

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/going-global-why-singapore>

From the beginning of the company, Worthington was aware in the back of his mind that someday Fluidigm would have to go global and setup manufacturing overseas. He has had previous successful experience in Singapore and was drawn by the favorable economic and governmental conditions.



Transcript

The question is why did we decide to go to Singapore.. So when I was at Actel, Actel was a fabulous semiconductor company, actually our backup fab at that time that we brought up was a chartered semiconductor in Singapore.. That turned out to be the best, at least for a while, while I was there, I don't know what it's like now, it was our best fab in the world.. We were able to get our best margins, our best yields and they were way ahead of schedule.. So in the back of my mind, I knew that someday Fluidigm will be global and then we would need to set up manufacturing not just on US soil but in other places and that I sort of had my eye out for Singapore.. John Young set up the first Hewlett-Packard facility in Singapore which was just wildly successful there and two of our other executives, Mike and Lincoln, set up an R&D and manufacturing facility in Singapore for applied biosystems and also just did really, really well.. So last year, it became clear that demand for chips is going like this.. We had customers in Japan, in Australia, all over Europe, and our customers were starting to say it is unacceptable for your primary production facility to be one mile from the San Andreas Fault and in a state that's known for having rolling blackouts and all that kind of stuff.. So we then set about drawing concentric circles around areas that had the kind of talent that we need to do what we do, biology, chemistry, integrated circuit capabilities, really strong manufacturing expertise and if you draw those concentric circles around the world, most of them are in places that are about as expensive as the Bay Area for manufacturing.. Then there happens to be a circle, a 21-mile radius in Singapore which is of course much more favorable from an economic point of view and the Singapore government is really trying to bring bio technology to Singapore..

So we were just really like a match made in heaven...