

CAD2 WSX102

» Incredibly powerful dual core workstation for CAD which gives Intel's mature Core 2 Duo processor a new lease of life

» Dual Core 'Workstation Enhanced' Intel Core 2 Duo (4.0GHz)

» 8GB RAM (4 x 2GB PC2-6400 800MHz Dual Channel)

» Intel WSX102 Motherboard

» 300GB 10,000 RPM (16MB Data Burst Cache) hard drive

» Nvidia Quadro FX 3700 graphics (512MB)

» Windows XP x64 Edition (or Windows Vista business 64-bit)

» 36 Months Full Parts & Labour System Warranty

£1,925

www.cad2.com

» Benchmarks

Graphics (bigger is better)
SolidWorks 2009 - 18
3ds Max Design 2009 - 238
Inventor 2009 - 3.9

CPU (smaller is better)
3ds Max Design - 1,236 secs

If you thought workstations were all about Intel Core i7 now, think again as CAD2's latest machine is designed to get every last drop of productivity out of Intel's long standing Core 2 Duo chip.

Taking advantage of the latest aggressive pricing on Intel's previous generation chip, CAD2 has configured the Core 2 Duo to run at a higher speed, accelerating the chip's two cores to a whopping 4.0GHz.

This is called overclocking, but you'll never hear this word uttered by anyone at CAD2. 'Workstation Enhanced' is what the Derby-based workstation specialist calls it, keen to distance itself from images of geeks in darkened bedrooms accidentally frying chips in the quest for ultimate frame rates.

But CAD2 is not in the fast food business and each WSX102 workstation comes with a full 36 month warranty and, as with all of its systems, is thoroughly road tested before shipping to verify stability.

With all this power at the heart of the machine we'd expected it to sound like a 747 on take-off, but the acoustics were excellent and it doesn't even require a specialist cooling system. This is in part due to the Phase III workstation upgrade which uses top quality low duty fans and insulating mats

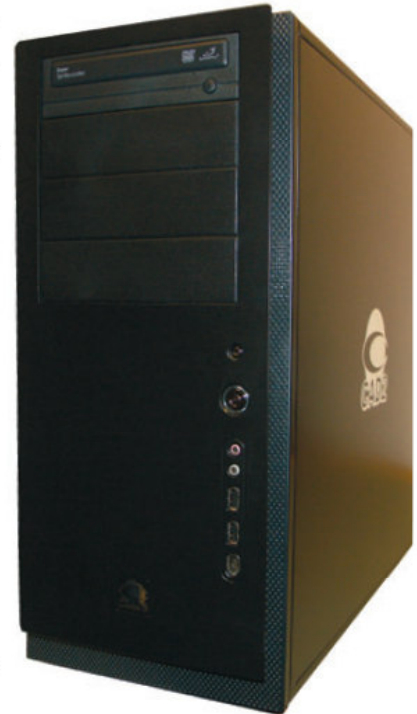
on the inside of the case.

In terms of RAM the WSX102 is maxed out at 8GB, with 4 x 2GB PC2-6400 800MHz Dual Channel modules. It is this, coupled with Windows XP Professional x64 Edition (or Vista Business X64), that gives the machine its 64-bit credentials and makes it equally suited for handling huge datasets as it is for cutting-edge performance.

The WSX102 made light work of our new SolidWorks 2009 graphics benchmark with the combination of high clock speed and Quadro FX3700 board taking top spot in our tests this month. The 4.0GHz CPU also helped claim top spot in our Inventor 2009 frame rate test. While the machine excelled in our CAD benchmarks, the limits of the dual core CPU were highlighted in our 3ds Max rendering test, where the Quad Core Core i7-based machines win hands down.

In summary, CAD2's WSX102 is a superb workstation for CAD, taking top marks for single threaded operations and as a result boosting graphics performance in large models. The only downside is the limit of two CPU cores, but if you're not heavily involved in rendering or simulation then this shouldn't be an issue.

Greg Corke



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