

AMD Talks Up 'Small-Form' Desktops

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The world's second-largest chip maker is at the CeBIT show in Germany to drum up support for DTX, its open-standard specification for small-form-factor desktops. Advanced Micro Devices is working to shrink the size of the average desktop.

The Sunnyvale, Calif., chip maker will be talking up its DTX standard, an open set of specifications for small-form-factor desktops, at the CeBIT show in Hannover, Germany.

On March 15, AMD plans to offer a briefing for its partners involved in developing the open DTX standard for small-form-factor PCs and announce that the first prototypes for this project should be ready by the middle of 2007, said Daryl Sartain, AMD's director of platform initiatives.

The DTX standard that AMD is proposing, Sartain said, will be open and not tied to any specific AMD product, and will not carry the company's label.

"For the past two years, we have been receiving a lot of input and guidance from our partners and our customers about small-form-factor desktops," Sartain said. "We do see a growing market demand for these types of smaller chassis."

AMD first announced that it would solicit partners to help develop the DTX standard at January's CES show in Las Vegas. While at the show, the company showed off some motherboard designs for small-form-

factor desktops.

While standard ATX boards are 9.6 inches by 9.6 inches, the standard DTX board would be manufactured at approximately 9.54 inches by 7.9 inches.

There is also a proposal for a "micro" version of the DTX board, which would measure about 7.9 by 6.7 inches. Both versions of the DTX would come with two expansion slots.

The standard-size DTX motherboard would allow manufacturers to produce four boards per panel and would allow vendors to sell these motherboards for either an ATX or DTX chassis, Sartain said. (The mini-board would allow vendors to produce six boards per manufacturing panel.)

When desktops are eventually developed that use the DTX platform, Sartain said, these PCs will use 65-watt processors, which will create machines that run both cool and quiet.

Sartain said the goal of the DTX standard is not to create a class of low-cost PCs, but to offer an array of desktops that can take advantage of the platform that AMD and its partners are developing.

These type of features are especially important for OEMs and their customers that are looking to save power as well as desk space by switching to small-form desktops, Sartain said.

"Enterprises are very concerned about power and space," Sartain said. "With the type of chassis we are talking about, it's going to be much easier for companies to keep up with asset management. These desktops take up less space and they also use up less power."

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