

AMD Hosts Preemptive Lunch Before Intel Launch

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Advanced Micro Devices held a lunch meeting to talk up AMD's mobile-processing prowess before Intel's "Santa Rosa" chipset steals all the press.

AMD made a strong preemptive statement on Wednesday, hosting a press and analyst luncheon to hype the company's strengths in mobile processing compared to the upcoming Intel mobile chip code-named "Santa Rosa."

"We believe that versus Santa Rosa, in many areas, we already provide a superior experience," said Patrick Moorhead, vice president of advanced marketing for AMD.

AMD representatives highlighted graphics capabilities with Vista, and compatibility with next-gen 802.11n and Draft-N wireless standards. Representatives from NVIDIA and Broadcom spoke at the San Francisco event, pointing to the advantage of an open-platform, brand-name solution. Whereas Santa Rosa is rumored to have these features made only by Intel, AMD partners with NVIDIA and Broadcom for each capability separately.

"Really what this is, is a brand-name solution," Moorhead said. "So people say, 'Hey, I might not know what all these brands are, but I know its better and I know these brands are better.' We want to provide our customers with the absolute choice."

Moorhead gave graphics demonstrations using AMD's latest mobile chips, the AMD mobile 690G chipset with the AMD Turion 64 X2 mobile processor, in comparison to Intel's desktop Centrino G965 chipset with the Intel Core2 Duo processor. The graphics were admittedly more life-like and the frame rate on the AMD system was between 40 and 45 frames per second, compared to Intel's 17 to 22 frames per second. Of course, since Santa Rosa has yet to be tested, these numbers aren't really an apples-to-apples comparison.

While both 802.11n and Draft-N do not have finalized standards just yet, AMD professed to have been compatible with both for six months. The next-generation wireless standard is said to be far more powerful and efficient than 802.11g.

"The idea is that we can put more devices on the home network, serve them with a higher throughput, and provide a better experience," said Clint Brown, director of business development for Broadcom. "With our 802.11n on an AMD platform, you can see there is a 20-fold improvement in terms of transfer time for multimedia content versus 802.11g."

Broadcom representative Rich Ybarra showed a demo of an Apple TV box streaming content to a flat screen TV, while two laptops streamed real-time online video and a Nintendo Wii ran online, all from the same 802.11n router.

AMD also emphasized the company's focus on Windows Vista compatibility.

"3D is even more important for Windows Vista," Moorhead said. "AMD recommends a discreet graphics card for the ultimate experience. In the Vista world, it becomes even more important to make sure that users get branded graphics. What this does is provide a much more satisfying

experience to the end user."

When asked how Vista's increased emphasis on graphics taxes the power efficiency of the chip, AMD reps seemed nonplussed.

"Certainly Vista is consuming more power but we have been very focused on introducing more power-efficient technologies via the 65-nanometer process, as well as the wireless solutions," said Bahr Mahony, director of product marketing for AMD. "We're able to deliver an additional hour of battery life over our previous-generation platforms."

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