



# The Silicon-Carbide Revolution

## 7x24Exchange-Northwest Chapter

By: Anthony Pinkey  
National Accounts Manager

5.11.2021

## There Are Four Parts To Today's Story

Part One: What is the "*Revolution*" ?

Part Two: Where Is The Battleground?

Part Three: Who Is Funding The Revolution?

Part Four: Two Stories From Inside Revolution



# Revolutionary Guide

Anthony Pinkey, National Accounts Manager at Mitsubishi Electric

- Born, raised and educated in New York City
- BEE Degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Manhattan College
- 35 years of Mission Critical experience: sales, product management, marketing, company owner
- Author, speaker
- Represented the United States playing rugby in 10 countries



**MITSUBISHI  
ELECTRIC**

UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLIES

**PART I**

**Welcome to  
The Revolution!**



Some Technological Revolutions are



# It's Easy to See the Flashy Ones



- Your phone recognizes you!
- Augmented Reality!
- 3D screens!
- Your phone is your bank!



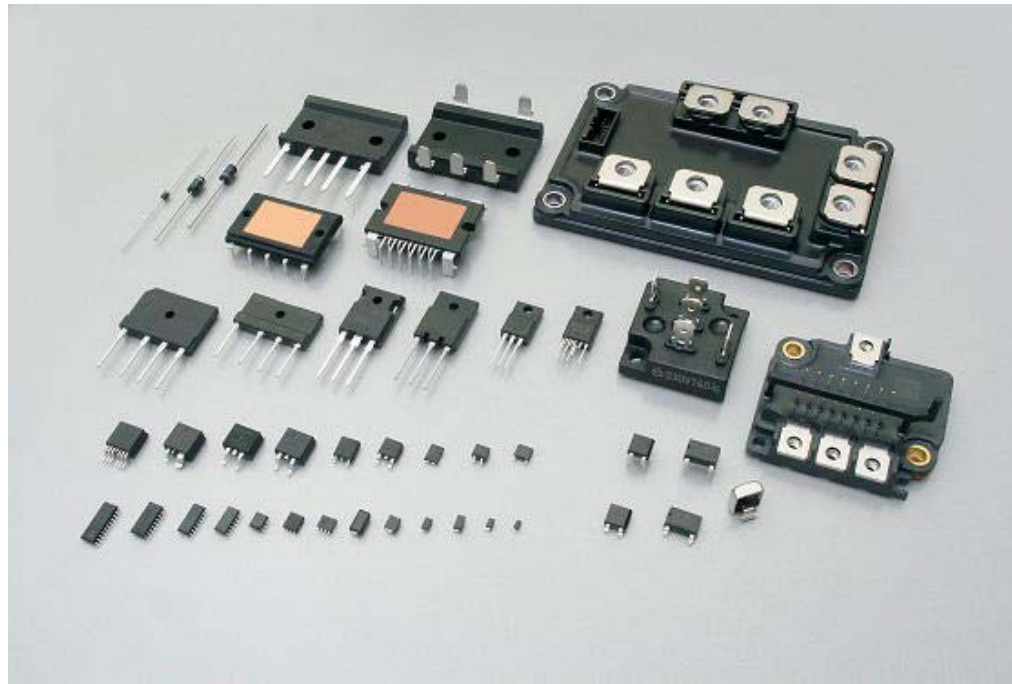
Holograms

# It's Easy to See the Flashy Ones



- Products are faster, more efficient, environmentally friendly
- They all embellish cost, size and weight reductions

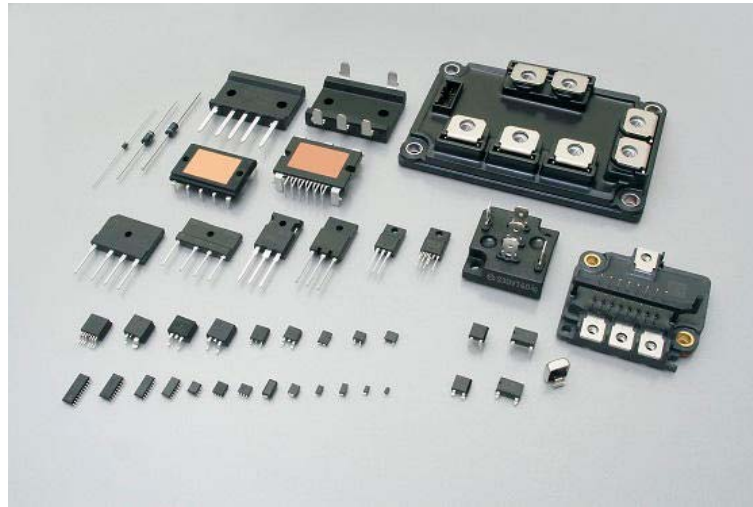
# Some Technological Revolutions are very subtle...





# ...the *behind-the-scene* Revolution in Power Electronics

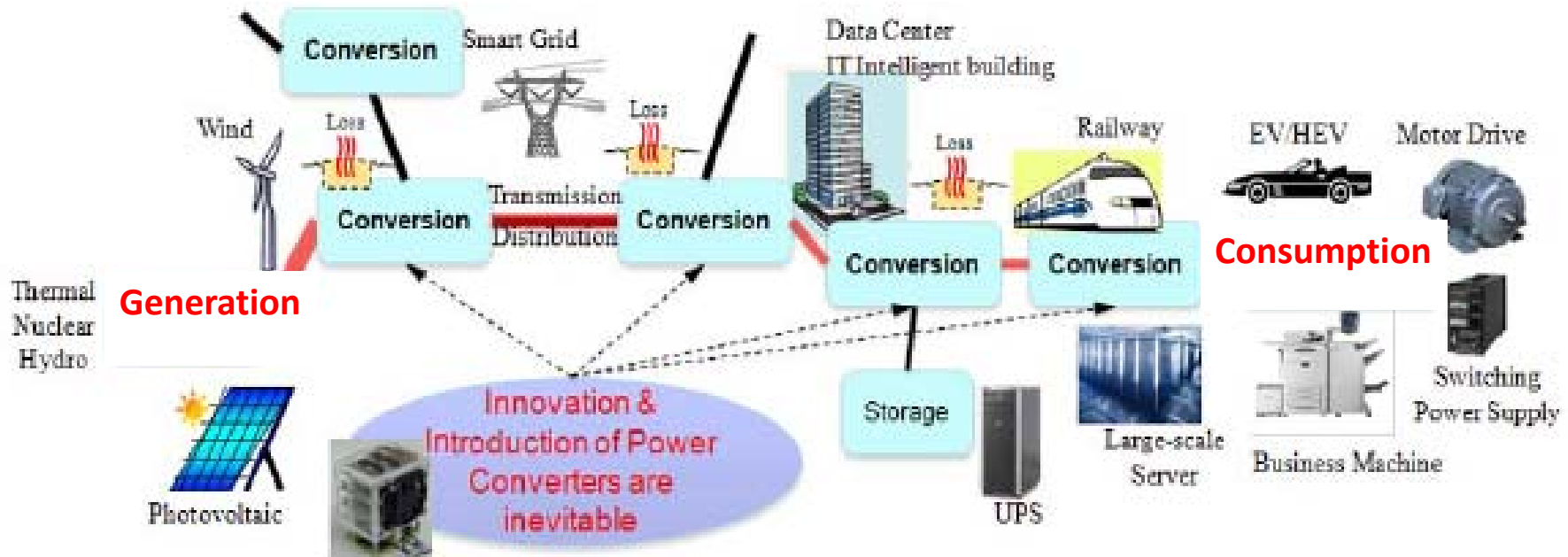
Devices: Semiconductors, transistors, converters, inverters...



Advancements to these devices provide us with more efficient ways to manipulate, regulate, and convert electricity from one form to another...

(THIS is the real Revolution)

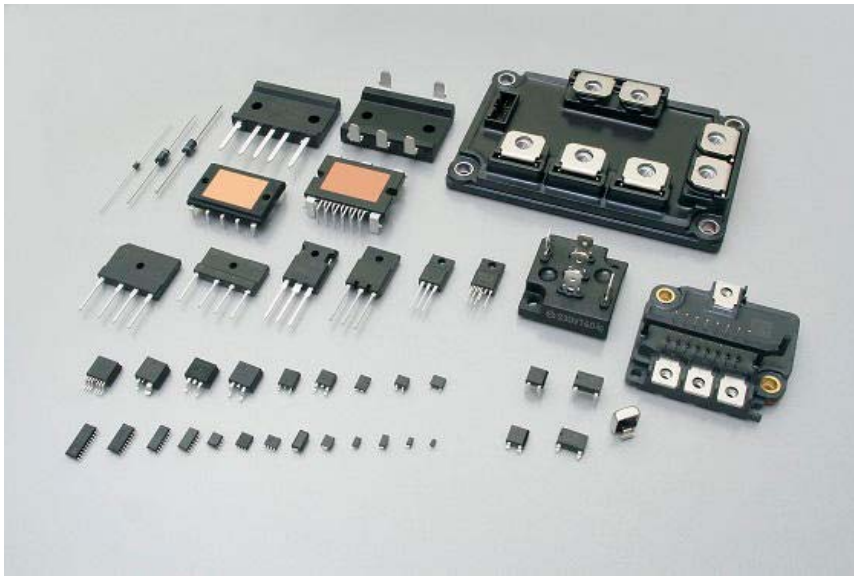
# Power Electronics Devices at work in the Smart Grid



Currently, > 60% of generated electric power passes through power electronics between generation and use

# Power Electronics Devices

Semiconductors, transistors, converters, inverters...



...for the past 60 years, the material used to conduct electricity inside these devices has been Silicon...

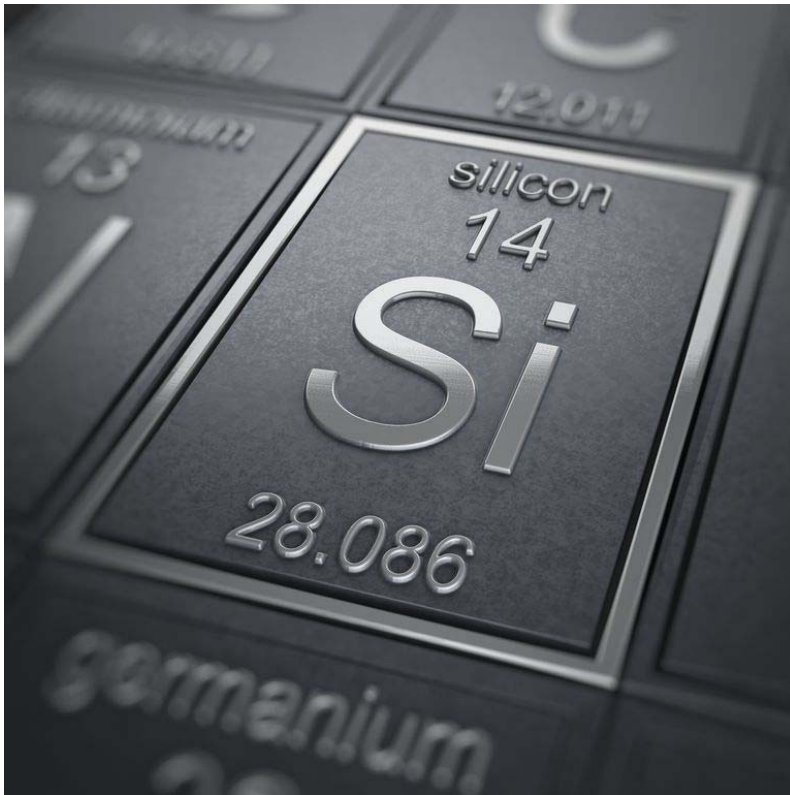
...as a material, we have pushed Silicon electrons to their limits...

...time for a revolution...

As with all Revolutions, someone or something  
is going to make an exit...



...you can say goodbye to Silicon...

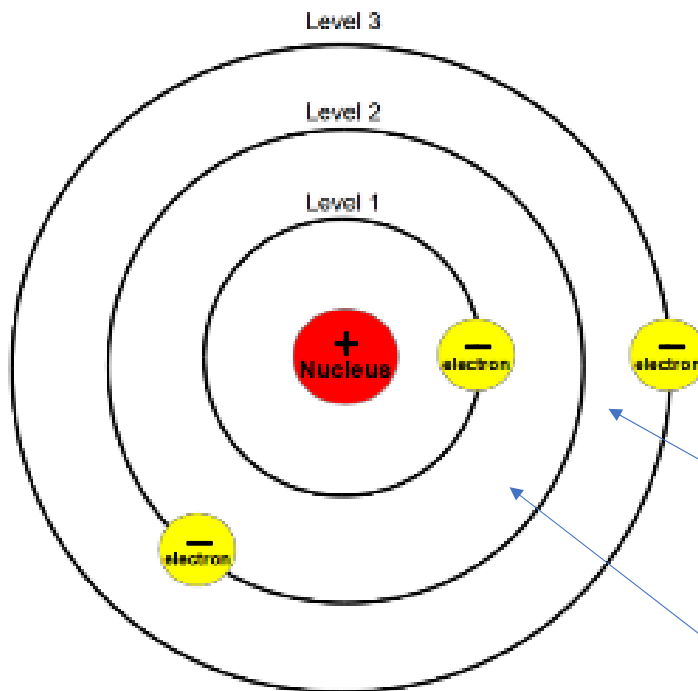


...good old number 14 on the Periodic Table...

**This Way  
Out**

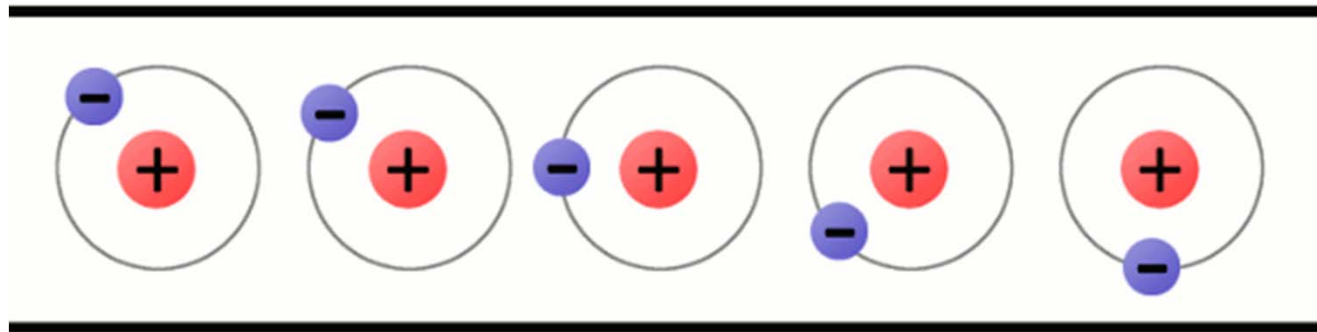


# How did this Happen?



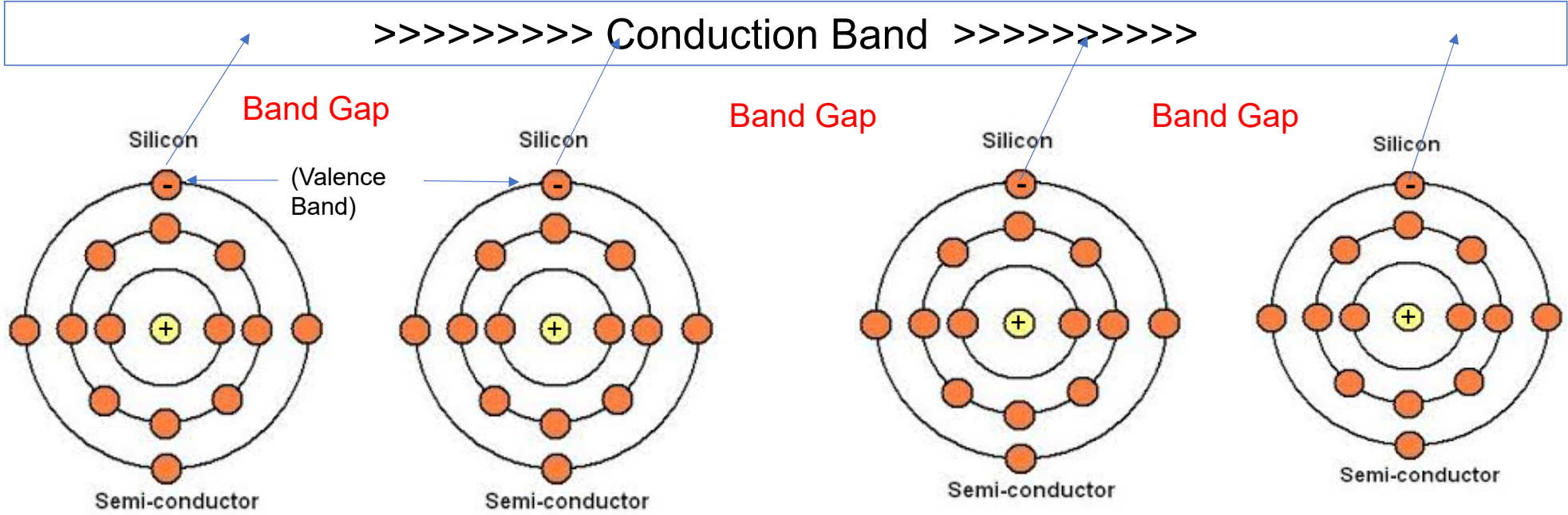
- It all starts with the atom
- Every atom has a positively charged nucleus and negatively charged electrons orbiting the nucleus in Bands
- Bandgaps separate the electron Bands
- Electrons cannot exist in Bandgaps!! (No Man's Land)

# How do we make Electric Current?



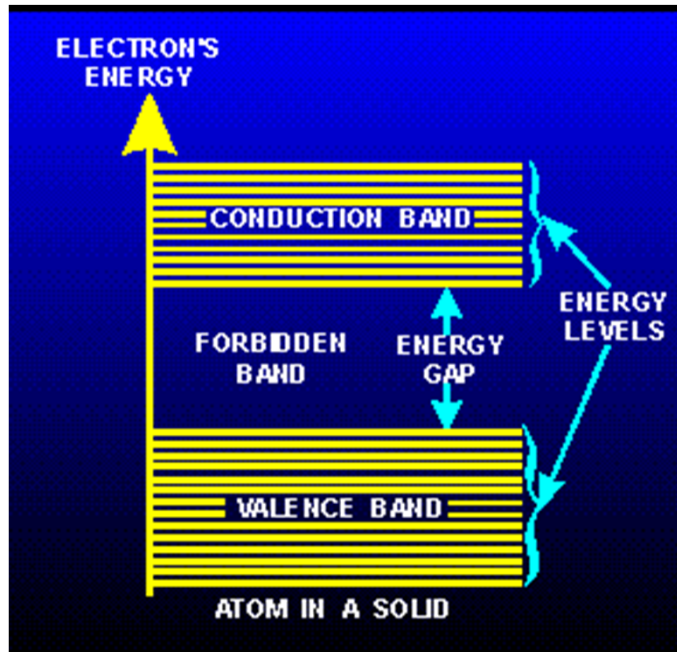
- The **movement** of charged electrons from one atom to another makes electricity.
- The electrons are not tied to a particular atom, they are on the move in what is called the **Conduction Band**.

# Electrons Must Cross a Bandgap





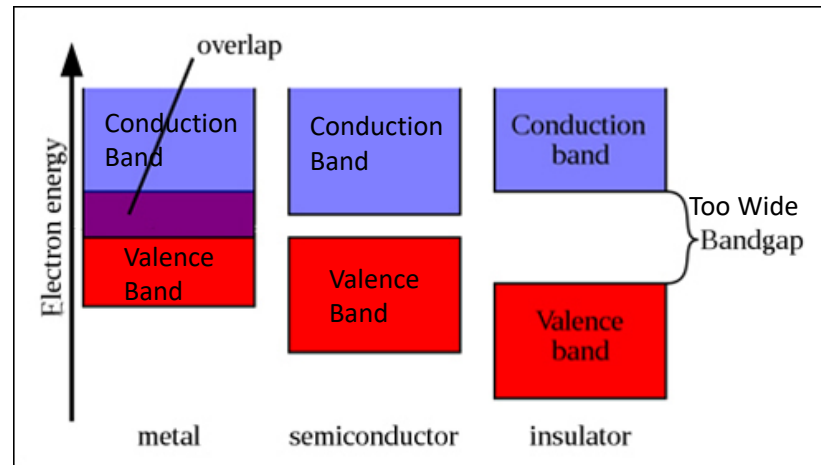
# Crossing the Bandgap to Conduction



- You need energy to move electrons to the Conduction Band
- Not all Bandgaps are the same

# Bandgaps in Different Materials

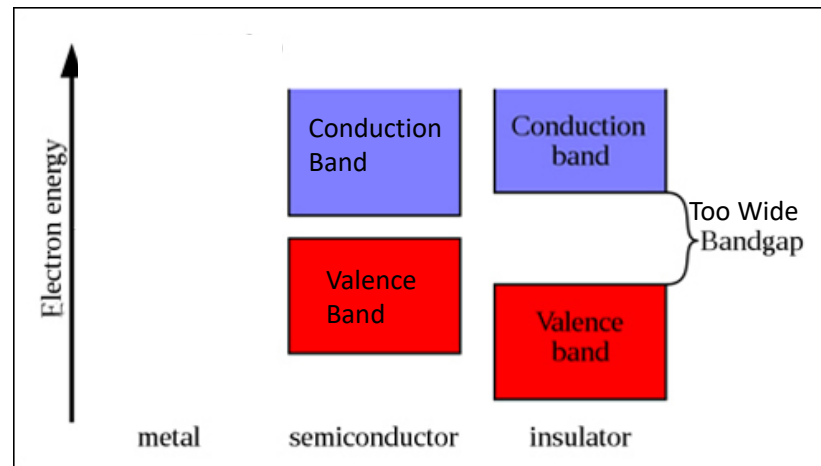
A Look At Different Materials And Their BandGaps



- **Metals** have overlapping electron bands (**Valence & Conduction**)

# Bandgaps in Different Materials

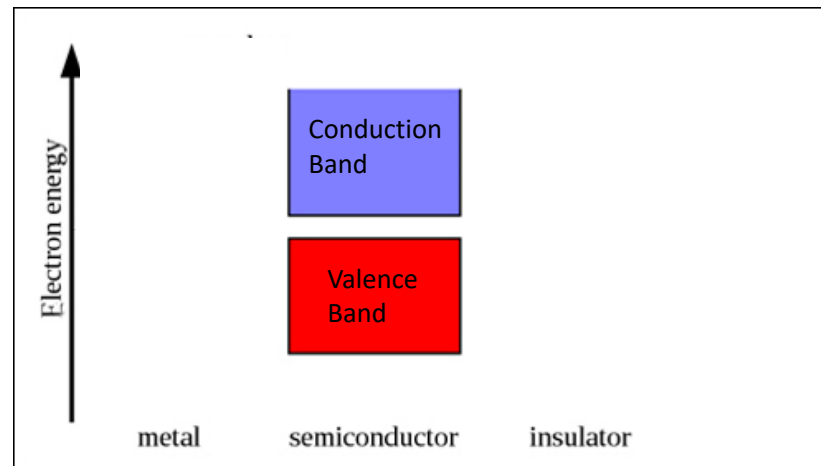
## A Look At Different Materials And Their BandGaps



- **Metals** have overlapping electron bands (Valence & Conduction)
- **Insulators** have a Band Gap that is too wide

# Bandgaps in Different Materials

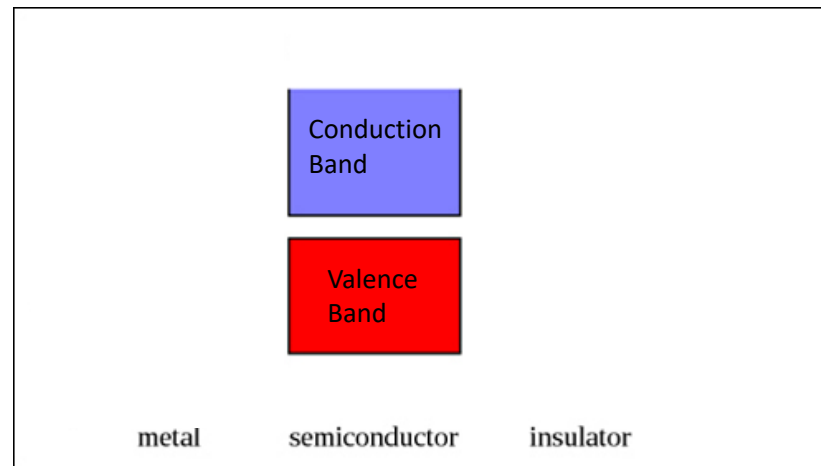
## A Look At Different Materials And Their BandGaps



- **Metals** have overlapping electron bands (valence & conduction)
- **Insulators** have a wide band gap between the bands
- In a **semiconductor** the Band Gap is just right; we will **control** the flow of electrons from the valence band to the conduction band by adjusting the size of the Band Gap.

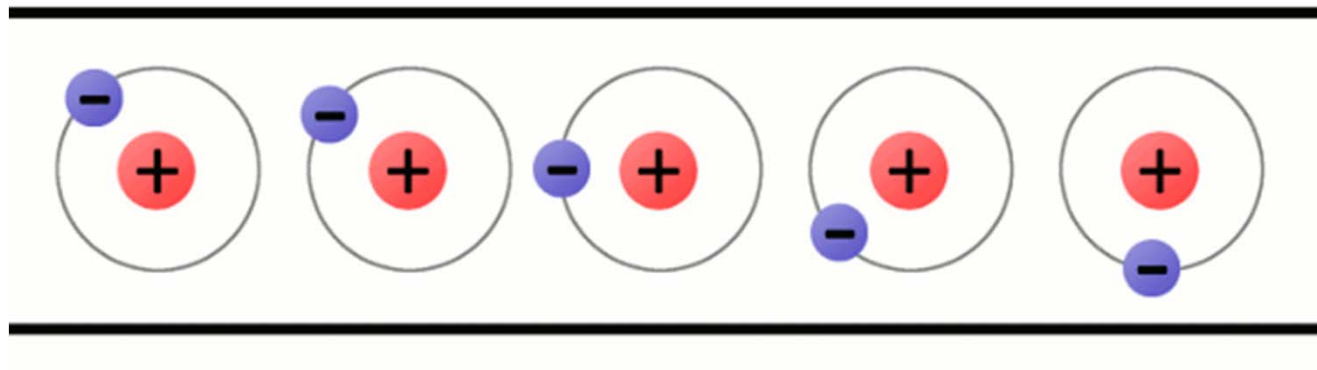
# Bandgaps in Different Materials

## A Look At Different Materials And Their BandGaps

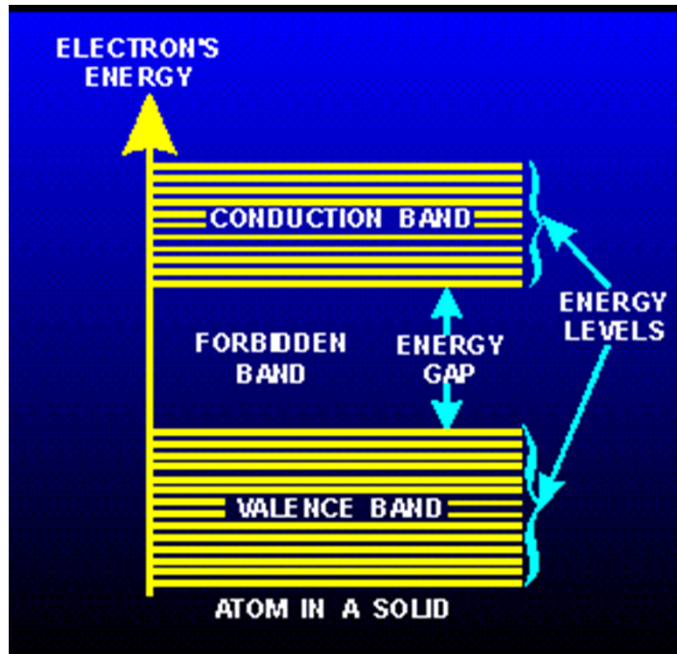


- **Metals** have overlapping electron bands (valence & conduction)
- **Insulators** have a wide band gap between the bands
- In a **semiconductor**, we can control the electrons moving from the valence band to the conduction band
- Silicon was chosen as the material best suited for conduction

# How Do We Get Electrons To Cross The Bandgap Into the Conduction Band?

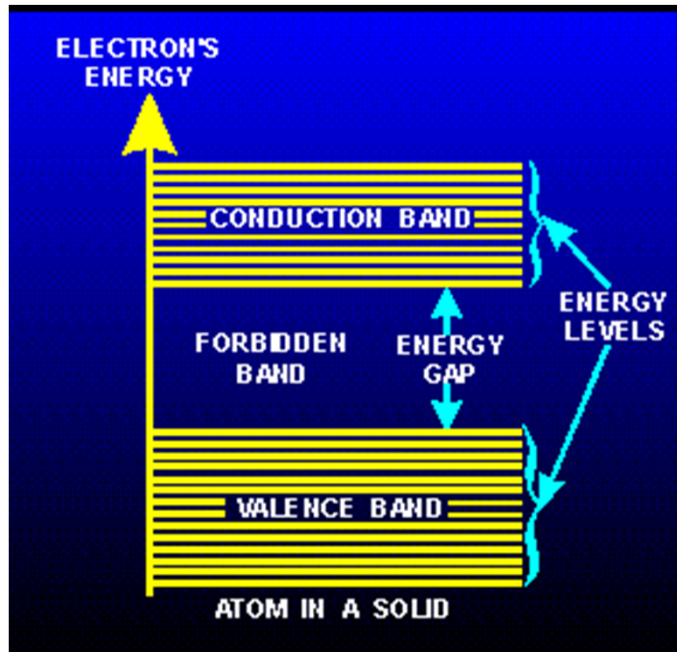


# Crossing the Bandgap to Conduction



- You need energy to move electrons to the Conduction Band
- Energy = Voltage, Light, Heat

# Crossing the Bandgap to Conduction

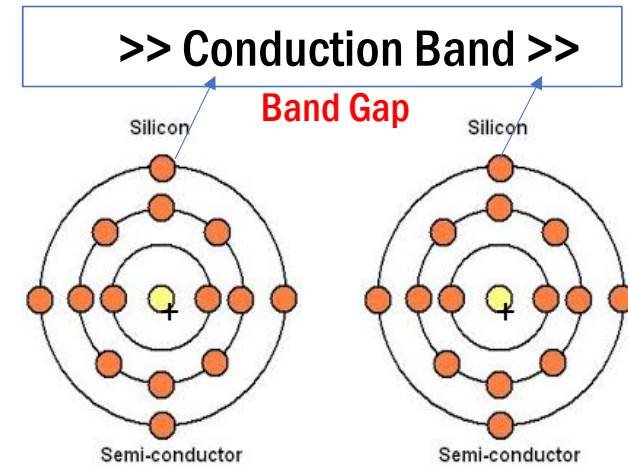
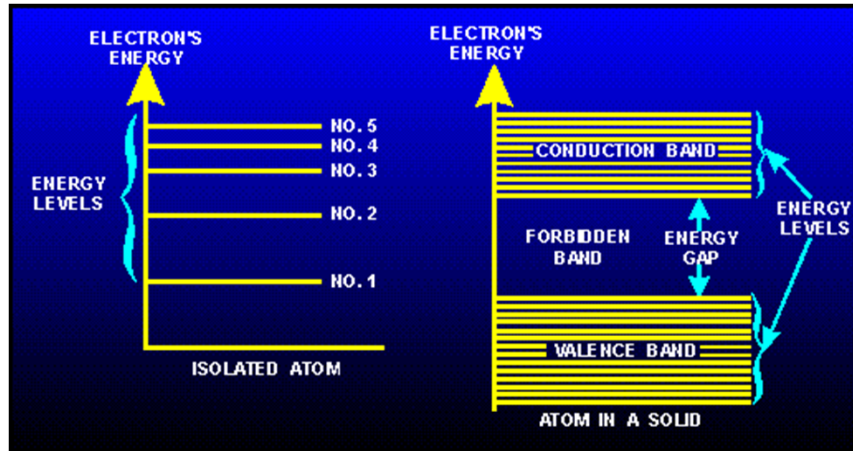


| <u>MATERIAL</u>              | <u>BANDGAP ENERGY (eV)</u> | <u>APPLICATION</u>                                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Silicon (Si)                 | 1.11                       | Lasers, LEDs, Photo-voltaic cells, Power electronics    |
| <b>Silicon Carbide (SiC)</b> | <b>3.25</b>                | <b>LEDs, Power electronics, new emerging technology</b> |

- Silicon Carbide is a Wide Bandgap material
- Its Bandgap is 3X wider than Silicon



# Crossing the Bandgap to Conduction



| MATERIAL              | BANDGAP ENERGY (eV) | APPLICATION   |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---|
| Silicon (Si)          | 1.11                | Lasers, LEDs, Integrated circuits, Photo-voltaic cells, Power electronics |
| Silicon Carbide (SiC) | 3.25                | LEDs, Power electronics, new emerging technology                          |

- **Bandgaps** determine how a material's electrons behave as electric current

# Advantages of Silicon Carbide Over Silicon

*Because it can get across the Wider Bandgap.*

1. It can sustain 10X higher voltages than Silicon and 10x the breakdown voltage
2. Carry 5X higher currents
3. Withstand 3X higher temperature
4. Exhibit 3X Higher thermal conductivity
5. Switch 10X faster

(...you can see why Silicon-based devices have approached their material limits)

# What People in our Industry are saying about Silicon Carbide (SiC)

- “SiC is to the 21<sup>st</sup> century what Silicon was to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.” – **IEEE**
- “Wide Bandgap (WBG) semiconductors are a foundational technology that will transform multiple industries, resulting in billions of dollars of savings.” – **US Department of Energy**
- “SiC technology is a **disruptive** technology that has changed the trajectory of future semiconductor innovations.”  
– **Oxford University Press**

A Technological innovation that creates a new market and eventually disrupts an existing market and value network, displacing established market-leading firms, products, and alliances.

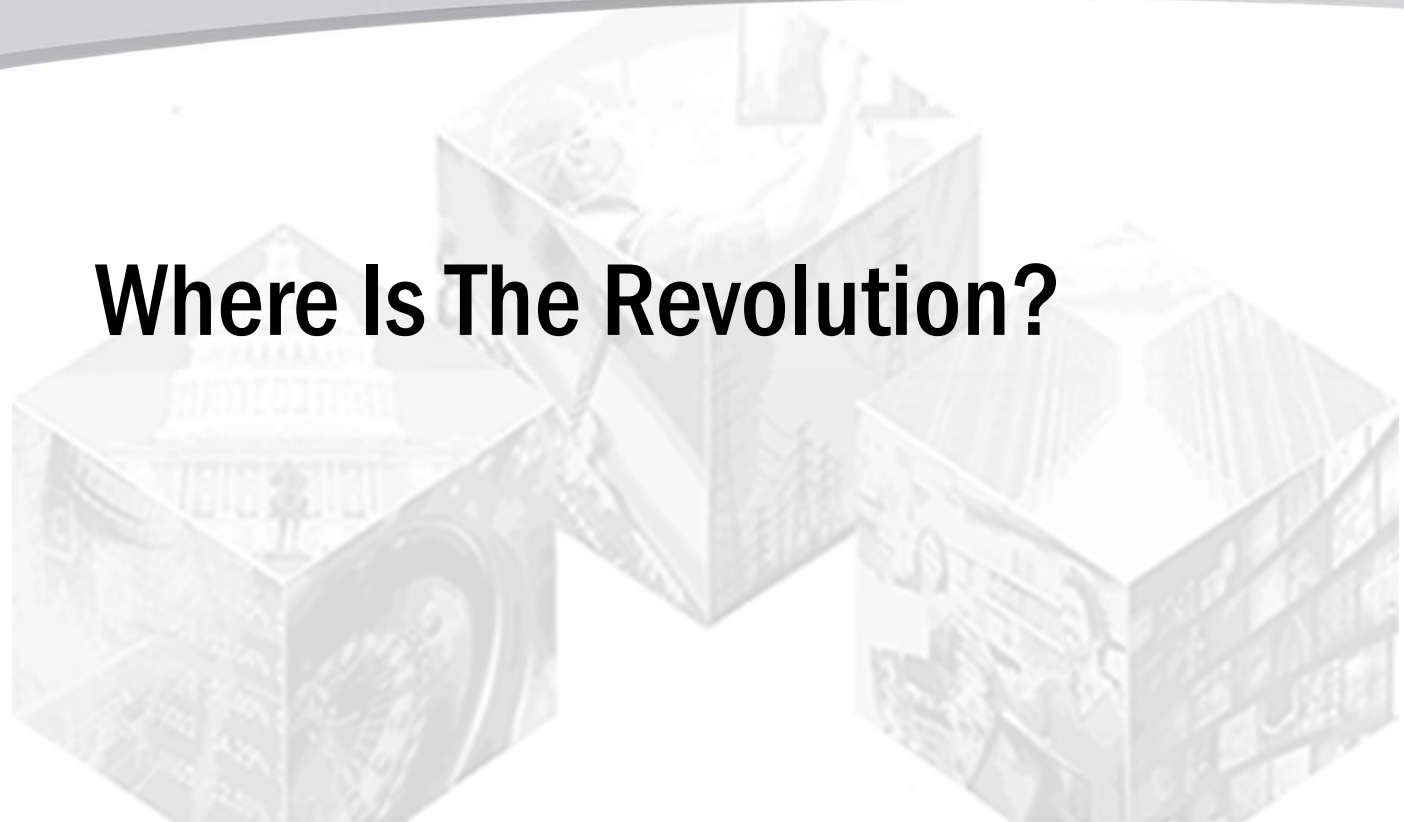


**MITSUBISHI  
ELECTRIC**

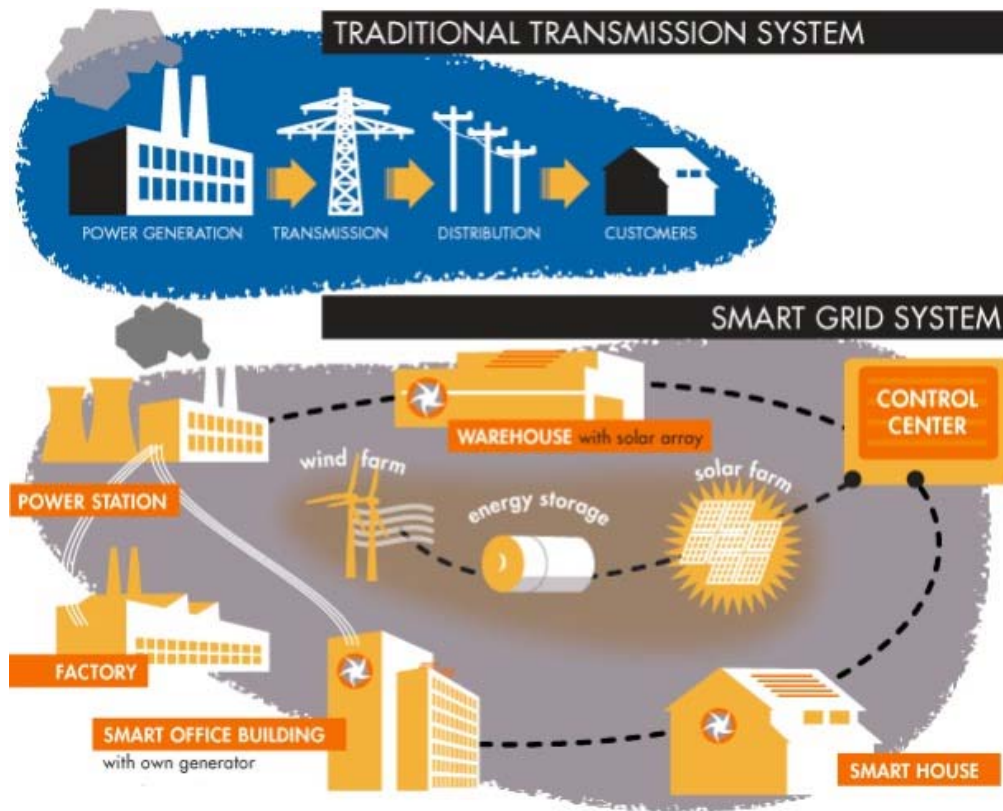
UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLIES

**PART II**

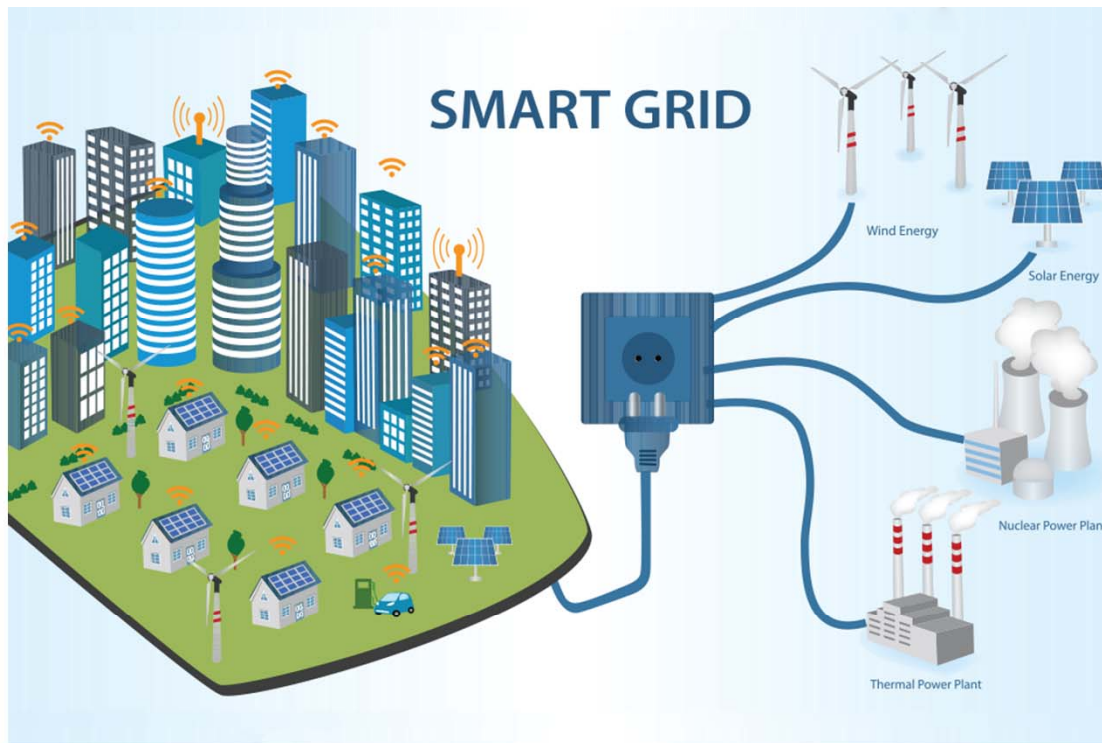
## Where Is The Revolution?



# The Revolution Is All Around Us



# ...the never ending Revolution in Power Electronics Devices

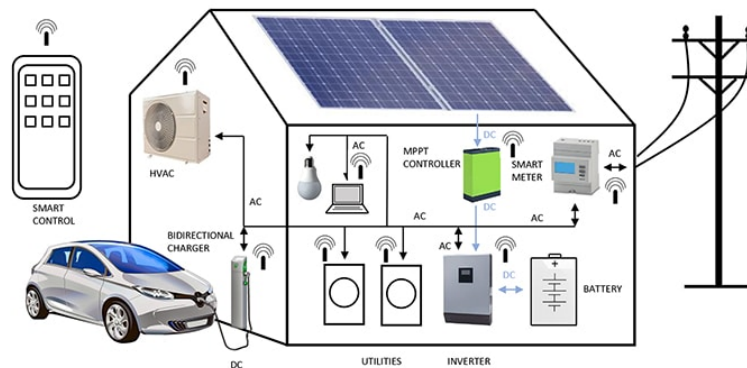


**Smart Grid** is an **Electrical Grid** with **Automation, Communication and IT systems** that can monitor **power flows** from points of generation to points of consumption (even down to appliances level) and control the **power flow** or curtail the load to match generation in real time or near real time.

# Advances in Power Electronics and Control Systems Drive Efficient, and Reliable Electric Grids

## Electric Grid Applications

- HV DC Interface (AC to DC)
- Microgrids
- MV Motor Drive
- Solar Interface
- Wind Interface
- Energy Storage Interface



Distributed energy (solar panels, wind turbines, combined heat & power, generators) that produce a self-sufficient energy system that serves a discrete location. Features:  
1. A microgrid is local, 2. A microgrid is independent, 3. A microgrid is intelligent

# Solar (Photovoltaic) Power

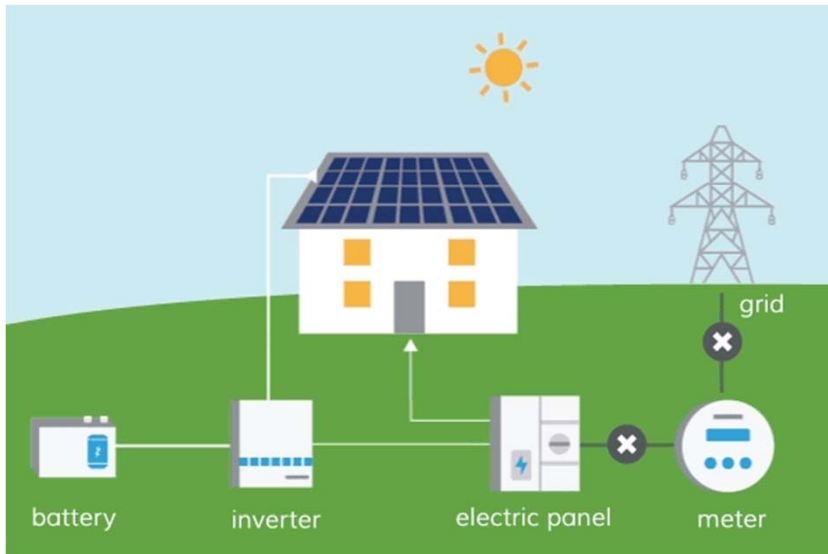


## Did You Know:

- The Earth receives more energy from the sun in one hour than is used in the entire world in one year.
- 0.3% of the Earth's land area covered in solar panels could supply all of the world's electricity needs.
- The cost that goes into creating solar panels is paid back through clean (renewable) electricity production within anywhere from 1-2 years.

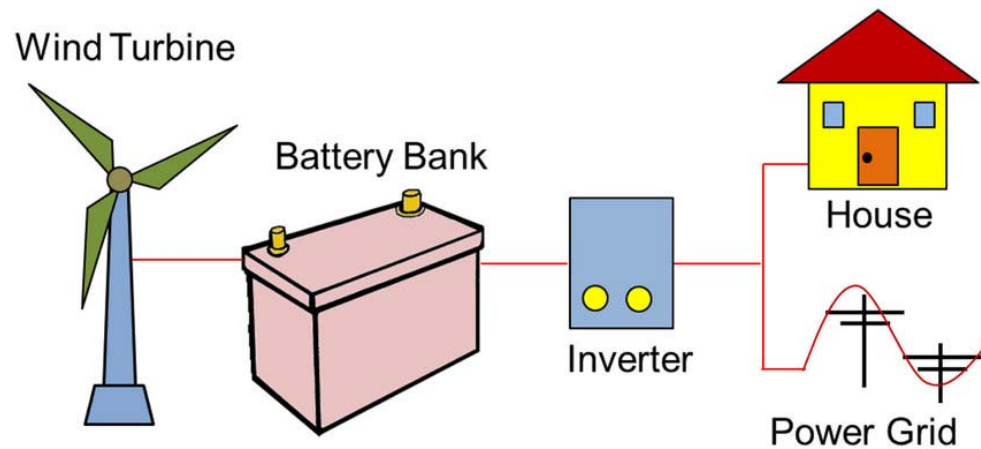


# Solar (PV) Power



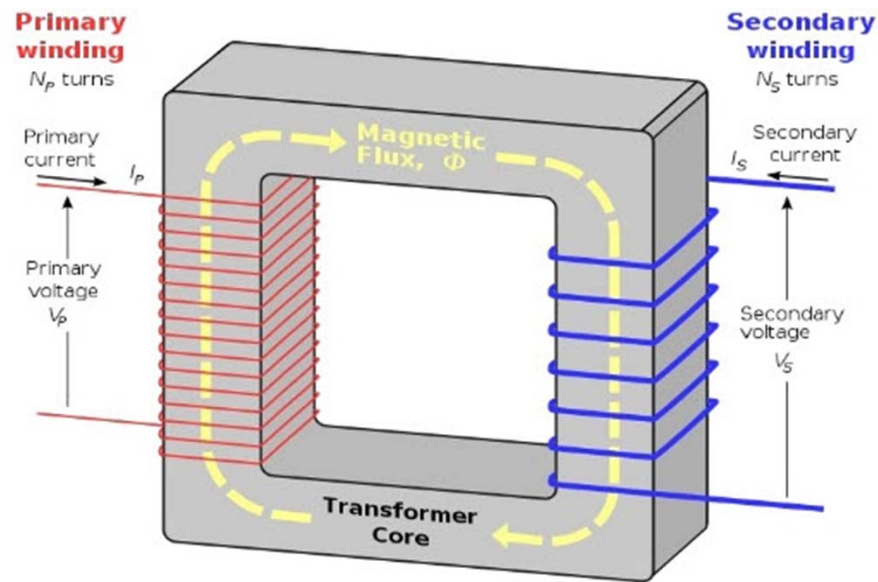
1. Photon particles carry light energy from the sun
2. The photons collide with Silicon (or Silicon Carbide) atoms inside solar panels to create the flow of DC electricity
3. An inverter converts the DC current to AC current that you use in your home, charge batteries or put onto the grid

# Wind Power



- Wind is a form of solar power created by the uneven heating of the Earth's surface.
- Prices for power contracts are as low as 2 cents per kilowatt-hour. These prices are recorded by the U.S. Department of Energy.

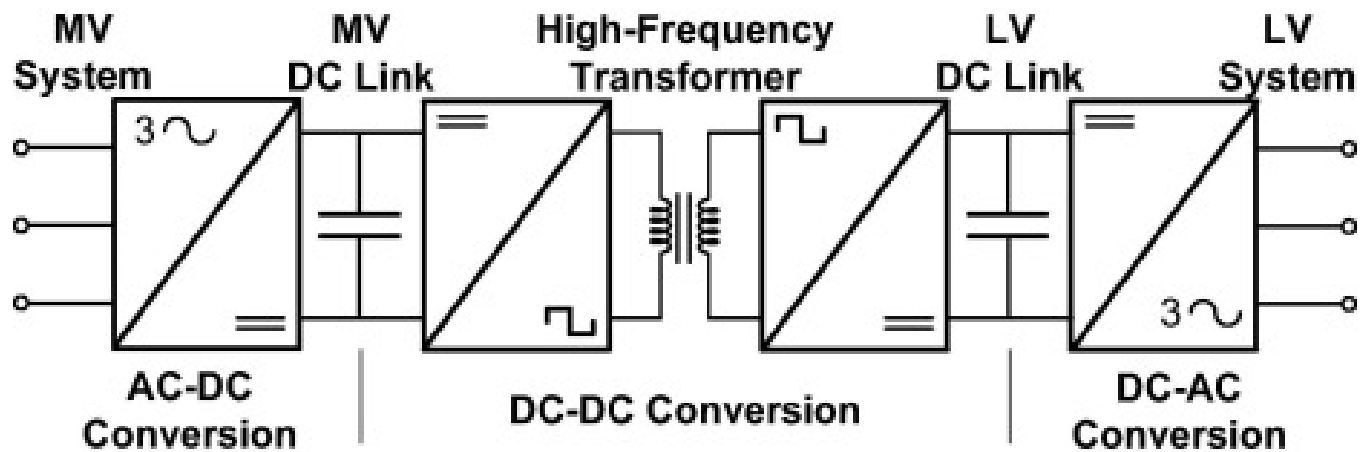
# The Transformer



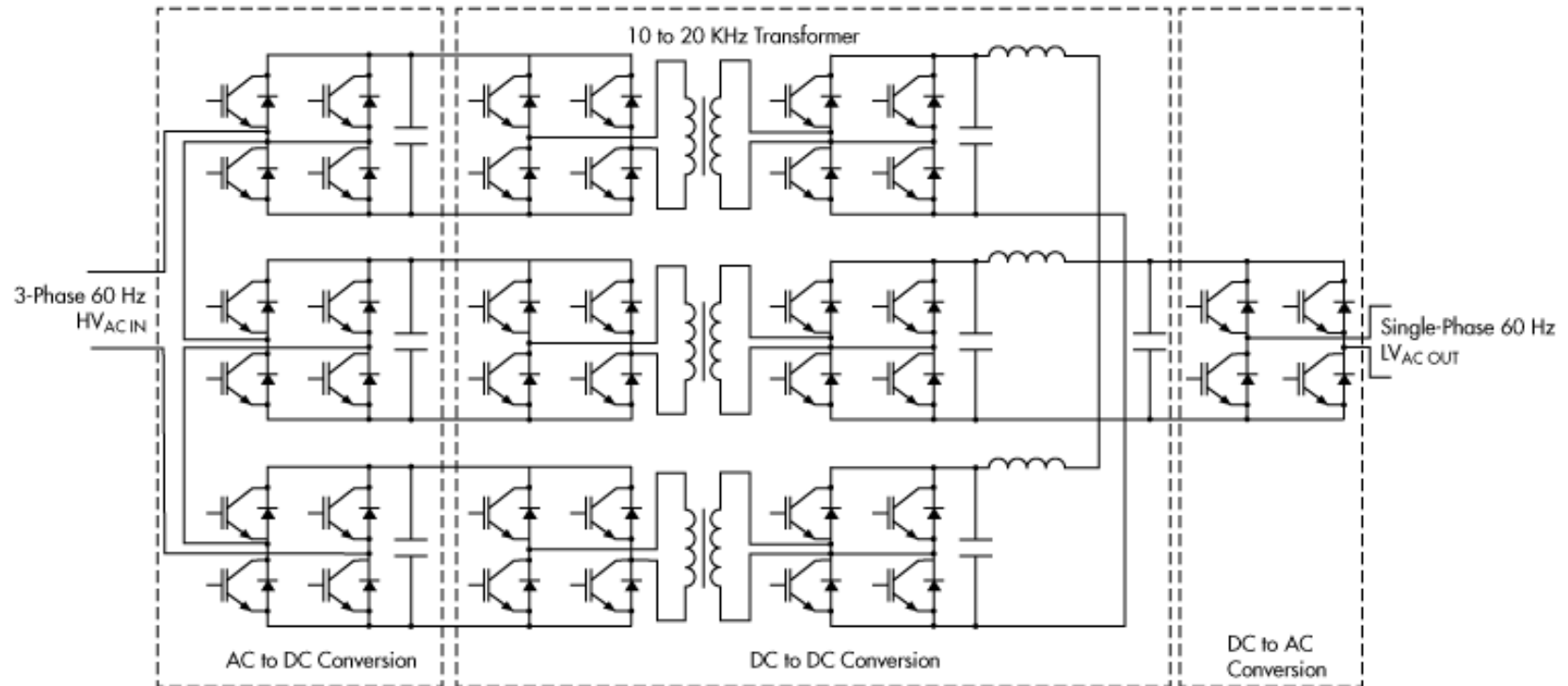
We are using the same design since 1882!

Improvements have been limited due to heat and frequency constraints

# The *Solid State* Transformer (SST)

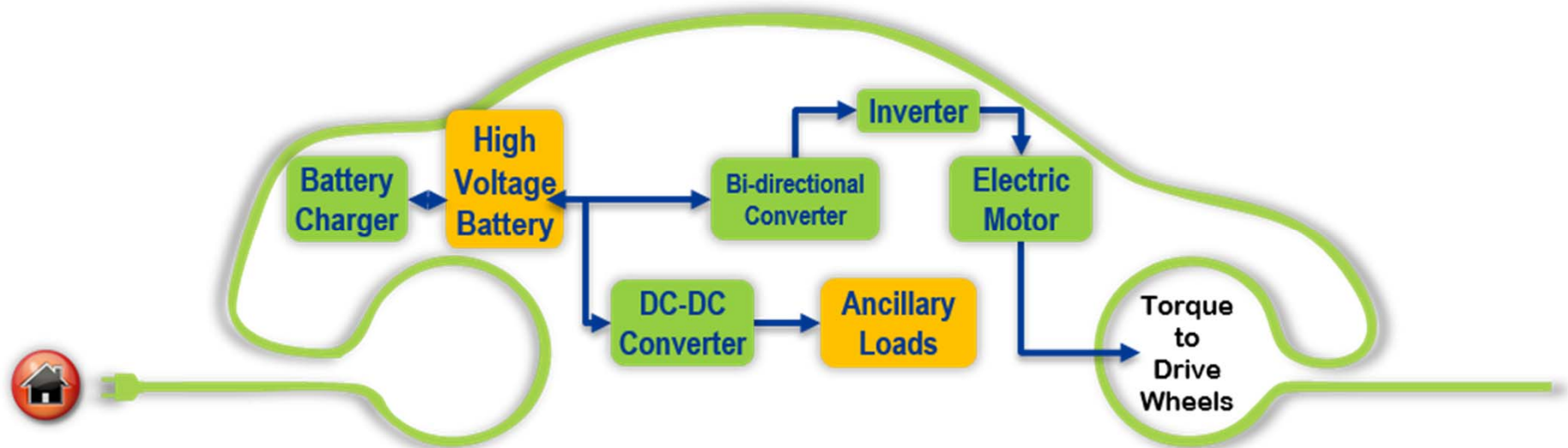


# The *Solid State* Transformer (SST)



Three Phase to Single Phase  
or  
Single Phase to Three Phase

# Power Electronics Devices In A Hybrid Electric Vehicle (EV)



# SiC MOSFET Modules in NEW Tesla Model 3 EV



“It is now confirmed that Tesla is integrating SiC MOSFET based power modules in Model 3 inverters...

24 SiC MOSFET modules are used in each Model 3 inverter, this represents almost 2 Million SiC MOSFETs on our roads

<https://www.pntpower.com/tesla-model-3-powered-by-st-microelectronics-sic-mosfets/?from=singlemessage&isappinstalled=0>



**MITSUBISHI  
ELECTRIC**

**UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLIES**

**PART III**

**A Revolution Must Have Funding**



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
ENERGY**



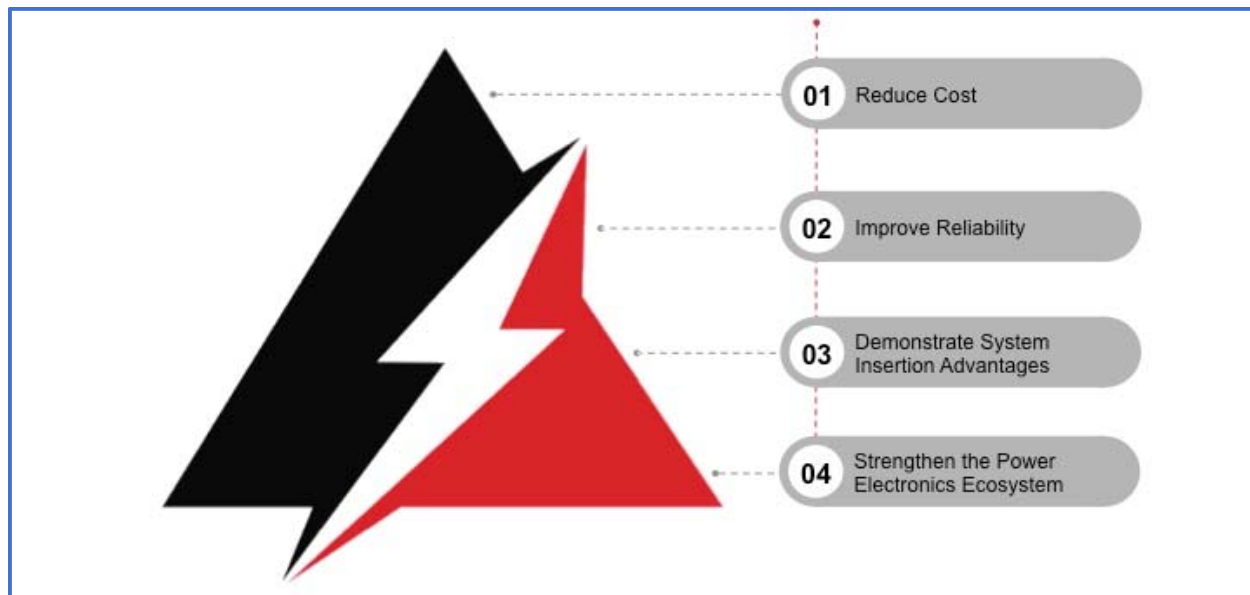


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

- The U.S Department of Energy launched  **POWER**AMERICA , a Manufacturing Institute to Accelerate Adoption of Wide Bandgap power electronics.
- PowerAmerica addresses technology needs in the development of WBG systems to enable US manufacturing job creation and energy savings by US Industries.



## Mission: Accelerate Commercialization of WBG Technology



Supporting US manufacturing is a priority for all  
PowerAmerica activities

# US Department of Energy

**Industrial Motors:** WBG materials enable higher-efficiency, variable speed drives in pumps, fans, compressors, and HVAC systems.

**Electronics:** WBG materials are already used in large, high-efficiency data centers (UPS).

**Grid integration:** WBG-based inverters can convert the DC electricity generated from solar and wind energy into the AC electricity used in homes and businesses – reducing losses by 50%.

**Utility applications:** WBG materials can reduce transformer size by a factor of ten or more and accelerate development of high-voltage DC power lines.

**Electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids:** WBG materials will reduce battery recharging losses by 66%, and reduce the size of the cooling system by 60%. They offer greater efficiency in converting AC to DC power.

**Military:** WBG semiconductors are used in high-density power applications, satellite communications, and high-frequency radar.

**Geothermal:** WBG-based electronic sensors can withstand the harsh, high-pressure, and high-temperature environments of geothermal wells.

**Circuit Breakers:** WBG materials are being used in circuit “switches” that open in 700 nanoseconds.



**MITSUBISHI  
ELECTRIC**

UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLIES

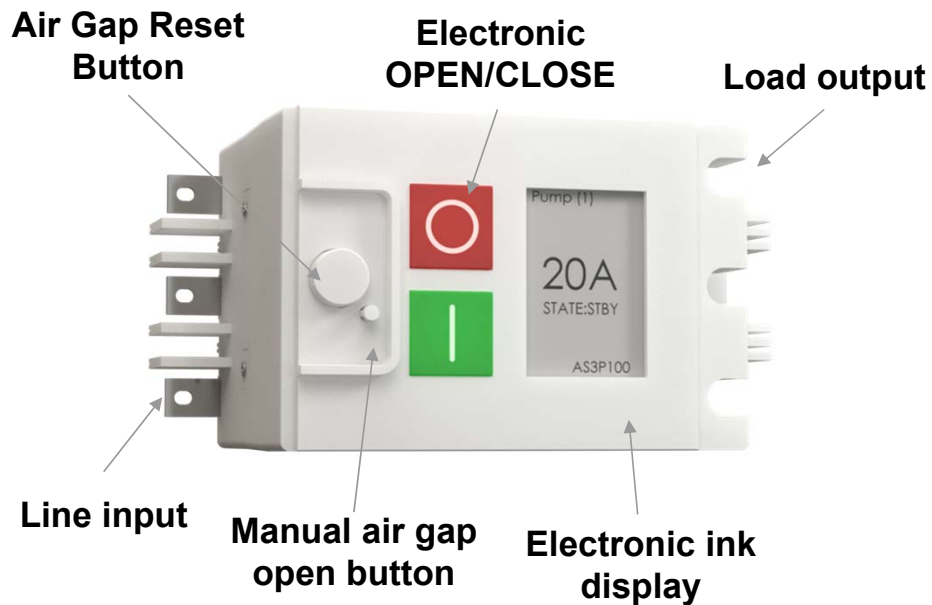
**PART IV**

## **Revolutionary Leaders:**

- **Atom Power - SiC Solid State Circuit Breaker**



# Solid State Circuit Breaker (SSCB)

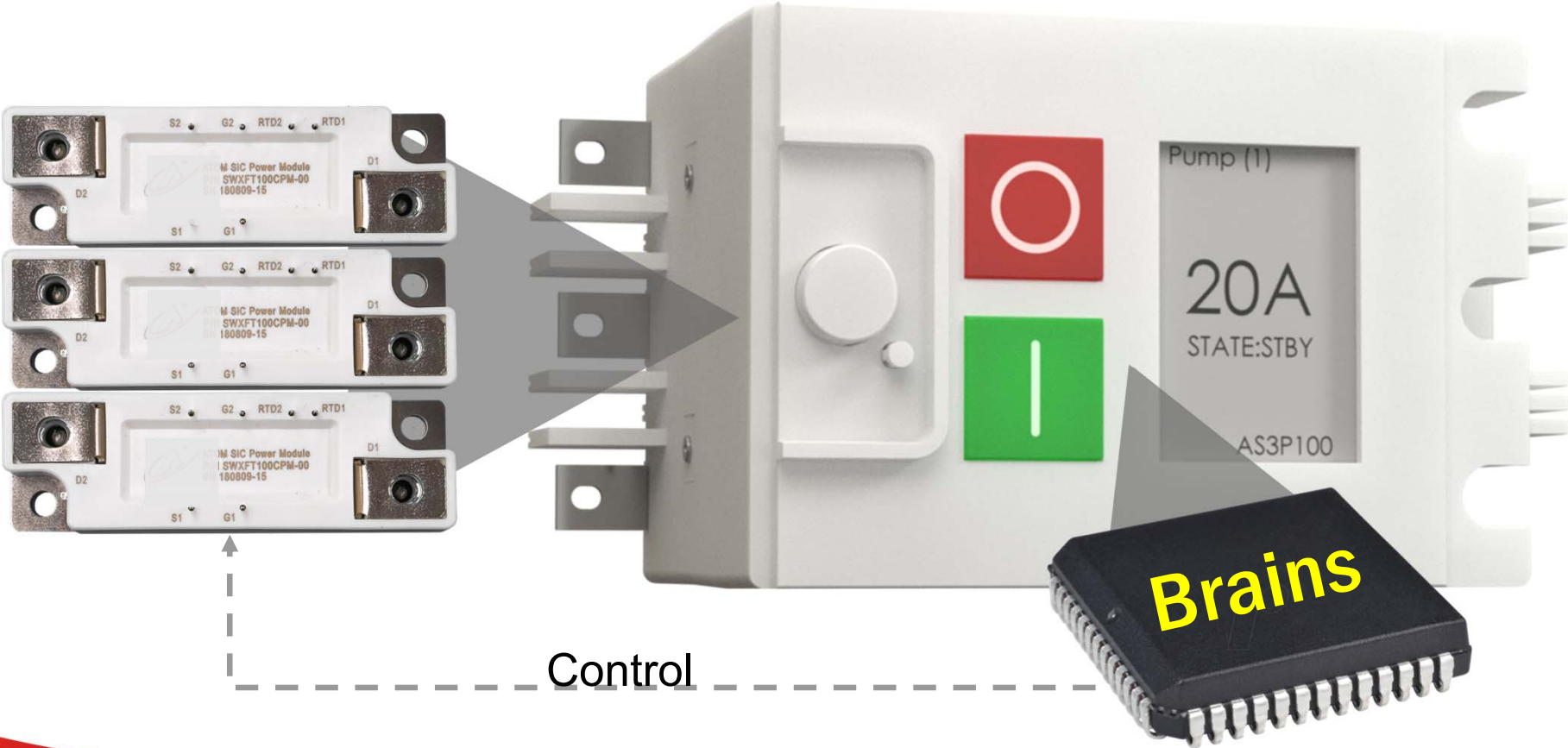


- **Solid-state (SiC) Switch**
- **Safer than any molded case breaker**
- **Intelligent & Self-aware**
- **Dynamic**

# Current is interrupted using Silicon-Carbide (SiC) semiconductors



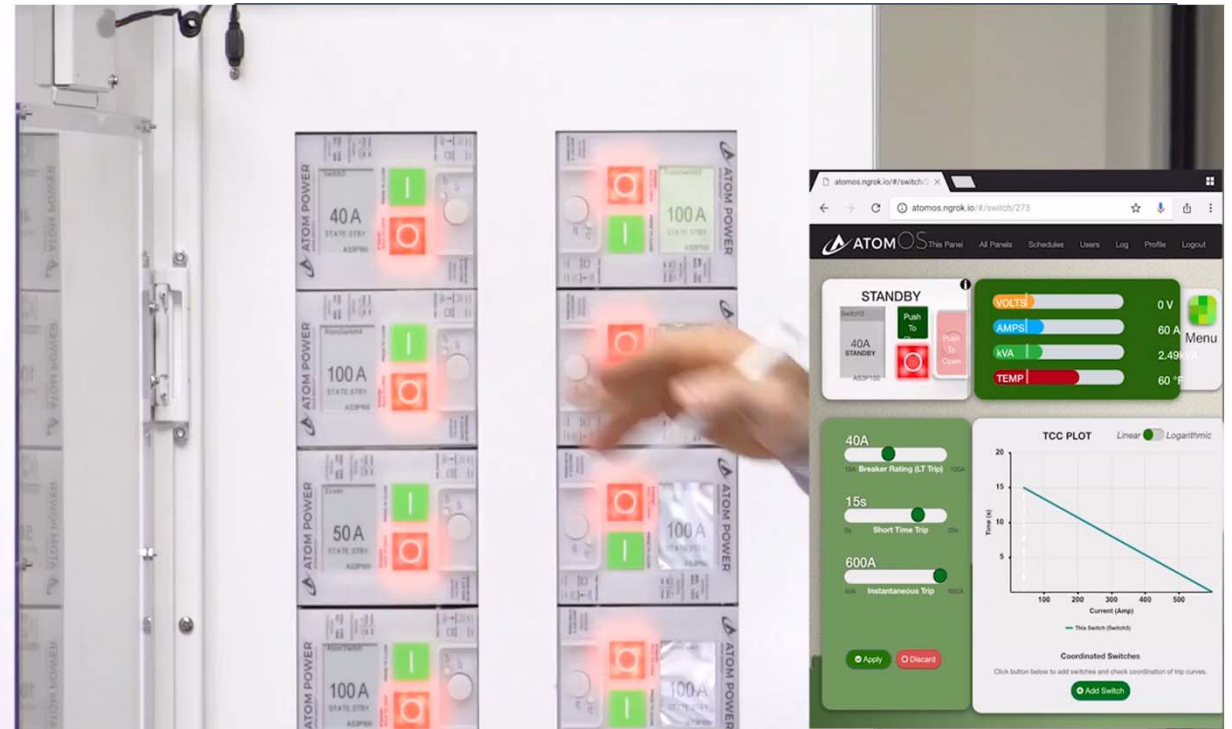
# 3-Phase SSCB



Control

# Let's Talk Control

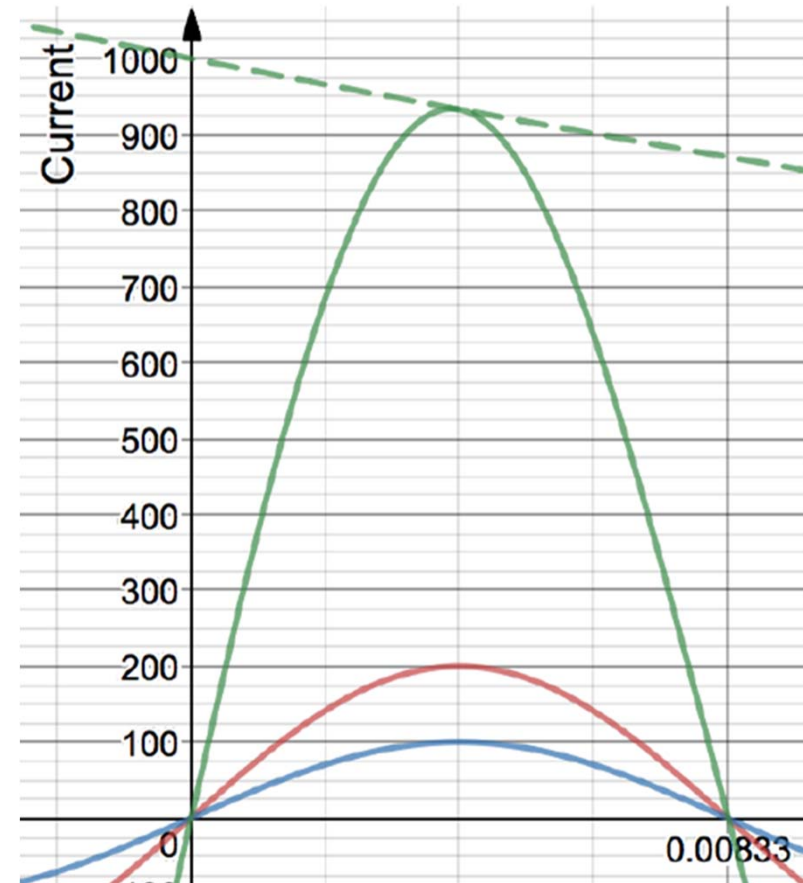
- Digital Remote Control
- Unlimited Operations
- Dynamic Time-Current Curves





## Let's Talk Speed

- ~3 microsecond round-trip time fault detection
- ~ Opens 16,000x faster

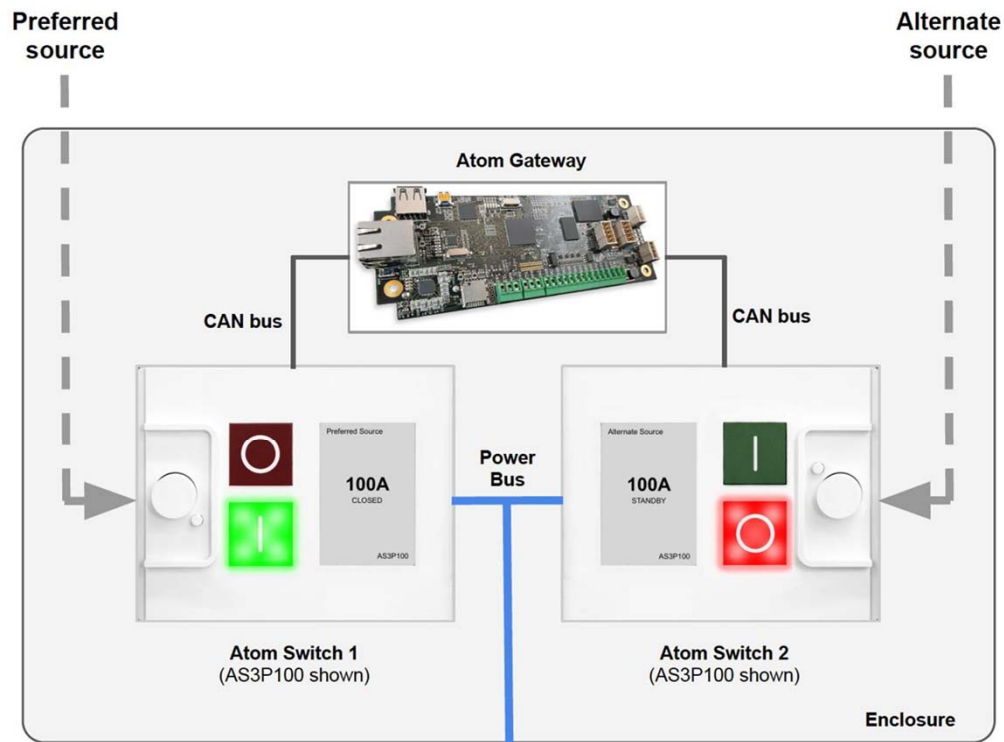


# 100,000-amp Interrupting Capacity

- 100 A Switch Opens in 700 nsec
- 1200 A Switch Opens in 2  $\mu$ sec
- Arc flash energy is reduced by 3,200x



# Fast Transfer Switching



80 microsecond transfer time  
(amperage does not matter)

# A Summary of things a SSCB can do...

- Arc flash mitigation
- Ultra fast circuit protection - 3 $\mu$ s round trip fault detection
- 100,000-amp interrupting capacity
- Remote Dynamic time-current curve adjustment of Switch from 15-1200 amps
- Surge Protection
- Thermal memory
- Remote firmware update capability
- Easily networked with one (1) IP address for the whole thing

## Revolutionary Leaders:

- Mitsubishi - SiC UPS

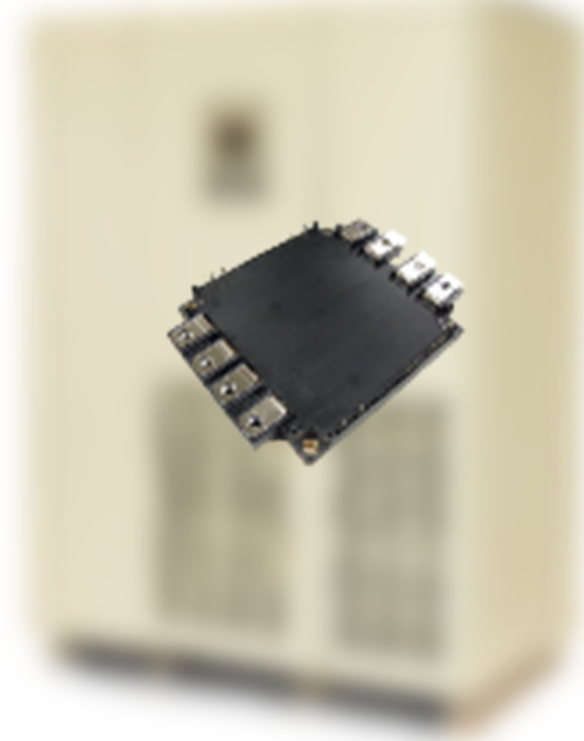


# How does a UPS generate Reliable power?

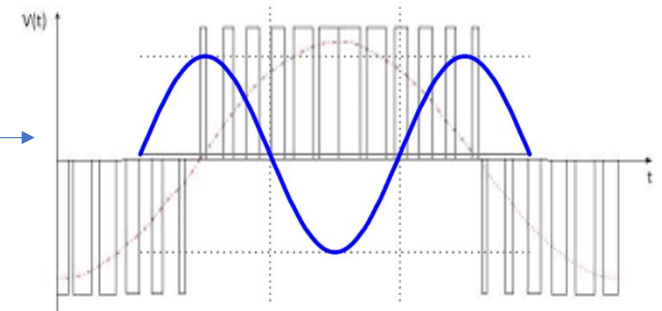
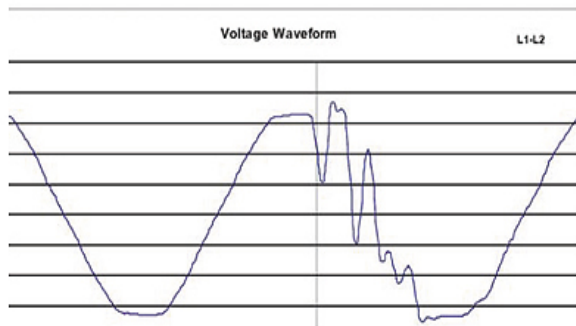


# How does a UPS generate Reliable power?

Answer: With a Semiconductor



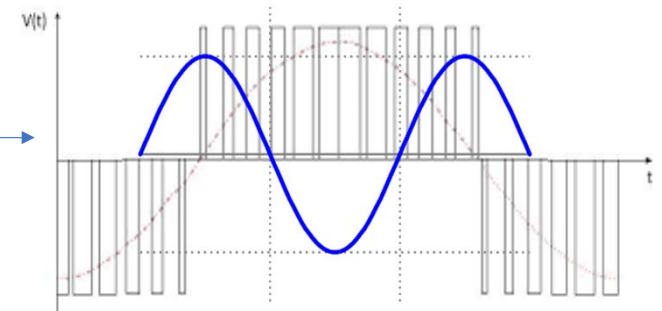
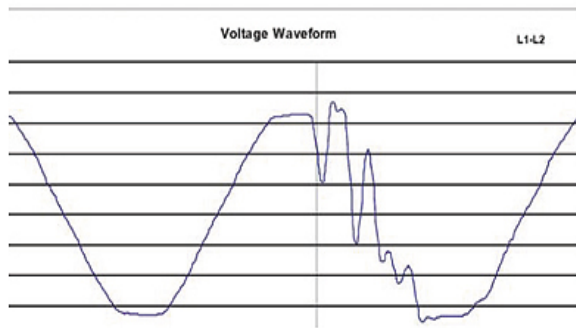
# The Semiconductor is the Heart and Soul of the UPS





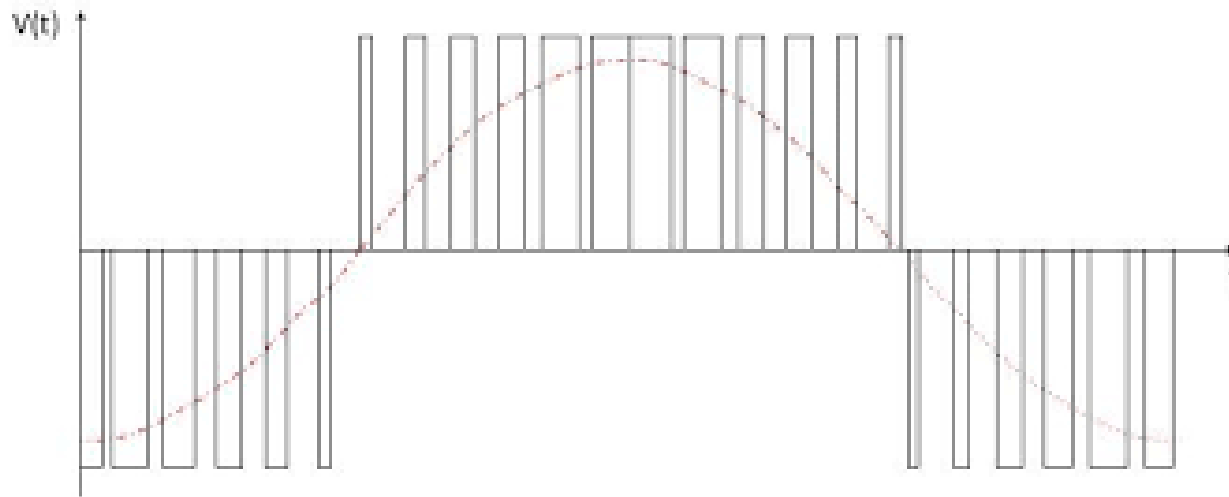
# The Semiconductor is the Heart and Soul of the UPS

The better the semiconductor...the better the output waveform

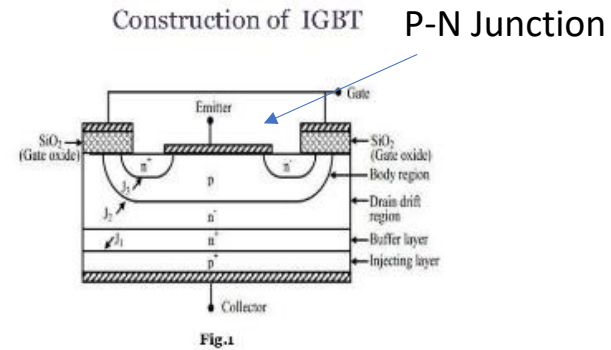


# How does a UPS semiconductor device work?

- UPS controls turn the semiconductor on and off to create the flow of electricity



# Moving Semiconductor Electrons

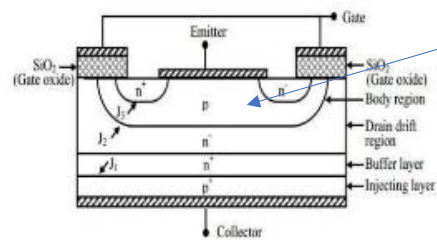


## Insulated Gate Bipolar Transistor

*Every Cycle Matters!*

# MOVING SILICON ELECTRONS

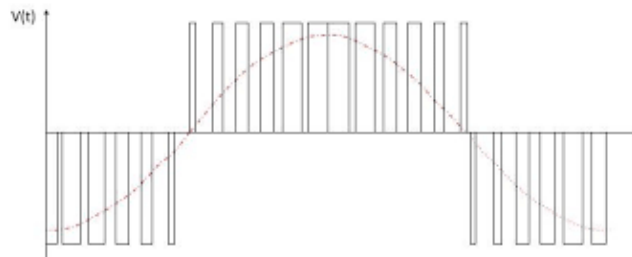
Construction of IGBT



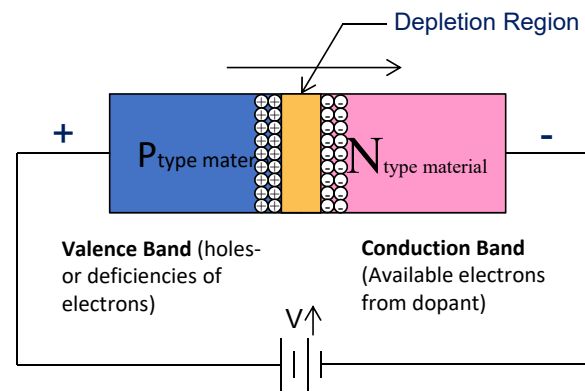
P-N Junction

Fig.1

The IGBT P-N junction shapes the UPS output waveform by creating pulses of electricity and spaces with no electricity.



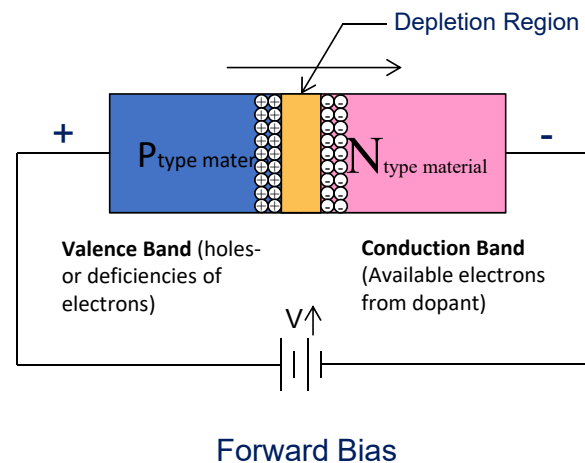
# Moving Semiconductor Electrons



Forward Bias

A **p-n junction** is a boundary between p-type and n-type particles. The "p" (positive) side contains an excess of electron holes, while the "n" (negative) side contains an excess of electrons.

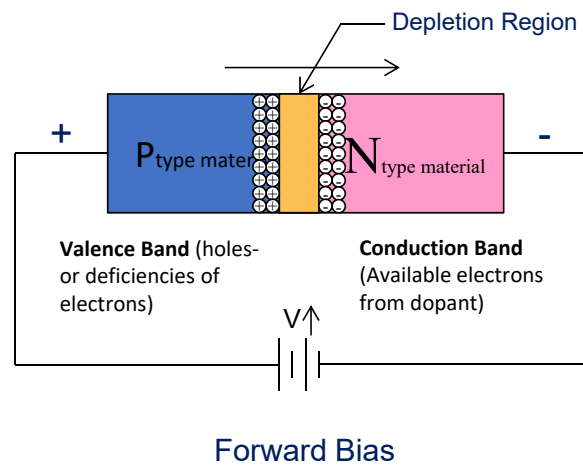
# Moving Semiconductor Electrons



A p-n junction is a boundary between p-type and n-type particles that are created by doping.

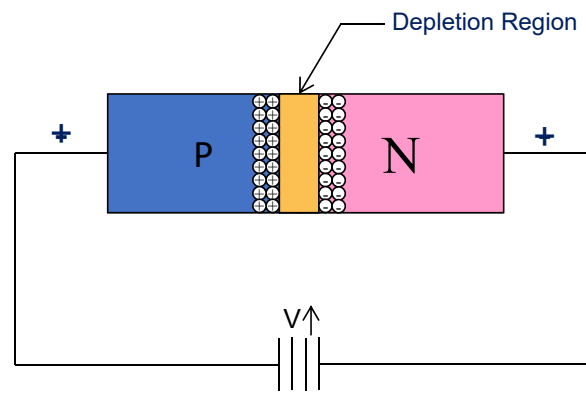
The "p" (positive) side contains an excess of electron holes, while the "n" (negative) side contains an excess of electrons that are created by "*doping*".

# Moving Semiconductor Electrons



We apply voltage (forward bias)...

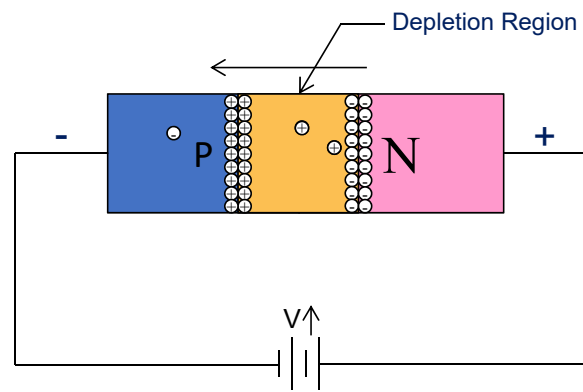
# Moving Semiconductor Electrons



Reverse Bias

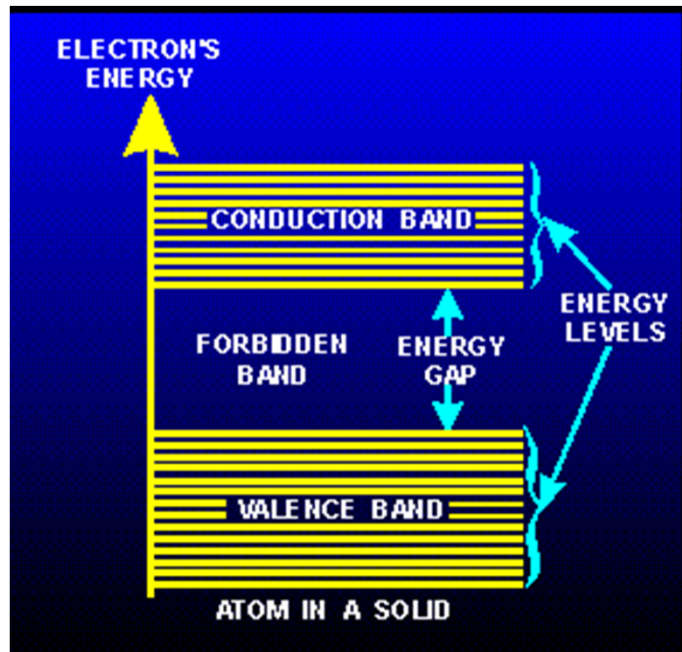


# Moving Semiconductor Electrons



Breakdown Voltage

# Addition of SiC



- Using Silicon Carbide (a Wide Bandgap material) enables a UPS semiconductor to exceed the limitations of Silicon

# Si Based IGBTs Give Way To SiC Based MOSFETs

Silicon Carbide permits manufacturers to replace slow Silicon Bipolar Transistors with single-carrier, or unipolar devices called MOSFETs. They can be switched quickly and far more *efficiently*. These faster devices have the added benefit of more-compact and less-expensive packaging because they require smaller control circuitry. **(Equipment shrinks in size...power density increases)**



## SiC MOSFET

“New” Semiconductor of Choice:

- Simpler (Unipolar)
- Smaller
- Faster
- More efficient

# UPS Benefits with Silicon Carbide

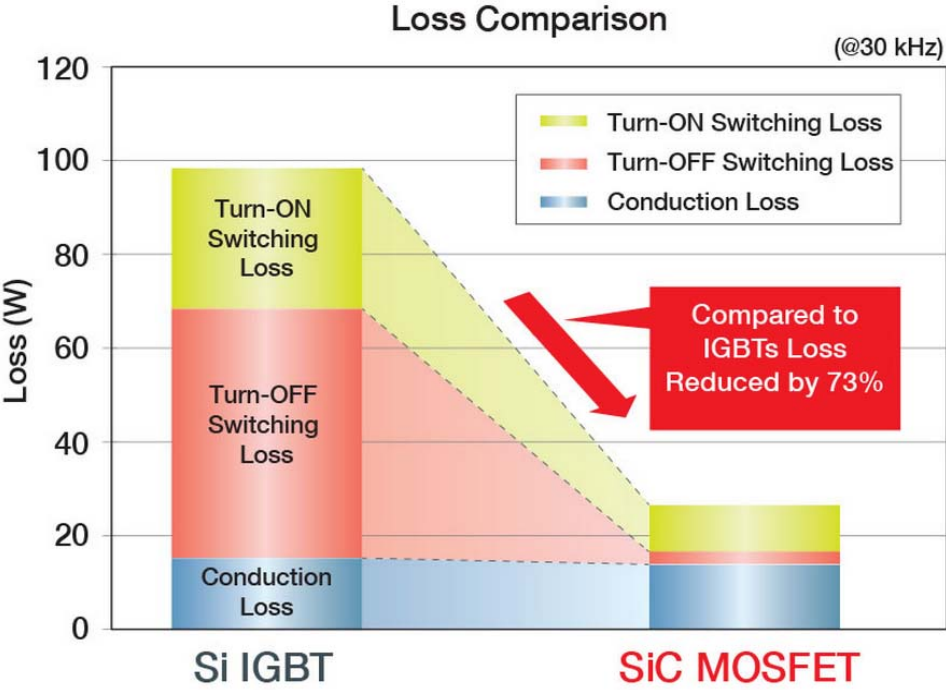
1. Higher Efficiencies
2. Less Heat Rejection
3. Less Cooling Requirements
4. Smaller Footprint

# Let's take a look at the improved Metrics using Silicon Carbide

## 1. Efficiency

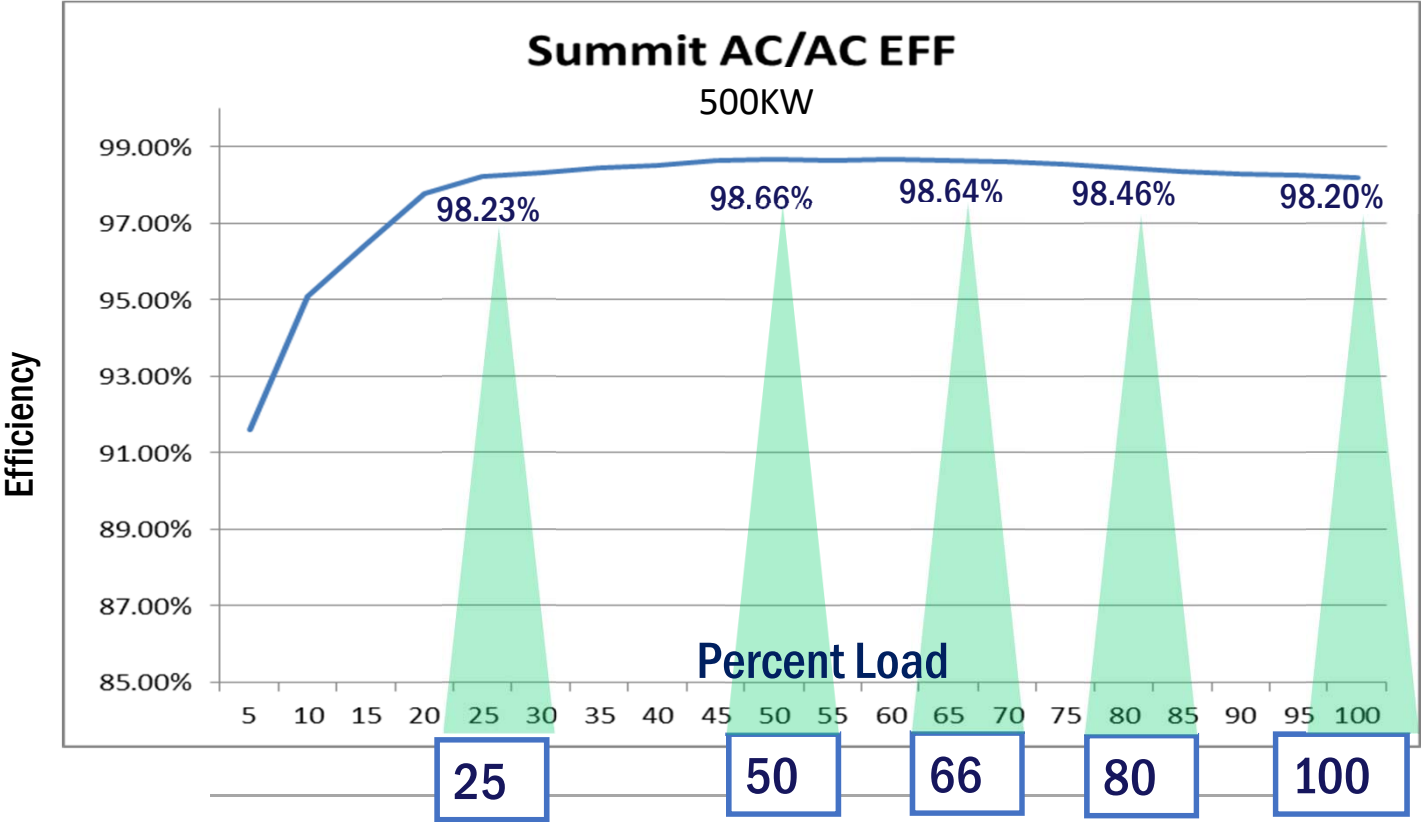
# SiC: Less Power Losses

Loss reduced by 73% compared with IGBTs



- There is a 73% Reduction in Power Losses
- Increases Efficiency

# SiC Efficiency Metrics



# SiC Factory Test Metrics @ 400kW

Table 4: Efficiency

| Load | Power Factor | Input kW | Output kW | Calculated Efficiency |
|------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------------------|
| 0%   | Unity        | 259      | -         | -                     |
| 25%  | Unity        | 98.7     | 96.7      | 98.0                  |
| 50%  | Unity        | 263.5    | 261.4     | 99.0                  |
| 75%  | Unity        | 307.7    | 305.3     | 99.2                  |
| 100% | Unity        | 401.5    | 398.5     | 99.3                  |
| 25%  | 0.95 lag     | 99.5     | 96.6      | 97.1                  |
| 50%  | 0.95 lag     | 194.7    | 192.7     | 98.0                  |
| 75%  | 0.95 lag     | 299.3    | 294.0     | 98.2                  |
| 100% | 0.95 lag     | 387.6    | 380.4     | 98.1                  |

AI

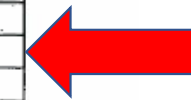


Table 4: Efficiency

| Load | Power Factor | Input kW | Output kW | Calculated Efficiency |
|------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------------------|
| 0%   | Unity        | 307      | -         | -                     |
| 25%  | Unity        | 98.4     | 96.77     | 97.52                 |
| 50%  | Unity        | 197.7    | 195.2     | 98.73                 |
| 75%  | Unity        | 296.2    | 293       | 98.91                 |
| 100% | Unity        | 405.6    | 401.2     | 98.91                 |
| 25%  | 0.95 lag     | 99.7     | 97.3      | 97.59                 |
| 50%  | 0.95 lag     | 199.3    | 196.7     | 98.69                 |
| 75%  | 0.95 lag     | 292.6    | 288.9     | 98.73                 |
| 100% | 0.95 lag     | 386.5    | 381.1     | 98.60                 |

AI

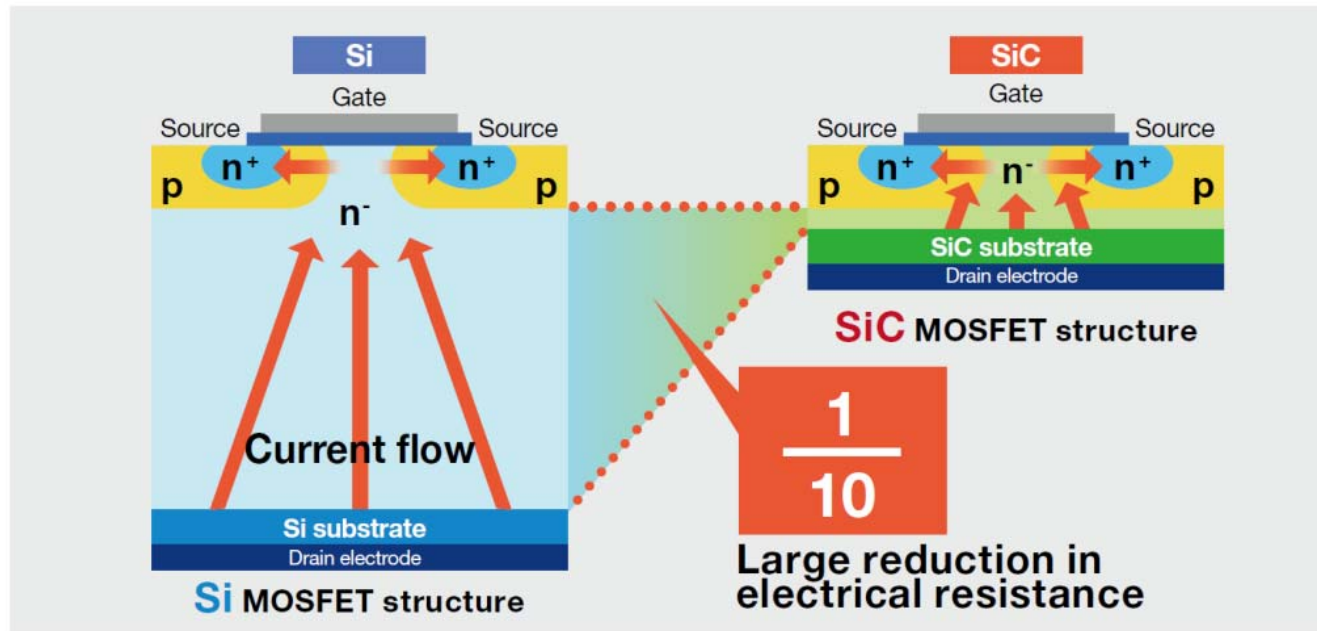


# Let's take a look at the improved Metrics using Silicon Carbide

1. Efficiency
2. Heat Rejection

# SiC Uses 1/10 The Material

- SiC requires **1/10** the material needed by Si to operate
- Thinner devices are **faster** and boast less resistance



## SiC Heat Metrics

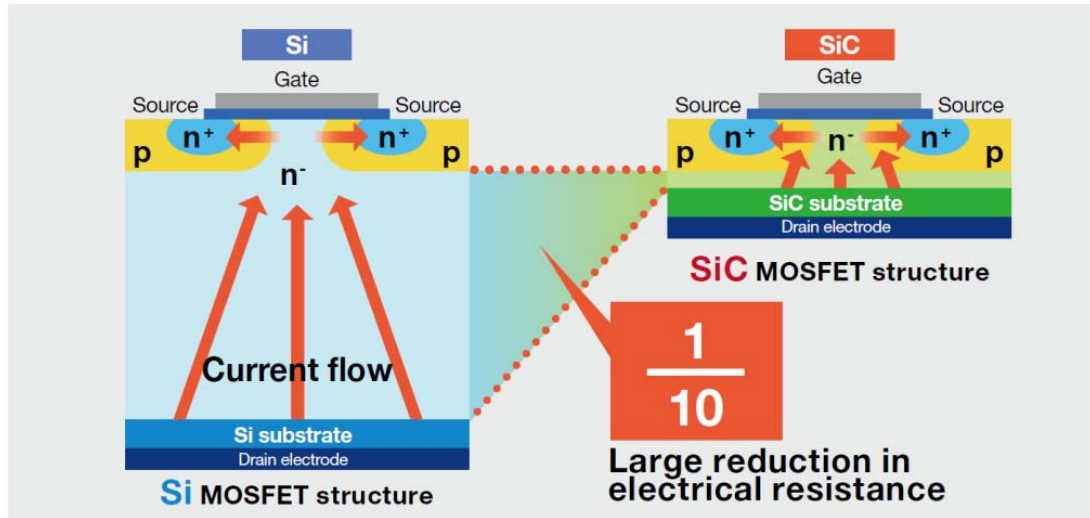
At 100% load Si has a heat rejection of 69.2 kBTU/hr, whereas SiC based UPS has a heat rejection of 42.0 kBTU/hr.

| UPS LOAD (%) | SiC UPS ENERGY SAVINGS (%) |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| 100          | 39.4%                      |
| 75           | 49.9%                      |
| 50           | 46.9%                      |

# Let's take a look at the improved Metrics using Silicon Carbide

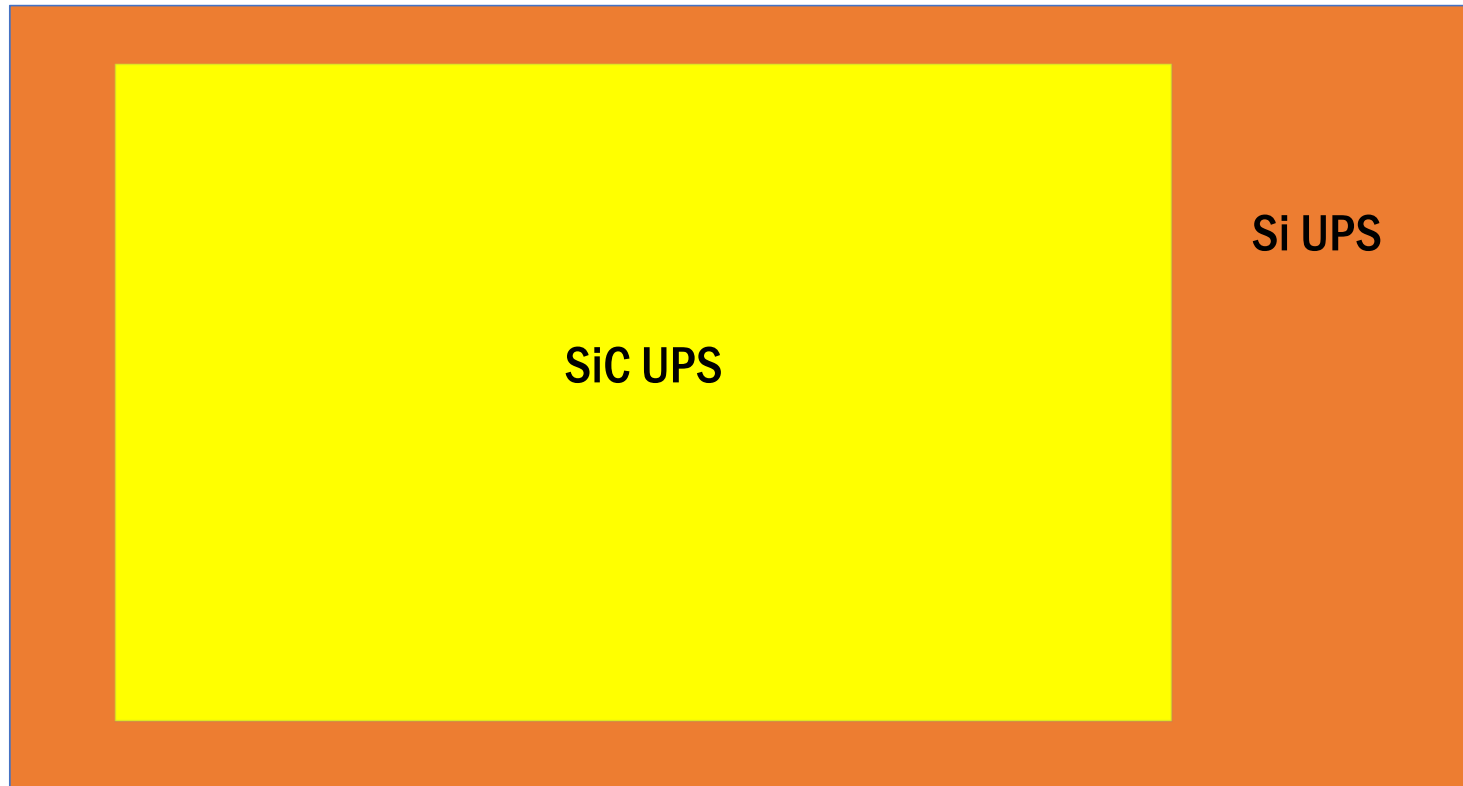
1. Efficiency
2. Heat rejection
3. Footprint

# SiC Size Metrics



Faster devices have the added benefit of more-compact and less-expensive packaging because they require smaller control circuitry, heatsinks, inverters...and filters!

# SiC Size Metrics



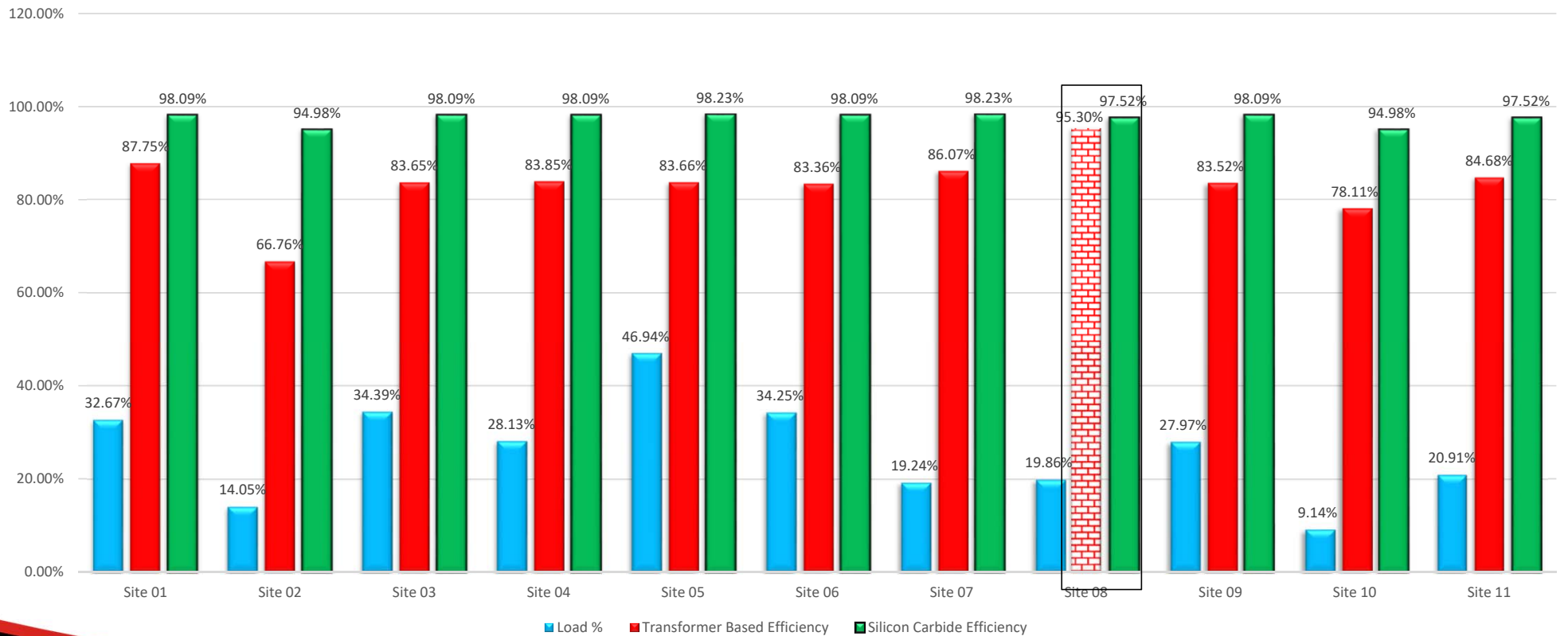
Average 35% Reduction in UPS Footprint

# Metrics Summary

- Efficiency > 98-99%
- Heat Rejection > 50% less cooling @ 75% load
- Footprint > 25-30% smaller

# Transformer Based vs. Silicon Carbide

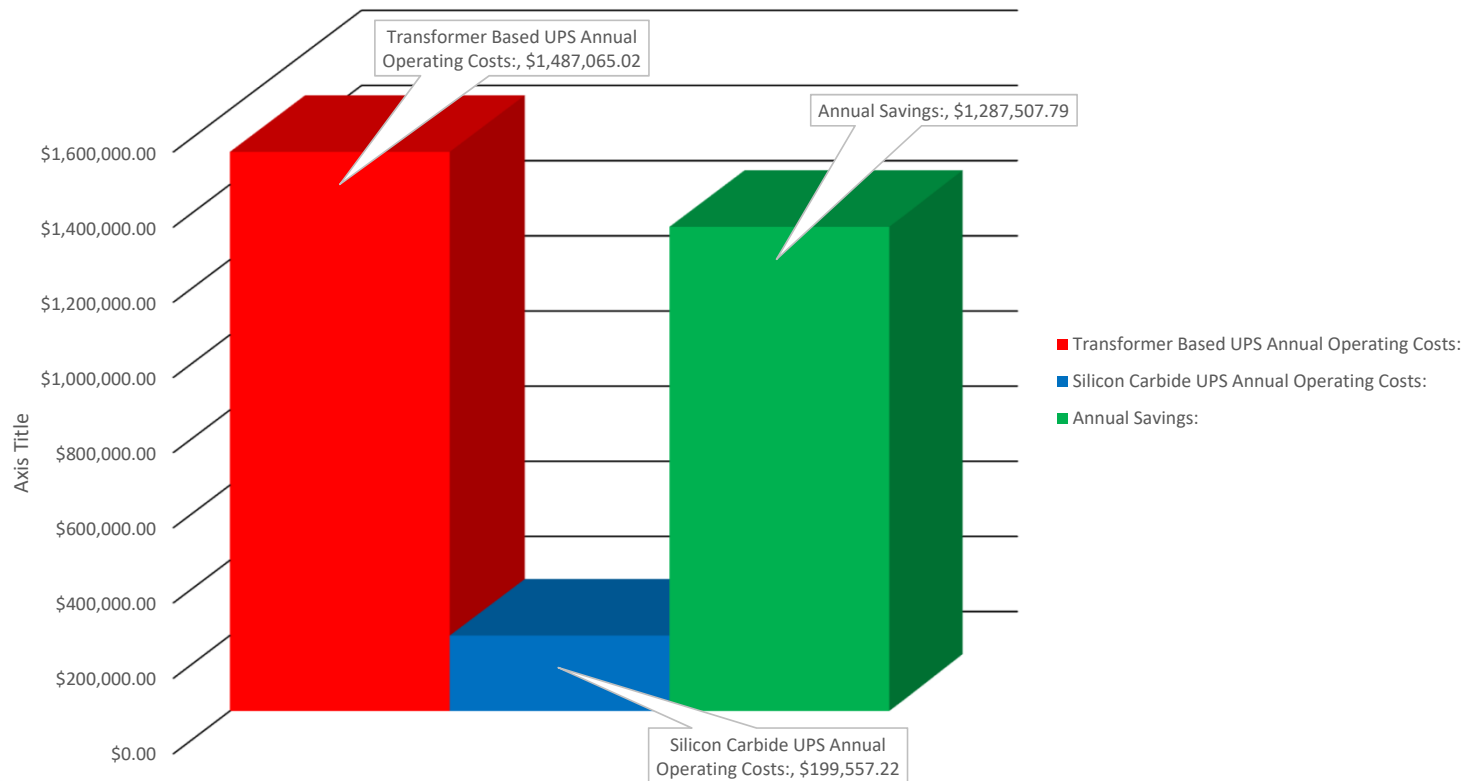
Load vs. Efficiency





# Annual Expense Loss Comparison

Transformer Based vs. Silicon Carbide



**Thank you!**