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Intel Runs PC on CPU Powered by Solar Cell

By IDG News Service

September 22, 2011

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Bloomberg News

Intel recently demonstrated Claremont, an experimental low-power processor the size of a postage stamp that could run PCs using solar power by dropping energy consumption to under 10 milliwatts.

Although the new processor is not expected to become a commercial product, the research could be integrated into future processors and other circuitry, says Intel's Justin Rattner.

The research is part of an Intel Labs project aimed at reducing energy consumption fivefold on chips and at bringing an always-on capability to computing devices. The Claremont chip is an experimental Pentium central processing unit and ran on a PC with the Linux operating system.

Intel has a company-wide goal of delivering 300-fold improvement in energy efficiency in high-performance computing over the next 10 years. Intel researcher Shekhar Borkar notes that about 200 watts of power are currently needed to achieve 100 gigaflops of performance, but the company wants to reduce that power requirement to just 2 watts.

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