Intel's PC Predictions

Written by Marco Attard
18 May 2011

Super slim laptops, smartphones and tablets make part of Intel's plans for the PC's "evolution"--or rather the company's position within the market, following CE Paul Otellini's talk at the company's analyst meeting.

The Financial Times reports Otellini showing a slide with a MacBook Air-like laptop while talking of a vision "similar to that of... Steve Jobs".

Otellini's future PC will obviously have higher performance, while being instant-on, permanently connected to the internet, low power, thin enough to be anorexic and touch enabled-- all while having "mainstream" prices.

The chips inside such machines? Intel wants to double the rate Moore's Law dictates in its chip development (meaning a new generation every year, as opposed to around 2 years).

Over the next 3 years Atom processors should go from "Saltwell" (32nm) to "Silvermont" (22nm) to, finally, "Airmont" (14nm).

On one investor's "blasphemous" suggestion that Intel should simply base its designs on those from Arm, Otellini insists that "The best way in these new markets is to build best-in-class chips…"

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What about the OS? Windows 8 (or 9!) in a nod to longtime Intel partner Microsoft.

Moving to more handheld devices, Otellini expresses disappointment at Nokia's abandoning Meego for Windows Phone 7 while confirming predictions that Intel-based smartphones will not appear until at least Q2 2012.

Intel's tablet plans however appear to be on track-- 35 products carrying Atom chips should appear this year. The first of such tablets run Windows, with Android and (finally) Meego offerings to follow.

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