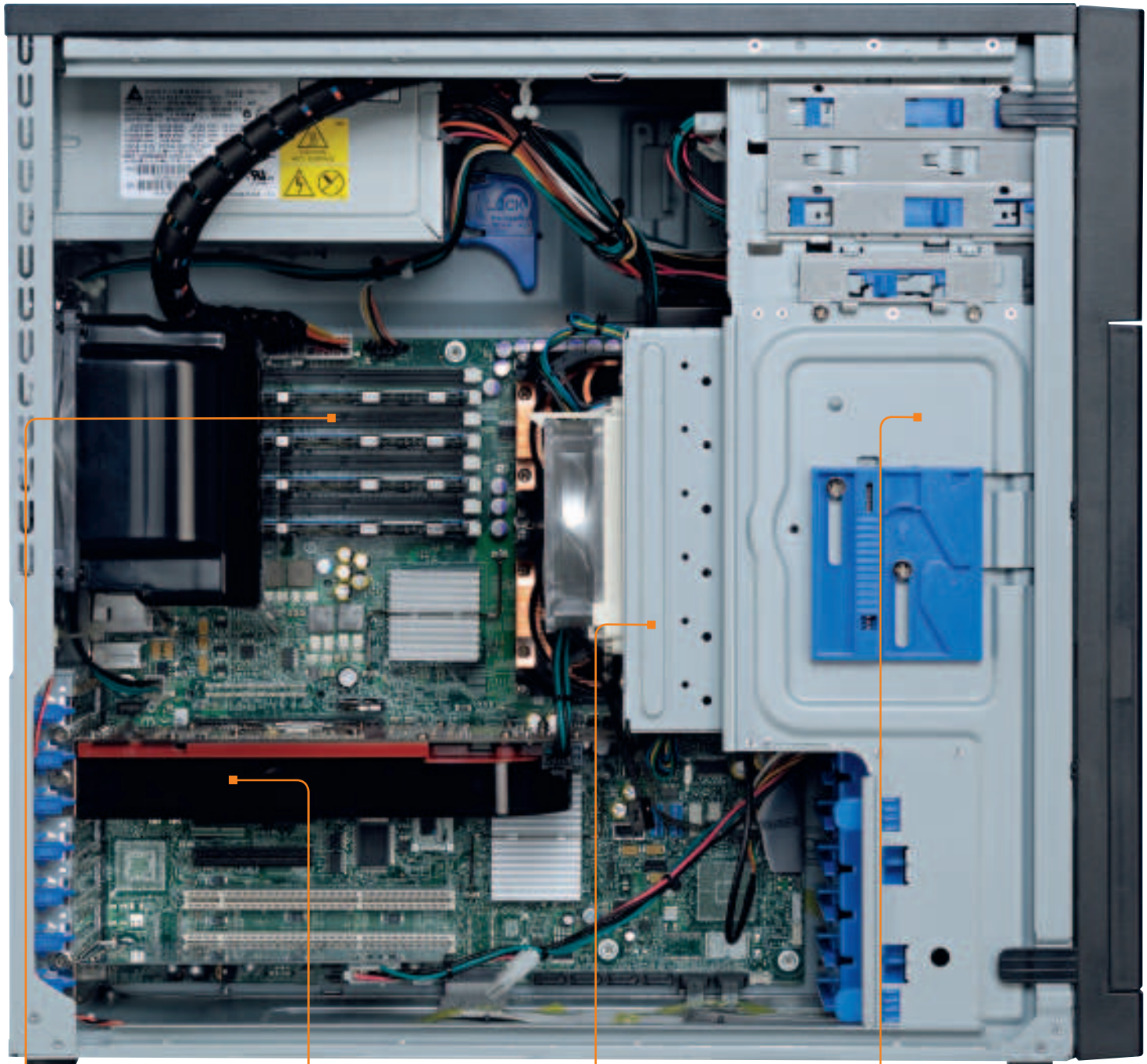


REVIEWS

HARDWARE / SOFTWARE / TRAINING



01 Memory
The 8GB of DDR2 RAM in this configuration makes a 64-bit operating system more appropriate: Windows XP Pro x64 is provided

02 Graphics card
The use of a FireGL V7600 (see full review, page 96) keeps the workstation cost down without compromising performance

03 Processors
Two Intel Xeon X5355 chips run in parallel inside the X20i-64, providing eight cores of computational power in total

04 Hard disks
The configuration uses a 10,000rpm 150GB disk for superior OS performance and a second 7,200rpm 750GB disk for data storage



DETAILS

PRICE

• £2,395 / \$4,891* / €3,333*

*Currency conversion

PLATFORM

Windows XP Pro x64

MAIN FEATURES

- 2 x Intel Xeon X5355 processors
- 512MB ATI FireGL V7600 graphics card
- 8GB 667MHz DDR2 RAM
- Intel S5000XVNSATA motherboard
- 150GB 10,000rpm SATA hard disk
- 750GB 7,200rpm SATA II hard disk
- Three-year warranty
- Other configurations available

MANUFACTURER

Xworks Interactive

WEBSITE

www.xworksinteractive.com

RELATED PRODUCTS

- *ERA HP xw8400*
Reviewed: Issue 95
- *CAD2 Imagine DQX*
Reviewed: Issue 95

Xworks X20i-64

AMD's new FireGL V7600 has made it out into the wild, and Xworks is one of the first manufacturers to put it to good use in this updated workstation **BY ALAN DEXTER**

Computer manufacturers can't be seen to be caught napping. Anyone building PCs must be ready to leap on the latest technologies and put them to work. This is exactly what Xworks has done here, updating its existing X20i-64 workstation to favour the latest release from AMD, the ATI FireGL V7600 graphics card (full review, page 96).

AMD has had a hard time matching Nvidia in the consumer graphics card market, but an R600 core used as a workstation engine is a different beast to its gaming-oriented counterpart, and proves its worth here. The X20i-64's performance is strong across the board: while AMD was a little slow in releasing the 64-bit drivers for this card, we had no problems with compatibility or stability.

The card packs 512MB of GDDR4 RAM into its large two-slot frame, which is less than the 768MB of Nvidia's Quadro FX 4600. This is not a fair comparison, though, as the V7600 is a more budget-conscious graphics solution, and that's certainly a major factor in this configuration's competitive pricing. If we were to have a criticism of the card, it would be that it erred on the noisy side when under full load, but documentation provided by Xworks indicates that our unit was an early test board, so this should be fixed in commercial machines. It's a strong card that fills an obvious gap in both AMD's line-up and, more importantly, the affordable professional graphics market.

Graphics aside, this specification is reminiscent of the machine that we looked at in issue 95's group test, which had the

same name. A highlight then, and still a positive point now, was the excellent processing offered by a pair of Intel Xeon X5355 processors. With a total of eight processing cores combined, each running at 2.67GHz and packing 4MB of L2 cache, these chips handle serious computation without breaking into a noisy sweat. This explains the healthy *Cinebench 10* results, and one of the highest *3DMark06* CPU indexes we've seen.

Even better news is that Xworks will be offering free upgrades to the higher-performance E5430 processors in place of the X5355s as supplies become available.

This core is married to a healthy 8GB of ECC DDR2 RAM running on a 667MHz bus, providing plenty of room for the 64-bit version of Windows XP Pro that comes pre-installed as



THE UPDATED CONFIGURATION IS AN IMPRESSIVE MACHINE. THE SPECIFICATION IS EXCELLENT

standard. Storage has had something of an upgrade from the previous machine too: the OS is held on a 150GB Western Digital drive that spins at 10,000rpm, while a 7,200rpm 750GB drive stores your data.

Overall, this updated configuration of the X20i-64 is an impressive machine. The specification is excellent, the build quality is spot-on, yet somehow Xworks has managed to produce the X20i-64 at almost a thousand pounds less than some similarly performing peers. ●

VERDICT

PROS

- Great CPU configuration
- Generous RAM
- Excellent graphics performance

CONS

- Potentially immature ATI drivers

SPECIFICATIONS

VALUE FOR MONEY

OVERALL

9

9

9

BENCHMARKS (Higher scores are better)

3DMARK06		CINEBENCH R10			SPECVIEWPERF 10							
OVERALL	CPU INDEX	RENDERING (1 CPU)	RENDERING (X CPUs)	OPENGL STANDARD	3DMAX-04	CATIA-02	ENSIGHT-03	MAYA-02	PROE-04	SW-01	TCVIS-01	UGNX-01
9.972	5.947	3.045	18.489	5.897	23.94	24.72	41.6	204.11	21.39	48.61	18.98	43.75