

ac3 Supercomputer Breaks the Teraflop Barrier

Sydney, Wednesday, October 8, 2003 - Australia's newest and most powerful supercomputer - supplied by Dell and running on Intel technology - has broken the computing world's version of the sound barrier by performing more than a trillion calculations per second.

Each calculation is called a flop, with a trillion amounting to a teraflop, the kind of computing power that a consortium of five New South Wales universities will use to conduct advanced scientific research and computational modelling.

The density and power of the supercomputer is provided by a cluster of 155 Dell PowerEdge™ 1750 dual Intel Xeon processor nodes, each with 2 Gbyte of memory and running the Linux operating system.

The system is housed at the Australian Centre for Advanced Computing and Communications (ac3) at the Australian Technology Park in Sydney.

University of Technology Sydney Professor of Mathematics, Lindsay Botten said the supercomputer established a new benchmark for sustained computing power at 1.07 teraflops.

"This added power will be a tremendous boost to the work being carried out at the Centre and assist with the development of the national Computational Grid", Professor Botten said.

ac3 CEO Dr Philip McCrea said purchase of the supercomputer earlier this year was assisted by a grant from the Australian Research Council, together with funding from UTS, Sydney University, University of New South Wales, Macquarie University, and University of Wollongong.

"Access to such a powerful resource will make a tremendous contribution to a diverse range of research projects which include development of new photonic technology, new microwave technologies, modelling of the effects of land cover changes, the design of new drugs, and improved mobile communication reception," Dr McCrea said.

"We chose a fully integrated and warranted system from a trusted supplier, to ensure our users can have confidence that their innovative research is undertaken on a reliable platform," Dr McCrea added. "We also knew Dell would be able to customise the technology as needed and provide flexible service and support at great value."

David Miller, Managing Director for Dell Australia and New Zealand said, "Dell is extremely pleased to be a part of the ground-breaking research performed by the ac3 cluster. We are developing modular solutions for high performance computing communications (HPCC) that provide top performance and address practical issues such as space, power, cost and deployment."

General Manager of Intel Australia and New Zealand, David Bolt said he was delighted that ac3 had selected a solution based on Intel processor technology. He said, "ac3 is undertaking some of the most advanced, compute-intensive research taking place in Australia - it's exciting to know that the power and cost effectiveness of a standards-based Intel hardware cluster is playing an integral role in making that research possible."

About ac3

ac3 was established in 2000 with seed funding from the NSW Government and eight NSW universities. The company provides advanced computing services to NSW industry, commerce, government and academia by providing managed co-location services and operating supercomputers in its secure data centre at the Australian Technology Park at Redfern. Information on ac3 can be obtained at www.ac3.com.au

About Dell

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