



Lakeport chipsets 945/955 to receive ADAT audio capability

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San Francisco (CA) - The upcoming 945/955 chipsets for the Intel's dual-core processors will bring a significant upgrade of audio integration. The platform's audio capability will be extended from PCM and AC3 of the 915 to PCM, AC3 and ADAT in the second quarter of this year. The format will be offered in the framework of Intel's Audio Studio 2 software (IAS 2) and offer full 7.1 channel audio (seven channels plus one channel line-out) as well as audio output that is upconverted from 16 to 24 bit and a provided dynamic range of 144 dB.

Intel claims that ADAT will bring professional audio quality especially to Entertainment PCs (EPC) that are equipped with dual-core processors. The system was demonstrated in combination with a prototype ADAT receiver from Sonic Focus, that Intel may recommend to system partners as add-on to future EPCs. The demonstrated prototype receiver, dubbed "Lightdrive", supported 24-bit audio upconversion and provided an output of 180 watts per channel. We were not able to review the system, but its immediately clear even to untrained ears that the device provided a much more lively music and movie experience than a 5.1 channel audio system.

Sonic Focus and Intel did not go into details about availability and pricing of the Lightdrive system, mentioned however that talks with system builders are underway. The receiver is planned to appear in various versions ranging from entry-level systems to high-end devices. When it comes to market, we expect several product versions in a range from about \$300 to more than \$1500.



Intel sees the Lightdrive device as another selling point for an EPC. Obviously, Intel does not intend to stop with DVR and picture management functionality for the EPC. The prototype is a signal that the company has its eyes on all entertainment electronics and in this case will go after the receiver market.