

nVidia's Newest Mobile GPU Gems

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The GeForce 8M discrete graphics solutions should help laptop users to optimize their Centrino Duo experience.

You've seen the GeForce 8M graphics work wonders on the desktop side; now feast your eyes on what it can do on the mobile side.

It's hardly a coincidence that nVidia is launching its new graphics series with Intel's newest Centrino Duo platform, based on the fact that many PC makers will begin bundling discrete options to maximize their gaming and high-definition performance. One highlight is DirectX 10 support.

If you're one of the lucky ones to see some of the latest gaming demos with DX10, you'll realize how compelling this is for games. Another highlight is AES128 encryption on the GPU. Also known as HDCP support, it lets you play back copy-protected Blu-ray and HD DVD titles on a PC. Additionally, you'll see 50% performance gains over the previous GeForce 7 series, according to nVidia.

The company is also updating its next generation PureVideo HD, which throttles CPU utilization down to practically nothing when playing back your high definition content. nVidia's been pounding the benefits of PureVideo HD in my head for a while now. Its main benefit is offloading the majority of the decoding work from the CPU to the graphics processing unit (GPU). This includes commonly used HD codecs such as VC1, MPEG2, and H.264. I should also note that this latest version of PureVideo HD is compatible with Windows Vista only.

This is a big step for nVidia, given that there's a lack of optimized Vista drivers out there in the graphics industry. For gamers especially, the hurdle is getting graphics performance even to the level of Windows XP.

Most laptops will use one of five flavors from the 8M series, starting from the lowest: The GeForce 8400M G, 8400M GS, 8400M GT, 8600M GS, and 8600M GT will begin to populate laptops starting this summer. nVidia is also announcing several Quadro cards on the workstation and business side. One of them, the nVidia Quadro NVS 140M, is featured on the Lenovo Thinkpad T61 Widescreen .

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