

Next-Generation NVIDIA Codenames Revealed

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Friday, 09 November 2007

Source : DayliTech

Get ready for an avalanche of new NVIDIA products

NVIDIA's GeForce 8800 GT might be one of the best performance-per-dollar cards since the Radeon 9800, but things are moving fast at NVIDIA and there's a lot more on the way from the company between now and next Summer.

Over the last quarter, the company moved away from the old "Gx" designation for its core names, instead opting to switch to a more descriptive system. NVIDIA's new codenames follow:

- D8M: Eighth generation mainstream, previously named G98
- D8P: Eighth generation performance, previously named G92
- D9M: Ninth generation mainstream
- D9P: Ninth generation performance
- D9E: Ninth generation enthusiast

GeForce 8800 GT, codenamed G92 and D8P, stole the majority of the headlines last week. GeForce 8800 GT, the 112 stream processor sub-titan, became NVIDIA's first 65nm processor design. However, NVIDIA's dark horse was really the revision on GeForce 8800 GTS SSC.

GeForce 8800 GTS SSC, as it's awkwardly called, is essentially identical to the GeForce 8800 GTS based on the 90nm G80 core. However, where typical 8800 GTS components only enables 96 of the 128 stream processors of the G80 core, the 8800 GTS SSC enables 112 stream processors -- the same number featured on the GeForce 8800 GT.

And yet in December, GeForce 8800 GTS is expected to undergo another revision as the company moves from the 90nm G80 core to the 65nm D8P. Vendors will introduce 112 stream processor and 128 stream processor revisions on D8P, which even further convolutes the corporate guidance put forth just a week ago.

NVIDIA will continue to cannibalize the GeForce 8000 series as it moves to 65nm silicon across the board. GeForce 8400 will likely be the first to go before the end of the year, as the G86 design is replaced by the 65nm D8M silicon, which was previously called G98.

As 2007 comes to a close, the company will ramp production on ninth-generation components to replace the eighth-generation 65nm parts, D8x. Sound familiar? It should, as NVIDIA is almost exactly replicating Intel's tick-tock strategy of alternate cycles of design and shrink.

Early NVIDIA roadmaps claim D9M, the first ninth-generation NVIDIA component, will replace the GeForce 8500-series lineup. There's no retail designation for these D9x parts, but it would be a safe bet to say these will be the GeForce 9xxx-series cards.

D9M will add PCIe 2.0 support, DirectX 10.1, wider memory controllers (up to 128-bits) and will be based on a 65nm silicon. D9P, the likely 8600-series replacement, adds the same features as D9M, but the memory controller width will top out at 256-bits.

D9E, the enthusiast component slated to replace the GeForce 8800-series, will incorporate all of the features of D9P and add a 512-bit memory bus. NVIDIA is holding its cards close on D9E, and has not provided any other guidance or release date.