

By [Bogdan Rezatu](#), Hardware Editor

## [Sapphire Radeon HD 3850 Takes Back the AGP Slot](#)

*Those who won't quit using older motherboards can now enjoy the 3000 series*

It looks like highly-performing graphics cards are reserved to the users who take it seriously when it comes to investing huge amounts of money. It may seem logical for these state-of-the-art graphics adapters to sit on next-generation motherboards, yet there are technology nostalgics that would like to get the best out of their GPU while sticking to their vintage motherboard featuring an AGP slot. Sapphire has unveiled the world's first DirectX 10.1 graphics card to connected via a legacy AGP interface. The Radeon 3850 comes with 512 MB of onboard memory clocked at a dazzling speed of 1700 MHz. The graphics processor is clocked at 700 MHz and has a thermal envelope of 95 watts. Sapphire and Powercooler have rigged this AGP version with a six-pin power connector, just like the one found on PCI-Express graphics cards. The power connector is necessary, as the AGP slot can only deliver 50 watts of effective power, so a 4-pin connector won't be able to fuel the card's power requirements. A dual 4-pin external supply (as those present in the GeForce 6800 Ultra models ) won't justify its efficiency, so the manufacturer decided to go on with the 6-pin connector that can deliver up to 75W. Sapphire is also shipping an adapter with the AGP version of the video card for those whose power source does not feature the necessary connector. The AGP graphics board is powered by a normal, fully functional HD 3850 GPU, with 64 5-way superscalar shader units for a total of 320 stream processors. The graphics card also features an internal 512-bit ring bus memory architecture (256-bit external) to go with AMD's advanced power management architecture. The included Unified Video Decoder enables full hardware accelerated decode for H.264 and VC-1 video streams, while the pair of dual-link DVI connectors to support HDCP allows the user connect the PC to a high-definition TV-set. It seems that "AGP's not dead", but take extra care when fitting the video card into the slot, in order to avoid the final "Now it is".