

Samsung adding 300 jobs as Austin expansion heads toward completion

Engineers, technicians to be added during first half of year as part of \$3.6 billion production upgrade.

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Samsung Austin Semiconductor said Wednesday that it will hire 300 engineers and technicians in the first half of this year as part of its \$3.6 billion expansion plan.

The hires will bring Samsung's local employment to about 2,000 — slightly ahead of where the company expected to be by the time the expanded factory moves to full production.

Samsung is expanding its Northeast Austin plant to make processors for new mobile devices and is establishing a design center here. Analysts think Samsung is a key supplier to Apple Inc. for the iPhone and iPad.

The company said it is seeking experienced and entry-level process and equipment engineers and technicians. Technicians should have an associate's degree in a technical field or experience in a related industry, the company said.

Samsung said it hired more than 600 employees last year as part of its current expansion, bringing total employment in Austin to about 1,700.

"We are delighted to continue this positive hiring trend in 2011," said Charmaine Winters, Samsung Austin senior human resources manager.

The jobs also are an important boost for the region's employment market, which is growing jobs at a modest pace but faces potential setbacks with looming school district and state agency layoffs.

When Samsung's expansion is completed later this year, Austin will have one of the biggest chip manufacturing complexes in North America. The \$3.6 billion investment makes it the most expensive construction project in Austin history.

Samsung hasn't stated the strategy behind its investment in Austin, but industry analysts say Apple is a driving force. Apple relies on Samsung as a key supplier of both memory and integrated processors for its fast-selling mobile devices, including tablets and smart phones.

The Austin factory will provide both those kinds of chips. The expansion is expected to begin commercial production in the second half of this year.

The project brings Samsung's total investment in Austin to more than \$9 billion since the company located its first factory here in 1996.

More information on the positions and the application process can be found at www.samsung.com/careers .

Courtesy of JB Goodwin