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AMD to launch dual-core 64 on May 31

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The AMD Athlon 64 X2 processor will be launched on the first day of Computex, the mammoth show that brings most of Taiwan's computer hardware, software and technology industry face-to-face with technology buyers from around the world, the company said Friday. AMD has used Computex in prior years to launch new processors. If previous years are a guide, the processor will likely be accompanied by the introduction of compatible motherboards produced by Taiwanese companies.

Dual-core processors contain two processors on a single piece of silicon and give users improved performance. This is because processor-intensive tasks like editing video and burning optical discs can be handled independently so they don't slow each other down as might happen in a single-core processor. Until now, most desktop and server processors have had a single core but several dual-core chips have been launched.

Intel, AMD's biggest rival, has already launched a dual-core version of its Pentium processor. It began shipping the chip, called the Pentium Extreme Edition 840 (Pentium EE), in April this year and a second chip, called the Pentium D, is due later this month.

Prototype versions of the new Athlon 64 chip scored well against the Pentium EE in tests carried out by PC World. A system based on the Athlon 64 chip achieved a score of 115 on the PC WorldBench 5 benchmark, against 95 for a system based on the Pentium EE, making the dual-core Athlon 64 system the second-fastest tested to date. The Athlon 64 also drew less power, at about 100 watts versus 145 watts for the Intel chip.

The Athlon 64 X2 isn't AMD's first dual-core processor. The Sunnyvale, California, company launched a dual-core version of its Opteron processor for four-way and eight-way servers in April. It will start shipping a second dual-core Opteron, for two-way servers and workstations, in May, it said at the time.

Martyn Williams [2].

Hardware

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