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Tukwila Servers Expected in 2009

Intel's Itanium lineup is to receive a new member

Intel, the leading manufacturer of processors, plans to ship a quad-core version of its server-oriented Itanium processors. The new processors, which are code-named Tukwila, are expected to become available to vendors later this year, with the first servers built using this chip to arrive in early 2009. The new Tukwila is expected to double the performance rates of its current dual core version of Itanium. They are to bring a 30MB of on-chip cache memory and will use Intel's QuickPath Interconnect technology. This feature should considerably increase server performances. Although there's no official statement revealing the technical specifications of the new chip, Tukwila is said to be manufactured using a 65nm processor, one step better than the current Itanium. Intel's Itanium processors are designed to satisfy the performance needs of high-end servers running large databases, data warehouses, and transaction-heavy business applications. Hewlett-Packard is the biggest integrator of the Itanium processors but servers built on this chip are also available at Fujitsu, NEC and others. These vendors are expected to feature the new chip, upon release, in their server products. According to an IDC report, the number of Itanium systems sold climbed to 36 percent in the fourth quarter, compared to the same period the year before. This increase in the number of sold products is mainly due to the system servers being made available in Europe and the Asia Pacific region. Still, Intel's current Itanium is no match for the performance achieved by IBM and Sun's current RISC processors. With Tukwila, Intel expects to rise to the challenge of offering a solid competitor. Microsoft has shown a considerable interest in Intel's Itanium, as the processor provides a hardware platform for its own server-based software solution. This is the reason why Microsoft has started a campaign trying to persuade financial institutions that its solution provides a reliable low-cost alternative to mainframes.