

Apple Updates iMacs With Latest Chip (Update)

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(AP) -- Apple Computer Inc. on Wednesday updated its iMac line with Intel Corp.'s latest microprocessors.

The Intel Core 2 Duo processor, which was launched by the world's largest chip maker this summer, is faster than the Intel chips previously used in the iMac and other Macintosh computers.

Also Wednesday, Apple unveiled a new version of its consumer desktop computer - an iMac with a 24-inch screen. With a 2.16-gigahertz chip, the high-end computer retails for \$1,999.

Philip Schiller, Apple's senior vice president of worldwide product marketing, said that every iMac will now have the Core 2 Duo chips.

Apple also bumped up the processing speeds of both models of its Mac mini without raising the prices of \$599 and \$799. The book-sized computer, aimed to be the company's entry-level offering, now features Intel's faster dual-core chips, instead of single-core ones.

The product upgrades come as Apple is looking to gain market share against its PC rivals that run Microsoft Corp.'s Windows operating system.

To better compete, Apple announced plans to switch from IBM Corp. and Freescale Semiconductor Inc. chips in June 2005, and by January 2006 the company unveiled two Intel-based computers - an iMac and a new laptop - that were based on Intel's Core Solo processor. It has since switched its entire line of computers to Intel.

Meanwhile, Windows-based PC makers are looking for Microsoft Corp.'s upcoming Windows Vista operating system to boost sales. Release of the consumer version of Vista has been pushed to January, however, and Apple will be looking to capitalize on the delay.

"The holiday season should be a great one," Schiller said.

Shares of Apple fell \$1.45, or 2 percent, to close at \$70.03 on the Nasdaq Stock Market.

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