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Subject: Re: IDL and Macs. Speed is not only about squared roots  
Posted by [Karl Schultz](#) on Fri, 14 Jul 2006 15:20:46 GMT  
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On Fri, 14 Jul 2006 06:26:22 -0700, jgc wrote:

> Hi,  
>  
>> You mention input and output. What exactly do you mean?  
>  
> You described it:  
>  
>> If you're chucking lots of data to and from the disk I'd expect a  
>> laptop to be slower than a desktop regardless of cpu speed, as the  
>> disks are slower in laptops generally (and Mac Minis too).  
>  
> You are right, sorry I forgot to mention that both are laptops, that's  
> why I was surprised to see such a big difference

Disk drives can influence results like these in surprising ways. See:

<http://www.macintouch.com/imaintel/bench.html>

There is a discussion there about how using a Western Digital drive vs a Maxtor resulted in some significant differences in a benchmark. If the test being discussed here does significant disk I/O, the disk itself may account for the observations.

It gets really hard to talk about benchmarks without getting into a lot of detail. Sometimes I wish TimeTest3 didn't have the disk test in it. Yes, I know you can turn it off with an option, but few people do. And I know it is there to try to simulate a more realistic test environment. But sometimes a huge difference in the disk subsystem can overwhelm the CPU results and then when you get an answer you don't expect, you have to drill down to the next level of detail and find out which tests in TT3 are slower or faster, and so on.

>> The fairest test is going to be running the same program on an Intel OS  
>> X machine, and the same machine booted into Windows.  
>  
> I might search for one, and let you know the results.

I'd love to see those results too. We have a machine here that could boot both. I even remembered to repartition the hard drive to make room :-). But I just have not gotten around to installing Windows yet.

Karl

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