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AMD's Fusion Chip
Aims High at The IGP
Market
The Web

[AMD's Fusion Chip Aims High](#)

The mobile computing market is directly targeted

The idea behind AMD's Fusion chip, a combination between a central processing unit and graphics processing chip, is certainly nothing new as Advanced Micro Devices touted this approach for sometime now but until this moment there is no palpable product and the first chips are expected only in the last part of 2008 or early 2009. By combining the central processing unit and the GPU in a single silicon die, AMD could stir some pretty big waves as the company would then have a definitive advantage over the mobile computing market that does not require high graphics capabilities and it is more interested at the moment in increasing battery life and better compatibility between the hardware components. The new thing about the Fusion chip is that according to the news site [beyond3d](#) at an Australian tech show an AMD spokesperson said that the total graphics performance offered by Fusion will be comparable with today's middle to high end discrete graphics cards. On the cost side, the same person said that its cost will be only a little higher than the medium cost of integrated graphics solutions that are now found in mobile computers. When considering the performance and cost differences between mobile and desktop oriented graphics cards and while thinking about the low performance offered by most integrated graphics solutions for the mobile market, AMD's promise to deliver so much performance in an integrated graphics package seems a little surprising, to say the least. The promised middle to high end graphics performance is in fact a huge range and when talking about the cards of 2007 from the 2009 perspective, we will see that in fact AMD promises to integrate the capabilities of today's high end graphics card into the Fusion chip, as the now high end graphics card will be most probable just a low to middle level card over almost two years. Considering that today an AMD/ATI medium graphics solution is based on the Radeon HD 2600 Pro GPU and that a high end graphics card integrates the ATI Radeon HD 2900XT, Fusion's performance level should oscillate somewhere between those two cards. Considering once more that we are talking here about an integrated graphics solution, please allow me to be just a little pessimistic about the performance level that can be squeezed out of such a chip, even if it sits right next to a powerful central processing unit. While I personally like very much the idea of having to pay only a small premium over the quite low price of an integrated graphics solution and still enjoy a high 3D performance, it remains to be seen just how well AMD's Fusion will perform. If the company's claims are only accurate by half, the Fusion chip will still be something to behold as it may find itself a nice and quite niche on the mobile computing market and strongly compete with lower level discrete graphics solutions which are kind of expensive and have a relatively low level of performance.