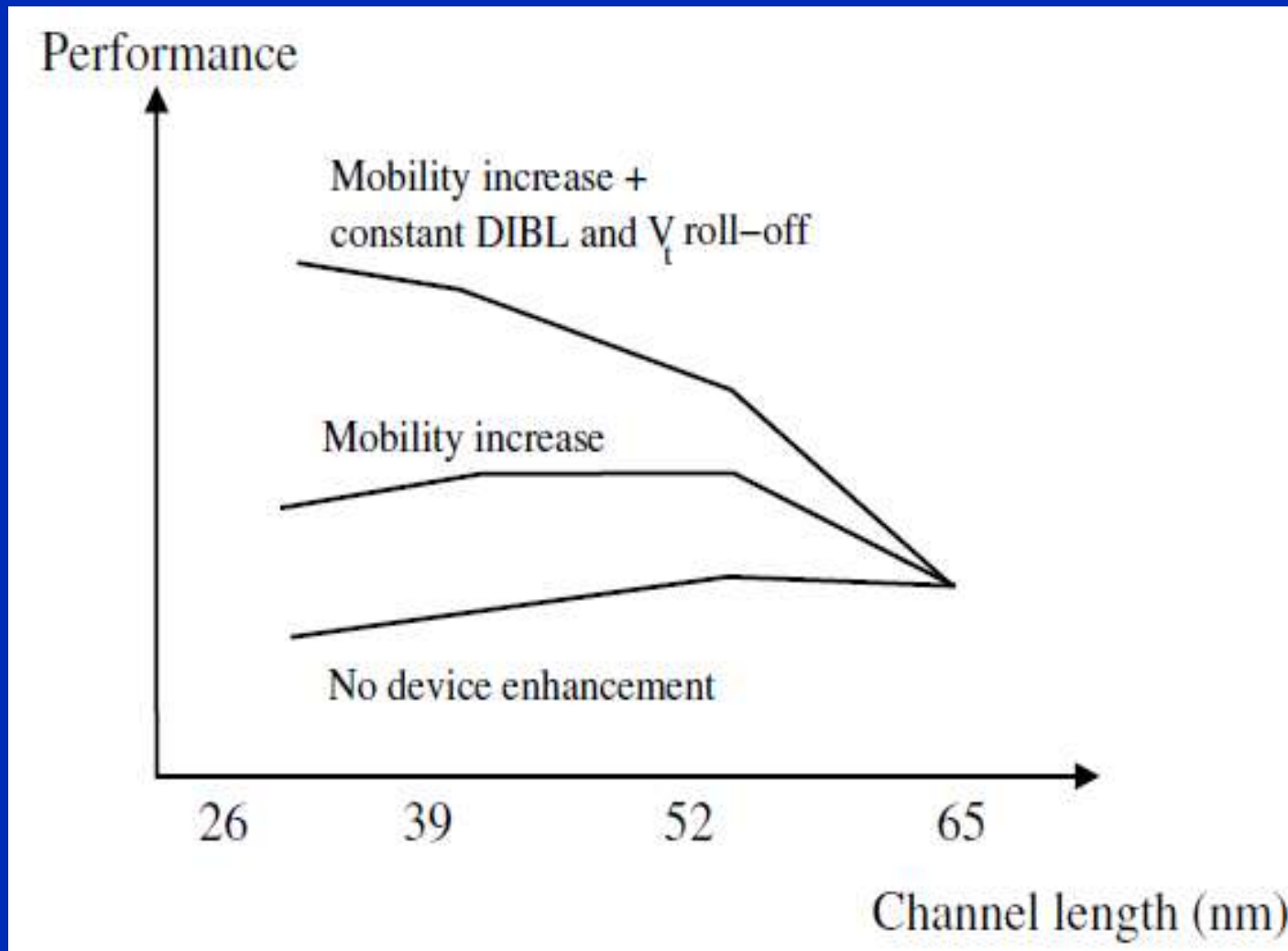
## • Transistor vs interconnect scaling?



# Overview of Device Scaling

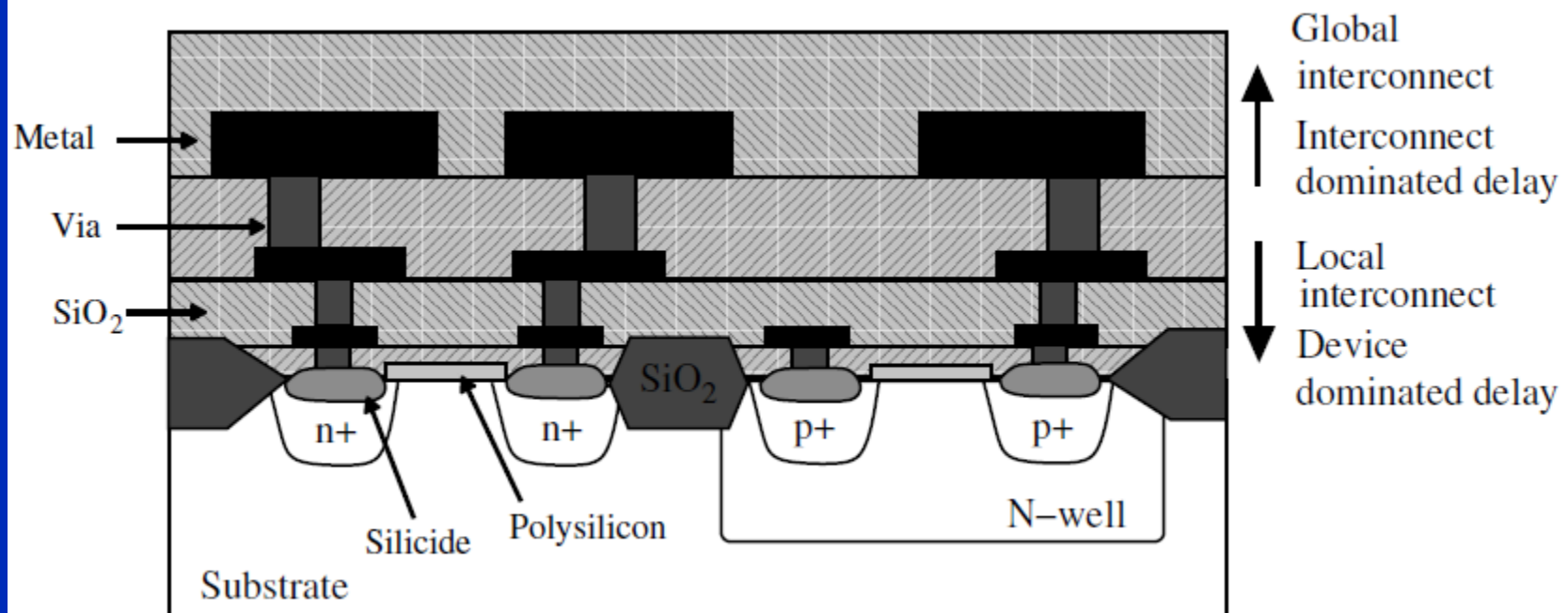


# Device Scaling Scenarios



# Overview of Interconnect Scaling

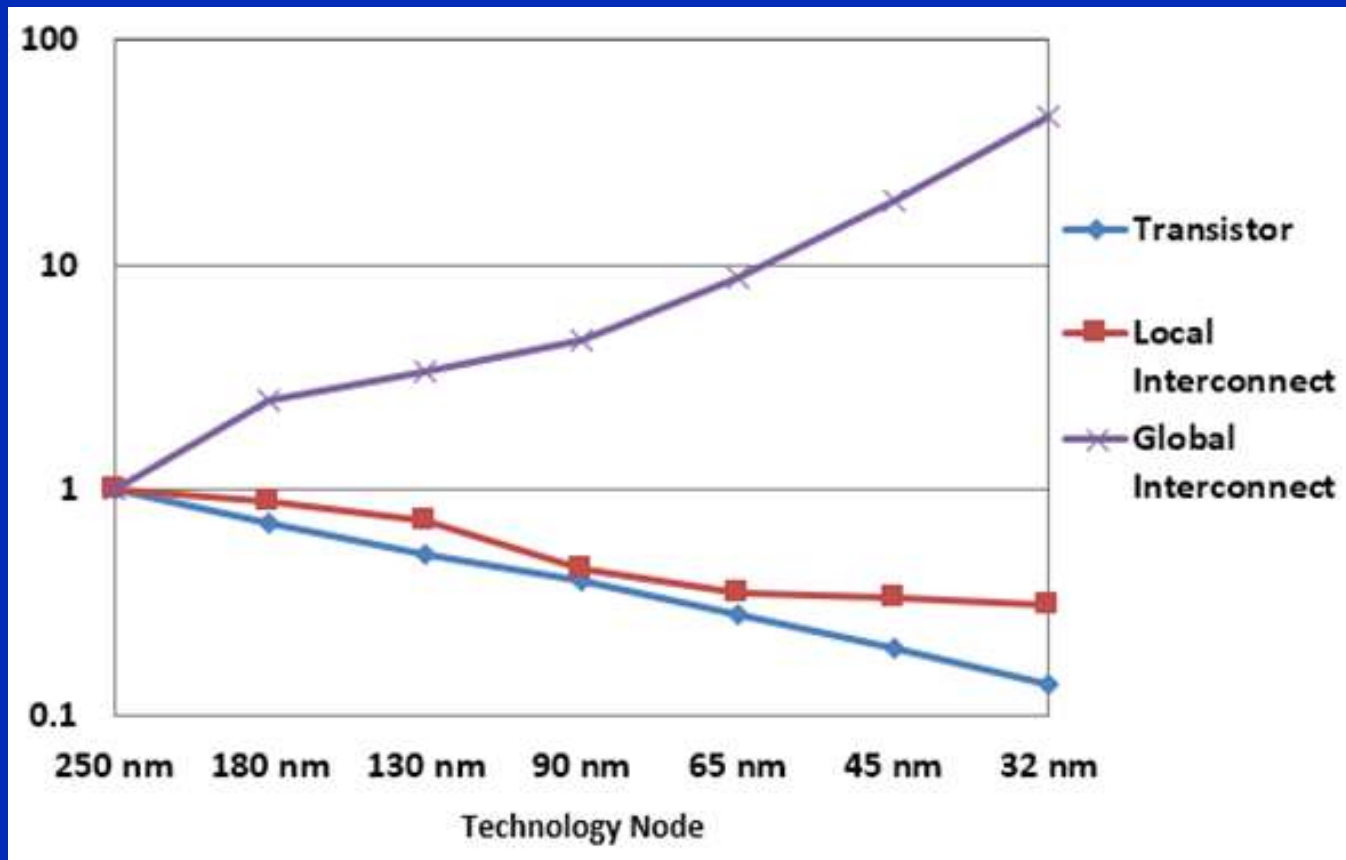
- Metal pitch reduced from 1.8  $\mu\text{m}$  in 1994 to a few hundred nanometers in 2011
  - Higher coupling capacitance
- Significant reduction in the cross-sectional area
  - Higher parasitic resistance



# Interconnect Scaling Scenarios

Interconnect parameters	Ideal scaling		Quasi-ideal scaling		Constant resistance		Constant thickness	
	Local	Global	Local	Global	Local	Global	Local	Global
Resistance	$S$	$S_c S^2$	$\sqrt{S}$	$S_c S \sqrt{S}$	1	1	1	$SS_c$
Coupling capacitance ( $C^c$ )	$1/S$	$S_c$	$1/\sqrt{S}$	$S_c \sqrt{S}$	$1/S$	$S_c^2 S$	1	$S_c S$
Ground capacitance ( $C^g$ )	$1/S$	$S_c$	$1/(S\sqrt{S})$	$S_c/\sqrt{S}$	$1/S$	$S_c$	$1/S$	$S_c$
$C^c/C^g$	1	1	$S$	$S$	1	$S_c S$	$S$	$S$
$RC$ Delay	1	$S_c^2 S^2$	$1/S$ to 1	$S_c^2 S$ to $S_c^2 S^2$	$1/S$	$S_c$ to $S_c^2 S$	$1/S$ to $S$	$S_c^2 S$ to $S_c^2 S^2$

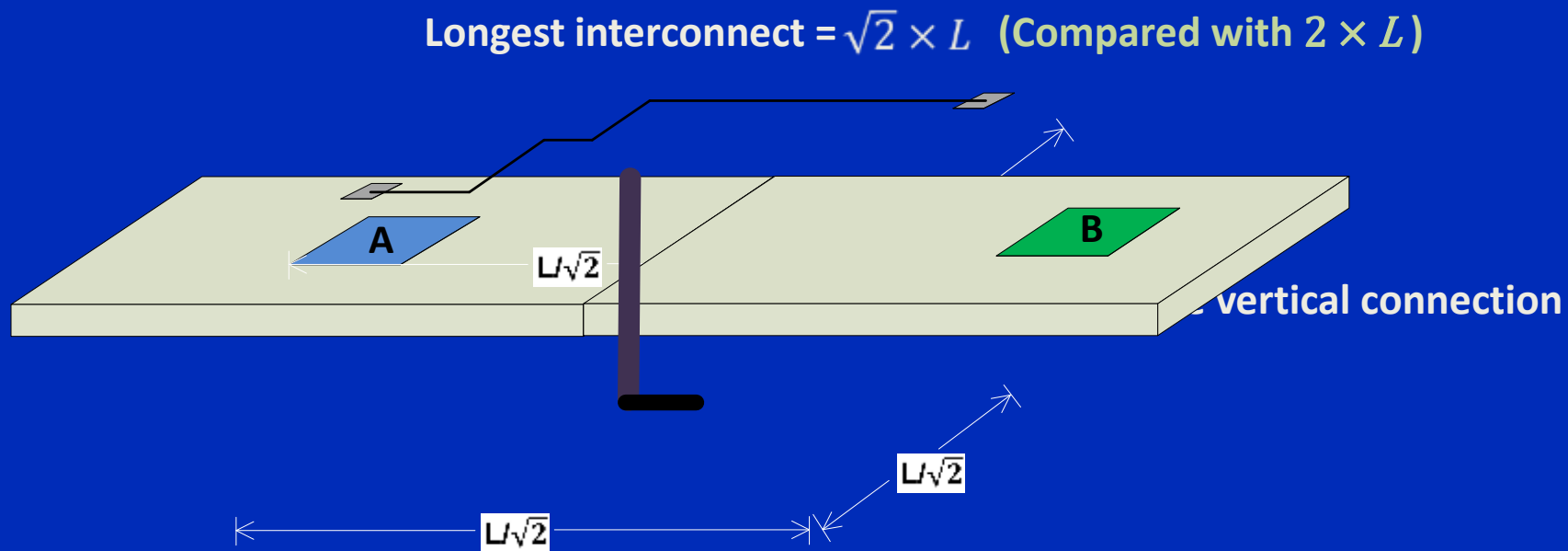
# Interconnect Scaling Scenarios



**Interconnect-centric design era**

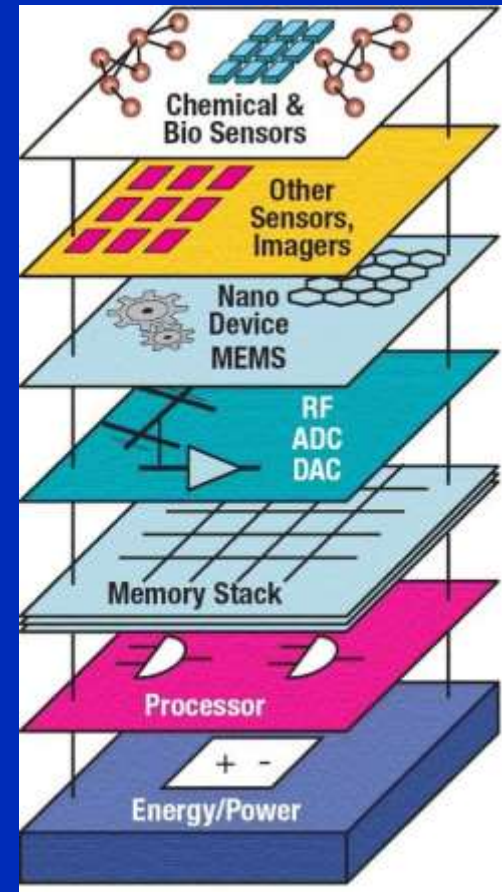
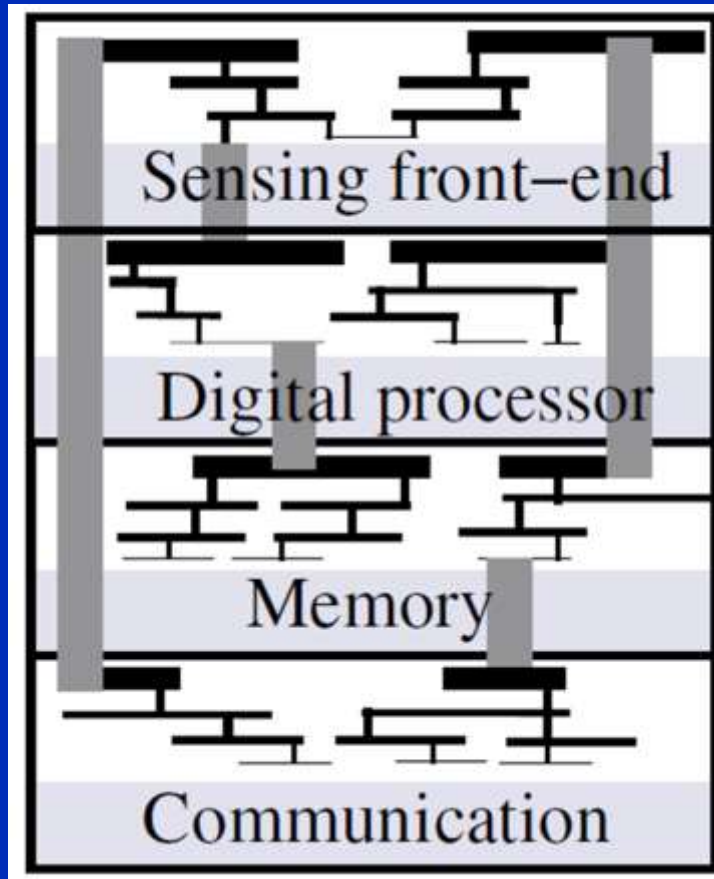
# Vertical Integration

- One solution: **Go vertical!**



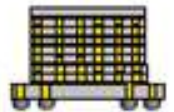
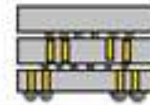
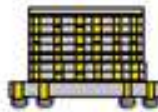
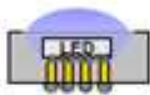
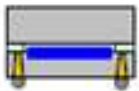
Reduction of longest interconnect length :  $\sqrt{N}$   
(  $N$  = number of planes )

# Heterogeneous Integration



**Dies with different functions, fabricated with different technologies are integrated**



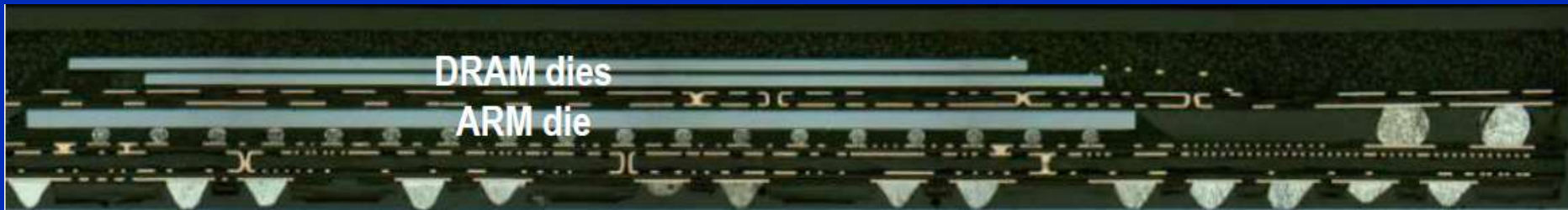
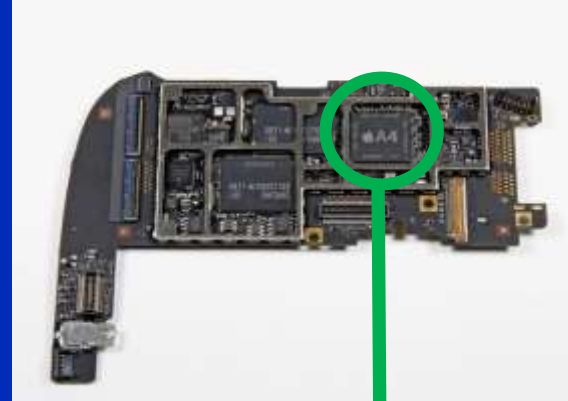
16

# Outline

- **Motivation**
- **Background**
  - 3D Integration Technology
  - Power and Signal Integrity
- **Recent Research Results in 3D ICs at NanoCAS Lab**
- **Conclusions**

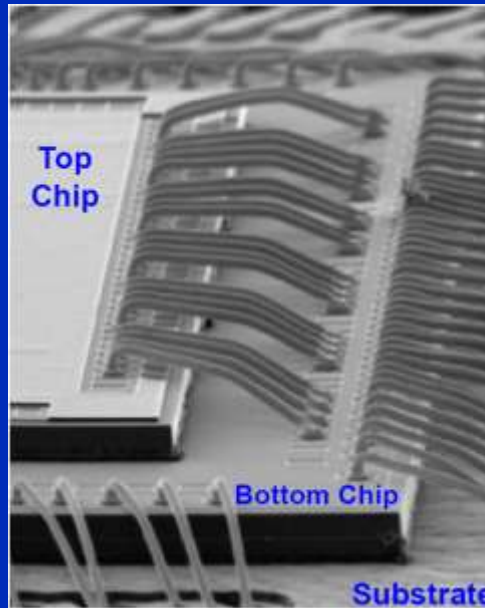
# Example

- Apple A4 Chip (for 1<sup>st</sup> Gen iPad and iPhone 4)

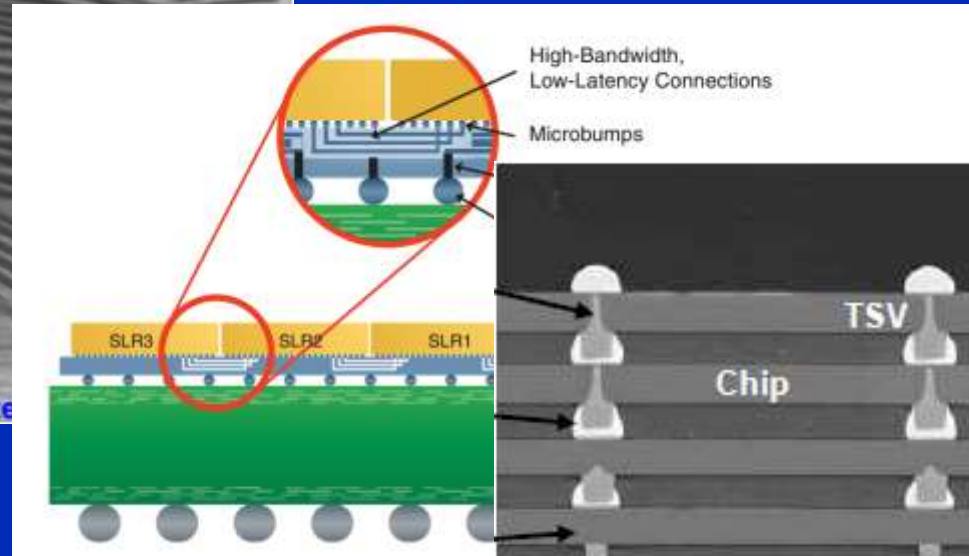


**Off-chip vertical connections**

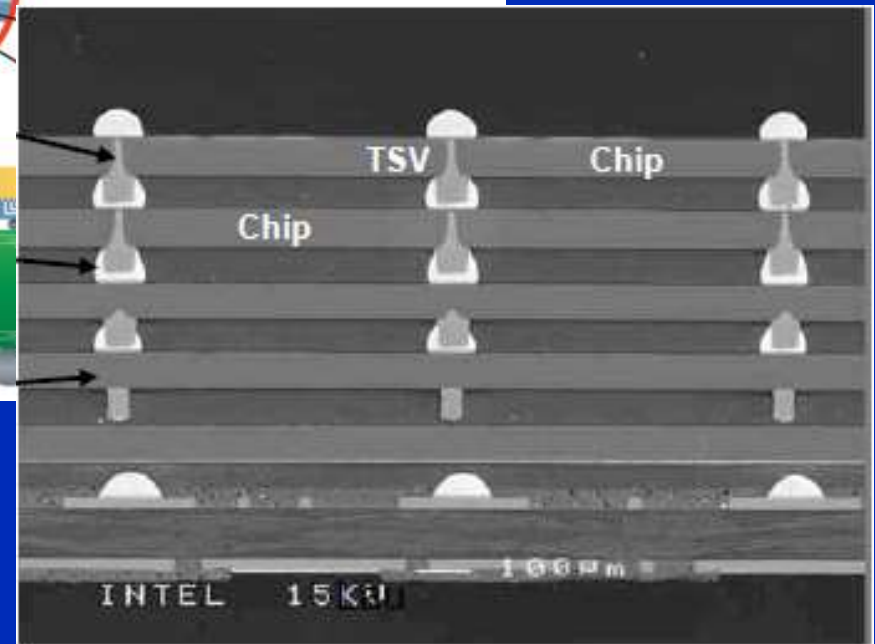
# Different Types of 3D ICs



3D Package-on-Package, Amkor



Interposer Based Integration, Xilinx

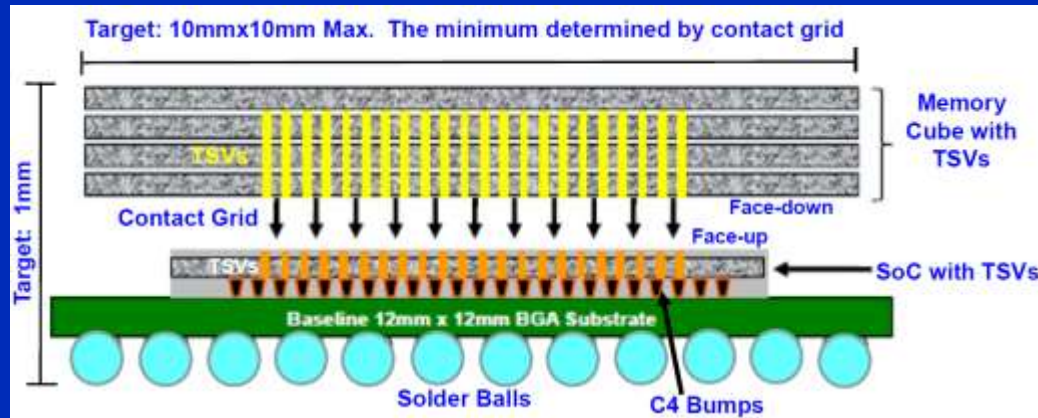


Through Silicon Via (TSV), Intel



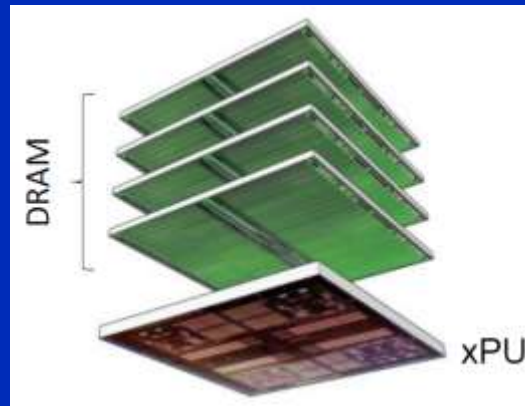
# Current Status in Industry

- Hyper Memory Cube (already commercially available)



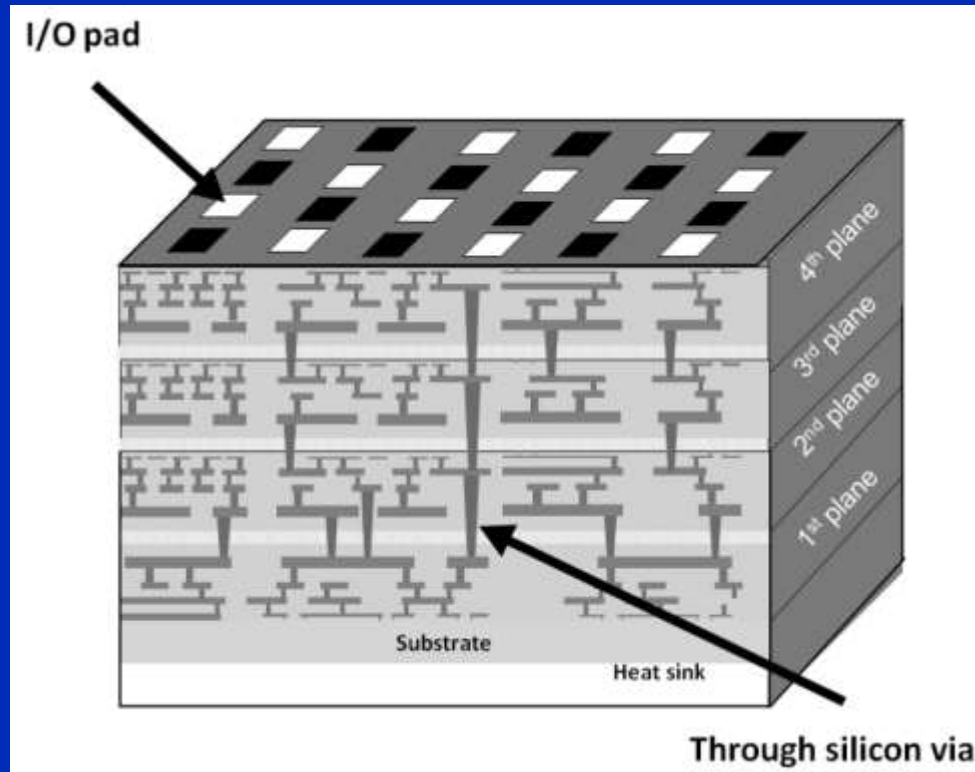
Micron Wide I/O DRAM (15X faster, 70% less energy and 90% less space)

- Memory-Processor Stack (next step)



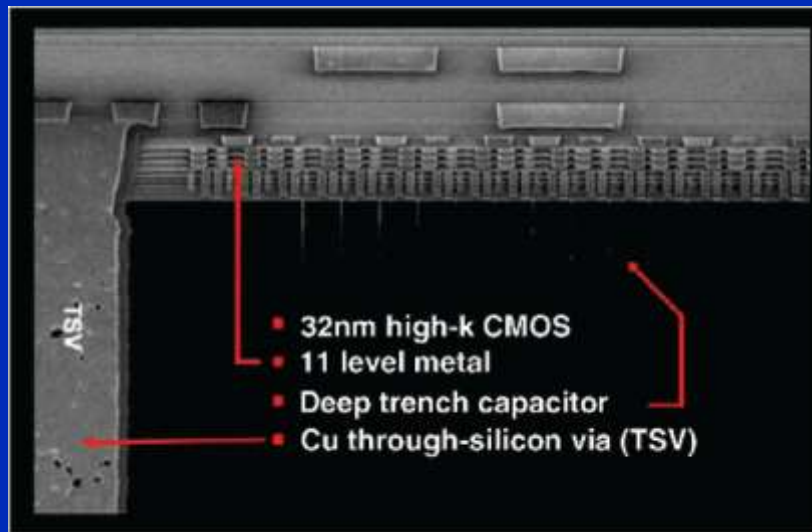
AMD xPU + DRAM stacking

# Wafer-Level TSV Based 3D Integration

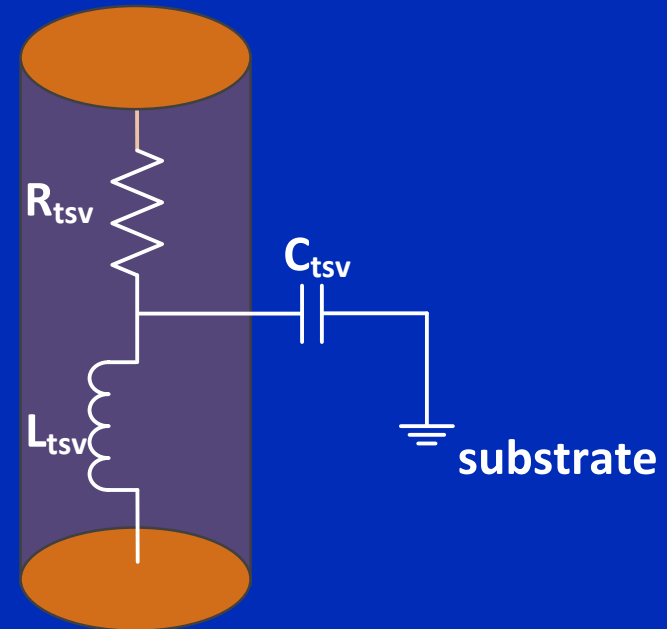


- Multiple wafers are
  - Thinned
  - Aligned
  - Bonded
- No fundamental limitations exist
  - Alignment accuracy of 1  $\mu\text{m}$
  - Adhesive, oxide, metal bonding
  - Wafer thinning capability
    - 0.1  $\mu\text{m}$  for SOI
    - 15  $\mu\text{m}$  for bulk silicon

# Through Silicon Via



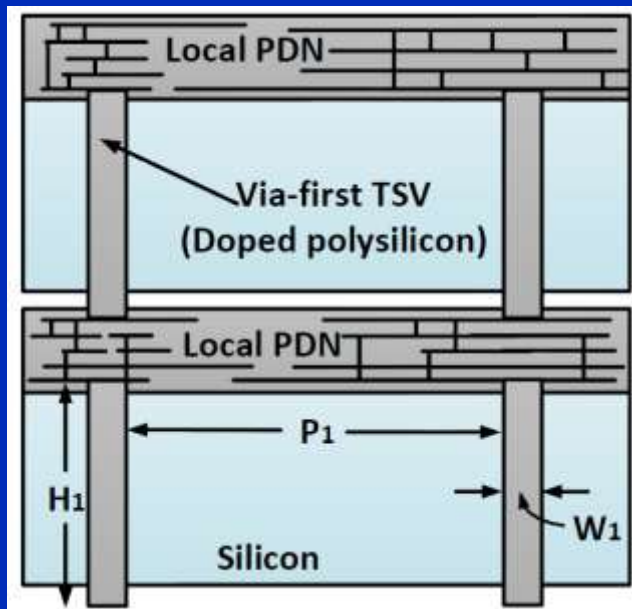
Courtesy of IBM



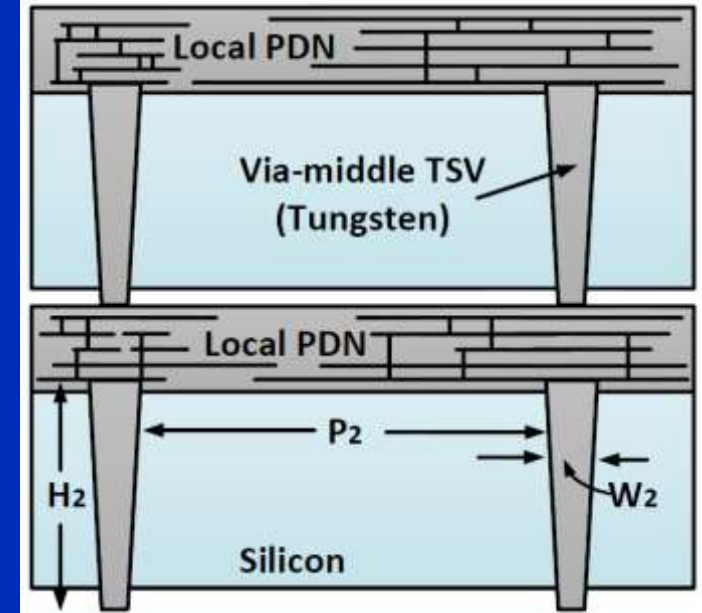
- TSVs are large
  - Diameter in the 2 to 10  $\mu\text{m}$  range
  - Height in the 8 to 60  $\mu\text{m}$  range
- TSVs have parasitic impedances (RLC)



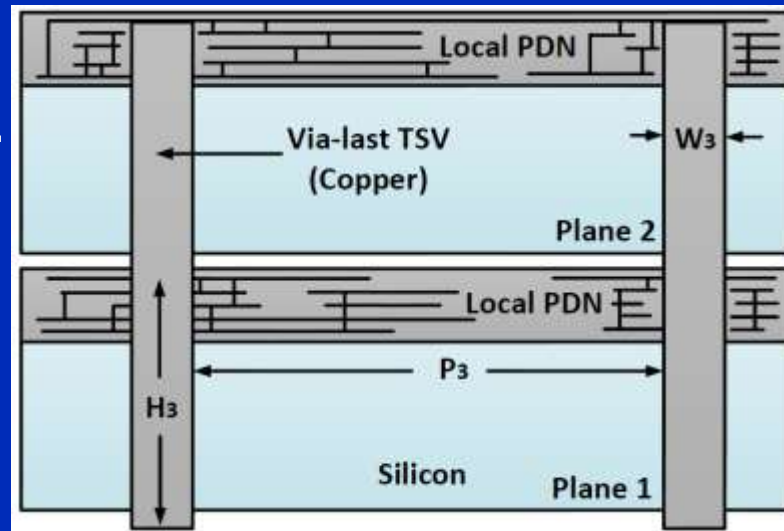
# TSV Fabrication Techniques



- **Via-first**
  - Prior to FEOL process



- **Via-middle**
  - After FEOL
  - Before BEOL

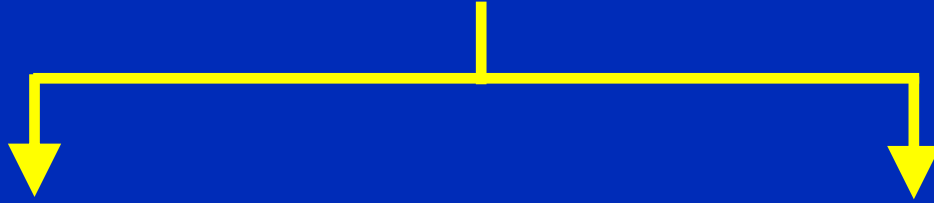


- **Via-last**
  - After BEOL

# Primary Challenges

- **Fabrication**
  - TSV reliability and stress
  - Bonding techniques
  - Thermal/Cooling
- **Design**
  - Architecture
  - Design for test
  - EDA tools
  - Design for thermal integrity
  - Physical design
    - Power integrity
    - Signal integrity

# Research Focus on 3D ICs



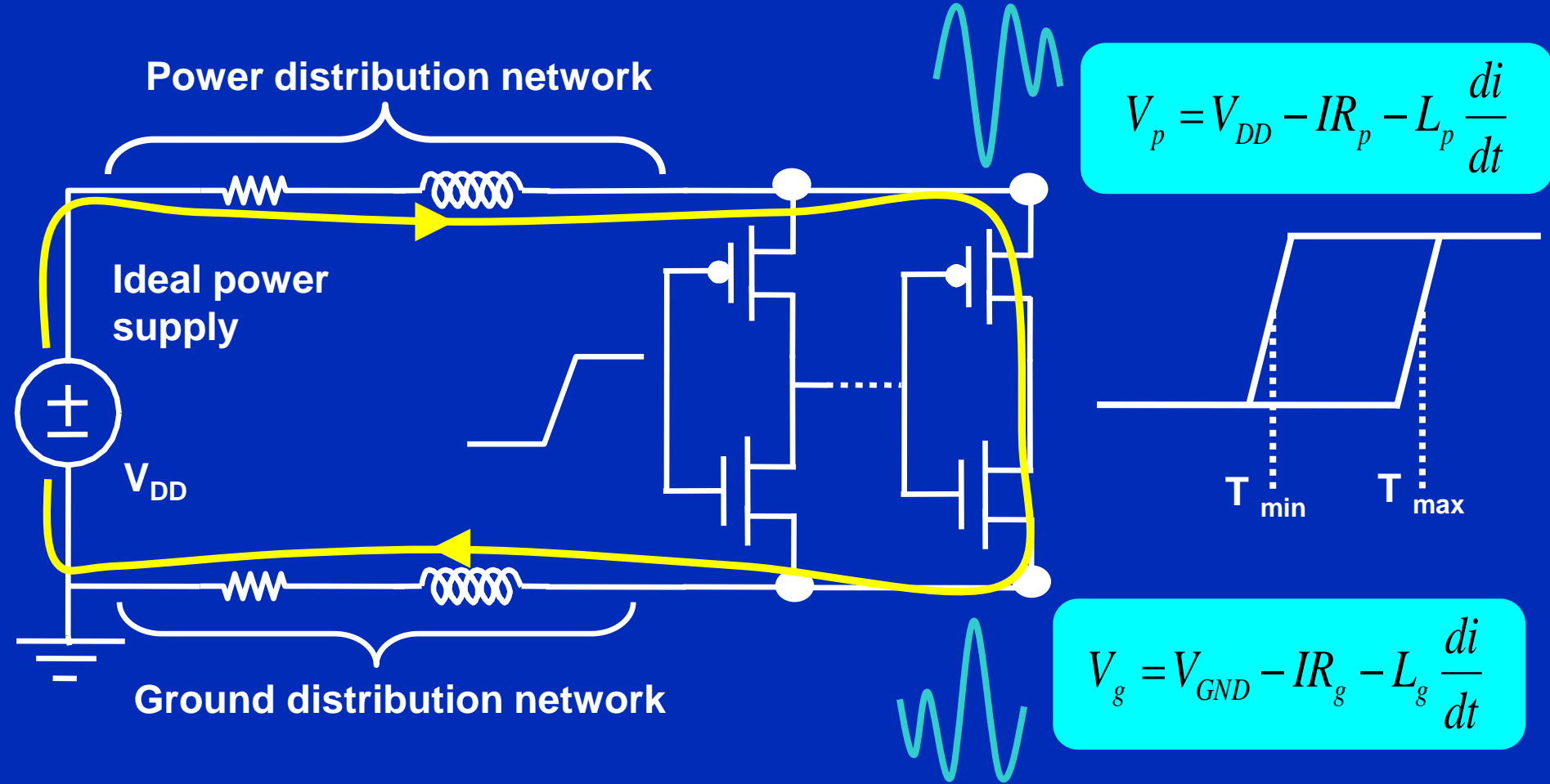
## Power integrity and power aware design for 3D ICs

- Power distribution in processor-memory stacks
  - [JETCAS'12, SOCC'12, GLSVLSI, 13]
- Decoupling capacitor topologies for 3D ICs
  - [TVLSI'15, ISQED'15]
- Resource allocation in 3D ICs
  - [ISQED'15, GLSVLSI'13]
- Low power 3D ICs
  - [ISCAS'15]

## Signal Integrity for 3D ICs

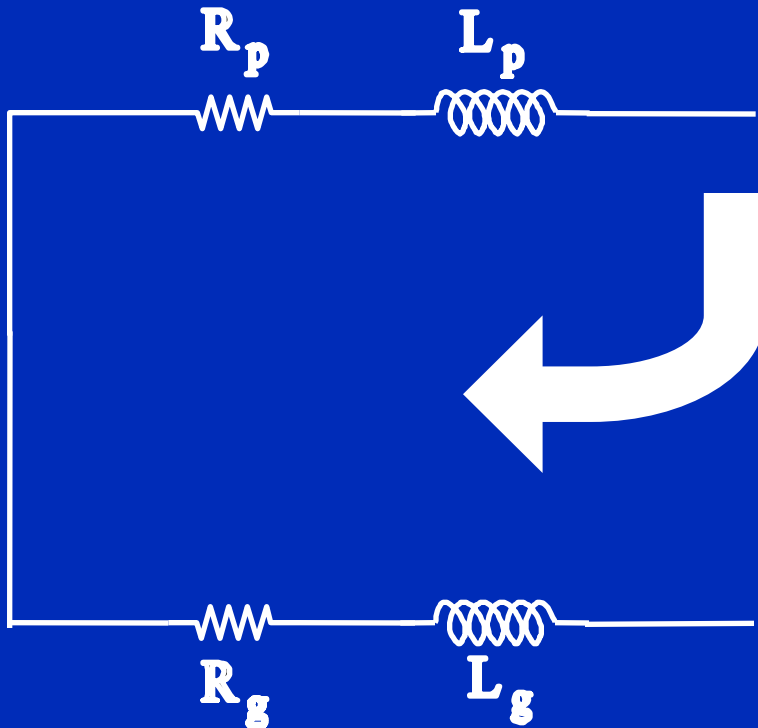
- TSV-to-transistor noise modeling
  - [Integration'14, GLSVLSI'13]
- Noise analysis for implantable 3D ICs
  - [ISCAS'11, BioCAS'11]

# Power Integrity and Delay Uncertainty



- *“I have thought about some of the problems of building electric circuits on a small scale, and the problem of resistance is serious.”* Feynman, 1959

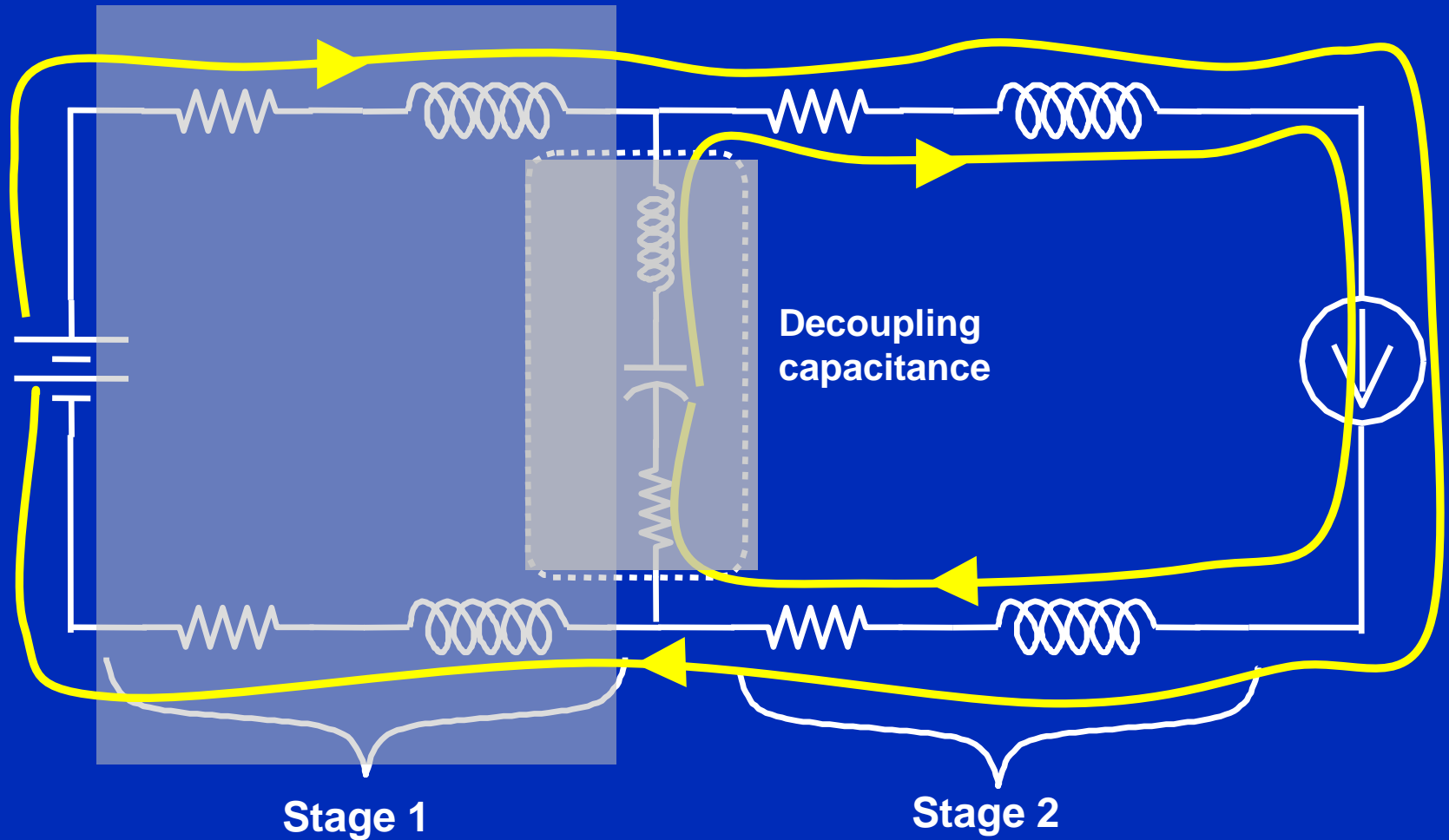
# Impedance Characteristics



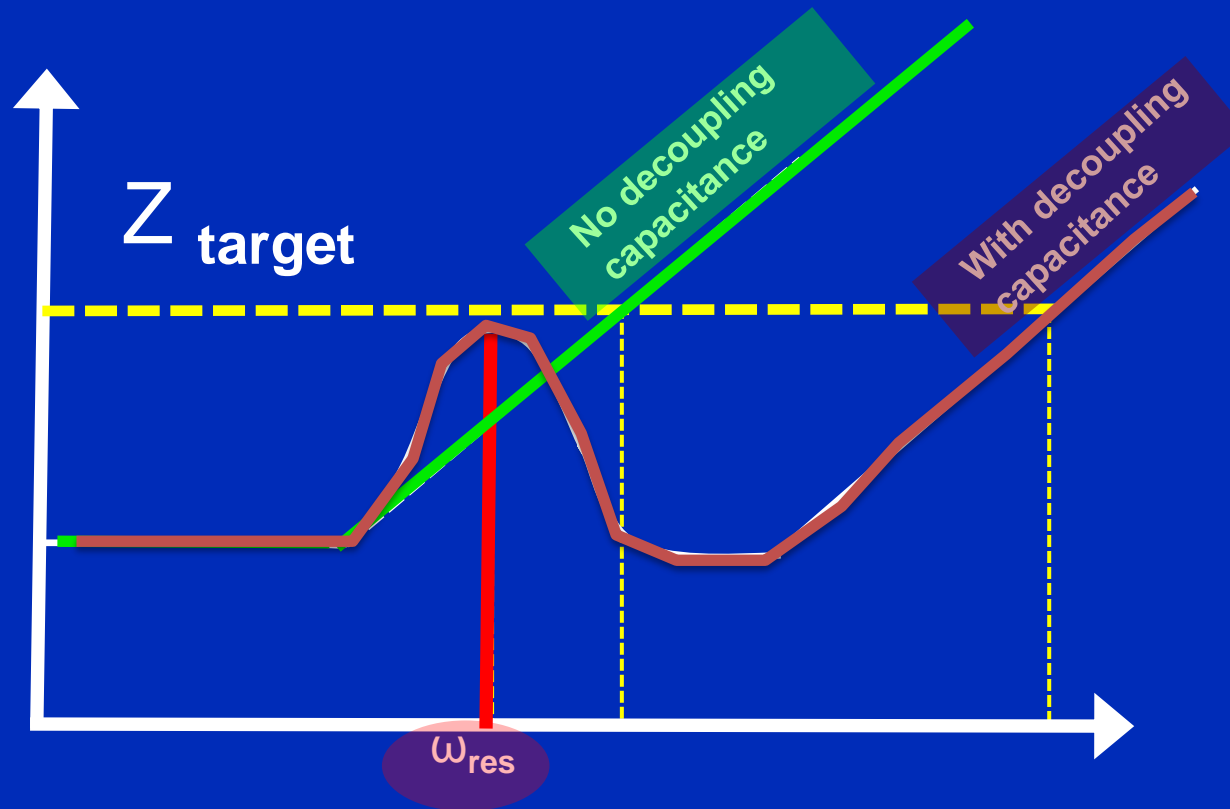
$$Z_{\text{target}} = \frac{\text{Nominal voltage} \times \text{Allowed ripple}}{\text{Current}}$$
$$= \frac{\text{Nominal voltage}^2 \times \text{Allowed ripple}}{\text{Power consumption}}$$

- 65 nm CMOS microprocessor\*
  - P = 250 watts
  - $V_{DD} = 1.2$  volts
  - Ripple = 10% of  $V_{DD}$
  - Target impedance  $\leq 0.3$  milliohms

# Decoupling Capacitance



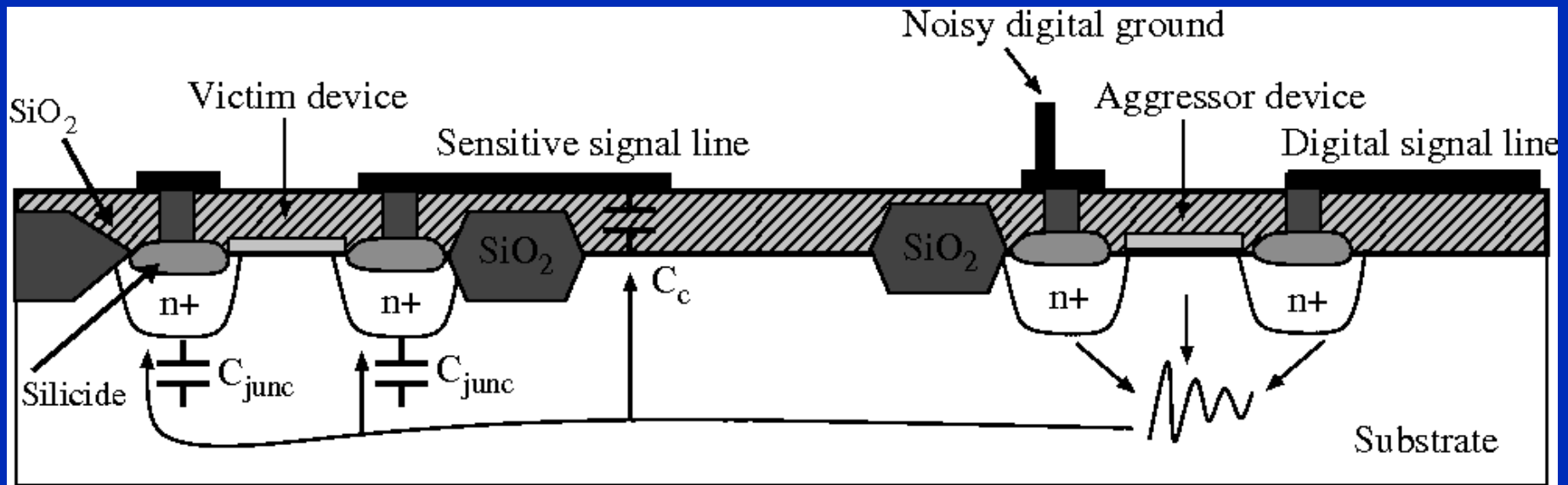
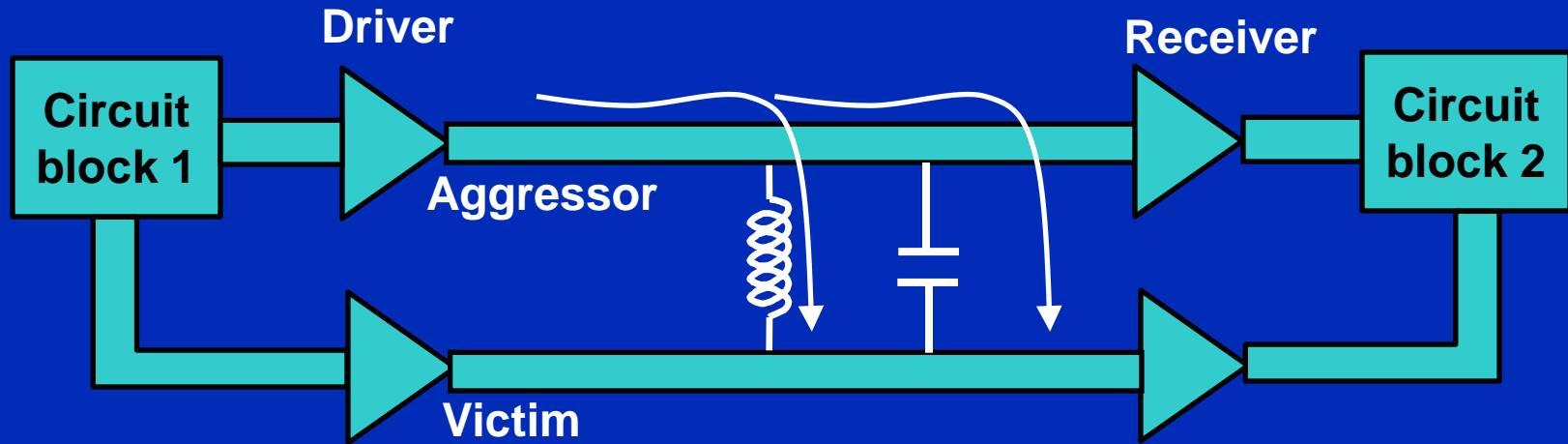
# Decoupling Capacitance and Impedance



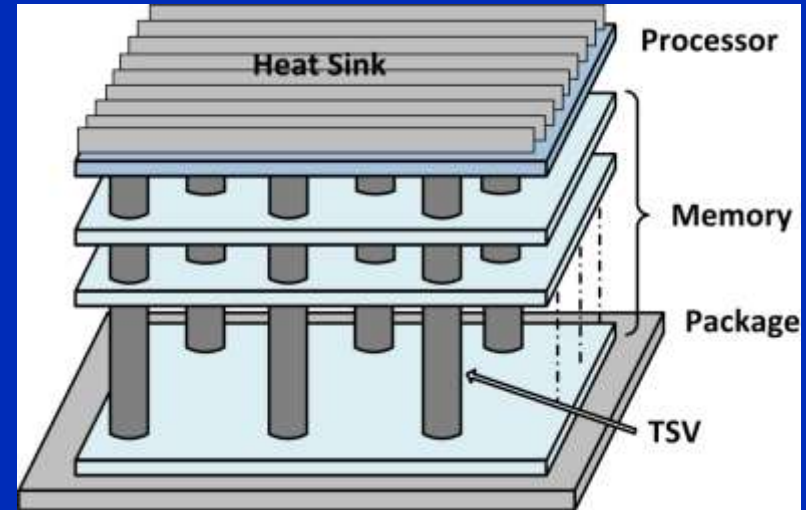
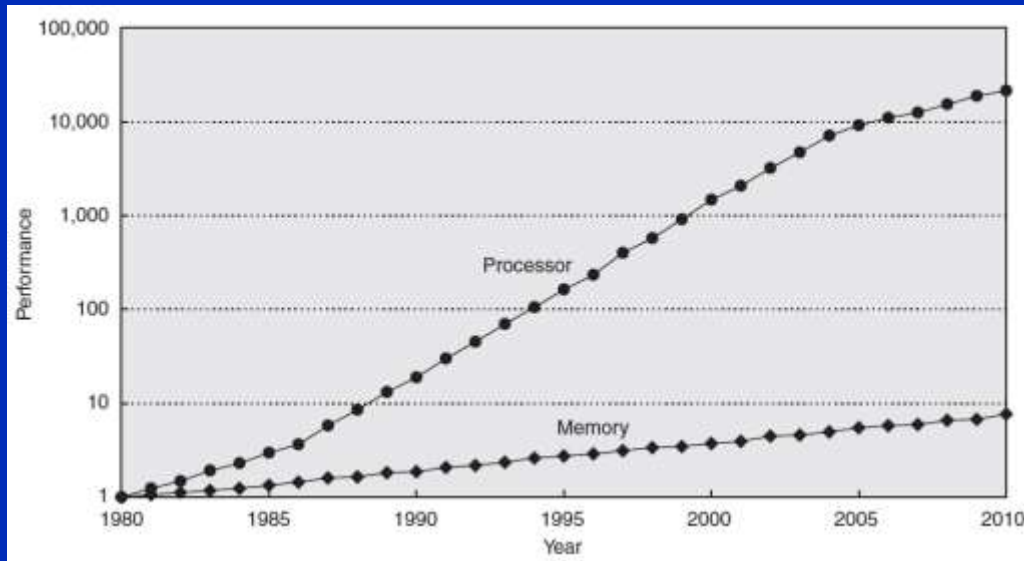
- Decap is required to satisfy target impedance
- Resonance should be carefully considered



# Signal Integrity



# 3D Processor-Memory Stacks



J. L. Hennessy and D. A. Patterson, Morgan Kaufmann 2011

3D processor-memory stack

- Higher on-chip memory bandwidth
- Reliable power delivery is an important challenge

# 3D Processor-Memory Stacks

## 3D DRAM Design and Application to 3D Multicore Systems

**Hongbin Sun**

Xi'an Jiaotong University

**Jibang Liu**

Rensselaer Polytechnic

**Rakesh S. Anigundi**

Qualcomm

**Nanning Zheng**

Xi'an Jiaotong University

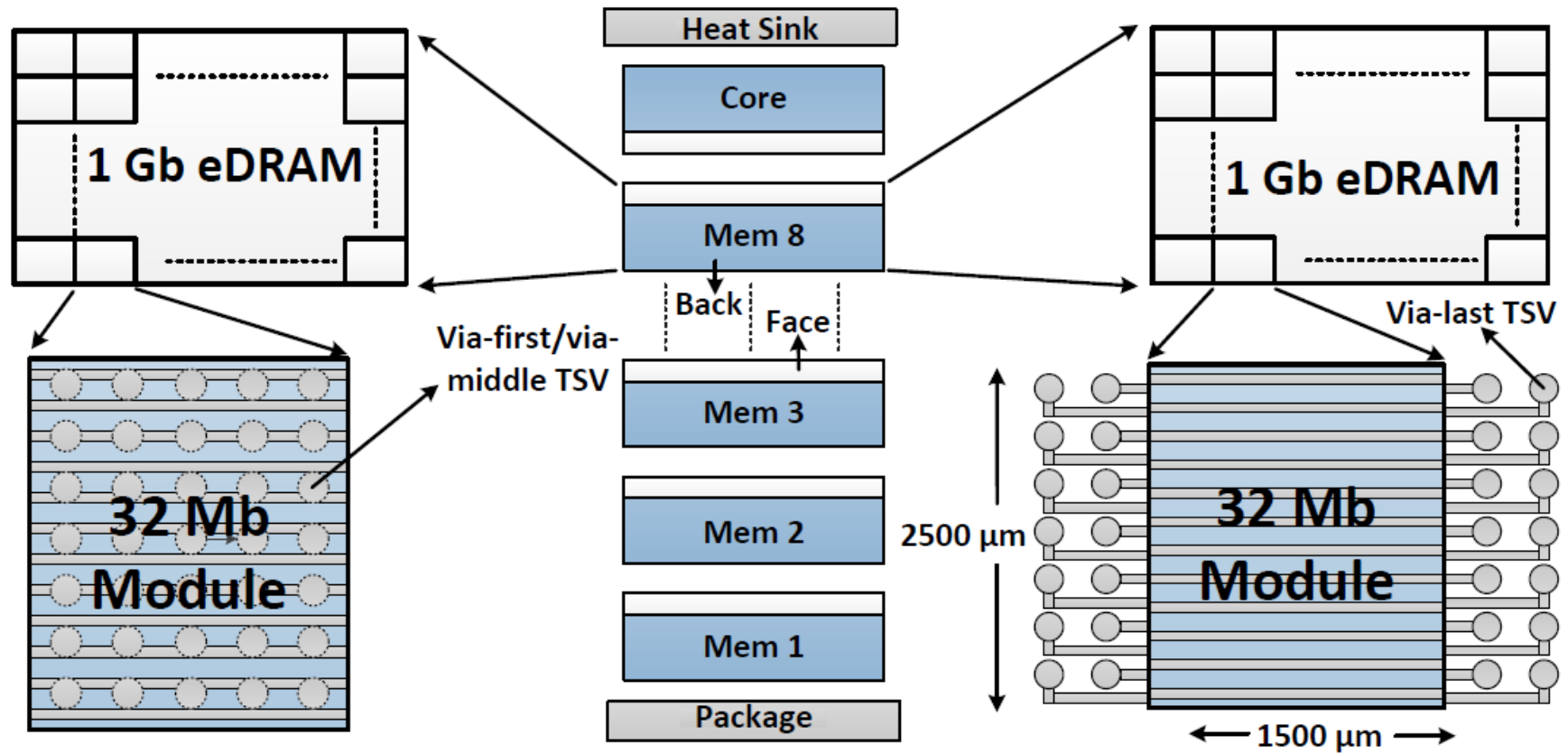
**Jian-Qiang Lu, Kenneth Rose, and Tong Zhang**

Rensselaer Polytechnic

IEEE Design & Test of Computers, 2009

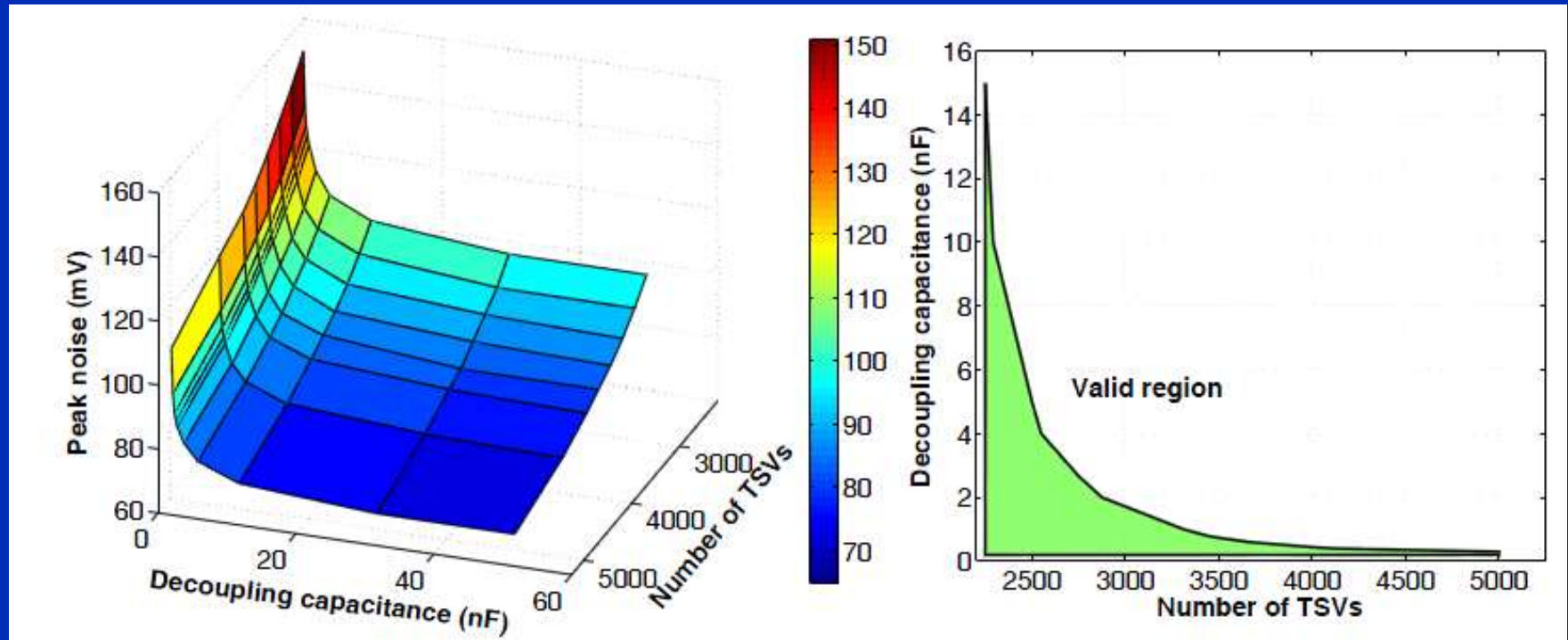
- **Potential architectural benefits of a 9 plane memory + processor stack (1 GB embedded memory)**
  - Access latency, footprint, energy consumption
- **Power delivery is identified as a primary challenge**

# Nine Plane 3-D Processor-Memory Stack



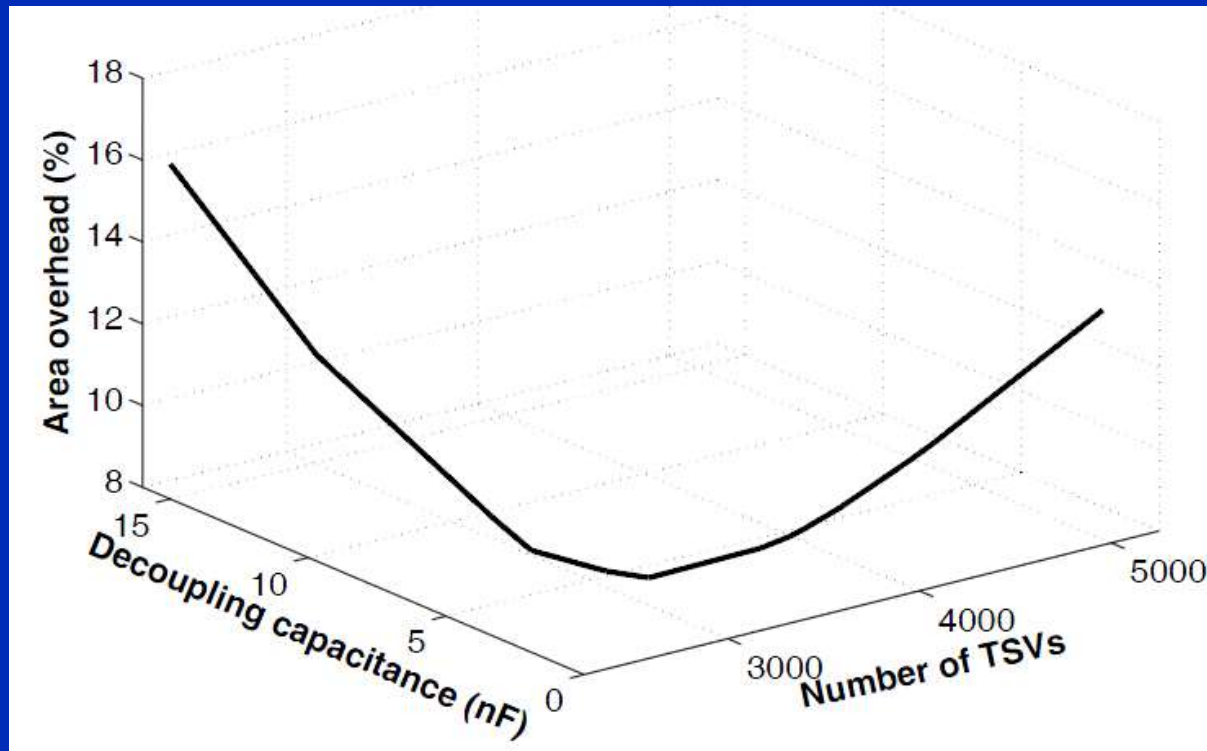
- How many power/ground TSVs are required?
- How much decoupling capacitance is required?
  - Satisfy power supply noise (target impedance)
  - Minimize area

# Design Space for Via-First TSV



- Monotonic response
- Typically over-damped
  - Relatively low peak-to-peak noise
- High number of TSVs to reduce effective resistance
- High decoupling capacitance to reduce transient  $IR$  drop

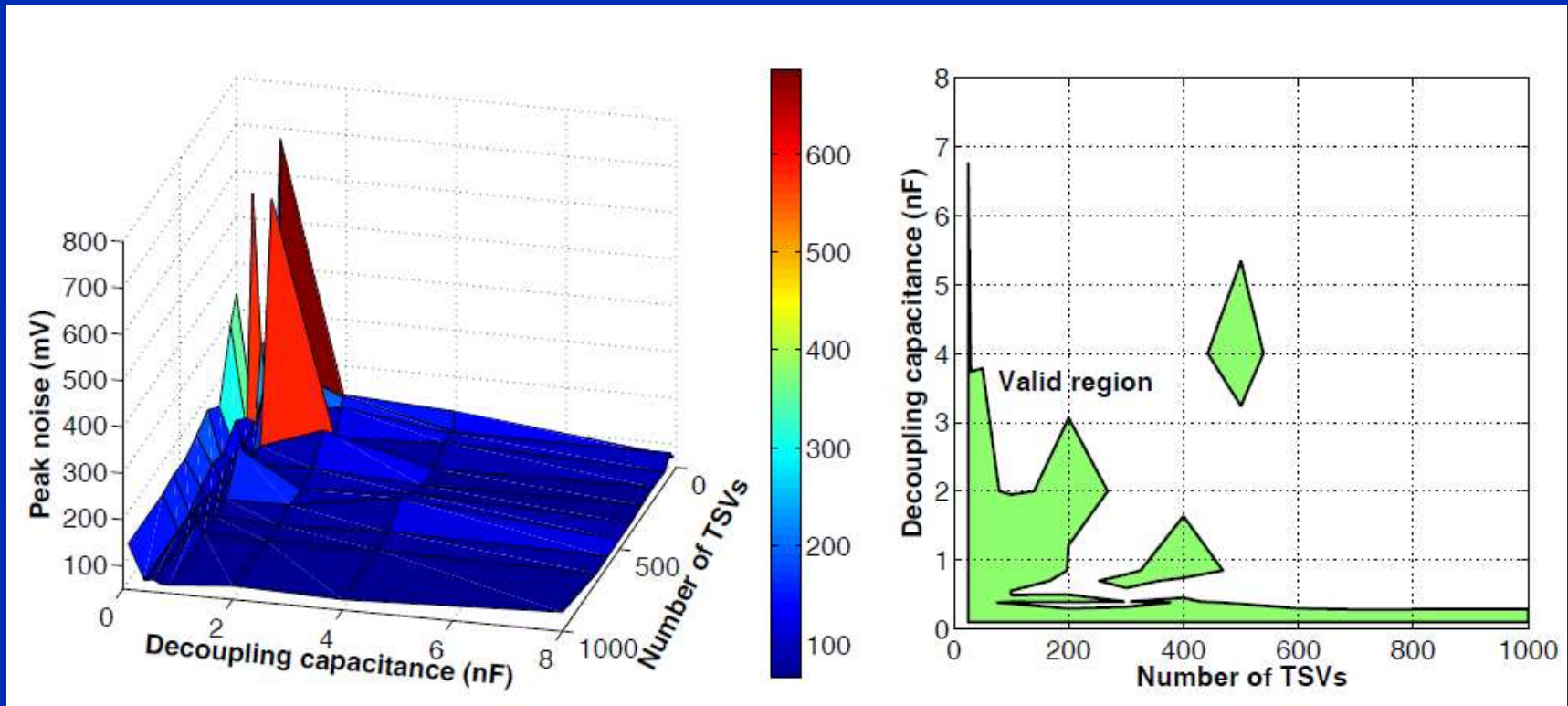
# Minimum Physical Area for Via-First TSV



- Decap is implemented as MOS-C
  - 39 fF/um<sup>2</sup> → 32 nm technology node (from EOT)
- Optimum pair exists that minimizes area
  - 2750 TSVs and 2.7 nF of decoupling capacitance
  - 9% area overhead
  - 34 mV peak-to-peak noise



# Design Space for Via-Last TSVs

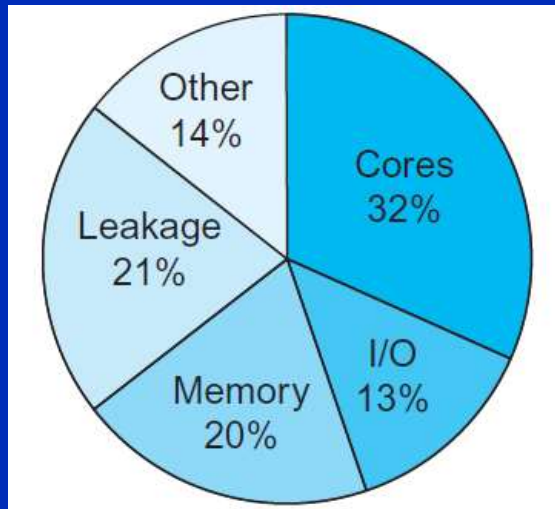


- Non-monotonic response
- Typically under-damped
- Relatively high peak-to-peak noise
- High sensitivity to design variables
- Careful analysis is required

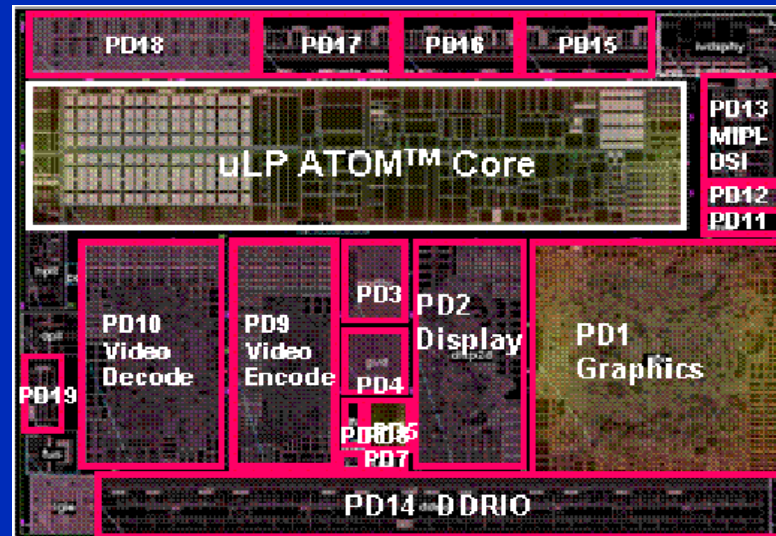


# Power Gated 3D ICs

- An effective method to reduce leakage power consumption
- Total power consumption = dynamic power + leakage power



\* Niagara 2 (2008)

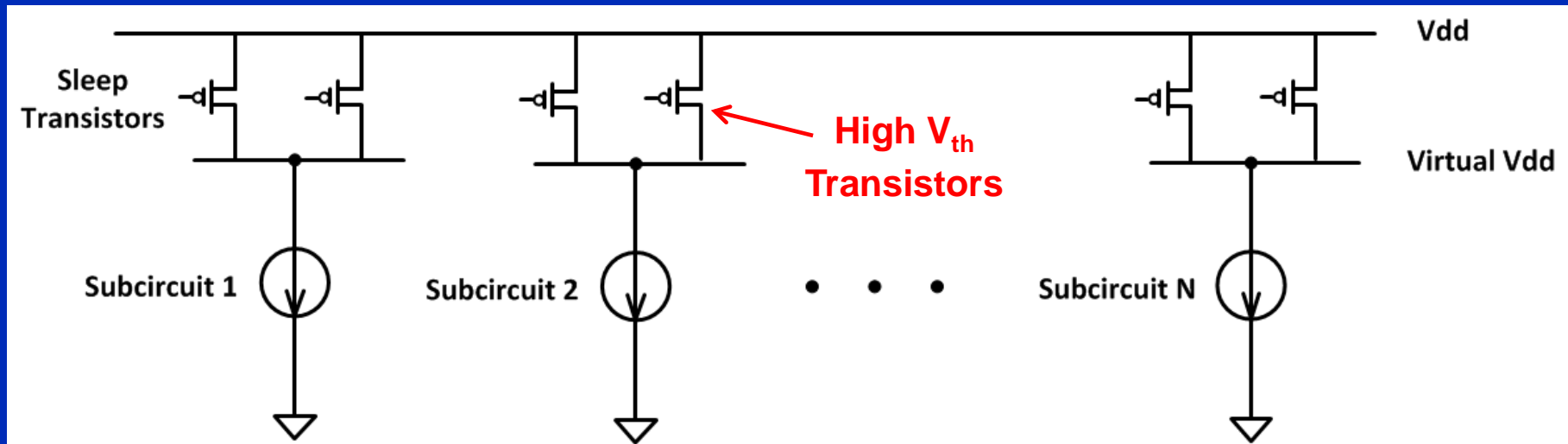


Intel Atom Processor

**Power Gating: turn off the inactive blocks to save leakage**

# Power Gating: Sleep Transistors

- Sleep transistors are inserted along the power delivery path



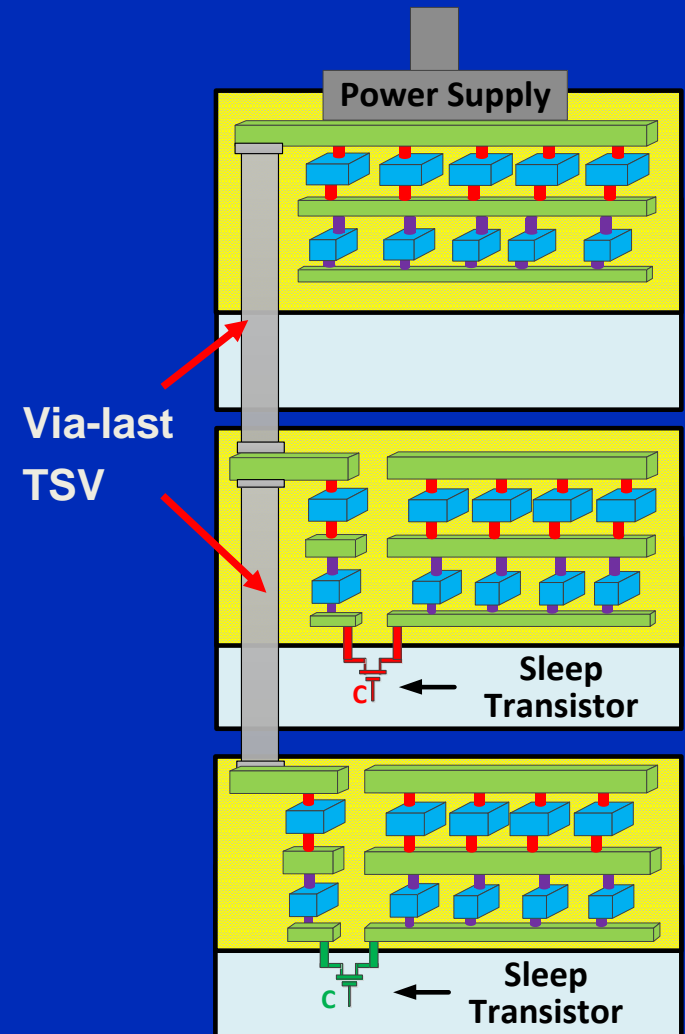
- Sleep transistors also consume significant area
  - More than 1 meter overall width

# Allocate Area between TSVs and Sleep Transistors

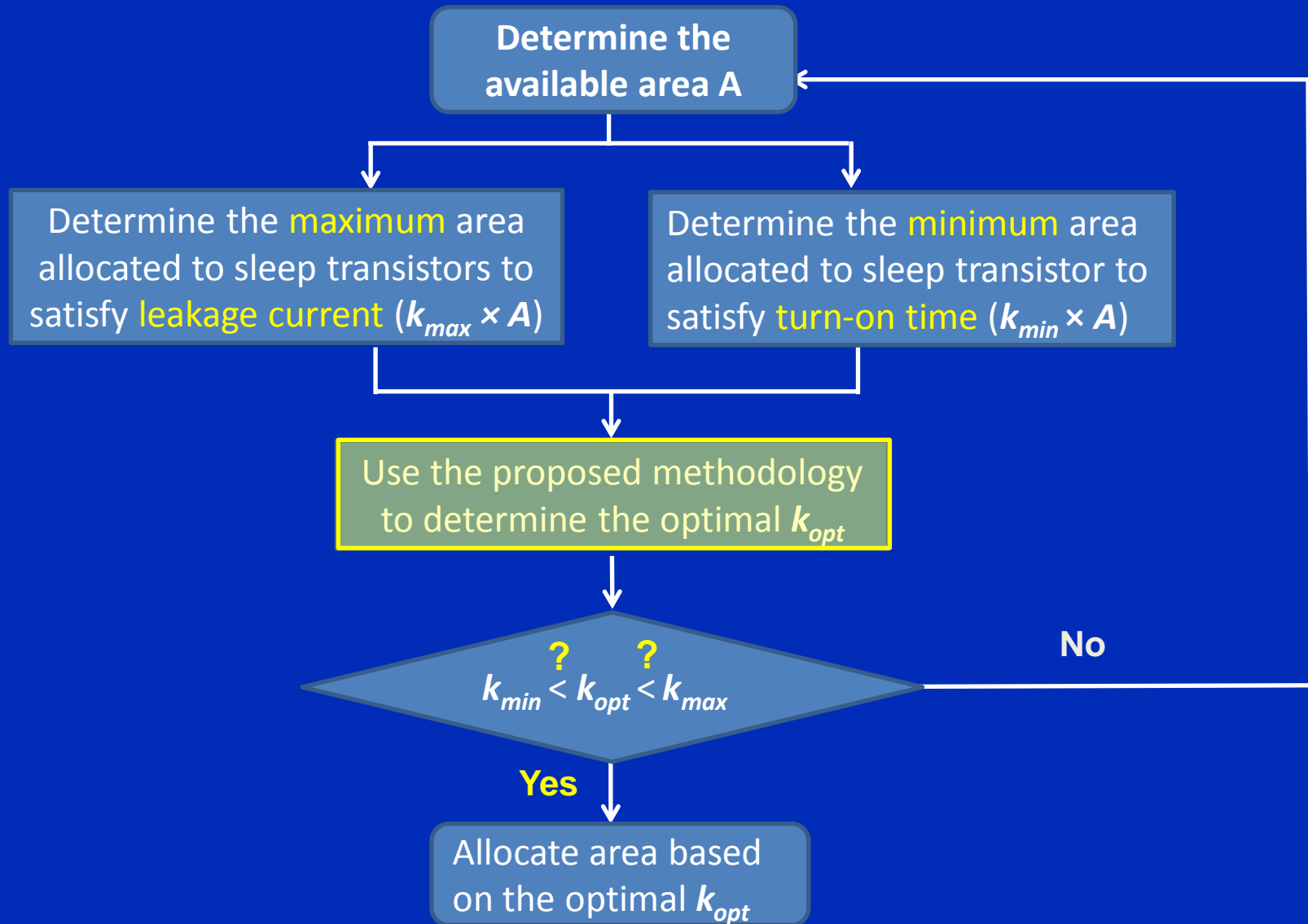
- Area contention
- Both affect power integrity
- Minimize power supply noise

Subject to:

- Leakage power
- Turn on time



# Proposed Design Flow



# Closed-Form Expressions for Optimum $k$

- Effective resistance of TSVs

$$R_{TSV}^{eff} = \frac{4\rho h_{TSV}}{\pi d^2 N_{TSV}} = \frac{\rho h_{TSV} \alpha}{(1-k)A}$$

- Effective resistance of sleep transistors

$$R_{st}^{eff} \approx \frac{L^2 \beta}{\mu C_{ox} (V_{gs}^{st} - V_{th})} \times \frac{1}{kA}$$

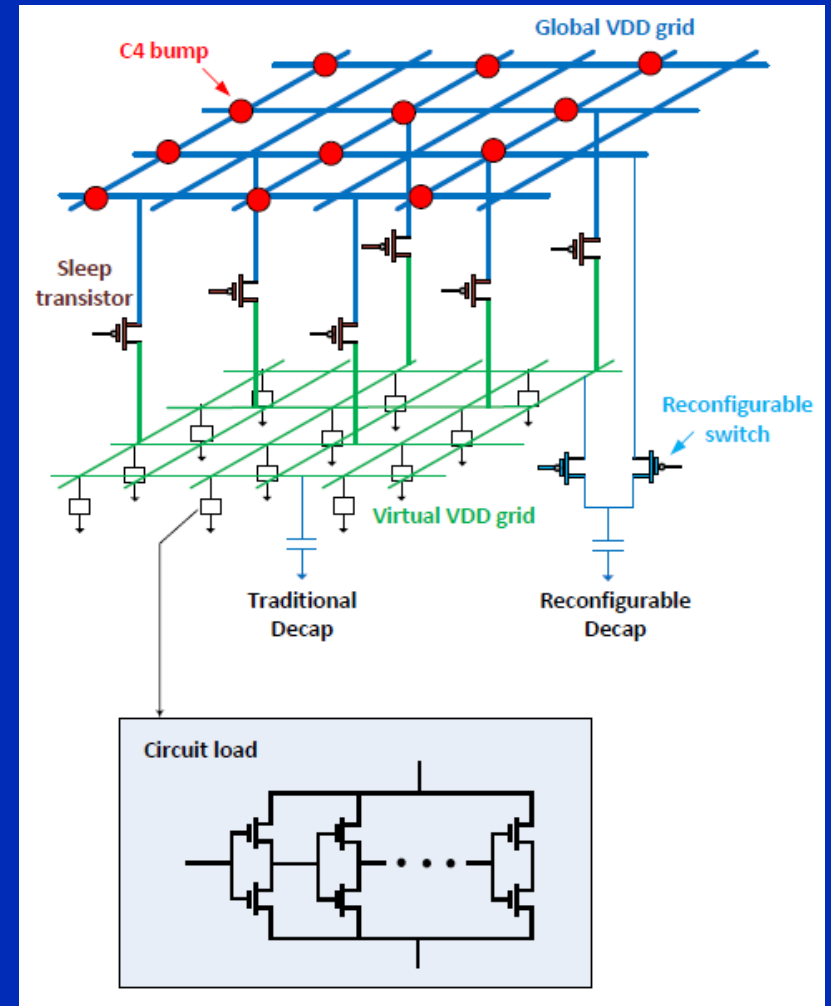
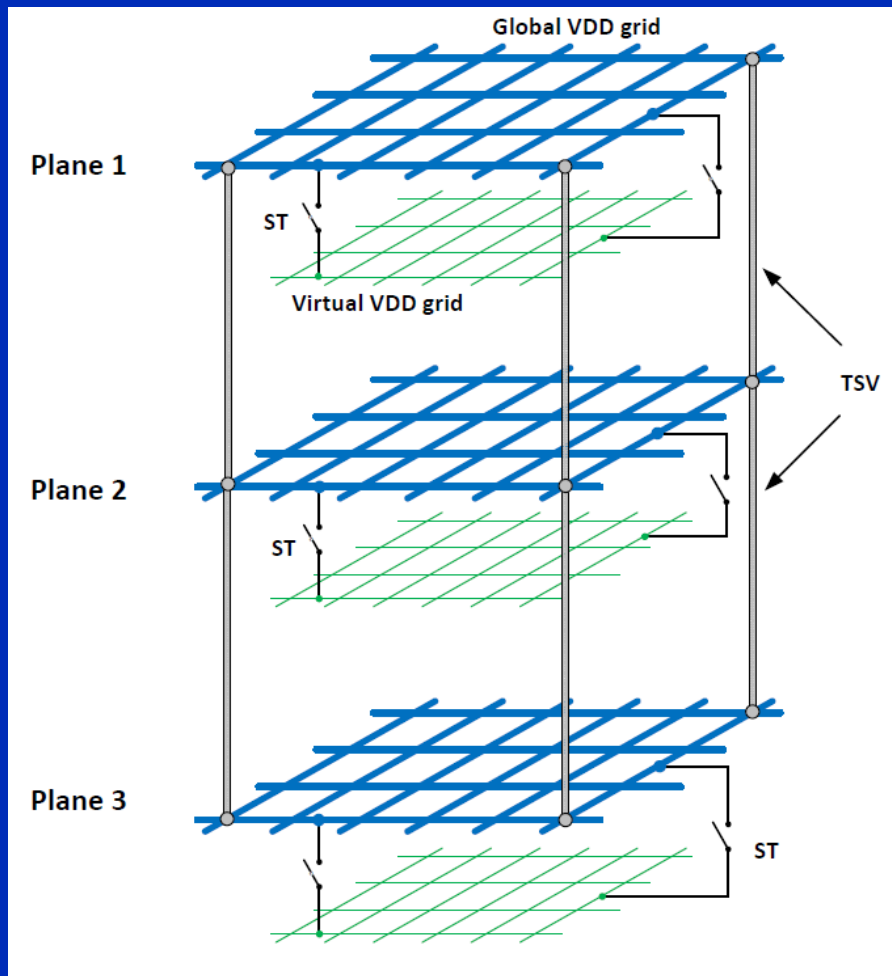
- Optimization objective

$$Z_{worst} \approx \mu(R_{PDN} + R_{TSV} + R_{ST}) + \frac{VL_{PDN}}{(R_{PDN} + R_{TSV} + R_{ST})C_{decap}}$$

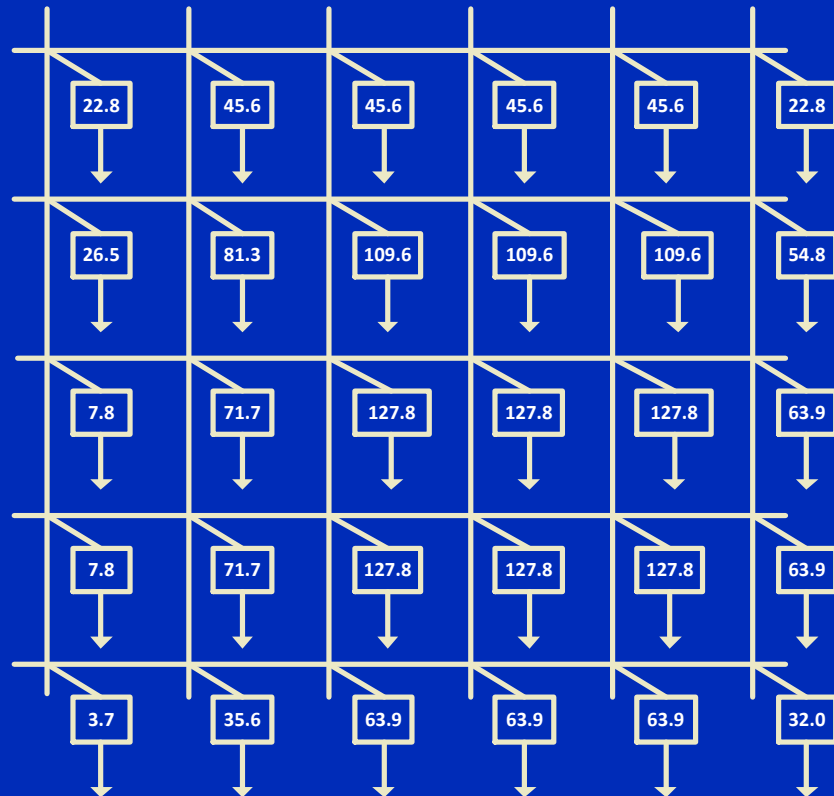
- Optimum  $k$

$$k_{optimal1,2} = \frac{(R_{optimal}A + T_1 - T_2) \pm \sqrt{(R_{optimal}A + T_1 - T_2)^2 - 4R_{optimal} \cdot AT_1}}{2R_{optimal} \cdot A}$$

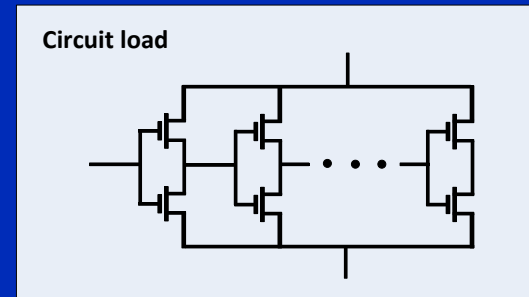
# Comprehensive Simulation Setup



# Distributed Circuit Loads



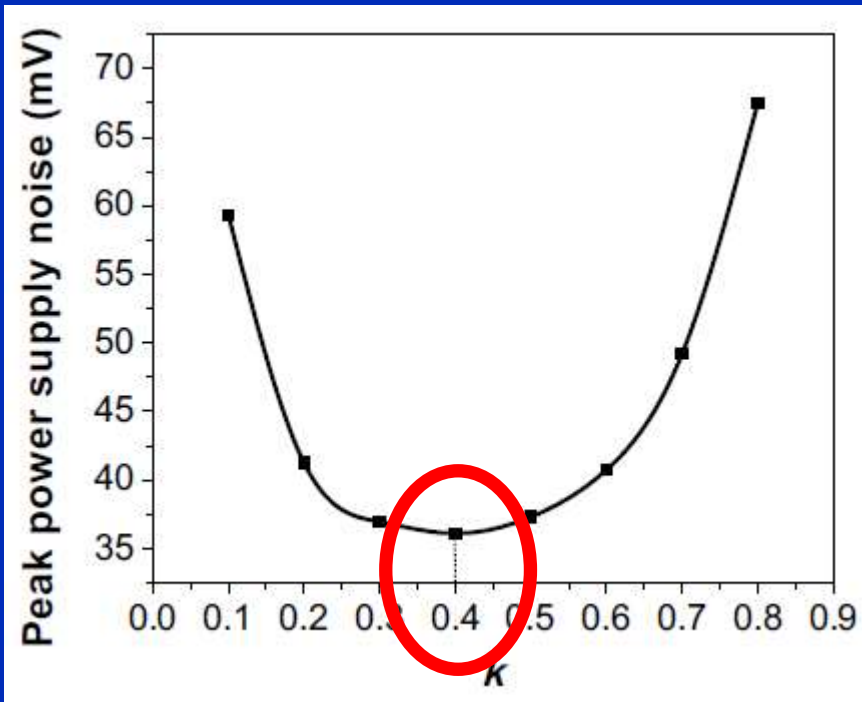
(Unit of peak current: mA)



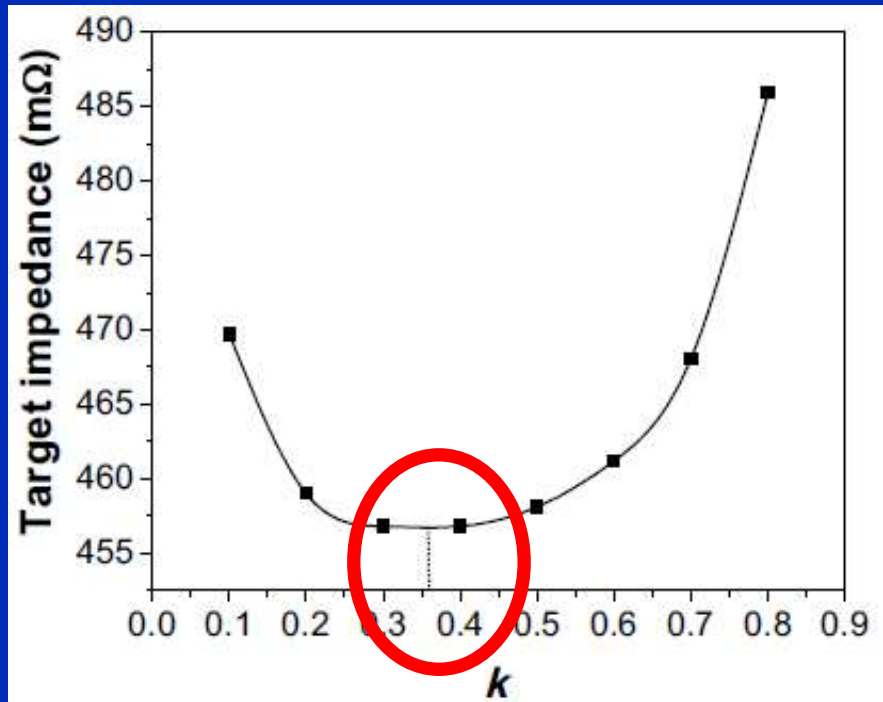
**Power density matches OpenSPARC T2 Core: 40 W/cm<sup>2</sup>**

# Results

From simulation



Closed-form expression

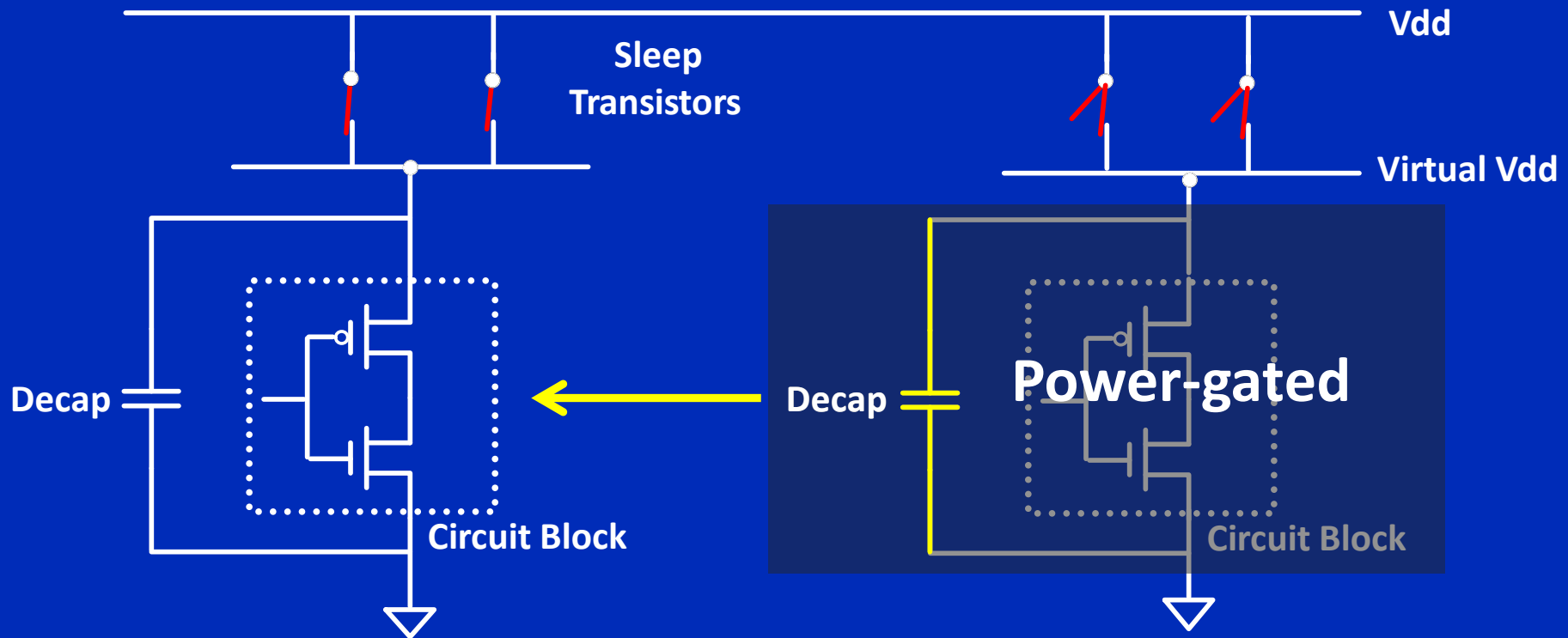


Error < 4%

Noise reduction: up to 42%

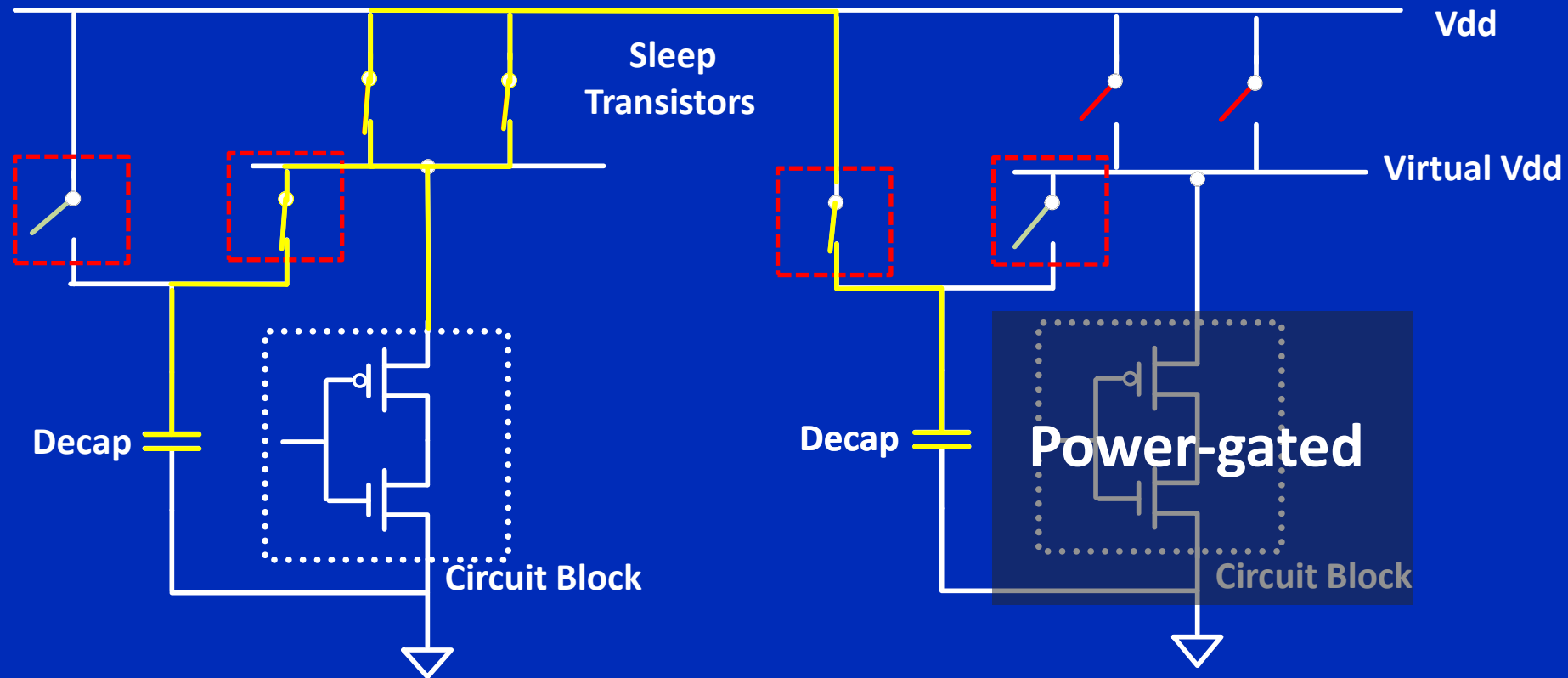


# Problem: Utilization of a Decap



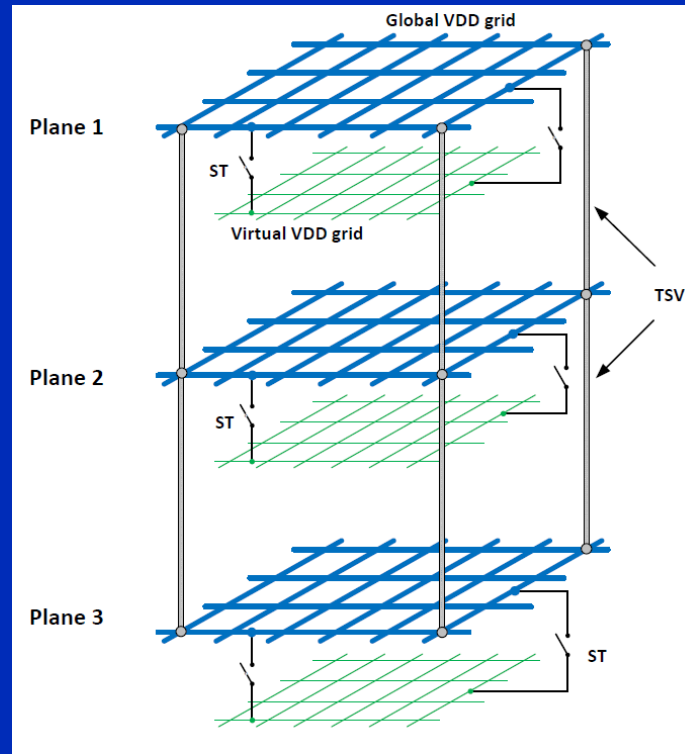
- Utilize decap for nearby blocks
- Not as effective in 2D ICs: large impedance
- New opportunity in TSV-based 3D ICs

# Proposed Reconfigurable Topology



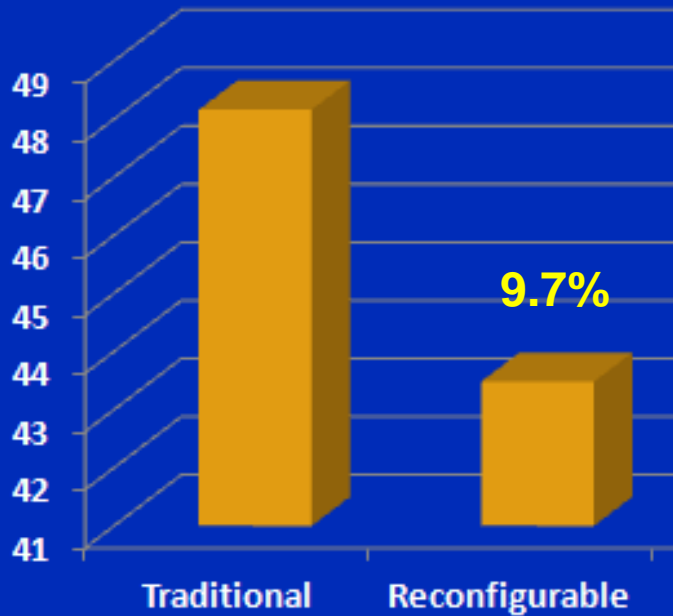
- Two reconfigurable switches are added:
  - When the circuit block is ON, connect decap to virtual Vdd
  - When the circuit block is OFF, connect decap to global Vdd

# Power Gating Scenarios

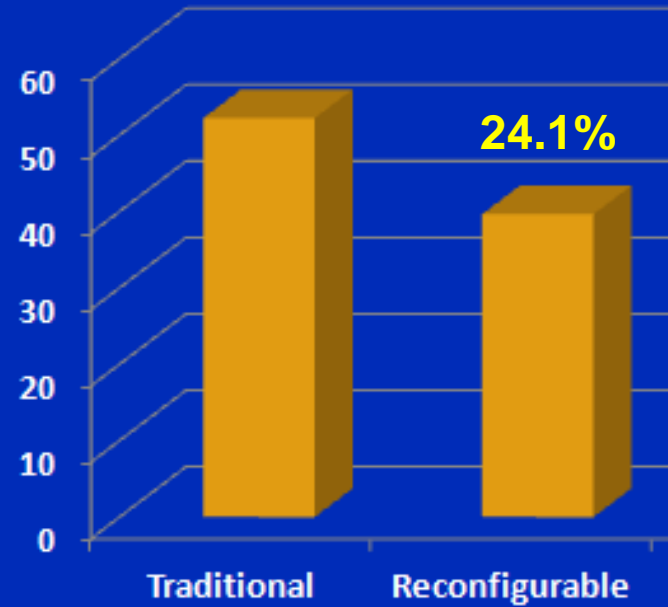


	Top Plane	Middle Plane	Bottom Plane
Scenario 2	ON	OFF	ON
Scenario 3	OFF	OFF	ON

# Simulation Results – Peak Power Supply Noise

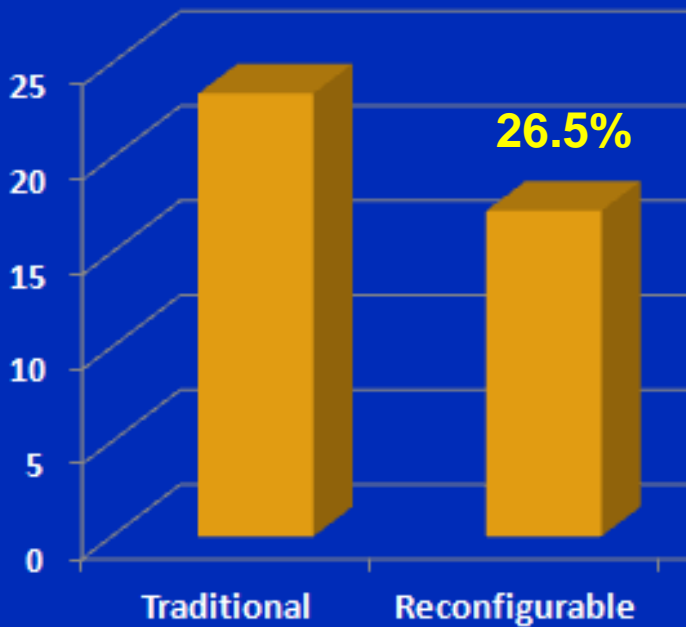


Scenario 2

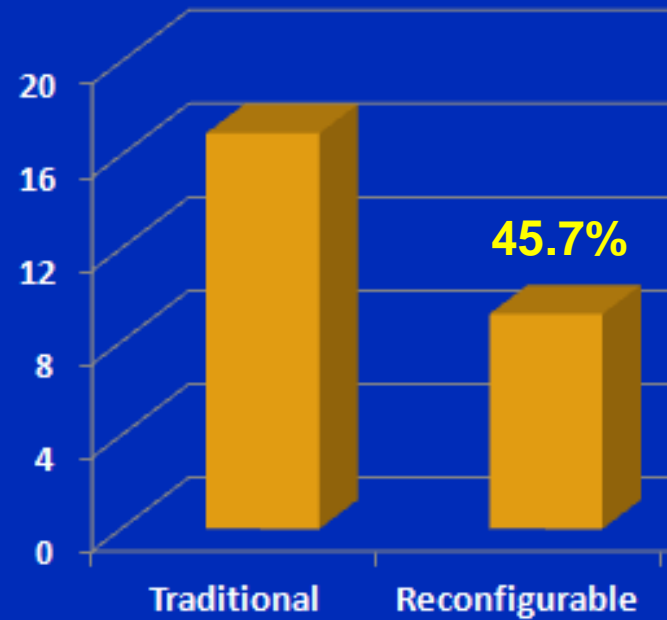


Scenario 3

# Simulation Results – RMS Power Supply Noise

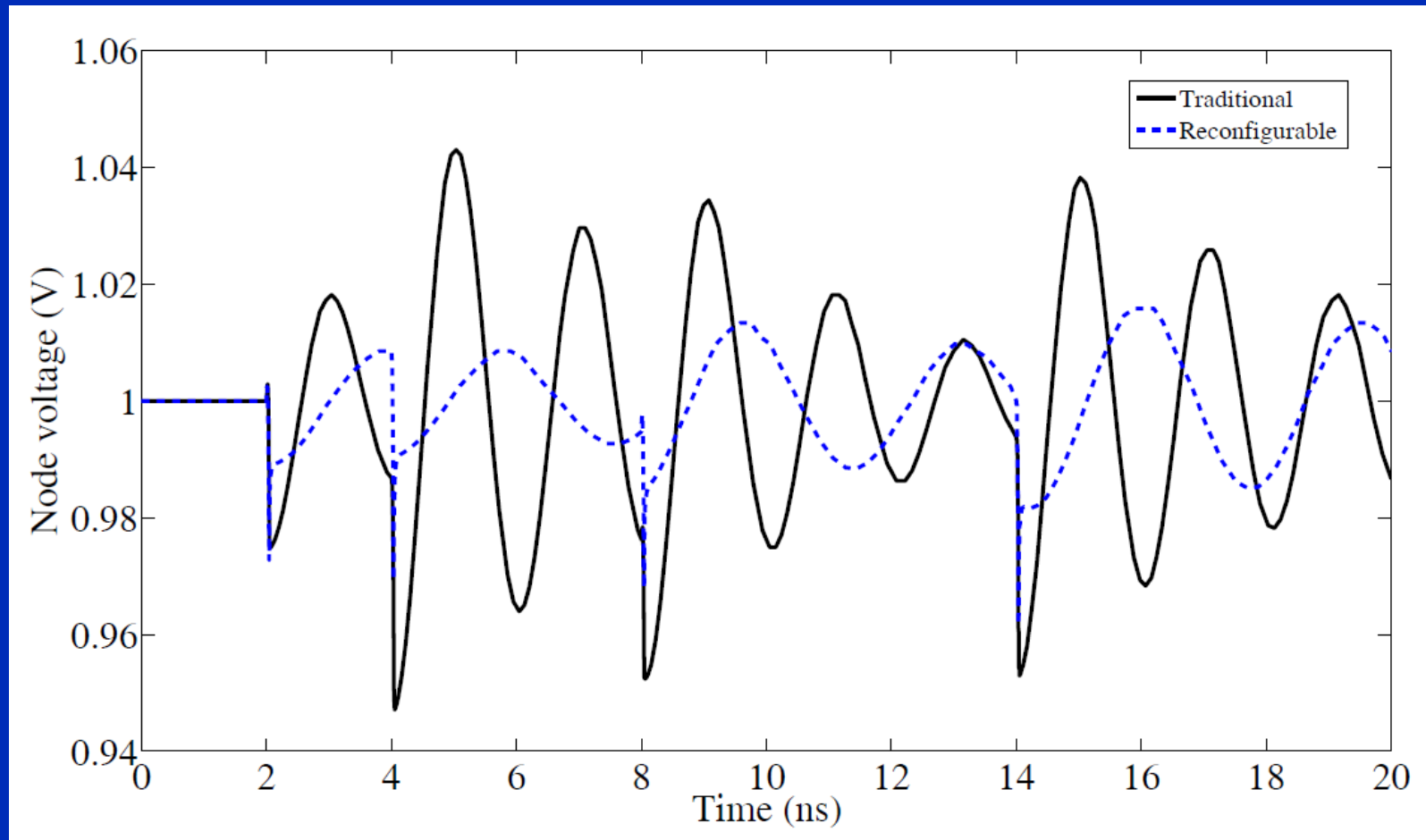


**Scenario 2**



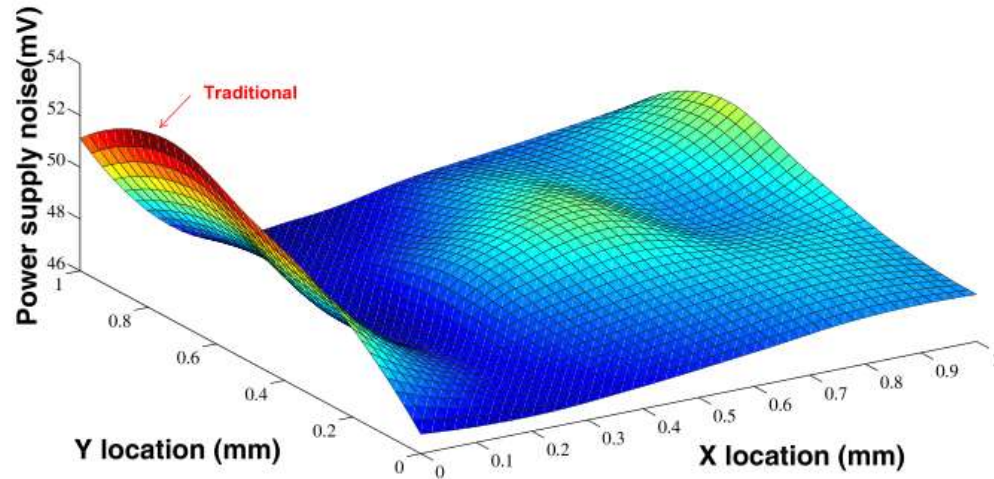
**Scenario 3**

# Temporal Power Supply Noise Waveform

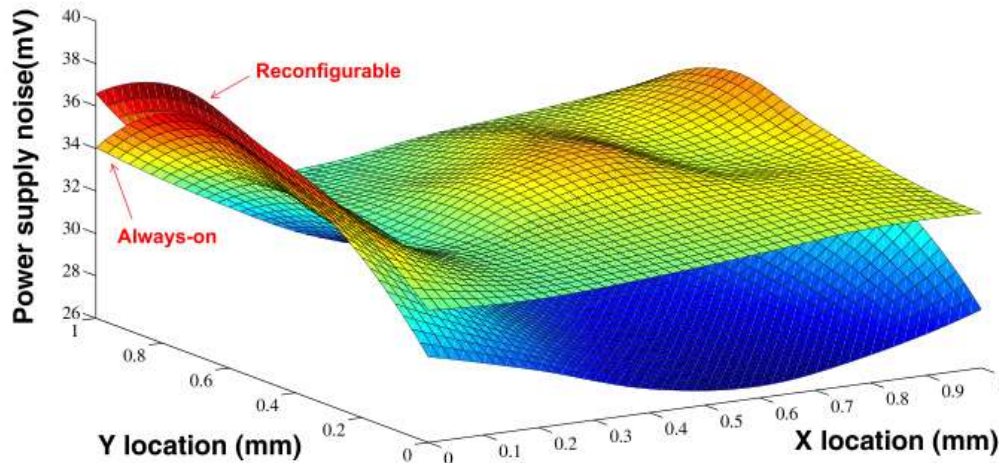


Transient power noise (Scenario 3)

# Spatial Power Supply Noise Distribution



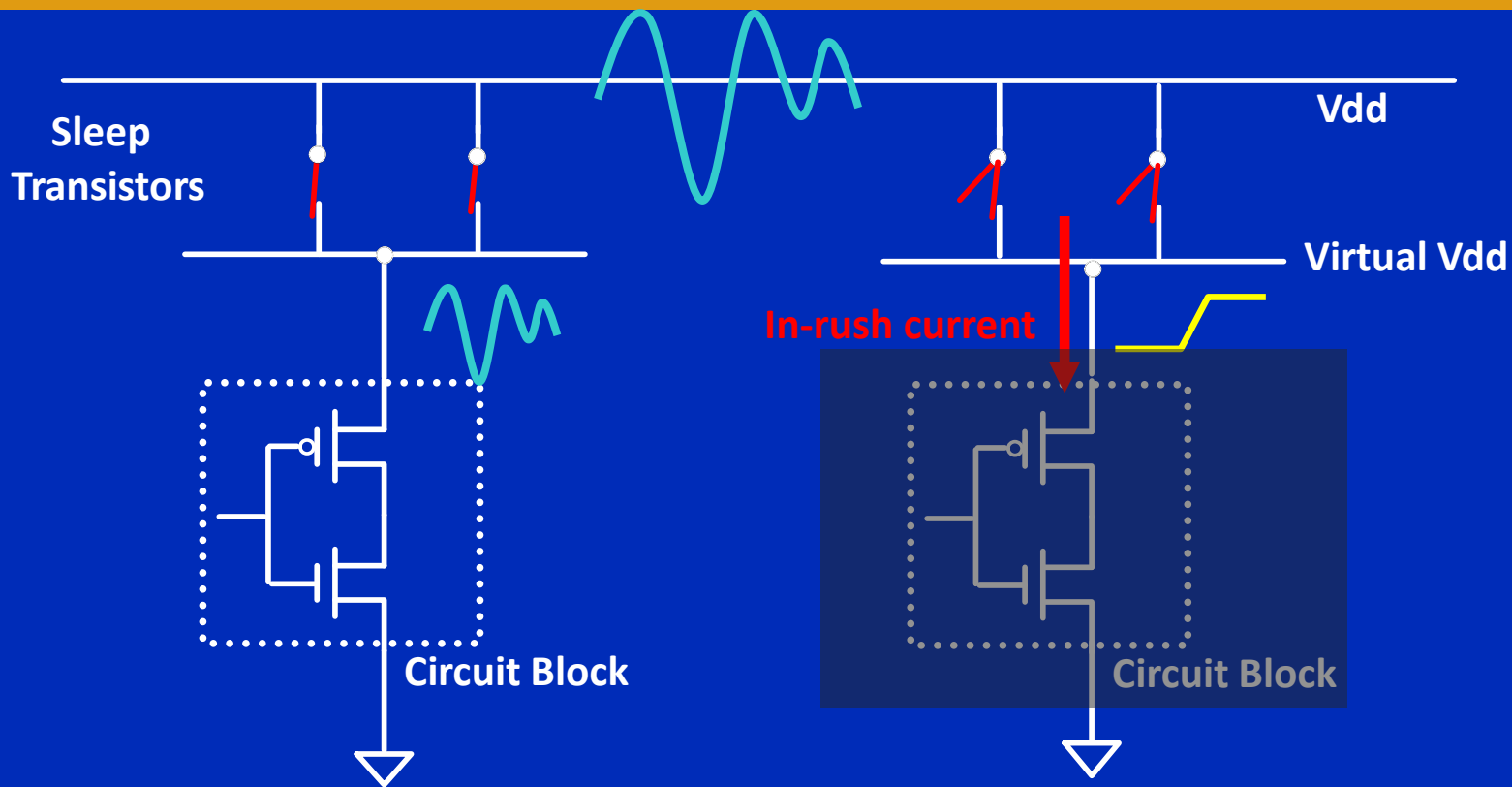
(a)



(b)

Average reduction: **23.1%**

# Simulation Results – Power Gating Noise

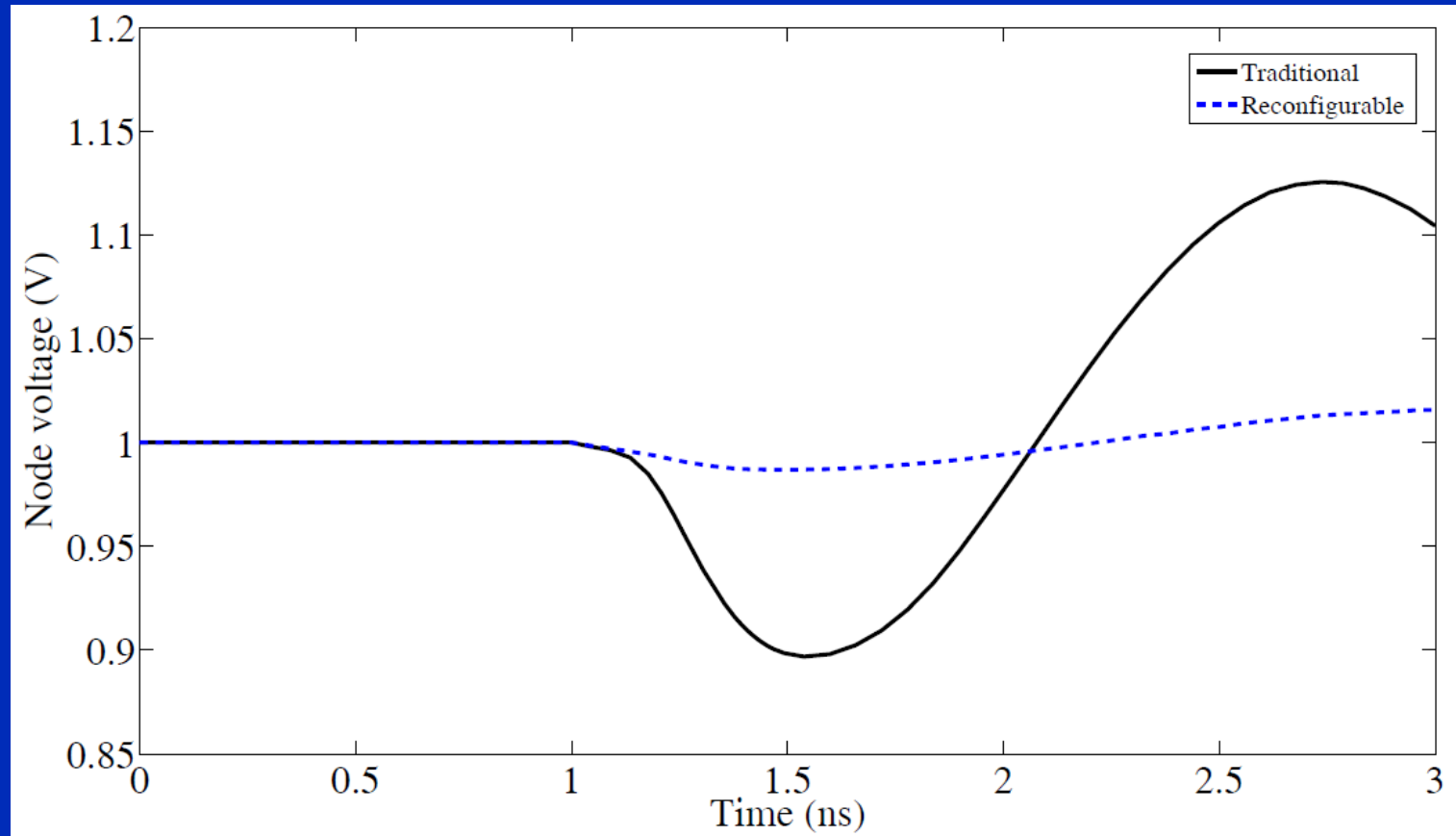


	Top Plane	Middle Plane	Bottom Plane
Scenario 2	ON	OFF → ON	ON
Scenario 3	OFF	OFF → ON	ON

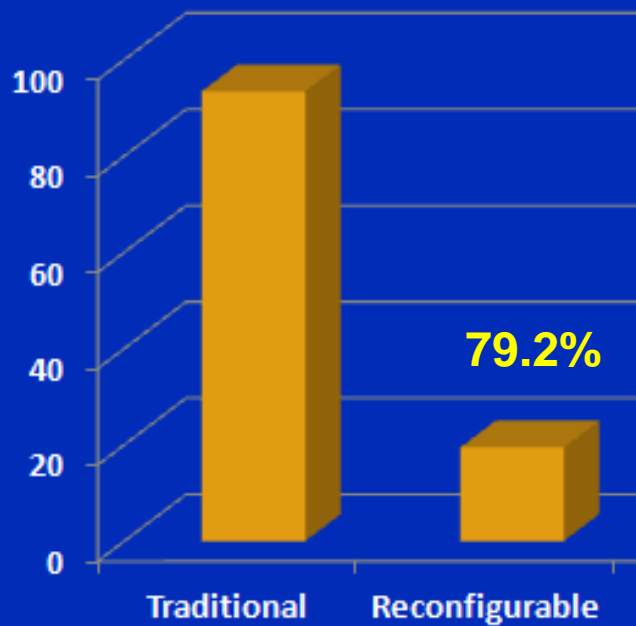


# Temporal Power Gating Noise Waveform

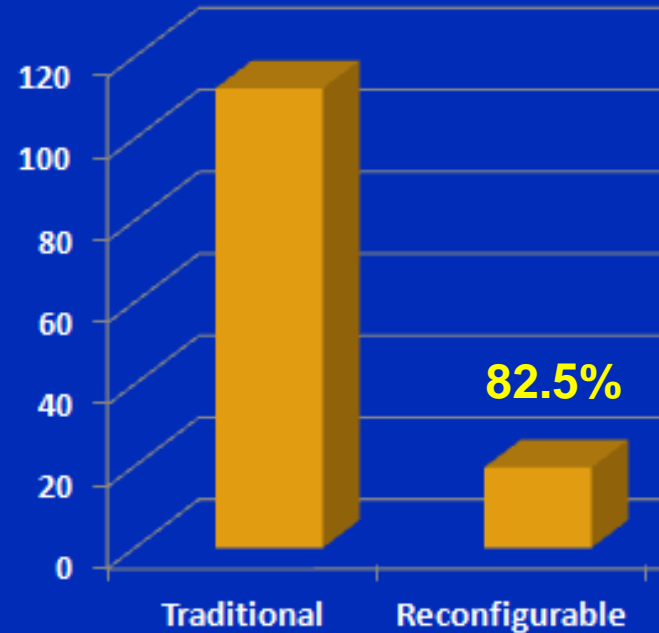
Sleep state → active state at 1 ns



# Simulation Results – Power Gating Noise



**Scenario 2**



**Scenario 3**

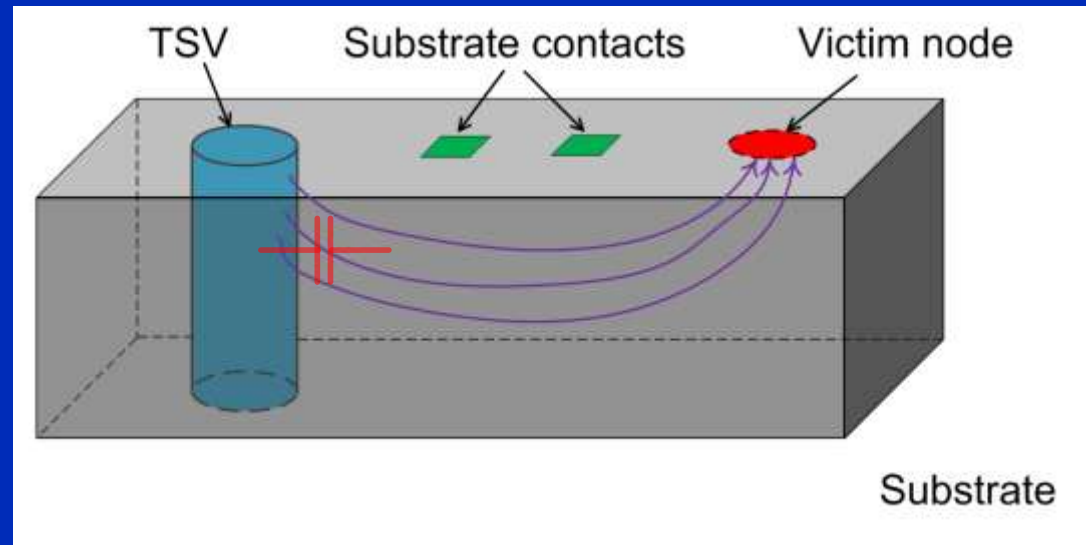
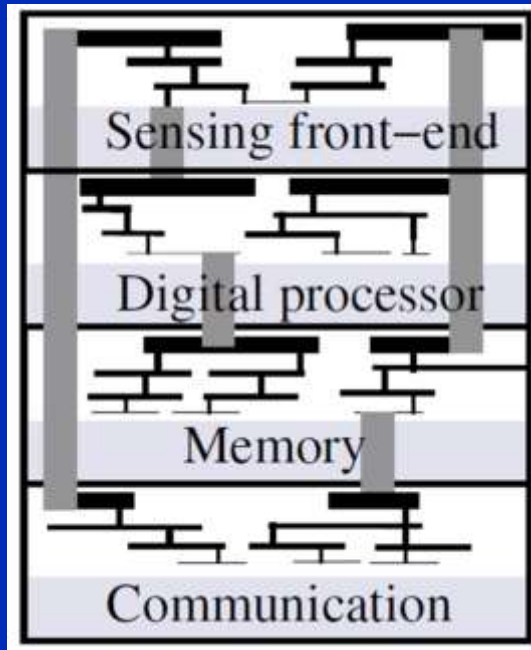
# Area and Power Overhead

- Physical area increases only by **1.93%**

Power consumption (mW)	Traditional	Reconfigurable	Increase (%)
Scenario 1	26.45	26.81	1.36
Scenario 2	17.57	18.07	3.41
Scenario 3	8.89	9.41	5.85

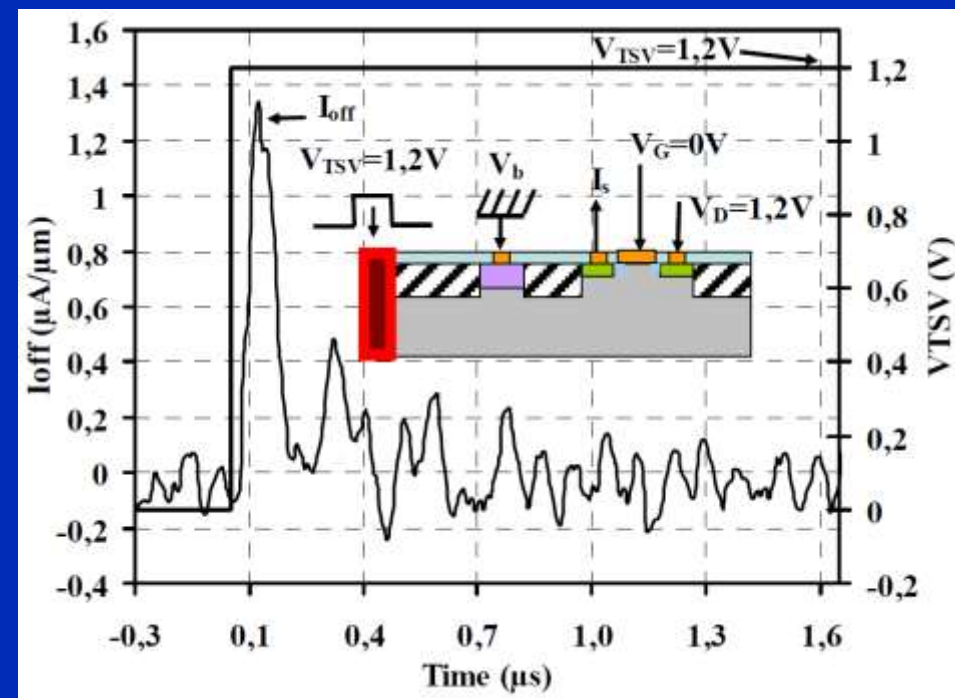
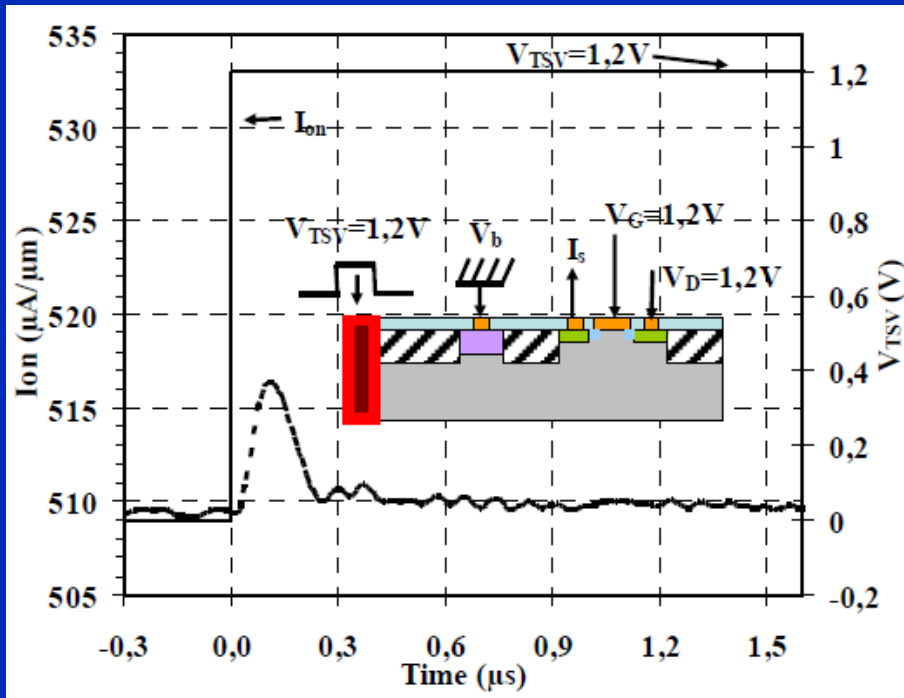
- Power overhead can be further reduced by utilizing metal-insulator-metal (MIM) capacitors

# TSV Noise Coupling



- Noise couples into the substrate due to both oxide and MOS capacitance
- Aggressive signals such as clock networks
- Affects the operation of a transistor (both on and off)
  - Memory circuits
  - Analog devices in heterogeneous 3D integration

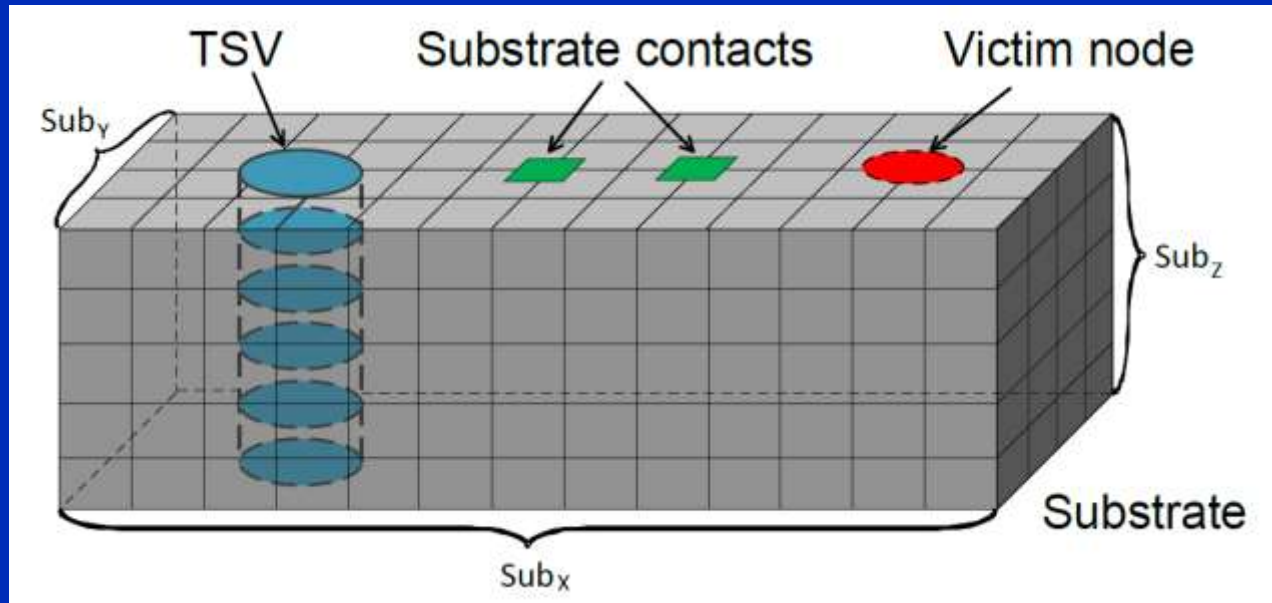
# Effect of TSV Noise on Devices



H. Chaabouni, *et al.* "Investigation on TSV impact on 65nm CMOS devices and circuits," *IEEE International Electron Devices Meeting*, 2010.

# Modeling TSV Noise Coupling

- 3D field solver: HFSS → not possible for practical circuits
- Discretized model based on transmission line matrix method

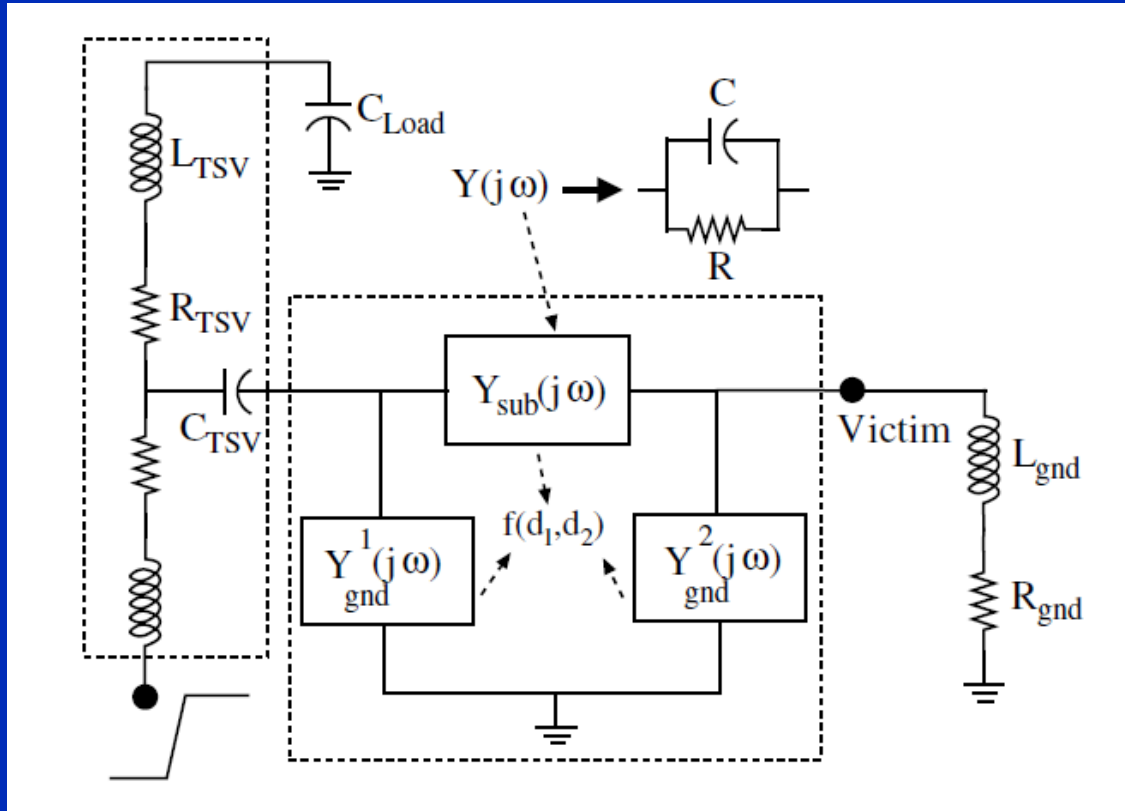


**Accurate, but...computationally prohibitive!**

- Fast evaluation is difficult
- Early stages of TSV floorplanning
- Substrate contact locations

# Compact $\pi$ Model

- Single TSV cell and an *equivalent  $\pi$  network*.



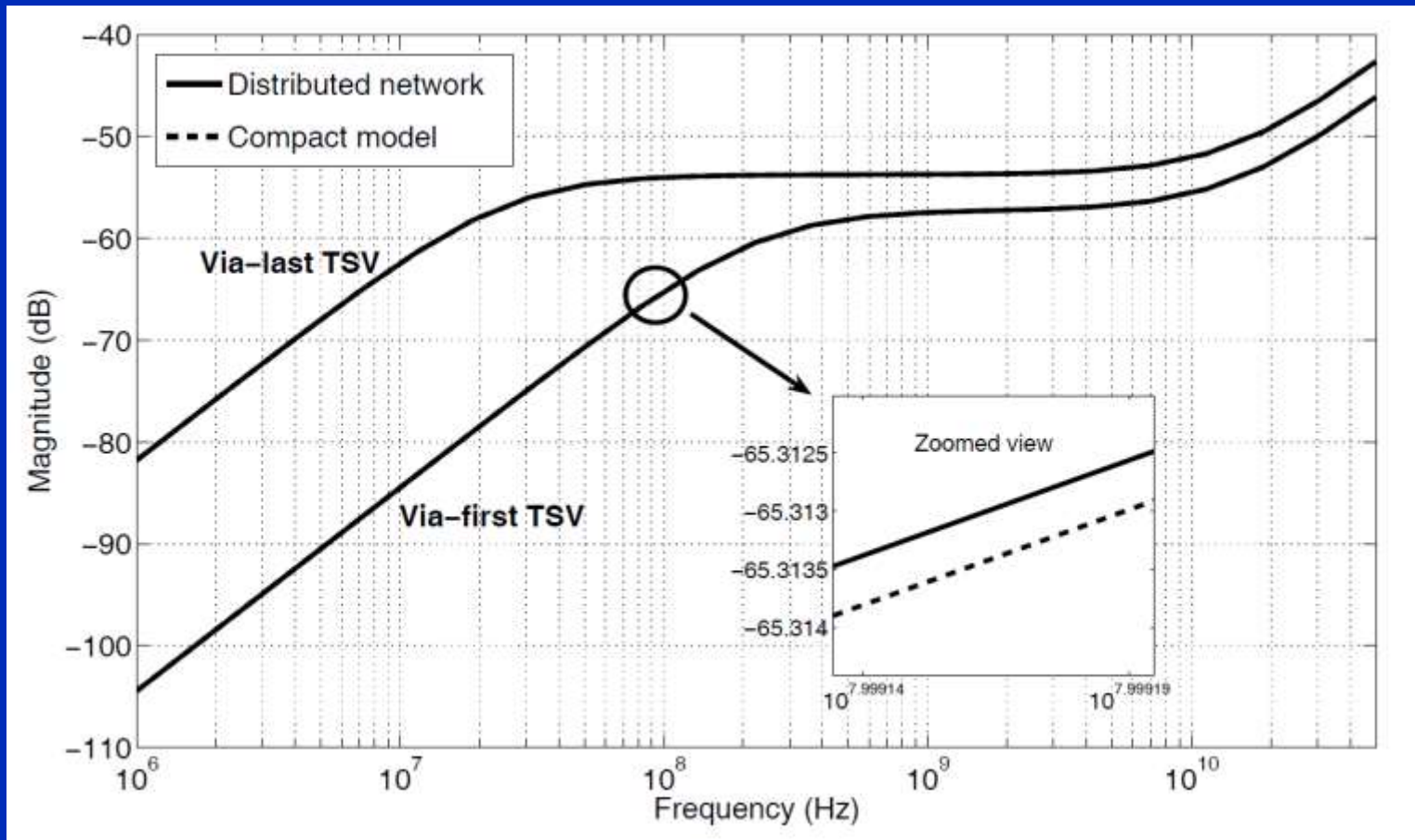
- Approach

1. AC analysis of the distributed mesh to obtain  $Y_{11}(j\omega)$ ,  $Y_{12}(j\omega)$ ,  $Y_{21}(j\omega)$ ,  $Y_{22}(j\omega)$
2. Obtain the  $R$  and  $C$ s within the  $\pi$  network to match the four impedances
3. Single  $R$  and  $C$  value until 100 GHz.



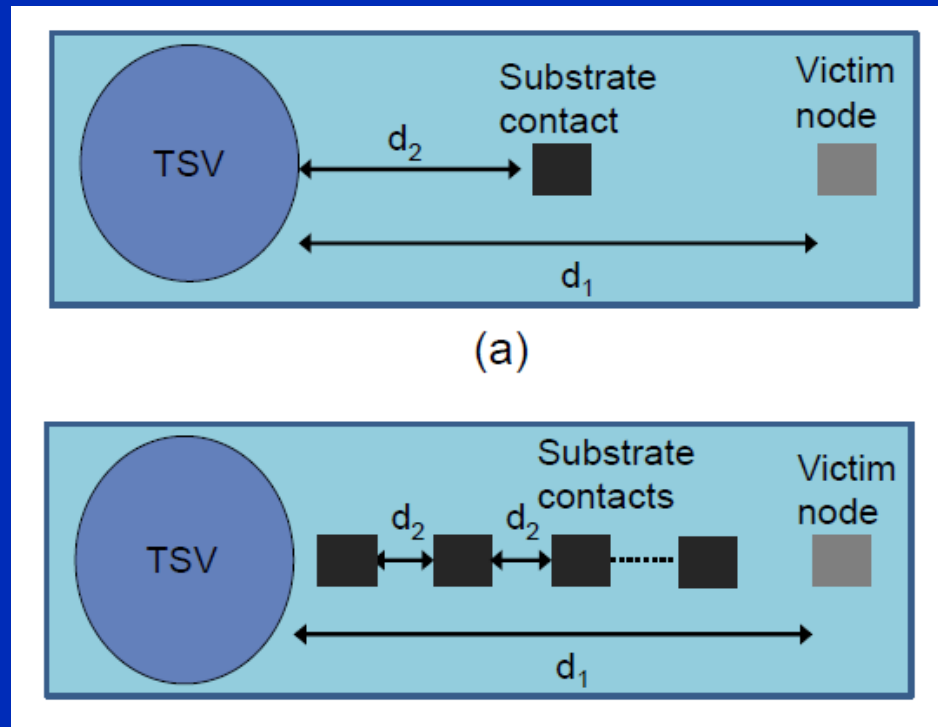
# Validation of the Compact $\pi$ Model

- The transfer function of the compact model is compared with the transfer function of the distributed mesh

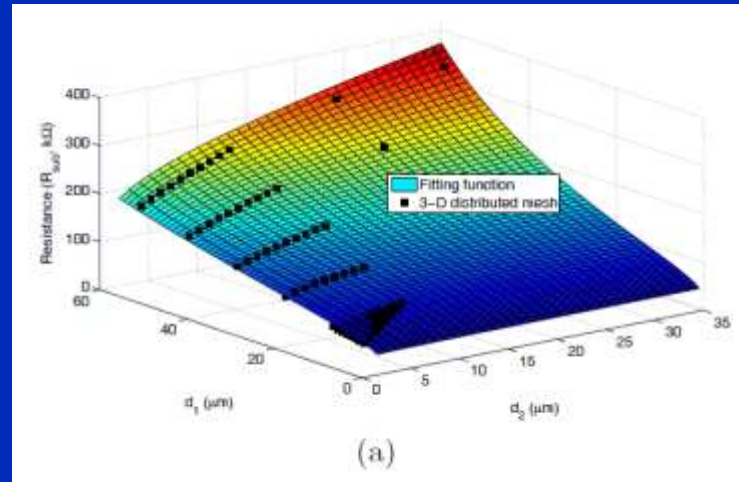
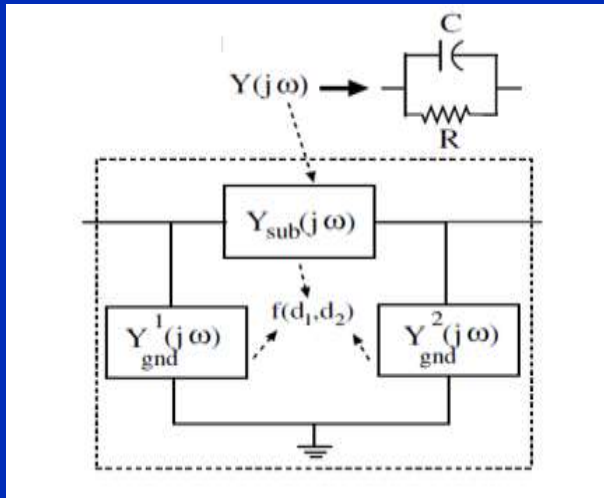


# Characterizing TSV-to-Substrate Coupling

- TSV noise is affected by several design parameters
  - Distance between TSV and victim node ( $d_1$ )
  - Number and location of substrate contacts ( $d_2$ )



# Closed-Form Expression for Each Admittance



Resistance  $R_{\text{sub}}$  of the  $Y_{\text{sub}}(j\omega)$

- Analyze the distributed mesh to obtain the impedances (**Dots**)
- Approximate the surface with a logarithmic function using 3D least square regression analysis (**Surface**)

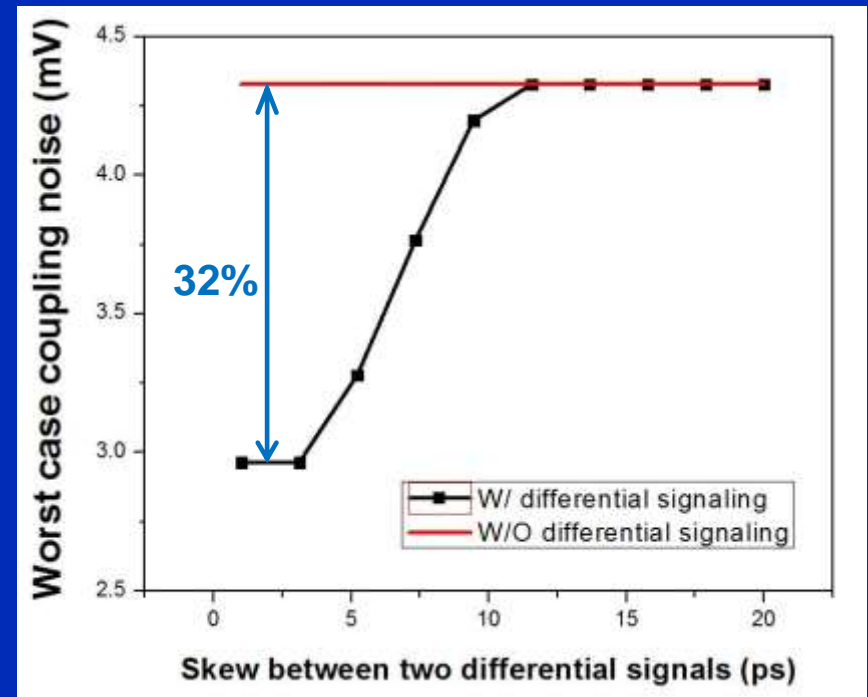
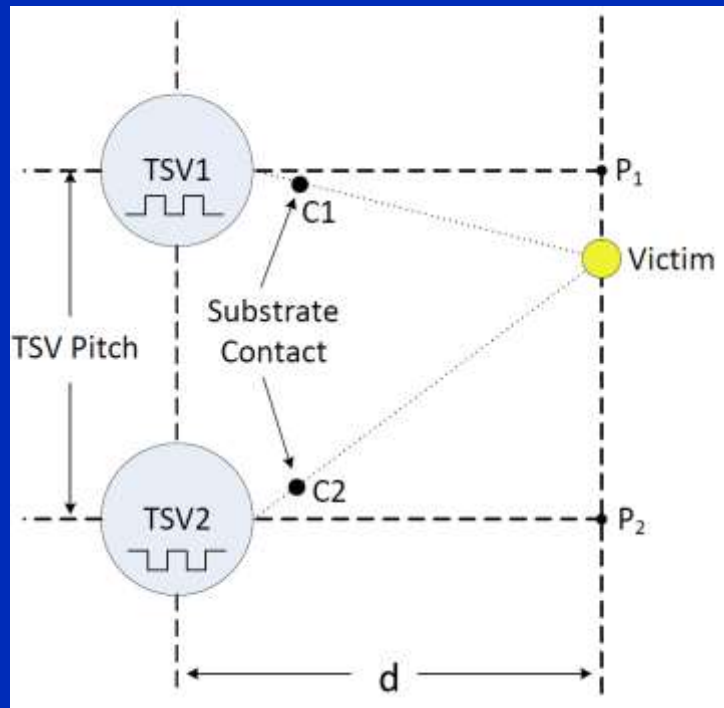
$$F(d_1, d_2) = A + Bd_1 + Cd_2 + D \ln d_2 + E \ln d_1,$$

# Fitting Coefficients and Accuracy

Cases	Admittances	Fitting coefficients					Average error (%)
		A	B	C	D	E	
Case 1	$R_{sub} = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	27.09	0	0	-0.98	-5.11	6.6
	$C_{sub} = F$ (aF)	326.7	0.41	0.48	-17.26	-67.55	2.8
	$R_{gnd}^1 = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	28.31	0	0	-8.14	1.98	1.9
	$C_{gnd}^1 = F$ (aF)	301.3	-0.28	0.66	-96.94	30.09	1.6
	$R_{gnd}^2 = F$ (k $\Omega$ )	45.91	2.30	3.08	-218.3	154.9	9.6
	$C_{gnd}^2 = 1000/F$ (aF)	8.05	0.28	0.29	-20.39	12.49	10.4
Case 2	$R_{sub} = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	29.18	0.28	0.38	1.34	-11.78	8.3
	$C_{sub} = F$ (aF)	317.1	2.99	4.24	14.2	-127.6	10.8
	$R_{gnd}^1 = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	69.24	-0.046	1.97	-35.05	4.73	0.7
	$C_{gnd}^1 = F$ (aF)	758.5	-0.49	21.13	-380.8	51.33	0.7
	$R_{gnd}^2 = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	9.50	-0.19	-0.99	-1.95	9.31	1.6
	$C_{gnd}^2 = F$ (aF)	106.4	-2.05	-10.99	-20.83	100.7	1.6
Case 3	$R_{sub} = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	27.35	-0.082	0.036	-2.11	-1.12	2.4
	$C_{sub} = F$ (aF)	296.6	-0.89	0.83	-20.78	-13.12	1.9
	$R_{gnd}^1 = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	36.16	0.028	0.39	-10.16	1.18	2.4
	$C_{gnd}^1 = F$ (aF)	235.6	-1.18	-2.16	-61.86	51.91	6.9
	$R_{gnd}^2 = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	11.57	0.11	-0.19	4.43	-5.86	11.6
	$C_{gnd}^2 = F$ (aF)	129.1	1.18	-2.22	49.1	-65.23	10.9
Case 4	$R_{sub} = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	24.41	0.13	0.42	1.69	-8.36	8.5
	$C_{sub} = F$ (aF)	265.3	1.40	4.67	17.88	-91.2	7.2
	$R_{gnd}^1 = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	117.6	-0.03	0.40	-35.66	3.64	0.3
	$C_{gnd}^1 = F$ (aF)	998	0.03	-68.78	37.31	32.11	2.9
	$R_{gnd}^2 = 1000/F$ (k $\Omega$ )	14.56	-0.01	-0.73	-3.49	5.93	2.4
	$C_{gnd}^2 = F$ (aF)	162	-0.13	-8.17	-37.74	64.26	2.5

- Average error is 4.8%

# Design Guidelines – Differential TSV Signaling



# Conclusions

- Among various “emerging” technologies, 3D integration seems to be the most viable in the near-future
- Research is needed, but no fundamental limitations exist
- Opportunities are beyond high performance computing
  - Sensing and actuating
    - Mobile electronics
    - Healthcare
    - Environmental control...
- We have demonstrated several design methodologies to enhance power and signal integrity in 3D ICs



# Publications on 3D ICs

## • Book Chapters

- E. Salman, "Power and Signal Integrity Challenges in 3D Systems-on-Chip," *Physical Design for 3D Integrated Circuits*, A. Todri-Sanial and C. S. Tan (Eds.), CRC Press, in press
- M. Stanacevic, Y. Lin, and E. Salman, "Analysis and Design of 3D Potentiostat for Deep Brain Implantable Devices," *Neural Computation, Neural Devices, and Neural Prosthesis*, pp. 261-287, Z. Yang (Ed.), Springer, 2014

## • Journal papers

- H. Wang and E. Salman, "Decoupling Capacitor Topologies for TSV-based 3D ICs with Power Gating," *IEEE Transactions on Very Large Scale Integration (VLSI) Systems*, in press
- H. Wang, M. H. Asgari, and E. Salman, "Compact Model to Efficiently Characterize TSV-to-Transistor Noise Coupling in 3D ICs," *Integration, the VLSI Journal*, June 2014
- S. M. Satheesh and E. Salman, "Power Distribution in TSV Based 3D Processor-Memory Stacks," *IEEE Journal on Emerging and Selected Topics in Circuits and Systems*, December 2012

## • Conference papers

- S. Fang and E. Salman, "Low Swing TSV Signaling Using Novel Level Shifters with Single Supply Voltage," *Proc. of the IEEE International Symposium on Circuits and Systems*, May 2015
- H. Wang and E. Salman, "Resource Allocation Methodology for Through-Silicon-Vias and Sleep Transistors in 3D ICs," *Proc. of the IEEE Int. Symp. on Quality Electronic Design*, March 2015
- H. Wang and E. Salman, "Enhancing System-Wide Power Integrity in 3D ICs with Power Gating," *Proc. of the IEEE International Symposium on Quality Electronic Design*, March 2015
- H. Wang, M. H. Asgari, and E. Salman, "Efficient Characterization of TSV-to-Transistor Noise Coupling in 3D ICs," *Proceedings of the ACM/IEEE Great Lakes Symposium on VLSI*, pp. 71-76, May 2013.
- S. M. Satheesh and E. Salman, "Effect of TSV Fabrication Technology on Power Distribution in 3D ICs," *Proceedings of the ACM/IEEE Great Lakes Symposium on VLSI*, pp. 287-292, May 2013.
- H. Wang and E. Salman, "Power Gating Topologies in TSV Based 3D Integrated Circuits," *Proceedings of the ACM/IEEE Great Lakes Symposium on VLSI*, pp. 327-328, May 2013.
- S. M. Satheesh and E. Salman, "Design Space Exploration for Robust Power Delivery in TSV Based 3D Systems-onChip," *Proceedings of the IEEE International System-on-Chip Conference*, pp. 307-311, September 2012.
- E. Salman, M. H. Asgari, and M. Stanacevic, "Signal Integrity Analysis of a 2D and 3D Integrated Potentiostat for Neurotransmitter Sensing," *Proc. of the IEEE Biomedical Circuits and Systems Conference*, pp.17-20, November 2011.
- E. Salman, "Noise Coupling Due to Through Silicon Vias (TSVs) in 3D Integrated Circuits," *Proceedings of the IEEE International Symposium on Circuits and Systems*, pp. 1411-1414, May 2011.