**COMPUTER PROCESSOR: INTEL CORE VERSUS AMD PROCESSORS**

**ABUBAKAR MUHAMMAD**

**(ST/CS/ND/21/040)**

**A SEMINAR PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE, SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC MUBI, ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA**

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**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF NATIONAL DIPLOMA (ND) IN COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**AUGUST, 2023**

**Abstract**

*The CPU market is dominated by two major players, Intel and AMD, each offering a wide range of processors with distinct features and capabilities. This review explores the advantages and disadvantages of Intel and AMD processors, highlighting their respective strengths in single-core and multi-core performance, power efficiency, integrated graphics, software optimization, and pricing. While Intel has historically excelled in single-core performance and enjoys extensive software optimization, AMD processors have gained ground in multi-core performance, power efficiency, and competitive pricing, particularly with their Zen architecture. The technology landscape is continually evolving, and recent advancements by both companies have intensified the competition. The abstract concludes with recommendations for consumers, urging them to consider their specific needs, research recent benchmarks and reviews, and evaluate future-proofing and budget considerations when choosing between Intel and AMD processors. A well-informed decision will ensure users obtain the best CPU to meet their computing requirements.*

**Keywords**: CPU, processor, Intel processors, AMD processors, Single-core performance, Multi-core performance, Power efficiency

**Introduction**

A Microprocessor is an electronic device that does the function of a computer’s central processing unit (CPU) on a single Integrated Circuit (IC) or at most a few integrated circuits. A microprocessor is a programmable device that accepts data in digital form and processes it according to the instructions stored in its memory unit and it provides the result as output. Microprocessors also have an internal memory and they can be used for multiple purposes (Koufaty & Upton, 2014).

The rivalry between Intel and AMD has long been a driving force in the CPU market, resulting in fierce competition that benefits consumers with cutting-edge technologies and improved performance. In this review, we will delve into the latest offerings from both companies and compare their respective strengths, weaknesses, and overall value for different use cases. Intel Core processors have historically held the upper hand in single-core performance, making them the preferred choice for tasks that heavily rely on single-threaded applications, such as gaming and certain productivity software. However, AMD's recent lineup, specifically the Ryzen series, has made significant strides in narrowing the performance gap and, in some cases, even surpassing Intel's offerings, especially in multi-core performance. Recent benchmark tests by Tom's Hardware (2022), showcased the Intel Core i9-12900K and AMD Ryzen 9 5950X going head-to-head in various applications. While Intel's i9-12900K demonstrated superior single-core performance, the Ryzen 9 5950X excelled in multi-core tasks, making it the top choice for power users and content creators.

AMD's Zen architecture has proven to be a game-changer for power efficiency, leading to CPUs that consume less power while delivering competitive performance. This advantage has allowed AMD processors to shine in laptops and portable devices, where battery life is crucial. A study conducted by AnandTech (2023), compared the power efficiency of Intel's Alder Lake-S series and AMD's Ryzen 5000 series. The results indicated that AMD's processors consumed noticeably less power under load, translating to longer battery life and cooler operation in laptops and small form factor systems.

In recent years, AMD's integrated graphics have made significant improvements, providing viable solutions for casual gamers and users who don't require a dedicated graphics card. The AMD Ryzen APUs with Vega graphics have demonstrated superior performance compared to Intel's integrated graphics. A review by TechSpot (2023), compared the AMD Ryzen 7 5700G and Intel Core i7-12700K integrated graphics. The Ryzen 7 5700G delivered better gaming performance and smoother frame rates in most titles, making it an attractive choice for budget-conscious gamers.

**Literature Review**

Intel is an abbreviation for Integrated Electronics. The American tech company and multinational corporation, Intel Corporation, has its headquarter in Santa Clara, Silicon Valley, California. Robert Noyce invented Intel. This corporation developed the Intel 8086 – the first x86 processor. On a scale of 1-10, all the Intel processors range from 4-10. Almost all of them come with iGPU, and they have a commendable CPU performance (Ami, 2019).

The Intel processors clock higher than the AMD ones- but they consume a lot higher power and cost the device longer battery life. Thus, this processor is viable for devices like laptops that need single-core boosts and short workloads where the battery life is not a primary concern. If a user wants to change the motherboard, the processor, or the socket’s compatibility in a desktop, Intel offers very few options as compared to AMD. It is due to frequent changes in the motherboard and chipset (Brooks & Bose, 2020).

AMD is an abbreviation for Advanced Micro Devices. AMD is a multinational company that is American, based in Santa Clara, California. John Carey, Jack Gifford, and Jerry Sanders invented it. This company began to supply x86 processors in the form of second-source manufacturers. They thus became the competitors of Am386. Considering a range of scale from 1-10, the AMD processors fall under the range of 5-10. They are comparatively cheaper than any Intel Processors in a similar range (Patterson, 2019).

The AMD processors are way more efficient than the current-gen Core series. The APUs of AMD are also a commendable option because they offer a great CPU performance and better iGPU performance compared to the Core i series. All the laptops that have Ryzen processors often have a lower clocking, and they are less aggressive than the laptops with Intel processors. They have longer battery life. Thus, whenever a user prefers a longer battery life and higher iGPU performance than the Core i series, the Ryzen powered laptops are a better option. Although, if you are building a new Desktop PC, you must avoid the older A-series APUs and FX series because they consume more power and produce more heat (Ramanathan, 2016).

In the case of devices like desktops and mobiles, where a person uses them for day-to-day purposes and gaming, the Ryzen APU is the best option. For some heavy tasks such as 3D modeling, video editing, and more, the Threadripper or Ryzen 7 or 9 CPUs are preferable. In the case of Ryzen AMUs and CPUs on the AM4 platform, a user needs to check the motherboard chipset for support- otherwise, the PC may not proceed to boot. But one can resolve it with motherboards that have USB BIOS flashing for their newer processors (Schaller, 2017)

**Features of Intel Processors**

Intel processors offer a range of features that cater to various computing needs, from improved multitasking with Hyper-Threading to enhanced single-core performance with Turbo Boost Technology. Additionally, features like AVX and Quick Sync Video provide added benefits for specific workloads, such as multimedia processing and content creation. Intel's dedication to innovation and integration of cutting-edge technologies continues to drive their processors' performance, making them popular choices for a wide range of users, from casual consumers to professional content creators and businesses.

**Hyper-Threading Technology**

Hyper-Threading (HT) is a key feature found in many Intel processors, enabling each physical core to handle two software threads simultaneously. This technology effectively doubles the number of available threads, improving multitasking and overall system responsiveness. Hyper-Threading has been present in Intel CPUs for several generations, and its benefits have been well-documented. Intel's Hyper-Threading technology continues to provide a performance boost in multi-threaded workloads, allowing users to run demanding applications smoothly while simultaneously handling background tasks (TechSpot, 2023).

**Turbo Boost Technology**

Intel's Turbo Boost Technology is a dynamic feature that automatically increases the clock speed of individual processor cores when there is thermal headroom and power available. This feature allows the CPU to boost its performance on-demand, providing better responsiveness in single-threaded applications and tasks that require quick bursts of processing power. Intel's Turbo Boost Technology is a nifty feature that can significantly enhance performance in single-core tasks, delivering snappy performance in everyday computing and lightly threaded applications (PCWorld, 2023).

**Advanced Vector Extensions (AVX)**

Intel's Advanced Vector Extensions (AVX) are instruction set extensions designed to accelerate performance for floating-point-intensive applications, such as scientific simulations, 3D rendering, and image processing. AVX instructions allow the processor to process larger chunks of data at a time, improving the efficiency of these applications. The inclusion of AVX instructions in Intel's processors has been a game-changer for professional users and content creators, significantly reducing rendering times and improving productivity in AVX-optimized software (AnandTech, 2023).

**Quick Sync Video**

Intel's Quick Sync Video is a hardware-based video encoding and decoding technology integrated into select Intel processors. It allows for faster and more efficient video transcoding, reducing the processing burden on the CPU when dealing with multimedia tasks. Intel's Quick Sync Video technology is a boon for video editors and content creators, as it dramatically accelerates video encoding and decoding, saving valuable time in the content production workflow (Tom's Hardware, 2022).

**Intel Optane Memory Support**

Intel's Optane Memory technology provides caching capabilities, allowing users to accelerate the performance of traditional hard drives. By storing frequently accessed data in an Optane Memory module, the system can access that data more quickly, resulting in improved overall system responsiveness. Intel's Optane Memory has proven to be an effective solution for users looking to boost the performance of their systems without resorting to costly full SSD upgrades, as it significantly accelerates storage responsiveness (AnandTech, 2023).

**Features of AMD Processors**

AMD processors boast a range of features that cater to diverse computing needs, with their multi-core architecture, Precision Boost technologies, and integrated Radeon graphics providing compelling advantages for different user scenarios. Additionally, AMD's focus on innovative technologies like Infinity Fabric and StoreMI further enhances their processors' performance and overall value. These features have solidified AMD's position as a strong competitor in the CPU market, appealing to various user segments, including gamers, content creators, and budget-oriented consumers.

**Multi-Core Architecture with Simultaneous Multithreading (SMT)**

AMD processors, especially those based on the Zen architecture, are known for their multi-core design and efficient multithreading capabilities. With Simultaneous Multithreading (SMT), each physical core can handle two threads simultaneously, resulting in improved multitasking and parallel processing performance. The AMD Ryzen processors' multi-core performance, especially when combined with Simultaneous Multithreading, provides a significant advantage in multi-threaded workloads and content creation tasks (TechSpot, 2023).

**Precision Boost and Precision Boost Overdrive (PBO)**

AMD's Precision Boost dynamically adjusts the clock speeds of individual cores based on workload demands, providing optimal performance in various tasks. Precision Boost Overdrive (PBO) takes this further, allowing compatible motherboards to boost clock speeds even higher for improved performance under specific conditions. AMD's Precision Boost and Precision Boost Overdrive technologies enable Ryzen processors to automatically adapt to different workloads, delivering a performance boost when needed while maintaining power efficiency (AnandTech, 2023)

**Radeon Graphics (APUs)**

AMD's Ryzen APUs come with integrated Radeon Vega graphics, making them attractive choices for budget-conscious users and small form factor systems. These APUs offer decent gaming performance and multimedia capabilities without the need for a separate dedicated graphics card. The integrated Radeon graphics found in AMD's Ryzen APUs provide a cost-effective solution for casual gamers and HTPC builders, offering playable frame rates in popular titles at lower settings (PCWorld, 2023).

**Infinity Fabric**

AMD's Infinity Fabric is an interconnect technology that links various components within the processor, such as CPU cores, caches, and the integrated GPU. This high-speed interconnect facilitates efficient communication between different parts of the chip, enhancing overall performance and latency. AMD's adoption of Infinity Fabric in its processor architecture has allowed for efficient data communication between different components, resulting in impressive multi-core performance and lower latencies (AnandTech, 2023)

**StoreMI Technology**

AMD's StoreMI is a software feature that enables users to combine an SSD and an HDD into a single, faster virtual drive. This technology intelligently moves frequently accessed data to the faster SSD, providing the benefits of both storage types without manual data management AMD's StoreMI technology has been well-received by users looking to improve storage performance without the cost of a full SSD upgrade, offering a seamless and cost-effective solution (TechSpot, 2023)

**Differences Between Intel and AMD processors**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Parameter** | **Intel** | **AMD** |
| Cost Efficiency | Intel processors are less expensive compared to the AMD ones at the lower range. | AMD processors are less expensive compared to the Intel ones at the higher range. |
| Heating | It may heat up when someone uses it with a Clock Speed Boost of 14nm. | The AMD processor generally stays cooler than Intel due to its small lithography. The TSMC 7nm is very similar to the Intel 10nm. |
| Efficiency | Intel is way more efficient compared to AMD processors. | AMD is not very efficient as compared to the Intel processors. |
| iGPU | In the case of Intel, it has iGPU in almost all the Core i series (excluding the Core i F-series). | In the case of AMD, it has iGPU only in the AMD APU series. The GPU performance here is higher than the Intel iGPU. |
| Clock Speed | Intel’s Clock speed can reach and surpass 5.0 GHz. | AMD’s Clock speed may reach 5.0 GHz. But in this case, it produces more heat. |
| Multiprocessing capabilities | Intel possesses symmetric multiprocessing capabilities that can go up to 4 sockets/ 28 cores. | AMD possesses symmetric multiprocessing capabilities that can go up to 8 sockets/ 128 cores. |
| IPC | The Intel (Rocket Lake) IPC is lower than that of (Zen 3) AMD. | The (Zen 3) AMD IPC is higher than that of (Rocket Lake) Intel. |

**Advantages of Intel Processors over AMD processors**

Some historical advantages that Intel has had over AMD processors based on information available up to my last update. Keep in mind that the technology landscape is continually evolving, and the competitive advantages may have shifted since then.

**Strong Single-Core Performance:** Historically, Intel processors have excelled in single-core performance, making them popular choices for tasks that rely heavily on single-threaded applications, such as certain gaming scenarios and lightly-threaded software.

**Established Software Optimization:** Intel has long been the dominant player in the CPU market, and as a result, many software applications and games have been initially optimized for Intel processors. This can result in slightly better performance in certain software that takes advantage of Intel-specific optimizations.

**Availability and Market Presence:** Intel processors have been widely available in various devices, including laptops, desktops, workstations, and servers. Their strong market presence and brand recognition have made them easily accessible to consumers and businesses alike.

**Integrated Graphics in Consumer CPUs:** Intel's processors with integrated graphics (Intel HD Graphics or Intel Iris Graphics) have been better performers compared to AMD's older integrated graphics solutions. This has made Intel CPUs attractive for budget laptops and systems that don't require a dedicated graphics card.

**Extensive Product Lineup:** Intel offers a wide range of processors across different market segments, from budget-friendly options to high-end enthusiast CPUs. This variety allows consumers to find processors tailored to their specific needs and budget constraints.

**Overclocking Potential:** Historically, Intel processors have been more popular among enthusiasts for overclocking due to their higher headroom for clock speed adjustments. This has allowed users to push Intel CPUs beyond their stock frequencies for increased performance.

**Better Single-Core Gaming Performance:** Intel processors have traditionally demonstrated stronger single-core gaming performance, which can lead to higher frame rates in certain games that rely heavily on single-threaded performance. This advantage has made Intel CPUs a popular choice for gaming enthusiasts.

**Quick Sync Video:** Intel's Quick Sync Video technology is a hardware-based video encoding and decoding feature available in many Intel processors. It allows for faster video transcoding and improved multimedia performance, which can be beneficial for content creators and video editors.

**Thunderbolt Support:** Intel has been a key driver of Thunderbolt technology, a high-speed data transfer and display interface. Many Intel-based systems offer Thunderbolt support, providing users with fast data transfer and versatile connectivity options.

**Optane Memory Support:** Intel's Optane Memory is a caching technology that uses 3D XPoint memory to accelerate storage performance. When paired with a compatible storage setup, Optane Memory can enhance system responsiveness and reduce loading times.

**Proven Track Record:** Intel has a long history of producing high-quality and reliable processors. The company's track record in delivering consistent performance and stable products has instilled confidence in many consumers and businesses.

**Lower Power Consumption in Some Models:** While AMD has made strides in power efficiency, certain Intel processors have demonstrated lower power consumption, making them attractive options for energy-conscious users and laptops.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, both Intel and AMD processors offer distinct advantages and cater to various computing needs. Intel has historically excelled in single-core performance and enjoys widespread software optimization, making it an excellent choice for gaming and certain single-threaded applications. On the other hand, AMD processors, especially those based on the Zen architecture, have made significant strides in multi-core performance, power efficiency, and competitive pricing, making them attractive for productivity tasks, content creation, and budget gaming.

The technology landscape is continually evolving, and both Intel and AMD have been pushing the boundaries of CPU performance and innovation. As a result, the competitive advantage between the two companies may shift over time.

**Recommendations**

1. Identify Your Specific Needs: Before choosing between Intel and AMD processors, assess your computing needs and the types of applications you frequently use. Determine whether single-core performance, multi-core performance, power efficiency, or integrated graphics are more critical for your use cases.
2. Research Recent Benchmarks and Reviews: To make an informed decision, refer to recent benchmarks, reviews, and expert analysis from reputable hardware and technology publications. These sources will provide up-to-date comparisons and insights into the latest processor offerings from both Intel and AMD.
3. Consider Future-Proofing: When choosing a processor, consider your intended usage for the next few years. Opting for a processor with more cores and threads may provide better longevity and performance as software and applications increasingly utilize multi-core architectures.
4. Budget Considerations: Price-to-performance ratio is an essential factor to consider. AMD processors often offer better value for budget-conscious users, while Intel processors may be the preferred choice for users who prioritize single-core performance and are willing to pay a premium for it.
5. Check Compatibility: Ensure that the processor you choose is compatible with your desired motherboard and other components to avoid any compatibility issues.
6. for multiple CPUs to determine which is actually the right fit for you.

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