Xcell journal

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Xcell to New Heights

Xcell Wants You!

Welcome to the new version of *Xcell Journal*. I'm Mike Santarini, *Xcell*'s new publisher. I joined Xilinx in March of this year after working 13 years as an editor covering the EDA, FPGA, ASIC, IP, and memory industries for EE trade publications *EDN*, *EE Times*, and *Integrated System Design*.

I've dedicated my entire professional career to keeping the IC and systems design communities informed of new design developments and challenges. Now I'm bringing that mission to the ever-expanding Xilinx® user community. When Xilinx approached me for this job, I jumped at the chance.

Over the last 25 years, FPGAs have evolved from their glue logic beginnings to become a fundamental element of just about every digital design project. Indeed, today FPGAs boast multi-million-gate counts, MPUs, DSPs, and embedded functionality, and are starting to play a more central role in the world's most advanced products.

Even if FPGAs are not in your end product, chances are you've used at least one FPGA to develop that product. And what's beautiful about FPGAs – and at the same time a bit daunting – is their versatility. You can use them for any number of applications, but perhaps what's undermarketed is the "field-programmable" part of FPGAs. Yes, FPGAs are reprogrammable, meaning that you can change your design in the lab and even reuse the chips for other design projects. But you can also change the logic of your design in the field – after you've deployed your product.

The "FP" makes FPGAs the building blocks, Erector Set, Legos, ball of clay – you pick the analogy – of electronic design. We provide the renewable canvas (silicon) and the brushes and paint (tools and IP); you create the masterpieces. And as an editor walking through your gallery for the last 14 years, what beautiful, diverse and wonderful works of art you are creating. You are literally changing the world.

In my role as publisher here at *Xcell Journal*, I want to help you develop those masterpieces by keeping you informed of what the extremely hard-working folks at Xilinx are developing and what your peers are doing as well.

As you give this issue a read, you'll notice a number of new sections and a broad range of content, reflecting FPGA versatility. You'll notice that each issue contains a cover story examining the high-level challenges of a given application area. From there, the content becomes progressively more technical: from application articles that will appear in regularly featured sections, to how-to articles, to walkthroughs from our FAE staff. And to break it up a bit, we'll also profile one of our customers and take a look at new tool, IP, and board offerings from our growing list of partners.

This issue is a first of many steps to make *Xcell Journal* a technical Xilinx user community magazine. To reach its true potential, *Xcell Journal* needs your help; I encourage all of you to submit articles. Even if you are a bit pen-shy, I'll work with you to get your content in the magazine and out to your peers.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *Xcell* – a lot of people worked very hard to make this publication what it is. I'm hoping you will also pitch in to help it become what it can be. Please feel free to send me your articles and feedback to make *Xcell* excel to new heights.

Mike Santarini
Publisher