NVIDIA CORP
Form 10-K
March 13, 2012
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UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

_____

FORM 10-K

[x] ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
For the fiscal year ended January 29, 2012

OR

[_] TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

Commission file number: 0-23985

NVIDIA CORPORATION
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

| | |
|---|---|
| Delaware | 94-3177549 |
| (State or other jurisdiction of Incorporation or Organization) | (I.R.S. Employer Identification No.) |

2701 San Tomas Expressway
Santa Clara, California 95050
(408) 486-2000
(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of principal executive offices)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

| | |
|---|---|
| Title of each class | Name of each exchange on which registered |
| Common Stock, $0.001 par value per share | The NASDAQ Global Select Market |

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:
None

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.
Yes ý No o

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act.
Yes o No ý

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.
Yes ý No o

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files).
Yes ý No o

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K (§ 229.405 of this chapter) is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K. o

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See definitions of “large accelerated filer,” “accelerated filer” and “smaller reporting company” in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

| | |
|---|---|
| Large accelerated filer x | Accelerated filer o |
| Non-accelerated filer o (Do not check if a smaller reporting company) | Smaller reporting company o |

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Act).

Yes o No ý

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The aggregate market value of the voting stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant as of July 31, 2011 was approximately $7.98 billion (based on the closing sales price of the registrant's common stock as reported by the NASDAQ Global Select Market, on July 29, 2011). This calculation excludes approximately 26,462,277 shares held by directors and executive officers of the registrant. This calculation does not exclude shares held by such organizations whose ownership exceeds 5% of the registrant's outstanding common stock that have represented to the registrant that they are registered investment advisers or investment companies registered under section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940.

The number of shares of common stock outstanding as of March 9, 2012 was 616,028,107

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Portions of the registrant's Proxy Statement for its 2012 Annual Meeting of Stockholders to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission by April 5, 2012 are incorporated by reference.

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NVIDIA CORPORATION

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PART I

ITEM 1. BUSINESS

Forward-Looking Statements

This Annual Report on Form 10-K contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, which are subject to the "safe harbor" created by those sections. Forward-looking statements are based on our management's beliefs and assumptions and on information currently available to our management. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terms such as "may," "will," "should," "could," "goal," "would," "expect," "plan," "anticipate," "estimate," "project," "predict," "potential" and similar expressions intended to identify forward-looking statements. These statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors, which may cause our actual results, performance, time frames or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance, time frames or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. We discuss many of these risks, uncertainties and other factors in this Annual Report on Form 10-K in greater detail under the heading "Risk Factors." Given these risks, uncertainties and other factors, you should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. Also, these forward-looking statements represent our estimates and assumptions only as of the date of this filing. You should read this Annual Report on Form 10-K completely and with the understanding that our actual future results may be materially different from what we expect. We hereby qualify our forward-looking statements by these cautionary statements. Except as required by law, we assume no obligation to update these forward-looking statements publicly, or to update the reasons actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in these forward-looking statements, even if new information becomes available in the future.

All references to "NVIDIA," "we," "us," "our" or the "Company" mean NVIDIA Corporation and its subsidiaries, except when it is made clear that the term means only the parent company.



Our Company

NVIDIA is known to millions around the world for creating the graphics chips used in personal computers, or PCs, that bring games and home movies to life. With the invention of the graphics processing unit, or GPU, we introduced the world to the power of computer graphics. Today, we reach well beyond PC graphics. Our energy-efficient processors power a broad range of products, from smart phones to supercomputers. Our mobile processors are used in cell phones, tablets and auto infotainment systems. PC gamers rely on our GPUs to enjoy visually immersive worlds. Designers use GPUs to create visual effects in movies and create everything from golf clubs to jumbo jets. Researchers utilize GPUs to push the frontiers of science with high-performance computing. NVIDIA has nearly 5,000 patents granted and pending worldwide.

NVIDIA solutions are based on two important technologies: the GPU and the mobile processor. Both are highly complex chips, designed by NVIDIA engineers, and manufactured for us by a third party chip foundry. GPUs are the engines of visual computing, the science and art of using computers to understand, create and enhance images. One of the most complex processors ever created, the most advanced GPUs contain billions of transistors. We have three GPU product brands: GeForce, which creates realistic visual experiences for gamers; Quadro, the standard in visual computing for designers and digital artists; and Tesla, which accelerates applications for scientists and researchers.

Mobile processors incorporate central processing unit, or CPU, and GPU technologies to deliver an entire computer system on a single chip, or system-on-chip. Modern mobile processors possess significant computing capabilities yet consume one hundred times less energy than a typical PC. Tegra is our mobile processor and is built for applications ranging from smartphones, tablets and notebook PCs to televisions and cars. We believe energy-efficient mobile computing will transform how computers are used in our lives. Tegra is a major new growth business for us.

We were incorporated in California in April 1993 and reincorporated in Delaware in April 1998. Our headquarter facilities are in Santa Clara, California.

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Reporting Segments

We have three primary financial reporting segments - GPU Business; Professional Solutions Business, or PSB; and Consumer Products Business, or CPB.

| Reporting Segments | Primary Revenue Sources |
|---|---|
| GPU | GeForce discrete graphics and chipset products and notebook PCs<br>Licensing fees from Intel Corporation<br>Memory products |
| PSB | Quadro professional workstation products<br>Tesla high-performance computing products |
| CPB | Tegra mobile products<br>Icera baseband processors and RF transceivers for mobile connectivity<br>Royalty license fees and other revenue related to video game consoles<br>GPU and Tegra products in embedded products and automobiles |

GPU Business

Our GPU business revenue includes primarily sales of our GeForce discrete and chipset products that support desktop and notebook PCs plus license fees from Intel and sales of memory products. GeForce GPUs enhance the gaming experience on consumer notebook and desktop PCs by improving the quality of game graphics and the physical realism of the game environment. They also accelerate video editing and high definition, or HD, content creation by consumers and improve the viewing experience. GeForce GPUs power PCs made by or distributed by most PC original equipment manufacturers, or OEMs, in the world.

We ceased development of future chipset products based on the technology of the media and communications processor, or MCP, in the first quarter of fiscal 2011 and expect MCP chipset revenue in fiscal 2013 to be immaterial. Our MCP chipsets primarily comprised of our ION motherboard GPUs, a product reaching the end of its life cycle.

Professional Solutions Business

Our PSB consists of our Quadro professional workstation products and our Tesla high-performance computing products. Our Quadro products are designed to deliver the highest possible level of graphics performance and application compatibility for professionals. Tesla applies the significant processing power of our GPUs to general-purpose computing problems, greatly increasing performance and power efficiency over CPU-only solutions.

Quadro products improve performance and add functionality, such as photorealistic rendering, to computer-aided design workstations, and are used in professional video editing applications and for generating special effects in movies. They are recognized by many as the standard for professional graphics solutions needed to solve many of the world's most complex visual computing challenges in the manufacturing, entertainment, medical, science and aerospace industries. Quadro products are fully certified by several software developers for professional workstation applications.

Our growth strategy for Quadro is twofold: increase our focus on emerging economies; and continue to make Quadro more valuable through innovations such as our Maximus technology, which allows professionals to process compute-intensive tasks and visually intensive graphics simultaneously.

We believe industrial design is increasing in emerging economies, as manufacturers in, for example, Brazil, Russia, India and China, attempt to move up the value chain from contract manufacture to full product design. Movie-making in these regions is becoming more sophisticated and is expected to make more use of Quadro, just as Hollywood does today. All five nominated films for the special effects Oscar in 2011 used Quadro, while Bollywood's first action blockbuster, RaOne, also depended on Quadro for computer-generated special effects.

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In fiscal year 2012, we launched Project Maximus, which uses the compute power of Tesla with the visualization power of Quadro to merge the design and simulation stages into one workstation. Traditionally, the design and simulation stages of new product development have been separate, requiring the designer to hand over to a simulation expert and wait for the results before revising their design. Combining the processes greatly reduces the time for each iteration. “Simulation”, in this context, can mean verifying a plastic component is capable of manufacture by modeling the injection of molten plastic into a mold, determining a product is strong enough through a stress simulation, or generating a photorealistic image of a consumer product by simulating the path of light through and across it.

Tesla has had particular success in supercomputing centers and in oil exploration; other applications include accelerating drug discovery, weather simulations and derivative price modeling. Our growth strategy for Tesla is to focus on these and some other key markets, and to continue building an ecosystem of applications, development tools and developers who can develop for a massively parallel architecture like Tesla.

Consumer Products Business

Our CPB includes our Tegra system-on-chip products for smartphones, tablets, automotive infotainment systems, and other similar devices, and Icera baseband processors. The significant majority of Tegra revenues are generated by sales in smart phones and tablets. CPB also includes license, royalty, other revenue and associated costs related to video game consoles and other digital consumer electronics devices.

Our mobile strategy is to create a system-on-chip that enables the entertainment and web experiences that end users enjoy on a PC and other mobile devices. NVIDIA Tegra mobile products implement design techniques, both inside the chips and at the system level, which result in high performance and long battery life. These technologies enhance visual display capabilities, improve connectivity and minimize chip and system-level power consumption. We aim to innovate faster than the competition, introducing new features and capabilities to differentiate the user experience.

In support of this strategy, during fiscal year 2012, we launched Tegra 3, the world's first quad-core mobile computing chip, bringing PC levels of performance within the power envelope of a cellular phone chip. Tegra 3 includes several unique innovations, including its variable symmetric multiprocessing architecture with companion core which enables extremely low-power operation during the majority of use cases, and PRISM, which increases battery life during video playback by 40%. Another notable innovation is DirectTouch, which significantly improves the responsiveness of touch-screen user interfaces on devices and simultaneously reduces costs for the device manufacturer. Our software expertise makes both of these inventions completely transparent to the operating system; that is, neither the operating system nor the application developer has to know about them for users to benefit from them.

During the second quarter of fiscal year 2012, we completed the acquisition of Icera, an innovator of baseband processors for 3G and 4G cellular phones and tablets. Icera's technology uses a custom-built, low-power processor and a software-based baseband which assist manufacturers to develop multiple products from a common platform, reduce development costs and accelerate time to market. Icera's high-speed wireless modem products have been approved by more than 50 carriers across the globe. In addition to leveraging on the existing Icera business, the objective of the acquisition is to accelerate and enhance the combination of our application processor with Icera's baseband processor for use in mobile devices such as smartphone and tablets. Please refer to Note 7 of the Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements in Part IV, Item 15 of this Form 10-K for additional information regarding this business combination.

Our Strategy

Maintain Technology and Product Leadership in Visual Computing. We believe that ongoing investment in research and development in 3D graphics and image processing is critical to the development and enhancement of innovative

products and technologies. We are focused on using our advanced engineering capabilities to accelerate the quality and performance of 3D graphics, image processing and computational graphics to raise and change the user experience for both consumer entertainment and professional visualization applications. Our research and development strategy is to focus on concurrently developing multiple generations of GPUs, including GPUs for high-performance computing, and mobile and consumer products using independent design teams. As we have in the past, we intend to use this strategy to achieve new levels of graphics, networking and communications features and performance and ultra-low power designs, enabling our customers to achieve superior performance in their products. One of our primary competitive advantages is the quality of our software, measured by performance, reliability, features and compatibility with other applications.

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Advance Mobile Computing with Best-in-Class Ultra-Low Power System-On-Chip Processors. We believe that our expertise in graphics and low-power system architecture positions us to help drive continued market penetration through our applications processor roadmap. By deploying the new NVIDIA Icera baseband processor, we believe we can address a larger segment of the phone market. And further, by integrating the applications processor and baseband processor together in a single product, we believe we will be able to address an even larger segment next year.

Revolutionize High Performance Computing with Tesla and CUDA. Tesla is a family of GPU computing products that delivers processing capabilities for high-performance computing applications. NVIDIA CUDA is a general purpose parallel computing architecture that leverages the parallel compute engine in NVIDIA GPUs to solve many complex computational problems in a fraction of the time required by a CPU. We are working with developers around the world who have adopted and written application programs for the CUDA architecture using various high-level programming languages, which can then be run at significant execution speeds on our GPUs. Developers are able to accelerate algorithms in areas ranging from molecular dynamics to image processing, medical image reconstruction and derivatives modeling for financial risk analysis. We are also working with universities around the world that teach parallel programming with CUDA as well as with many PC , or OEMs that offer high performance computing solutions with Tesla for use by their customers around the world. We also sell directly to supercomputing centers such as Oak Ridge National Laboratory in the U.S. and the National Supercomputing Center in Tianjin, China. Researchers use CUDA to accelerate their time-to-discovery, and many popular off-the-shelf software packages are now CUDA-accelerated.

Use Our Intellectual Property and Resources to Enter into License and Development Contracts. We believe our technology leadership in graphics and mobile computing offers the opportunity to license our technology to customers that desire to build such capabilities directly into their own products. Accordingly, from time to time, we expect to enter into license and development arrangements, some of which may involve significant customization of our intellectual property components, to further enhance the reach of our graphics and mobile technology.

Sales and Marketing

Our worldwide sales and marketing strategy is key to our objective to become the leading supplier of , high-performance and efficient GPUs and mobile system-on-chip products. Our sales and marketing teams work closely with each industry's respective OEMs, original design manufacturers, or ODMs, system builders, motherboard manufacturers, add-in board manufacturers, or AIBs and industry trendsetters, collectively referred to as our Channel, to define product features, performance, price and timing of new products. Members of our sales team have a high level of technical expertise and product and industry knowledge to support the competitive and complex design win process. We also employ a highly skilled team of application engineers to assist our Channel in designing, testing and qualifying system designs that incorporate our products. We believe that the depth and quality of our design support are keys to improving our Channel's time-to-market, maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction within our Channel and fostering relationships that encourage customers to use the next generation of our products.

In the segments we serve that purchase our GPUs, the sales process involves achieving key design wins with leading OEMs and major system builders and supporting the product design into high volume production with key ODMs, motherboard manufacturers and AIBs. These design wins in turn influence the retail and system builder channel that is serviced by AIB and motherboard manufacturers. Our distribution strategy is to work with a number of leading independent contract equipment manufacturers, or CEMs, ODMs, motherboard manufacturers, AIBs and distributors, each of which have relationships with a broad range of major OEMs and/or strong brand name recognition in the retail channel. Currently, we sell a significant portion of our processors directly to distributors, CEMs, ODMs, motherboard manufacturers and add-in board manufacturers, which then sell boards and systems with our products to leading OEMs, retail outlets and a large number of system builders. In the CPB segment that we serve, the sales process primarily involves achieving key design wins directly with the leading mobile OEMs and supporting the product

design into high-volume production.

As a result of our Channel strategy, a small number of our customers represent the majority of our revenue. However, their end customers consist of a large number of OEMs and system builders throughout the world. Sales to our largest customer accounted for 11% of our total revenue for fiscal year 2012.

To encourage software title developers and publishers to develop games optimized for platforms utilizing our products, we seek to establish and maintain strong relationships in the software development community. Engineering and marketing personnel interact with and visit key software developers to promote and discuss our products, as well as to ascertain product requirements and solve technical problems. Our developer program makes certain that our products are available to developers prior to volume availability in order to encourage the development of software titles that are optimized for our products.

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Backlog

Our sales are primarily made pursuant to standard purchase orders. The quantity of products purchased by our customers as well as our shipment schedules are subject to revisions that reflect changes in both the customers' requirements and in manufacturing availability. The semiconductor industry is characterized by short lead time orders and quick delivery schedules. In light of industry practice and experience, we believe that only a small portion of our backlog is non-cancelable and that the dollar amount associated with the non-cancelable portion is not significant.

Seasonality

Our industry is largely focused on the consumer products market. Historically, we have seen stronger revenue in the second half of our fiscal year than in the first half of our fiscal year, primarily due to back-to-school and holiday demand. However, there can be no assurance of this trend.

Manufacturing

We do not directly manufacture semiconductor wafers used for our products. Instead, we utilize what is known as a fabless manufacturing strategy for all of our product-line operating segments whereby we employ world-class suppliers for all phases of the manufacturing process, including wafer fabrication, assembly, testing and packaging. This strategy uses the expertise of industry-leading suppliers that are certified by the International Organization for Standardization in such areas as fabrication, assembly, quality control and assurance, reliability and testing. In addition, this strategy allows us to avoid many of the significant costs and risks associated with owning and operating manufacturing operations. Our suppliers are also responsible for procurement of most of the raw materials used in the production of our products. As a result, we can focus our resources on product design, additional quality assurance, marketing and customer support.

We utilize industry-leading suppliers, such as Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company Limited, to produce our semiconductor wafers. We then utilize independent subcontractors, such as Advanced Semiconductor Engineering, Inc., Amkor Technology, JSI Logistics Ltd., King Yuan Electronics Co., Ltd., Siliconware Precision Industries Company Ltd. and STATS ChipPAC Incorporated to perform assembly, testing and packaging of most of our products. We purchase substrates from Nanya Technology Corporation, IbidenCo., Ltd. and Unimicron Technology Corporation.

We typically receive semiconductor products from our subcontractors, perform incoming quality assurance and then ship the semiconductors to CEMs, distributors, motherboard and AIB customers from our third-party warehouse in Hong Kong. Generally, these manufacturers assemble and test the boards based on our design kit and test specifications, and then ship the products to retailers, system builders or OEMs as motherboard and add-in board solutions.

Inventory and Working Capital

Our management focuses considerable attention on managing our inventories and other working-capital-related items. We manage inventories by communicating with our customers and then using our industry experience to forecast demand on a product-by-product basis. We then place manufacturing orders for our products that are based on forecasted demand. The quantity of products actually purchased by our customers as well as shipment schedules are subject to revisions that reflect changes in both the customers' requirements and in manufacturing availability. We generally maintain substantial inventories of our products because the semiconductor industry is characterized by short lead time orders and quick delivery schedules.

Our existing cash and marketable securities balances increased by 25.7% at the end of fiscal year 2012 compared with the end of fiscal year 2011. We believe that these balances and our anticipated cash flows from operations will be sufficient to meet our operating, acquisition and capital requirements for at least the next twelve months.

Research and Development

We believe that the continued introduction of new and enhanced products designed to deliver leading 3D graphics, HD video, audio, ultra-low power consumption and system-on-chip architectures is essential to our future success. Our research and development strategy is to focus on concurrently developing multiple generations of GPUs, including GPUs for high-performance computing, and mobile and consumer products using independent design teams. Our research and development efforts are performed within specialized groups consisting of software engineering, hardware engineering, very large scale integration design engineering, process engineering, architecture and algorithms. These groups act as a pipeline designed to allow the efficient simultaneous development of multiple generations of products.

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A critical component of our product development effort is our partnerships with leaders in the computer-aided design industry. We invest significant resources in the development of relationships with industry leaders, often assisting these companies in the product definition of their new products. We believe that forming these relationships and utilizing next-generation development tools to design, simulate and verify our products will help us remain at the forefront of the 3D graphics market and develop products that utilize leading-edge technology on a rapid basis. We believe this approach assists us in meeting the new design schedules of PC OEMs and other manufacturers.

As of January 29, 2012, we had 5,042 full-time employees engaged in research and development. During fiscal years 2012, 2011 and 2010, we incurred research and development expense of $1,002.6 million, $848.8 million and $908.9 million, respectively.

Competition

The market for our products is intensely competitive and is characterized by rapid technological change, evolving industry standards and declining average selling prices. We believe that the principal competitive factors in this market are performance, breadth of product offerings, access to customers and distribution channels, software support, conformity to industry standard Application Programming Interfaces, manufacturing capabilities, processor pricing and total system costs. We believe that our ability to remain competitive will depend on how well we are able to anticipate the features and functions that customers will demand and whether we are able to deliver consistent volumes of our products at acceptable levels of quality and at competitive prices. We expect competition to increase from both existing competitors and new market entrants with products that may be less costly than ours, or may provide better performance or additional features not provided by our products. In addition, it is possible that new competitors or alliances among competitors could emerge and acquire significant market share.

A significant source of competition comes from companies that provide or intend to provide GPUs and mobile and consumer products. Some of our competitors may have greater marketing, financial, distribution and manufacturing resources than we do and may be more able to adapt to customer or technological changes.

Our current competitors include:

- suppliers of GPUs, including chipsets that incorporate 3D graphics functionality as part of their existing solutions, such as Advanced Micro Devices, or AMD, Intel, Matrox Electronics Systems Ltd. and VIA Technologies, Inc.;

- suppliers of system-on-chip products that support tablets, smartphones, portable media players, internet television, automotive navigation and other similar devices, such as AMD, ARM Holdings plc, Broadcom Corporation, Freescale Semiconductor Inc., Fujitsu Limited, Imagination Technologies Ltd., Intel, Marvell Technology Group Ltd., NEC Corporation, Qualcomm Incorporated, Renesas Technology Corp., Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd., Seiko Epson Corporation, ST-Ericsson, Texas Instruments Incorporated and Toshiba America Electronic Components, Inc.;

- licensors of graphics technologies, such as ARM Holdings plc and Imagination Technologies Group plc.; and

- suppliers of cellular basebands such as Broadcom Corporation, Freescale Semiconductor Inc., HiSilicon Technologies Co., Ltd., Intel, Marvell Technology Group Ltd., Mediatek, Qualcomm Incorporated, Renesas Technology Corp., Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd., Spreadtrum Communications Co., Ltd, ST-Ericsson, and Texas Instruments Incorporated.

If and to the extent we offer products in new markets, we may face competition from existing competitors as well as from companies with which we currently do not compete. We expect substantial competition from both Intel's and AMD's strategy of selling platform solutions, including integrating a CPU and a GPU on the same chip or same

package, as evidenced by AMD's announcement of its Fusion processors and Intel's announcement of its family of CPUs codenamed Sandy Bridge. As AMD and Intel continue to pursue platform solutions and integrated CPUs, we may not be able to successfully compete and our business could be negatively impacted.

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Patents and Proprietary Rights

We rely primarily on a combination of patents, trademarks, trade secrets, employee and third-party nondisclosure agreements and licensing arrangements to protect our intellectual property in the United States and internationally. Our currently issued patents have expiration dates from March 2012 to January 2031. We have numerous patents issued, allowed and pending in the United States and in foreign jurisdictions. Our patents and pending patent applications primarily relate to our products and the technology used in connection with our products. We also rely on international treaties, organizations and foreign laws to protect our intellectual property. The laws of certain foreign countries in which our products are or may be manufactured or sold, including various countries in Asia, may not protect our products or intellectual property rights to the same extent as the laws of the United States. This makes the possibility of piracy of our technology and products more likely. We continuously assess whether and where to seek formal protection for particular innovations and technologies based on such factors as:

- the location in which our products are manufactured;
- our strategic technology or product directions in different countries;
- the degree to which intellectual property laws exist and are meaningfully enforced in different jurisdictions; and
- the commercial significance of our operations and our competitors' operations in particular countries and regions.

Our pending patent applications and any future applications may not be approved. In addition, any issued patents may not provide us with competitive advantages or may be challenged by third parties. The enforcement of patents by others may harm our ability to conduct our business. Others may independently develop substantially equivalent intellectual property or otherwise gain access to our trade secrets or intellectual property. Our failure to effectively protect our intellectual property could harm our business. We have licensed technology from third parties for incorporation in some of our products and for defensive reasons, and expect to continue to enter into such license agreements. These licenses may result in royalty payments to third parties, the cross licensing of technology by us or payment of other consideration. If these arrangements are not concluded on commercially reasonable terms, our business could suffer.

Employees

As of January 29, 2012, we had 7,133 employees, 5,042 of whom were engaged in research and development and 2,091 of whom were engaged in sales, marketing, operations and administrative positions. We believe we have good relationships with our employees.

Financial Information by Reporting Segment and Geographic Data

The information included in Note 18 of the Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements in Part IV, Item 15 of this Form 10-K, including financial information by business segment and revenue and long-lived assets by geographic region, is hereby incorporated by reference.

Executive Officers of the Registrant

The following sets forth certain information regarding our executive officers, their ages and their positions as of February 29, 2012:

| Name | Age | Position |
|---|---|---|
| Jen-Hsun Huang | 49 | President, Chief Executive Officer and Director |
| Karen Burns | 44 | Vice President and Interim Chief Financial Officer |
| Ajay K. Puri | 57 | Executive Vice President, Worldwide Sales |
| David M. Shannon | 56 | Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Debora Shoquist | 57 | Executive Vice President, Operations |

Jen-Hsun Huang co-founded NVIDIA in April 1993 and has served as its President, Chief Executive Officer and a member of the Board of Directors since its inception. From 1985 to 1993, Mr. Huang was employed at LSI Logic Corporation, a computer chip manufacturer, where he held a variety of positions, most recently as Director of Coreware, the business unit responsible for LSI's “system-on-chip” strategy. From 1983 to 1985, Mr. Huang was a microprocessor designer for Advanced Micro Devices, Inc., a semiconductor company. Mr. Huang holds a B.S.E.E. degree from Oregon State University and an M.S.E.E. degree from Stanford University.

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Karen Burns joined NVIDIA in October 2000 and has served as Vice President and Interim Chief Financial Officer of NVIDIA since March 2011. From December 2010 to March 2011, Ms. Burns served as NVIDIA's Vice President, Corporate Controller and Tax and as Vice President - Tax from November 2007. From October 2000 to October 2007, Ms. Burns served as head of the tax department in various capacities, including Senior Director and Director. Previous to NVIDIA, Ms. Burns served nine years in various capacities in tax and audit with KPMG, a global public accounting firm, in their Atlanta, London, and Silicon Valley based practices. Ms. Burns holds both a B.A. and an M.A. in Accounting from Florida State University.

Ajay K. Puri joined NVIDIA in December 2005 as Senior Vice President, Worldwide Sales and became Executive Vice President, Worldwide Sales in January 2009. Prior to NVIDIA, he held positions in sales, marketing, and general management over a 22-year career at Sun Microsystems, Inc. Mr. Puri previously held marketing, management consulting, and product development positions at Hewlett-Packard Company, Booz Allen Hamilton Inc., and Texas Instruments Incorporated. Mr. Puri holds an M.B.A. degree from Harvard University, an M.S.E.E. degree from the California Institute of Technology and a B.S.E.E. degree from the University of Minnesota.

David M. Shannon joined NVIDIA in August 2002 as Vice President and General Counsel. Mr. Shannon became Secretary of NVIDIA in April 2005, a Senior Vice President in December 2005 and an Executive Vice President in January 2009. From 1993 to 2002, Mr. Shannon held various counsel positions at Intel, including the most recent position of Vice President and Assistant General Counsel. Mr. Shannon also practiced for eight years in the law firm of Gibson Dunn and Crutcher, focusing on complex commercial and high-technology related litigation. Mr. Shannon holds B.A. and J.D. degrees from Pepperdine University.

Debora Shoquist joined NVIDIA in September 2007 as Senior Vice President of Operations and became Executive Vice President of Operations in January 2009. From 2004 to 2007, Ms. Shoquist served as Senior Vice President of Operations at JDS Uniphase Corporation, a provider of communications test and measurement solutions and optical products for the telecommunications industry. From 2002 to 2004, she served as Senior Vice President and General Manager of the Electro-Optics business at Coherent, Inc., a manufacturer of commercial and scientific laser equipment. Her experience includes her role at Quantum Corporation as the President of the Personal Computer Hard Disk Drive Division. Her experience also includes senior roles at Hewlett-Packard Corporation. She holds a B.S degree in Electrical Engineering from Kansas State University and a B.S. degree in Biology from Santa Clara University.

Available Information

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K and, if applicable, amendments to those reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as the amended are available free of charge on or through our web site, http://www.nvidia.com, as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file such material with, or furnish it to, the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC. Our web site and the information on it or connected to it is not a part of this Form 10-K.

## ITEM 1A. RISK FACTORS

In evaluating NVIDIA and our business, the following factors should be considered in addition to the other information in this Annual Report on Form 10-K. Before you buy our common stock, you should know that making such an investment involves some risks including, but not limited to, the risks described below. Additionally, any one of the following risks could seriously harm our business, financial condition and results of operations, which could cause our stock price to decline. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also impair our business operations.

Risks Related to Our Business, Industry and Partners

If we are unable to compete in the markets for our products, our financial results will be adversely impacted.

The market for our products is extremely competitive, and we expect competition to intensify as current competitors expand their product offerings, industry standards continue to evolve and others realize the market potential of mobile and consumer products and services.

Our current competitors include:

- suppliers of GPUs, including chipsets that incorporate 3D graphics functionality as part of their existing solutions, such as Advanced Micro Devices, or AMD, Intel, Matrox Electronics Systems Ltd., and VIA Technologies, Inc.;

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- suppliers of system-on-chip products that support tablets, smartphones, portable media players, internet television, automotive navigation and other similar devices, such as AMD, ARM Holdings plc, Broadcom Corporation, Freescale Semiconductor Inc., Fujitsu Limited, Imagination Technologies Ltd., Intel, Marvell Technology Group Ltd., NEC Corporation, Qualcomm Incorporated, Renesas Technology Corp., Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd., Seiko Epson Corporation, ST-Ericsson, Texas Instruments Incorporated and Toshiba America Electronic Components, Inc.;

- licensors of graphics technologies such as ARM Holdings plc and Imagination Technologies Group plc and

- suppliers of cellular basebands such as , Broadcom Corporation, Freescale Semiconductor Inc., HiSilicon Technologies Co., Ltd., Intel, Marvell Technology Group Ltd., Mediatek, Qualcomm Incorporated, Renesas Technology Corp., Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd., Spreadtrum Communications Co., Ltd, ST-Ericsson and Texas Instruments Incorporated.

We expect competition to increase from both existing competitors and new market entrants with products that may be less costly than ours, or may provide better performance or additional features not provided by our products. In addition, it is possible that new competitors or alliances among competitors could emerge and acquire significant market share. Furthermore, competitors with greater financial resources may be able to offer lower prices than us, or they may offer additional products, services or other incentives that we may not be able to match. In addition, many of our competitors operate and maintain their own fabrication facilities and have longer operating histories, greater name recognition, larger customer bases, and greater sales, marketing and distribution resources than we do.

Our ability to compete will depend on, among other factors, our ability to:

- continue to keep pace with technological developments;
- develop and introduce new products, services, technologies and enhancements on a timely basis;
- transition our semiconductor products to increasingly smaller line width geometries;
- obtain sufficient foundry capacity and packaging materials; and
- succeed in significant foreign markets, such as China and India.

If we are unable to compete in our current or new markets, demand for our products could decrease which could cause our revenue to decline and our financial results to suffer.

If and to the extent we offer products in new markets, we may face competition from existing competitors as well as from companies with which we currently do not compete. We expect substantial competition from Intel and AMD, both of whom has a strategy of selling platform solutions, including integrating a CPU and a GPU on the same chip or same package, as evidenced by AMD's announcement of its Fusion processors and Intel's announcement of its family of CPUs codenamed Sandy Bridge. As Intel and AMD continue to pursue platform solutions and integrated CPUs, our business could be negatively impacted.

We depend on foundries to manufacture our products and these third parties may not be able to satisfy our manufacturing requirements, which would harm our business.

We do not manufacture the silicon wafers used for our products and do not own or operate a wafer fabrication facility. Instead, we are dependent on industry-leading foundries, such as Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company Limited, or TSMC, to manufacture our semiconductor wafers using their fabrication equipment and techniques. A substantial portion of our wafers are supplied by TSMC. The foundries, which have limited capacity, also manufacture products for other semiconductor companies, including some of our competitors. Since we do not have long-term commitment contracts with any of these foundries, they do not have an obligation to provide us with any set pricing or minimum quantity of product at any time except as may be provided in a specific purchase order. Most of our

products are only manufactured by one foundry at a time. In times of high demand, the foundries could choose to prioritize their capacity for other companies, reduce or eliminate deliveries to us, or increase the prices that they charge us. If we are unable to meet customer demand due to reduced or eliminated deliveries or have to increase the prices of our products, we could lose sales to customers, which would negatively impact our revenue and our reputation.

Because the lead-time needed to establish a strategic relationship with a new manufacturing partner and achieve initial production could be over a year, we do not have an alternative source of supply for our products. In addition, the time and effort to qualify a new foundry would result in additional expense, diversion of resources, and could result in lost sales, any of which would negatively impact our financial results. We believe that long-term market acceptance for our products will depend on reliable relationships with the third-party manufacturers we use to ensure adequate product supply and competitive pricing to respond to customer demand.

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If our third-party foundries are not able to transition to new manufacturing process technologies or develop, obtain or successfully implement high quality, leading-edge process technologies our operating results and gross margin could be adversely affected.

We use the most advanced manufacturing process technology appropriate for our products that is available from our third-party foundries. As a result, we continuously evaluate the benefits of migrating our products to smaller geometry process technologies in order to improve performance and reduce costs. We believe this strategy will help us remain competitive. Our current product families are manufactured using 0.18 micron, 0.14 micron, 0.13 micron, 0.11 micron, 90 nanometer, 80 nanometer, 65 nanometer, 55 nanometer and 40 nanometer process technologies. Manufacturing process technologies are subject to rapid change and require significant expenditures for research and development, which could negatively impact our operating expenses and gross margin.

We have experienced difficulty in migrating to new manufacturing processes in the past and, consequently, have suffered reduced yields, delays in product deliveries and increased expense levels. We may face similar difficulties, delays and expenses as we continue to transition our new products to smaller geometry processes. Moreover, we are dependent on our third-party manufacturers to invest sufficient funds in new manufacturing processes in order to have ample capacity for all of their customers and to develop the processes in a timely manner. Our product cycles may also depend on our third-party manufacturers migrating to smaller geometry processes successfully and in time for us to meet our customer demands. Some of our competitors own their manufacturing facilities and may be able to move to a new state of the art manufacturing process more quickly or more successfully than our manufacturing partners. If our suppliers fall behind our competitors in manufacturing processes, the development and customer demand for our products and the use of our products could be negatively impacted. If we are forced to use larger geometric processes in manufacturing a product than our competition, our gross margin may be reduced. The inability by us or our third-party manufacturers to effectively and efficiently transition to new manufacturing process technologies may adversely affect our operating results and our gross margin.

We cannot be certain that our third-party foundries will be able to develop, obtain or successfully implement high quality, leading-edge process technologies needed to manufacturer our products profitably or on a timely basis or that our competitors (including those that own their own manufacturing facilities) will not develop such high quality, leading-edge process technologies earlier. If our third-party foundries experience manufacturing inefficiencies, we may fail to achieve acceptable yields or experience product delivery delays. If our third-party foundries fall behind our competitors (including those that own their own manufacturing facilities), the development and customer demand for our products and the use of our products could be negatively impacted. Additionally, we cannot be certain that our third-party foundries will manufacture our products at prices that are competitive to what our competitors pay. If our third-party foundries do not charge us competitive prices, our operating results and gross margin will be negatively impacted.

Failure to achieve expected manufacturing yields for our products could negatively impact our financial results and damage our reputation.

Manufacturing yields for our products are a function of product design, which is developed largely by us, and process technology, which typically is proprietary to the manufacturer. Low yields may result from either product design or process technology failure. We do not know a yield problem exists until our design is manufactured. When a yield issue is identified, the product is analyzed and tested to determine the cause. As a result, yield problems may not be identified until well into the production process. Resolution of yield problems requires cooperation by, and communication between, us and the manufacturer. Because of our potentially limited access to wafer foundry capacity and our recent transition to a wafer buy model where the costs of our products are based on the price per wafer versus price per functional die, decreases in manufacturing yields could result in an increase in our costs and force us to allocate our available product supply among our customers. Lower than expected yields could potentially harm

customer relationships, our reputation and our financial results.

Our business results could be adversely affected if the identification and development of new products is delayed or unsuccessful.

In order to maintain or improve our financial results, we will need to continue to identify and develop new products and enhancements to our existing products in a timely and cost-effective manner. The process of developing new products and services and enhancing existing products and services is highly complex, costly and uncertain, and any failure by us to anticipate customers' changing needs and emerging technology trends could adversely affect our business. We must make long-term investments and commit significant resources before knowing whether our predictions will accurately reflect customer demand for our new products and technologies. It is possible that our development efforts will not be successful and that our new technologies will not result in meaningful revenues. Even if we introduce new and enhanced products to the market, we may not be able to achieve market acceptance of them in a timely manner.

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Our ability to successfully develop and deliver new products will depend on various factors, including our ability to:

•effectively identify and capitalize upon opportunities in new markets;
•timely complete and introduce new products and technologies;
•transition our semiconductor products to increasingly smaller line width geometries; and
•obtain sufficient foundry capacity and packaging materials.

We occasionally have experienced delays in completing the development and introduction of new products and product enhancements, and we could experience delays in the future. In addition, in the past, we have been unable to successfully manage product transitions from older to newer products resulting in obsolete inventory. Our failure to successfully develop and introduce new products and technologies or identify new uses for existing or future products, could result in rapidly declining average selling prices, reduced demand for our products or loss of market share any of which could harm our competitive position and cause our revenue, gross margin and overall financial results to suffer.

If we are unable to achieve market acceptance and design wins for our products and technologies, our results of operations and competitive position will be harmed.

The success of our business depends to a significant extent on our ability to achieve market acceptance of our new products and enhancements to our existing products and identify and enter new markets. The market for our product and technologies has been characterized by unpredictable and sometimes rapid shifts in the popularity of products, often caused by the publication of competitive industry benchmark results, changes in pricing of dynamic random-access memory devices and other changes in the total system cost of add-in boards, as well as by severe price competition and by frequent new technology and product introductions. Broad market acceptance is difficult to achieve and such market acceptance, if achieved, is difficult to sustain due to intense competition and frequent new technology and product introductions. If we do not successfully achieve or maintain market acceptance for our products and enhancements or identify and enter new markets, our ability to compete and maintain or increase revenues will suffer.

Additionally, there can be no assurance that the industry will continue to demand new products with improved standards, features or performance. If our customers, original equipment manufacturers, or OEMs, original design manufacturers, or ODMs, add-in-card and motherboard manufacturers, system builders and consumer electronics companies, do not continue to design products that require more advanced or efficient processors and/or the market does not continue to demand new products with increased performance, features, functionality or standards, sales of our products could decline and the markets for our products could shrink. Decreased sales of our products for these markets could negatively impact our revenue and our financial results.

We believe achieving design wins, which entails having our existing and future products chosen for hardware components or subassemblies designed by OEMs, ODMs, and add-in board, or AIB, and motherboard manufacturers is an integral part of our future success. Our OEM, ODM, and AIB and motherboard manufacturers' customers typically introduce new system configurations as often as twice per year, typically based on spring and fall design cycles or in connection with trade shows. Accordingly, when our customers are making their design decisions, our existing products must have competitive performance levels or we must timely introduce new products in order to be included in our customers' new system configurations. This requires that we:

•anticipate the features and functionality that customers and consumers will demand;
•incorporate those features and functionalities into products that meet the exacting design requirements of our customers;

- price our products competitively; and
- introduce products to the market within our customers' limited design cycles.

If OEMs, ODMs and AIB and motherboard manufacturers do not include our products in their systems, they will typically not use our products in their systems until at least the next design configuration. Therefore, we endeavor to develop close relationships with our OEMs and ODMs, in an attempt to better anticipate and address customer needs in new products so that we will achieve design wins.

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Our ability to achieve design wins also depends in part on our ability to identify and be compliant with evolving industry standards. Unanticipated changes in industry standards could render our products incompatible with products developed by major hardware manufacturers and software developers. If our products are not in compliance with prevailing industry standards, we may not be designed into our customers' product designs. However, to be compliant with changes to industry standards, we may have to invest significant time and resources to redesign our products which could negatively impact our gross margin or operating results. If we are unable to achieve new design wins for existing or new customers, we may lose market share and our operating results would be negatively impacted.

If new consumer products and technologies which incorporate our products do not achieve market acceptance, our business could be negatively impacted.

The success of our business also depends on market acceptance of new consumer products and technologies, such as smartphones, smartbooks, tablets and other similar consumer electronics devices, which contain our products. As markets for these new consumer products emerge, we may encounter new sources of competition as well as customers who have different requirements than those in the PC business. If market acceptance of such products and technologies is not attained, our ability to compete and maintain or increase revenues will be adversely affected.

Our ability to be successful in emerging consumer product markets depends in part on our ability to cultivate new industry relationships in these market segments. As the number and variety of Internet-connected devices increase, we will need to improve the functionality of our products to succeed in these new markets, which may require significant time and resources on our part to design our products which could negatively impact our business.

Business disruptions could seriously harm our future revenue and financial condition and increase our costs and expenses.

Our worldwide operations could be disrupted by earthquakes, telecommunications failures, power or water shortages, tsunamis, floods, hurricanes, typhoons, fires, extreme weather conditions, climate change, medical epidemics or pandemics and other natural or man-made disasters or catastrophic events. The occurrence of any of these business disruptions could result in significant losses, seriously harm our revenue and financial condition, adversely affect our competitive position, increase our costs and expenses, and require substantial expenditures and recovery time in order to fully resume operations. Our corporate headquarters, and a portion of our research and development activities, are located in California, and other critical business operations and some of our suppliers are located in Asia, near major earthquake faults known for seismic activity. In addition, a majority of our principal IT data centers are located in California, making our operations vulnerable to natural disasters or other business disruptions occurring in this geographical area. The manufacture of product components, the final assembly of our products and other critical operations are concentrated in certain geographic locations, including Taiwan, China and Korea. Our operations could be adversely affected if manufacturing, logistics or other operations in these locations are disrupted for any reason, including natural disasters, information technology system failures, military actions or economic, business, labor, environmental, public health, regulatory or political issues. The ultimate impact on us, our significant suppliers and our general infrastructure of being located near major earthquake faults and being consolidated in certain geographical areas is unknown. However, in the event of a major earthquake or other natural disaster or catastrophic event, our revenue, profitability and financial condition could suffer.

In late July 2011, Thailand began experiencing severe flooding that has caused widespread damage to the local manufacturing industry. PC manufacturers obtain disk drive components used in its PCs from suppliers with operations in Thailand that were and continue to be severely impacted by the flooding. These PC manufacturers have and expect to continue to experience a short-term reduction in the supply of these disk drive components. As a result, in our fourth quarter of fiscal year 2012 shipments of PCs by some PC manufacturers were reduced, which reduced the demand for our GPUs. In addition, higher disk-drive prices constrained the ability of some PC manufacturers to

include a GPU in their systems which also reduced demand for our GPUs and negatively impacted our financial results for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2012.

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A decline in demand in certain end-user markets could have a material adverse effect on the demand for our products and results of operations.

Our customer base includes companies in a wide range of end-user markets, but we generate a significant amount of revenue from sales to customers in the communications-and computer-related industries. Within these end-user markets, a large portion of our revenue is generated from sales to customers in the cell phone, tablet and PC markets, including professional workstations. Decline in one or several of these end-user markets could have a material adverse effect on the demand for our products and our results of operations and financial condition. These declines could be large and sudden. Since PC, cell phone and tablet manufacturers often build inventories during periods of anticipated growth, they may be left with excess inventories if growth slows or if they incorrectly forecast product transitions. In these cases, these manufacturers may abruptly suspend substantially all purchases of additional inventory from suppliers like us until their excess inventory has been absorbed, which would have a negative impact on our financial results.

We sell our products to a small number of customers and our business could suffer if we lose any of these customers.

We receive a significant amount of our revenue from a limited number of customers. Revenue from significant customers, those representing 10% or more of total revenue, aggregated approximately 11% of our total revenue from one customer for the fiscal year 2012 and approximately 12% of our total revenue from another customer for fiscal years 2011 and 2010. Sales to our largest customers have fluctuated significantly from period to period primarily due to the timing and number of design wins with each customer, as well as the continued diversification of our customer base as we expand into new markets, and will likely continue to fluctuate dramatically in the future. Our operating results in the foreseeable future will continue to depend on sales to a relatively small number of customers, as well as the ability of these customers to sell products that incorporate our products. In the future, these customers may decide not to purchase our products at all, purchase fewer products than they did in the past, or alter their purchasing patterns in some other way, particularly because:

- substantially all of our sales are made on a purchase order basis, which permits our customers to cancel, change or delay product purchase commitments with little or no notice to us and without penalty;
- our customers may develop their own solutions;
- our customers may purchase products from our competitors; or
- our customers may discontinue sales or lose market share in the markets for which they purchase our products.

The loss of any of our large customers or a significant reduction in sales we make to them would likely harm our financial condition and results of operations.

If we fail to appropriately scale our operations in response to changes in demand for our existing products or to the demand for new products requested by our customers, our business and profitability could be materially and adversely affected.

To achieve our business objectives, it may be necessary from time to time for us to expand or contract our operations. In the future, we may not be able to scale our workforce and operations in a sufficiently timely manner to respond effectively to changes in demand for our existing products or to the demand for new products requested by our customers. In that event, we may be unable to meet competitive challenges or exploit potential market opportunities, and our current or future business could be materially and adversely affected. Conversely, if we expand our operations and workforce too rapidly in anticipation of increased demand for our products, and such demand does not materialize at the pace at which we expected, the rate of increase in our costs and operating expenses may exceed the rate of increase in our revenue, which would adversely affect our results of operations. In addition, if such demand does not

materialize at the pace which we expect, we may be required to scale down our business through expense and headcount reductions as well as facility consolidations or closures that could result in restructuring charges that would materially and adversely affect our results of operations. Because many of our expenses are fixed in the short-term or are incurred in advance of anticipated sales, we may not be able to decrease our expenses in a timely manner to offset any decrease in customer demand. If customer demand does not increase as anticipated, our profitability could be adversely affected due to our higher expense levels.

Our past growth has placed, and any future long-term growth is expected to continue to place, a significant strain on our management personnel, systems and resources. To implement our current business and product plans, we will need to continue to expand, train, manage and motivate our workforce. All of these endeavors require substantial management effort. If we are unable to effectively manage our expanding operations, we may be unable to scale our business quickly enough to meet competitive challenges or exploit potential market opportunities, or conversely, we may scale our business too quickly and the rate of increase in our costs and expenses may exceed the rate of increase in our revenue, either of which would materially and adversely affect our results of operations.

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Our revenue may fluctuate while our operating expenses are relatively fixed, which makes our results difficult to predict and could cause our results to fall short of expectations.

Demand for many of our revenue components fluctuates and is difficult to predict, and our operating expenses are relatively fixed and largely independent of revenue. Therefore, it is difficult for us to accurately forecast revenue and profits or losses in any particular period. Our operating expenses, which are comprised of research and development expenses and sales, general and administrative expenses, represented 35.2%, 32.6% and 38.3% of our total revenue for fiscal years 2012, 2011 and 2010, respectively. Since we often recognize a substantial portion of our revenue in the last month of each quarter, we may not be able to adjust our operating expenses in a timely manner in response to any unanticipated revenue shortfalls in any quarter. Further, some of our operating expenses, like stock-based compensation expense, can only be adjusted over a longer period of time and cannot be reduced during a quarter. If we are unable to reduce operating expenses quickly in response to any revenue shortfalls, our financial results will be negatively impacted.

Any one or more of the risks discussed in this Annual Report on Form 10-K or other factors could prevent us from achieving our expected future revenue or net income. Accordingly, we believe that period-to-period comparisons of our results of operations should not be relied upon as an indication of future performance. Similarly, the results of any quarterly or full fiscal year period are not necessarily indicative of results to be expected for a subsequent quarter or a full fiscal year. As a result, it is possible that in some quarters our operating results could be below the expectations of securities analysts or investors, which could cause the trading price of our common stock to decline. We believe that our quarterly and annual results of operations may continue to be affected by a variety of factors that could harm our revenue, gross profit and results of operations.

Because our gross margin for any period depends on a number of factors, our failure to forecast changes in any of these factors could adversely affect our gross margin.

We are focused on improving our gross margin. Our gross margin for any period depends on a number of factors, including:

- the mix of our products sold;
- average selling prices;
- introduction of new products;
- product transitions;
- sales discounts;
- unexpected pricing actions by our competitors;
- the cost of product components; and
- the yield of wafers produced by the foundries that manufacture our products.

If we do not correctly forecast the impact of any of the relevant factors on our business, there may not be any actions we can take or we may not be able to take any possible actions in time to counteract any negative impact on our gross margin. In addition, if we are unable to meet our gross margin target for any period or the target set by analysts, the trading price of our common stock may decline.

Global economic conditions may adversely affect our business and financial results.

Our operations and performance depend significantly on worldwide economic conditions. Uncertainty about current global economic conditions poses a continuing risk to our business as consumers and businesses have postponed spending in response to tighter credit, negative financial news and/or declines in income or asset values, which have reduced the demand for our products.

Other factors that could depress demand for our products in the future include the European sovereign debt crisis, conditions in the residential real estate and mortgage markets, expectations for inflation, labor and healthcare costs, access to credit, consumer confidence, and other macroeconomic factors affecting consumer and business spending behavior. These and other economic factors have reduced demand for our products in the past and could further harm our business, financial condition and operating results.

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Our business is cyclical in nature and has experienced severe downturns that have harmed, and may in the future harm, our business and financial results.

Our business is directly affected by market conditions in the highly cyclical semiconductor industry. The semiconductor industry has been adversely affected by many factors, including the global downturn, ongoing efforts by our customers to reduce their spending, diminished product demand, increased inventory levels, lower average selling prices, uncertainty regarding long-term growth rates and underlying financial health and increased competition. These factors, could, among other things, limit our ability to maintain or increase our sales or recognize revenue and in turn adversely affect our business, operating results and financial condition. If our actions to reduce our operating expenses to sufficiently offset these factors when they occur are unsuccessful, our operating results will suffer.

Our stock price continues to be volatile and investors may suffer losses.

Our stock has at times experienced substantial price volatility as a result of variations between our actual and anticipated financial results, announcements by us and our competitors, or uncertainty about current global economic conditions. The stock market as a whole also has experienced extreme price and volume fluctuations that have affected the market price of many technology companies in ways that may have been unrelated to these companies' operating performance.

In the past, securities class action litigation has often been brought against a company following periods of volatility in the market price of its securities. For example, following our announcement in July 2008 that we would take a charge against cost of revenue to cover anticipated costs and expenses arising from a weak die/packaging material set in certain versions of our previous generation media and communication processor, or MCP and GPU products and that we were revising financial guidance for our second fiscal quarter of 2009, the trading price of our common stock declined. In September, October and November 2008, several putative class action lawsuits were filed against us relating to this announcement. Please refer to Note 14 of the Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements in Part IV, Item 15 of this Form 10-K for further information regarding these lawsuits. Due to changes in the potential volatility of our stock price, we may be the target of securities litigation in the future. Such lawsuits could result in the diversion of management's time and attention away from business operations, which could harm our business. In addition, the costs of defense and any damages resulting from litigation, a ruling against us, or a settlement of the litigation could adversely affect our cash flow and financial results.

Our failure to estimate customer demand properly could adversely affect our financial results.

We manufacture our products based on forecasts of customer demand in order to have shorter shipment lead times and quicker delivery schedules for our customers. As a result, we may build inventories for anticipated periods of growth which do not occur or may build inventory anticipating demand for a product that does not materialize. In forecasting demand, we make multiple assumptions any of which may prove to be incorrect. Situations that may result in excess or obsolete inventory include:

- changes in business and economic conditions, including downturns in the semiconductor industry and/or overall economy;
- changes in consumer confidence caused by changes in market conditions, including changes in the credit market, expectations for inflation, and energy prices;
- if there were a sudden and significant decrease in demand for our products;
- if there were a higher incidence of inventory obsolescence because of rapidly changing technology and customer requirements;
- if we fail to estimate customer demand properly for our older products as our newer products are introduced; or
- if our competition were to take unexpected competitive pricing actions.

Any inability to sell products to which we have devoted resources could harm our business. In addition, cancellation or deferral of customer purchase orders could result in our holding excess inventory, which could adversely affect our gross margin and restrict our ability to fund operations. Additionally, because we often sell a substantial portion of our products in the last month of each quarter, we may not be able to reduce our inventory purchase commitments in a timely manner in response to customer cancellations or deferrals. We could be subject to excess or obsolete inventories and be required to take corresponding inventory write-downs and/or a reduction in average selling prices if growth slows or does not materialize, or if we incorrectly forecast product demand, which could negatively impact our financial results.

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Conversely, if we underestimate our customers' demand for our products, our third-party manufacturing partners may not have adequate lead-time or capacity to increase production for us meaning that we may not be able to obtain sufficient inventory to fill our customers' orders on a timely basis. Even if we are able to increase production levels to meet customer demand, we may not be able to do so in a cost effective or timely manner. Inability to fulfill our customers' orders on a timely basis, or at all, could damage our customer relationships, result in lost revenue, cause a loss in market share, impact our customer relationships or damage our reputation, any of which could adversely impact our business.

We may not be able to realize the potential financial or strategic benefits of business acquisitions or strategic investments and we may not be able to successfully integrate acquisition targets, which could hurt our ability to grow our business, develop new products or sell our products.

We have acquired and invested in other businesses that offered products, services and technologies that we believe will help expand or enhance our existing products and business. Most recently, we completed our acquisition of Icera Inc., an innovator of baseband processors for 3G and 4G cellular phones and tablets. Such a transaction can involve significant integration challenges and there can be no assurance that pre-acquisition due diligence will have identified all possible issues and risks that might arise with respect to the acquisition. If we are unable to timely and successfully integrate the acquired operations, product lines and technology of Icera, we may not be able to realize the expected benefits of the acquisition, which could adversely affect our business plans and operating results.

We may enter into future acquisitions of, or investments in, businesses, in order to complement or expand our current businesses or enter into a new business market. Negotiations associated with an acquisition or strategic investment could divert management's attention and other company resources. Any of the following risks associated with past or future acquisitions or investments could impair our ability to grow our business, develop new products, our ability to sell our products, and ultimately could have a negative impact on our growth or our financial results:

- difficulty in combining the technology, products, operations or workforce of the acquired business with our business;
- difficulty in operating in a new or multiple new locations;
- disruption of our ongoing businesses or the ongoing business of the company we invest in or acquire;
- difficulty in realizing the potential financial or strategic benefits of the transaction;
- difficulty in maintaining uniform standards, controls, procedures and policies;
- difficulty integrating the target's accounting, management information, human resources and other administrative systems;
- disruption of or delays in ongoing research and development efforts;
- diversion of capital and other resources;
- assumption of liabilities;
- incurring acquisition-related costs or amortization costs for acquired intangible assets that could impact our operating results;
- diversion of resources and unanticipated expenses resulting from litigation arising from potential or actual business acquisitions or investments;
- potential failure of the due diligence processes to identify significant issues with product quality, architecture and development, or legal and financial contingencies, among other things;
- difficulties in entering into new markets in which we have limited or no experience and where competitors in such markets have stronger positions;
- incurring significant exit charges if products acquired in business combinations are unsuccessful;
- potential inability to obtain, or obtain in a timely manner, approvals from governmental authorities, which could delay or prevent such acquisitions or investments;
-

potential delay in customer and distributor purchasing decisions due to uncertainty about the direction of our product offerings; and

- impairment of relationships with employees, vendors and customers, or the loss of any of our key employees, vendors or customers our target's key employees, vendors or customers, as a result of our acquisition or investment.

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In addition, the consideration for any future acquisition could be paid in cash, shares of our common stock, the issuance of convertible debt securities or a combination of cash, convertible debt and common stock. If we make an investment in cash or use cash to pay for all or a portion of an acquisition, our cash reserves would be reduced which could negatively impact the growth of our business or our ability to develop new products. However, if we pay the consideration with shares of common stock, or convertible debentures, the holdings of our existing stockholders would be diluted. The significant decline in the trading price of our common stock would make the dilution to our stockholders more extreme and could negatively impact our ability to pay the consideration with shares of common stock or convertible debentures. We cannot forecast the number, timing or size of future strategic investments or acquisitions, or the effect that any such investments or acquisitions might have on our operations or financial results.

System security risks, data protection breaches, cyber-attacks and systems integration issues could disrupt our internal operations, and any such disruption could reduce our expected revenue, increase our expenses, damage our reputation and adversely affect our stock price.

Experienced computer programmers and hackers may be able to penetrate our security controls and misappropriate or compromise our confidential information or that of third parties, create system disruptions or cause shutdowns. Computer programmers and hackers also may be able to develop and deploy viruses, worms and other malicious software programs that attack our products or otherwise exploit any security vulnerabilities of our products. The costs to us to eliminate or alleviate cyber or other security problems, bugs, viruses, worms, malicious software programs and security vulnerabilities could be significant, and our efforts to address these problems may not be successful and could result in interruptions, delays, cessation of service and loss of existing or potential customers that may impede our sales, manufacturing, distribution or other critical functions.

We manage and store various proprietary information and sensitive or confidential data relating to our business and third party business. Breaches of our security measures or the accidental loss, inadvertent disclosure or unapproved dissemination of proprietary information or sensitive or confidential data about us or our partners or customers, including the potential loss or disclosure of such information or data as a result of fraud, trickery or other forms of deception, could expose us, our partners and customers or the individuals affected to a risk of loss or misuse of this information, result in litigation and potential liability for us, damage our brand and reputation or otherwise harm our business. In addition, the cost and operational consequences of implementing further data protection measures could be significant.

Portions of our IT infrastructure also may experience interruptions, delays or cessations of service or produce errors in connection with systemic failures, systems integration or migration work that takes place from time to time. We may not be successful in implementing new systems and transitioning data, which could cause business disruptions and be more expensive, time consuming, disruptive and resource-intensive. Such disruptions could adversely impact our ability to fulfill orders and interrupt other processes. Delayed sales, lower margins or lost customers resulting from these disruptions could adversely affect, our financial results, stock price and reputation.

Any difficulties in collecting accounts receivable, including from foreign customers, could harm our operating results and financial condition.

Our accounts receivable are highly concentrated and make us vulnerable to adverse changes in our customers' businesses, and to downturns in the industry and the worldwide economy. We recorded approximately 20% and 11% of our accounts receivable balance from the same customer at January 29, 2012 and January 30, 2011, respectively.

Difficulties in collecting accounts receivable could materially and adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations. These difficulties are heightened during periods when economic conditions worsen. We continue to work directly with more foreign customers and it may be difficult to collect accounts receivable from them. We maintain an allowance for doubtful accounts for estimated losses resulting from the inability of our customers to make required payments. This allowance consists of an amount identified for specific customers and an amount based on overall estimated exposure. If the financial condition of our customers were to deteriorate, resulting in an impairment

in their ability to make payments, additional allowances may be required, we may be required to defer revenue recognition on sales to affected customers, and we may be required to pay higher credit insurance premiums, any of which could adversely affect our operating results. In the future, we may have to record additional reserves or write-offs and/or defer revenue on certain sales transactions which could negatively impact our financial results.

We obtain credit insurance over the purchasing credit extended to certain customers. As a result of the tightening of the credit markets, we may not be able to acquire credit insurance on the credit we extend to these customers or in amounts that we deem sufficient. While we have procedures to monitor and limit exposure to credit risk on our accounts receivable, there can be no assurance such procedures will effectively limit our credit risk or avoid losses, which could harm our financial condition or operating results.

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We may not be able to attract and retain qualified employees which could negatively impact our business.

Our future success and ability to compete is substantially dependent on our ability to identify, hire, train and retain highly qualified key personnel. The market for key employees in the technology industry can be competitive. None of our key employees is bound by an employment agreement, meaning our relationships with all of our key employees are at will. The loss of the services of any of our other key employees without an adequate replacement or our inability to hire new employees as needed could delay our product development efforts, harm our ability to sell our products or otherwise negatively impact our business.

In addition, we rely on stock-based awards as a means for recruiting, motivating and retaining highly skilled talent. If the value of such stock awards does not appreciate as measured by the performance of the price of our common stock or if our share-based compensation otherwise ceases to be viewed as a valuable benefit, our ability to attract, retain, and motivate employees could be weakened, which could harm our results of operations.

We are dependent on third parties for assembly, testing and packaging of our products, which reduce our control over the delivery schedule, product quantity or product quality.

Our products are assembled, tested and packaged by independent subcontractors, such as Advanced Semiconductor Engineering, Inc., Amkor Technology, ChipPAC, JSI Logistics, Ltd., King Yuan Electronics Co. and Siliconware Precision Industries Co. Ltd. As a result, we do not directly control our product delivery schedules, product quantity, or product quality. All of these subcontractors assemble, test and package products for other companies, including some of our competitors. Since we do not have long-term agreements with our subcontractors, when demand for subcontractors to assemble, test or package products is high, our subcontractors may decide to prioritize the orders of other customers over our orders. Since the time required to qualify a different subcontractor to assemble, test or package our products can be lengthy, if we have to find a replacement subcontractor we could experience significant delays in shipments of our products, product shortages, a decrease in the quality of our products, or an increase in product cost. Any product shortages or quality assurance problems could increase the costs of manufacture, assembly or testing of our products, which could cause our gross margin and revenue to decline.

We rely on third-party vendors to supply software development tools to us for the development of our new products and we may be unable to obtain the tools necessary to develop or enhance new or existing products.

We rely on third-party software development tools to assist us in the design, simulation and verification of new products or product enhancements. To bring new products or product enhancements to market in a timely manner, or at all, we need software development tools that are sophisticated enough or technologically advanced enough to complete our design, simulations and verifications. In the past, we have experienced delays in the introduction of products as a result of the inability of then available software development tools to fully simulate the complex features and functionalities of our products. In the future, the design requirements necessary to meet consumer demands for more features and greater functionality from our products may exceed the capabilities of available software development tools. Unavailability of software development tools may result in our missing design cycles or losing design wins, either of which could result in a loss of market share or negatively impact our operating results.

Because of the importance of software development tools to the development and enhancement of our products, a critical component of our product development efforts is our partnerships with leaders in the computer-aided design industry, including Cadence Design Systems, Inc. and Synopsys, Inc. We have invested significant resources to develop relationships with these industry leaders and have often assisted them in the definition of their new products. We believe that forming these relationships and utilizing next-generation development tools to design, simulate and verify our products will help us remain at the forefront of the 3D graphics, communications and networking segments and develop products that utilize leading-edge technology on a rapid basis. If these relationships are not successful, we

may be unable to develop new products or product enhancements in a timely manner, which could result in a loss of market share, a decrease in revenue or negatively impact our operating results.

If our products contain significant defects, our financial results could be negatively impacted, our reputation could be damaged and we could lose market share.

Our products are complex and may contain defects or experience failures due to any number of issues in design, fabrication, packaging, materials and/or use within a system. If any of our products or technologies contains a defect, compatibility issue or other error, we may have to invest additional research and development efforts to find and correct the issue. Such efforts could divert our engineers' attention from the development of new products and technologies and could increase our operating costs and reduce our gross margin. In addition, an error or defect in new products or releases or related software drivers after commencement of commercial shipments could result in failure to achieve market acceptance or loss of design wins. Also, we may be required to reimburse customers, including our customers' costs to repair or replace products in the field. A product recall or a significant

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number of product returns could be expensive, damage our reputation, could result in the shifting of business to our competitors and could result in litigation against us. Costs associated with correcting defects, errors, bugs or other issues could be significant and could materially harm our financial results. During fiscal years 2011, 2010 and 2009, we recorded net warranty charges of $466.4 million against cost of revenue to cover anticipated customer warranty, repair, return, replacement and other costs arising from a weak die/packaging material set used in certain versions of our previous generation MCP, and GPU products used in notebook configurations and shipped after July 2008. Please see the risk entitled "We are subject to litigation arising from alleged defects in our previous generation MCP and GPU products which, if determined adversely to us, could harm our business" for further information regarding this product defect.

We may have to invest more resources in research and development than anticipated, which could increase our operating expenses and negatively impact our operating results.

If new competitors, technological advances by existing competitors, our entry into new markets, or other competitive factors require us to invest significantly greater resources than anticipated in our research and development efforts, our operating expenses would increase. Our engineering and technical resources included 5,042, 4,161 and 3,940 full-time employees as of January 29, 2012, January 30, 2011 and January 31, 2010, respectively. Research and development expenditures were $1,002.6 million, $848.8 million and $908.9 million for fiscal years 2012, 2011 and 2010, respectively. If we are required to invest significantly greater resources than anticipated in research and development efforts without a corresponding increase in revenue, our operating results could decline. Research and development expenses are likely to fluctuate from time to time to the extent we make periodic incremental investments in research and development and these investments may be independent of our level of revenue which could negatively impact our financial results. In order to remain competitive, we anticipate that we will continue to devote substantial resources to research and development, and we expect these expenses to increase in absolute dollars in the foreseeable future due to the increased complexity and the greater number of products under development.

We are subject to risks associated with international operations which may harm our business.

We conduct our business worldwide. Our semiconductor wafers are manufactured, assembled, tested and packaged by third-parties located outside of the United States and other Americas. We generated 78%, 83%, and 84% of our revenue for fiscal years 2012, 2011 and 2010 respectively, from sales to customers outside the United States and other Americas. As of January 29, 2012, we had offices in 15 countries outside of the United States. The manufacture, assembly, test and packaging of our products outside of the United States, operation of offices outside of the United States, and sales to customers internationally subjects us to a number of risks, including:

- international economic and political conditions, such as political tensions between countries in which we do business;
- unexpected changes in, or impositions of, legislative or regulatory requirements;
- complying with a variety of foreign laws;
- differing legal standards with respect to protection of intellectual property and employment practices;
- local business and cultural factors that differ from our normal standards and practices, including business practices that we are prohibited from engaging in by the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and other anticorruption laws and regulations;
- inadequate local infrastructure that could result in business disruptions;
- exporting or importing issues related to export or import restrictions, tariffs, quotas and other trade barriers and restrictions;
- financial risks such as longer payment cycles, difficulty in collecting accounts receivable and fluctuations in currency exchange rates;
- imposition of additional taxes and penalties; and

- other factors beyond our control such as terrorism, cyber attack, civil unrest, war and diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome and the Avian flu.

If sales to any of our customers outside of the United States and other Americas are delayed or cancelled because of any of the above factors, our revenue may be negatively impacted.

Our international operations in Canada, China, Hong Kong, Finland, France, Germany, India, Japan, Korea, Russia, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan and the United Kingdom are subject to many of the above listed risks. Difficulties with our international operations, including finding appropriate staffing and office space, may divert management's attention and other resources any of which could negatively impact our operating results.