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iSuppli Comments on the Energy Star Computer Draft 2

Having just reviewed the EnergyStar computer spec (4.0 Draft 2), I have some comments for your consideration.

My question is around the issue of idle power specification. If I understood the spec correctly, ES will specify an amount of power that a given computer class can dissipate at idle. For typical desktops that value would be 50W.

If this is correct, my concern then is that we're not really pushing the manufacturers of power supplies all that hard. If in fact the core devices (microprocessors and memory) are improved significantly, then the power savings from them will almost automatically qualify a computer system for ES designation, even without any work on improving the power supply.

My knowledge of what's possible in power supplies tells me that they can be dissipating a couple of watts without too much difficulty, once they've made the decision to go 80 plus. Therefore, I think it'd do the world a great big favor if we'd consider the dissipation of the power supply and the core devices separately. I think the point of the exercise is lowering wasted power, not just an absolute amount, right?

We shouldn't be dissipating any more power than we have to at our present development level of technology. So why not set a spec for the power supply, and set another for "rest of system" dissipation. Or, alternatively, set a spec that really pushes both sets of devices equally hard. This will have the added advantage of allowing the spec to evolve independently for the power supply and core devices as they progress down their respective evolutionary paths.

Also, given the accuracy requirements that follow that portion of the spec, the meter specifications seem a little inconsistent. Resolution of 1mW seems a bit fine if required accuracy is only on the order of +/- 200mW minimum.

I hope these comments are useful in some way and are not a result of my lack of proper understanding of the spec. It is in all other ways well written, and I truly appreciate EPA's and your work on this issue.

Sincere regards,

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