

International Job

Strauss, principal analyst at Forward Concepts (Tempe, Ariz.), a DSP market tracker. FFTs and FIR filters are the two most popular DSP operations, Strauss said. High resolution-a 65,000-point FFT-is required to find an airplane or missile battery hidden among the "ground clutter" on a battlefield, Strauss said.

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Dedicated FFT devices like the Butterfly processor marketed by Sharp Microelectronics (Vancouver, British Columbia) are not "cheap chips," Strauss said. "They cost a few hundred dollars each." A few custom parts use an FPGA architecture to execute a floating-point operation, Strauss said, like one marketed by Texas Memory Systems Inc. (Houston), but Altera is the first to make such a part a "catalog item."

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Altera said its Radix 4 core uses only about 10 percent of the resources in a midrange Stratix FPGA. The Radix 2 is half the size of the Radix 4. Additional versions of the cores are under development, the company said.

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