

Analysts downplay delay of new Intel chip

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Tech analysts Tuesday downplayed the impact of Intel's decision to postpone release of a high-end server chip code-named Montecito.

Intel raised eyebrows Monday when it announced that quality-control concerns would delay the debut of the Itanium microprocessor from early 2006 until the middle of the year.

The cancellation of some chip models in 2004 raised questions among the press and public about Intel's capabilities; however, analysts told the San Jose Mercury News that a delay of a few months might help competitors such as IBM but would not be disastrous for Intel.

The newspaper pointed out that server customers have higher quality-control standards that must be met, and Montecito will be one of the most complex chips ever produced. Montecito, which will be used to run high-volume networks, consists of two processors and 1.8 billion transistors. Intel's fastest Pentium 4 used by consumers uses 169 million transistors.

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