

Infinity beckons for Illumina



[Elizabeth Cairns](#)

Illumina closed up 17% yesterday having released strong preliminary fourth quarter revenue of \$1.2bn, a 25% increase year-on-year and an easy beat of consensus expectations, which had sat at around 15% growth. The company expects to grow at this rate throughout the coming year, too, the regulatory uncertainty surrounding its decision to close the acquisition of Grail [without approval from antitrust authorities](#) notwithstanding. Perhaps more interesting for the long term is the news that the company, a specialist in sequencing short strands of DNA, is working on a new long-read technology. Codenamed Infinity, this runs on existing Illumina instruments and can provide sequences of around 10,000 bases in length. Early access for Infinity is to start in the second half of this year, Illumina said yesterday at the JP Morgan conference. Adding long-read tech to its core short-read offering was the thinking behind Illumina's attempted \$1.2bn takeout of Pacbio, [squashed on anticompetitive grounds in 2019](#). Now it seems to be attempting to build a short- and long-read empire from within, taking on Pacbio in the process. Pacbio's shares sank 11% yesterday, though this might also have been related to its preliminary fourth-quarter sales figures, which at \$36m missed analyst expectations.

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Evaluate HQ
[44-\(0\)20-7377-0800](#)

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