Oppo gives up on building custom chips for its flagship phones

Bloomberg reports Oppo's Zeku division was set up in 2019 and carried about 200 patents in its Shanghai division. Like Apple, Oppo started making its own co-processors for imaging and other smartphone components but had not successfully launched its own SoC to get away from relying on other companies for the most significant chip in the device.

Last year, the US issued sweeping restrictions on chip sales to China and other countries in the wake of the war in Ukraine. Chinese phone manufacturers, including Oppo, would have to get licenses to use chips built by US-based companies.

In January, media reports indicated the US cut a deal with the Netherlands and Japan to further restrict exports of chip manufacturing technology. The move could cut off Chinese companies from suppliers like ASML – the world's only producer of lithography machines needed to develop newer chips.

Oppo is a sister company to OnePlus, and the two smartphone manufacturers share many of the same components. Switching to a customized in-house chip, like rivals Apple and Google with their A-Series and Tensor chips, could have expanded the capabilities of future devices from both companies.

https://www.theverge.com/2023/5/12/23721105/oppo-zeku-shutdown-chip-design-smartphone-decline