New computer does Windows 3,000 times faster

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The most powerful Windows-based computer in Europe is being installed in Sweden's Umeå University. Nicknamed "Akka", the supercomputer incorporates IBM Power microprocessors, Cell Broadband Engines and Intel processors and is about 3,000 times faster than the average laptop. It is expected to handle some 46 trillion calculations per second, putting it among the top 50 fastest computers in the world.

The new machine, housed in High Performance Computing Center North (HPC2N), will be used for basic as well as applied research. It runs two operating systems – Windows and Linux – in what is known as a dual-boot design.

"This new system brings supercomputing to new users and new application areas", said Professor Bo Kågström at Umeå University and director of HPC2N. "This is the first supercomputer in Sweden with both Linux and Windows operating systems. It will be very exciting to see how new results can be achieved by combining and utilizing these different hardware and operating systems."

HPC2N is a consortium of universities and research institutes in northern Sweden, housed at Umeå University.

The system requires less electricity to run and cool than other supercomputer designs that connect clusters of "PC-style" processors.

"IBM is developing all new supercomputer packages to bring energy-efficient designs to new industries," said Dave Jursik, VP of supercomputer sales for IBM. "Working with Intel and Microsoft we can create powerful cluster solutions that address the growing needs of researchers such as the scientists in Sweden."

Source: IBM

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