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## AMD talks up DirectX 11, ultrathin notebooks

Says DX11 graphics cards will be available before Christmas

by Duncan Geere published on 8 July 2009

AMD, which demonstrated its new DirectX 11 graphics chips last month at Computex, has been talking to Pocket-lint about the technology, when its cards will be available to buy, about the notebook market and about battery life on PCs.

Microsoft's DirectX technology is a collection of graphics and audio APIs, and version 11 is just around the corner - due at the same time as Windows 7. However, it needs both software and hardware support.

AMD will be releasing its next generation of graphics cards, which will be able to take advantage of DirectX 11's new tessellation, multi-threading and compute shader, in time for Christmas. So if you're labouring under an ancient graphics card, and want to play games, then it might be a good time to upgrade.

Even if you don't play a lot of games, AMD's DirectX 11 drivers will let you transcode in Windows, without having to worry about formats, codecs or resolutions. Pocket-lint was shown a demo of a file being dragged to a PSP's hard drive, and transcoded automatically to the right format.

"We like to hide the tech and create immersive realism", said Richard Huddy, Developer Relations Manager for AMD, claiming that the transcoding is also quicker - 3x quicker than using the CPU. He says you'll be able to transcode an hour-long video in 20 minutes.

Leslie Sobon, AMD's VP of Product and Platform Marketing was also present, and we took the opportunity to have a little chat about how AMD sees the future of the notebook market, especially as rival Intel's Atom processor is proving popular



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in netbooks.

"There's a place for netbooks - a limited part of the market", said Sobon. She outlined what AMD thinks will be more popular in the next few years - ultra-thin, portable, notebooks that are pitched a little higher than the average netbook, but below the likes of the the Macbook Air and Dell Adamo.

Sobon also spoke about notebook battery life. AMD noticed late last year that some retailers were using a bit of software called MobileMark07 - long a benchmark within the industry - to inform consumers about battery life.

AMD was alarmed by this, because it doesn't represent a "real use scenario", said Sobon. It runs the CPU at about 7%, dims the screen and turns off Wi-Fi. Instead, AMD is pushing retailers to adopt the 3DMark06 software when conducting battery tests, which simulates more of an active use scenario - 47% processor use, with all features turned on.

Lastly, we asked them about Google's Chrome OS plans, and how they thought it'd affect the notebook sector. Noting Windows' dominance, Sobon told Pocket-lint that the company thinks competition is a good thing and that it's "very interested in alternative OSes".