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# INTEL PLANS 900MHZ CASCADES MP

*Speed Boost for Pentium III Xeon Processor Holds Place for Foster*

*By Steve Leibson {8/14/00-02}*

Intel has announced that it will ship a 900MHz version of its Pentium III Xeon (Cascades) processor with 2M of integrated L2 cache in 1Q01. The new processor joins the 700MHz 1M- and 2M-cache versions introduced in May (see *MPR 5/29/00-03*, "Intel Delivers Cascades-Based Xeon") and shipping now. The 700MHz/1M and 700MHz/2M Pentium III Xeon parts currently sell for $1,177 and $1,980, respectively, in 1,000-unit quantities. With the introduction of the 900MHz PIII Xeon, Intel has now positioned the 700MHz/1M processor for four-way "value" multiprocessor systems; the 700MHz/2M processor for four-way "performance" multiprocessor systems; and the 900MHz/2M processor for eight-way (and larger) multiprocessor systems. The Cascades processors are based on Intel's Coppermine core.

Meanwhile, Intel says that the dual-processor and multiprocessor versions of Foster (based on the Pentium 4/Willamette core) are scheduled for introduction next year. The dual-processor version of Foster (presumably the Pentium 4 Xeon), targeted at mid- and high-range workstations and departmental/workgroup servers, should appear by 1Q01. Intel will roll out the multiprocessor version, targeted at high-range workstations and servers, by 2H01. Foster MP will be accompanied by third-party chip sets for 4-way system designs and the 870 chip set (see *MPR 3/13/00-03*, "Intel Offers a Peek at 870 Chip Set") for 8-way to 16-way designs. In this way, Intel has scheduled its enterprise-class processor introductions at roughly six-month intervals from this point forward.

This six-month introduction periodicity conforms to Intel's newly announced view of the way its enterprise OEM customers want to see new processor rollouts, in sharp contrast to the more frenetic pace of desktop-processor introductions. The company cites the complexity of the server business as the driving reason behind its new product-release model. In this model, enterprise-class processor development follows six distinct steps: an evangelist-driven first step to initiate interest in the new device among OEMs, followed by a prototype processor release, a developer release, a pilot release, and a platform release, and culminating in general availability of the processor and systems based on that processor.

It is unclear whether Intel groups both the IA-32 and IA-64 processors within the same enterprise-processor introduction timeline punctuated by semiannual releases or has tracked the two processors separately. If both processor families are on a single track, that action would seem to relegate the introduction of enterprise-class Itanium processors to very late in 2001, or even into 2002, six months after the introduction of Foster MP. For more information, see Intel's Web site at *www.intel.com*.