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ECS PF88 Extreme Intel/AMD Hybrid Motherboard

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Here's what ECS has in mind with the PF88 Extreme motherboard: You would be able to purchase a SiS based Intel motherboard off of retail shelves once it's launched. If you decide to upgrade to an AMD platform at a later date, ECS would retail a daughter-card with socket-939 platform, which would be plugged into an additional slot to get the system up and running. According to ECS, the retail cost of the daughter-card would be around $50.00, though the price is not yet finalized. ECS believes that it would reduce the upgrade cost in the future when the user decides to upgrade his system, which is true to an extent. However, there are certain aspects of it that you'll have to keep in mind. Since it's a preliminary article, we'll present our initial thoughts on the board in Part II of the series. So, the idea is that once you have connected the daughter-card to the actual motherboard, you can then utilize all the features on the board with both AMD and Intel setups. The peripherals support is shared via a SiS southbridge that works as the "middleman" between both platforms - a unique concept indeed.

Although we don't particularly like to comment on the board layout during our initial look, we'll make an exception and delve just a little bit to see what, if anything, ECS has done to accommodate both platforms. The base of the motherboard is based on Intel's LGA775 platform powered by SiS north and southbridges. The board is color-coded with a passive heatsink on the northbridge to dissipate heat. We would've preferred it if ECS had opted for an active heatsink, but we have a feeling that extreme overclocking wouldn't be an option here, so maybe in that regard it's fine with whatever it has at the moment. The top part of the board is featured with four DIMM slots for dual-channel memory configuration in addition to the power connector and IDE connectors. The bottom area of the board has SATA ports, the southbridge for peripherals support and PCI and PCIe slots. The components are laid out rather cleanly and shouldn't propose to be much of a concern when everything is plugged in. Overall, the PF88 has a fairly standard layout with an additional slot to house a daughter-card for the AMD socket-939 platform.

Full Story [2].

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