AT A GLANCE

Xeon Replaces Pentium Pro 1

To boost revenues and ASPs, Intel is redoubling its effort to take a bite out of the lucrative high-end workstation and server markets with a new processor it calls Xeon. The processor replaces the venerable but now-rickety Pentium Pro with a 400-MHz Deschutes-based processor module. Xeon offers four-way symmetric multiprocessing, extended physical memory, and a large, fast L2 cache.

Already accused of anticompetitive practices with CPUs and core logic, Intel is now being accused of dumping graphics chips. Even if this is true, it's time to stop encouraging government intervention that will stifle competition more than the practices it seeks to prevent.

Intel steps back from modules; Silicon Spice cooking up new processor; KryoTech ships chilled Alpha at 767 MHz; Micron buys Rendition; Intel countersues Intergraph.

Along with Xeon, Intel announced two new chip sets to support that processor in the workstation and server markets. The 450NX for servers is a major step up from Pentium Pro's 450GX, but the 440GX for workstations is a disappointingly minor improvement over the 440BX used in the PC market.

IBM's cloning of the 'C54x DSP core from Texas Instruments is one more step in the company's shift away from microprocessor products and toward a position as a full-line ASIC supplier.

ARM signs Epson, Qualcomm, and National; Motorola cans Core+, FPGA business; TI, Philips cooperate on FireWire silicon; V3 provides system support for MIPS chips; IDT 200-MHz R5000 goes embedded; MPC860 controllers get smaller, faster; ARM spins up extensions for disk drives; Symbian forms from Euro tech trio.

The Slater Perspective: Integration and Segmentation Intertwined 20 Mendocino signals the beginning of the end of off-chip caches in PC microprocessors. Future shrinks to 0.18-, 0.13-, and 0.10-micron will bring even more integration, raising this question: What will differentiate the Celeron line?

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