

Intel's 64-Bit Pentium 4s Hit The Streets

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Intel's first 64-bit Pentium 4 microprocessors were quietly added to the company's price lists on Sunday, heralding their entrance into the marketplace.

Four versions of the Intel Pentium 4 6XX series were announced at speeds up to 3.6-GHz, a frequency grade lower than the existing 5XX series. Prices will range from \$224 to \$605. Intel also added the 3.73-GHz Pentium 4 Extreme Edition to its lineup, a \$999 chip that is fabricated on a finer 90-nm process than its older 130-nm P4EE components.

In addition to the Intel's 64-bit EM64T support, the new Pentium 4 chips also support the Execute Disable Bit, an additional megabyte of level-2 cache, and the Enhanced SpeedStep capability included on Intel's mobile processors. On the other hand, rival AMD began shipping its first 64-bit Athlon 64 processors in September of 2003, almost 18 months ago.

The 6XX series will likely be the last major enhancement to the Pentium 4 line before the introduction of the Pentium D "Smithfield," Intel's first dual-core part.

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