

Dual 2.7GHz Power Mac G5



EVEN-MORE-BLAZING TOWER MAC

Apple's new dual 2.7GHz Power Mac G5 supplants the dual 2.5GHz Power Mac G5 (★★★★ Nov/04, p38) as the top-of-the-line Power Mac. In fact, the 2.5GHz dualie is no longer in Apple's product line—a dual 2.3GHz Power Mac (\$2,499), dual 2GHz Power Mac (\$1,999), and single 1.8GHz Power Mac (\$1,499) join the dual 2.7GHz Power Mac.

On the surface, the newest Power Mac G5 doesn't look any different from previous models; it still has the striking aluminum case and the same number of connectors (three USB 2.0, one FireWire 800, two FireWire 400, optical audio input and output, analog audio input and output). But it's what's inside that counts. The processors are faster, each with a 1.35GHz frontside bus. All Power Macs now come with a stock 512MB of RAM, a welcome improvement—though we still recommend you boost your RAM to at least 1GB. The stock Serial-ATA hard drive jumps from 160GB to 250GB, and the SuperDrive is now rated at 16x and can burn double-layer DVDs.

The video card, a 256MB ATI Radeon 9650 with one single-link and one dual-link DVI port, supports Apple's huge 30-inch Cinema Display (★★★★ Feb/05, p36). If you want to run a pair of the 30-inchers (and make us all very jealous), you'll need to pay \$450 to upgrade to nVidia's GeForce 6800 Ultra DDL (★★★★ Mar/05, p39).

Other internals remain essentially the same as the erstwhile 2.5GHz dualie: liquid cooling; three full-length PCI-X slots (one 133MHz 64-bit slot and two 100MHz 64-bit slots); and optional AirPort and Bluetooth—though Apple now uses Bluetooth Core Specification Version 2.0 + EDR (Enhanced Data Rate), which has better speed and improved error correction.

Speed. The dual 2.7GHz Power Mac is faster than the dual 2.5GHz Power Mac (well, duh), but the improvement

varies by task. We saw a 16 percent speed increase when performing a Photoshop CS2 Action on a 100MB file, while we only noted an eight percent increase when exporting a file to PDF in InDesign CS2. Exporting a movie in iMovie HD went 26 percent faster, and creating a DVD image in iDVD went 17 percent faster. Both Power Macs performed similarly when importing Alex Wise's *Front Porch* music CD in iTunes or running Unreal Tournament's 2004 flyby and botmatch tests. We ran all of our

No, it's not a 3GHz G5—but it's oh so close.

tests with the processor performance set to Highest in System Preferences > Energy Saver > Options.

As we mentioned earlier, the dual 2.7GHz Power Mac is liquid cooled, and our experience with this cooling system hasn't changed from its implementation in the dual 2.5GHz Power Mac. During CPU-intensive tasks, the fans make a lot of noise; you won't notice it if the Power Mac sits under your desk, but if it's on top, you may mistake a busy Power Mac for a busy municipal airport.

The bottom line. Now that Apple's upgraded its fastest Power Mac, things have only gotten better. The dual 2.7GHz Power Mac is brawny, bold, and blazing. We like it.—*Roman Loyola*



TIP **PERFORMANCE**
Setting the Processor Performance (System Preferences > Energy Saver > Options) to Highest will cause the fans to work more and use more energy, but it will also provide a dramatic performance increase over the Automatic and Reduced settings.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK MADEO



COMPANY: Apple
CONTACT: 800-795-1000 or 408-996-1010, www.apple.com
PRICE: \$2,999

SPECIFICATIONS: Dual 2.7GHz PowerPC G5 processors, 512MB DDR400 SDRAM, 512KB L2 cache, 1.35GHz frontside bus, 256MB ATI Radeon 9650, 250GB Serial-ATA hard drive, 16x double-layer SuperDrive.

GOOD NEWS: Fastest Mac ever. Can burn double-layer DVDs.
BAD NEWS: Relatively noisy.

MacAddict RATED
★★★★
GREAT