
Subject: Re: MacTel

Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 18:02:49 GMT

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Ken Mankoff wrote:

> I've just heard that Mac will be moving from PPC to x86 chips in the
> next few years. I'm not sure what this means for IDL on Mac. Any
> thoughts from RSI or anyone else?

Are you Mac guys making room for the water-cooled MacTel behemoths that will grace your desk? I kid, sort of. I read that Apple will start with the Pentium M's which are much cooler. And now that Intel has all but scuppered IPF (Itanic) and moved much of these engineers back to x86 Intel is moving beyond the netbust debacle and delivering the processors Apple wants.

The traditional Intel-Microsoft-Dell triumvirate is breaking down and there are many reasons for Intel to invest heavily in OS X. Microsoft has stumbled with longhorn and the hardware makers are looking for the software that will entice (force) users to upgrade. Maybe they will invest in developing drivers? And then there are the legions of Windows users looking for a reason to defect...

But this doesn't really change the landscape, does it? I mean, without program W running on OS X user Y won't give up his windoZe. And with Dell and Microsoft bringing AMD into the love fest I see no end in the ability of Dell to deliver perfectly adequate if lifeless PC's to the indiscriminating masses at commodity prices. The wildcard will be Lenovo but even if they cut the bottom out from under Dell it is hard to say how this will better position Apple in the market.

As far as IDL on OS X is concerned it's hard to say (this is comp.lang.idl-pvwave, isn't it?) The next 18-24 months will be difficult as Apple transitions. I don't think anyone is going to run IDL using the binary translation layer so what does RSI do? We know they are reticent to support IDL on the OS X PPC architecture. Now are they going to support both? I think we can only hope that the claims that most applications can be recompiled in a few hours with just "minor tweaks" are true.

You have to wonder what the Macatistas are thinking. Some of the cachet of the Mac platform was it's mysterious RISC based PPC architecture. Now you guys will be so ordinary. :) And <gasp> what if you could walk into your local apple store and buy a copy of OS X to run on your home built x86 PC? Then how would you discern yourself from the slobbering masses? You say it won't happen... And they said OS X would never run on x86 too.

Apple has ~18 months until Microsoft delivers Longhorn. 18 months to convince developers to "switch" to yet another platform. 18 months to convince users to "switch" to an arguably better OS. 18 months. It's a fine day in the soap opera that is the industry.

And Mac IDL users hold their breath.

-r

Subject: Re: MacTel
Posted by [btt](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 18:10:14 GMT
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Rick Towler wrote:

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> Ken Mankoff wrote:
>
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> And Mac IDL users hold their breath.
>

Will the new Macs be Big Endian, Little Endian or a bit of both?
Perhaps Blendian?

Ben

Subject: Re: MacTel
Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 19:44:26 GMT
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Ben Tupper wrote:

> Rick Towler wrote:
>
>>
>> Ken Mankoff wrote:
>>
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>>
>
> Will the new Macs be Big Endian, Little Endian or a bit of both? Perhaps
> Blendian?

He heee. Little endian. Which should drive some developers mad...

-r

Subject: Re: MacTel
Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 19:50:38 GMT
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>> Will the new Macs be Big Endian, Little Endian or a bit of both?
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>
>
> He heee. Little endian. Which should drive some developers mad...

Little Indian already drives us developers mad.

-Mike

Subject: Re: MacTel
Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 19:52:58 GMT
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> Little Indian already drives us developers mad.

The other thing that drives us developers mad is when your spell checker replaces "Endian" with "Indian" right before you post to a newsgroup.
Stupid spell checker. *grumble*

-Mike

Subject: Re: MacTel
Posted by [K. Bowman](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 20:04:57 GMT
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In article <d84ngk\$9f\$1@news.nems.noaa.gov>,
Rick Towler <rick.towler@nomail.noaa.gov> wrote:

- > As far as IDL on OS X is concerned it's hard to say (this is
- > comp.lang.idl-pvwave, isn't it?) The next 18-24 months will be
- > difficult as Apple transitions. I don't think anyone is going to run
- > IDL using the binary translation layer so what does RSI do? We know they
- > are reticent to support IDL on the OS X PPC architecture. Now are they
- > going to support both? I think we can only hope that the claims that
- > most applications can be recompiled in a few hours with just "minor
- > tweaks" are true.

Since the OS X version is basically the Unix version (i.e., runs from the command line under X Windows) the port should be straightforward, if not trivial. It is not so much an OS X application as a FreeBSD application. ;-)
Altivec optimizations will need to be replaced with sorta-equivalent Intel optimizations, but maybe the compiler will take care of that.

- > You have to wonder what the Macatistas are thinking. Some of the cachet
- > of the Mac platform was it's mysterious RISC based PPC architecture.
- > Now you guys will be so ordinary. :) And <gasp> what if you could walk
- > into your local apple store and buy a copy of OS X to run on your home
- > built x86 PC? Then how would you discern yourself from the slobbering
- > masses? You say it won't happen... And they said OS X would never run
- > on x86 too.

Apple said yesterday that OS X will not run on generic PC hardware, although how they will accomplish that has yet to be revealed. Apple is still mostly a hardware company and can't afford to lose their hardware business.

The new machines may have Pentia inside, but they will still *look* cooler than wintel machines outside. ;-)
(And still cost more, no doubt.)

It has been an open secret that Apple has maintained a parallel x86 version of OS X.

- > Apple has ~18 months until Microsoft delivers Longhorn. 18 months to
- > convince developers to "switch" to yet another platform. 18 months to
- > convince users to "switch" to an arguably better OS. 18 months. It's a
- > fine day in the soap opera that is the industry.

I think this will be tough on Apple. In the face of uncertainty, I don't plan to buy any more PPC-based machines. We'll get by with what we have for the next couple of years until we see how this all falls out.

- > And Mac IDL users hold their breath.

I'm not worried yet, but RSI is about as transparent as Apple.

Ken Bowman
