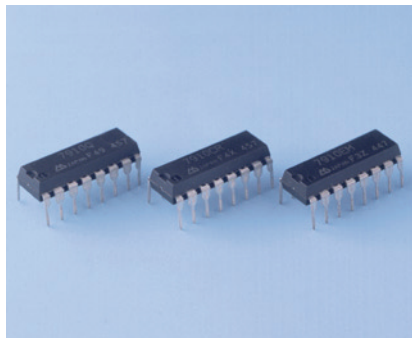


Melody IC SVM7910

July 1978



Product Features

Debuting in 1978, the SVM 7910 electronic sound-generating device was the world's first melody IC, taking advantage of CMOS IC technology derived from the development of quartz watches. The first finished product equipped with this device was the Seiko Electronic Melodia, a quartz alarm clock released by Seikosha* in July 1978. A revolutionary product, the Electronic Melodia could produce three types of electronic sounds—a melody, chimes, and a buzzer—each selected by simply pressing a button.

Later, in April 1983, came the advent of the SVM7960, part of the SVM79 melody IC series. With a maximum performance capacity of four songs, and a wide operating voltage range, from 1.5 to 5 volts, the emergence of this melody IC filled out the SVM79 series lineup, and expanded the range of sounds that could be expressed.

Background

Development of the SVM7910 melody IC began in 1976, with the initial purpose of being used as an alarm in alarm clocks. It made use of semiconductor technology developed by Epson's** Semiconductor Operations Division which was founded that same year to create an applied product in the form of an IC for use in watches.

Impact

The Seiko Electronic Melodia, the first product to use the SVM7910 melody IC, was released by Seikosha in July 1978, and was an unprecedented hit. Epson acquired the patent and utility model rights for the electronic sound-generating device and for numerous other ideas. In 1988, these activities culminated in the device winning the Asahi Shimbun***Prize in the year's Japan Commendation for Invention.

From there, an advanced version of the product came to be used as the alarm in alarm clocks, as the alarm for various other machines, and also to provide the sound on amusement machines. A lower-cost version was used for telephone on-hold music, greeting cards, toys, home appliances (such as alarms), doorbells, and facsimile machines. In this way, a product producing a pleasant melody helped to expand the market for other products.

*Now Seiko Clock Inc., a subsidiary of Seiko Corporation

** Then Suwa Seikosha Co., Ltd.

***A leading Japanese newspaper