

Rock Steady Board

by friday 13

ASRock P4i65GV

Intel Prescott support in a small micro-ATX form factor board? Well, why not? ASRock can do just about anything with their micro-ATX boards, and this one looks like it's bursting with energy.

Specifications	
СРИ	Supports Socket-478 Intel Pentium 4 (Prescott, Northwood, Willimate) and Celeron processors
Front Side Bus	800/533/400MHz
Chipset	Intel 865GV
Memory	Supports DDR266/333/400 on 2x DIMM slots
Slots	Ix AGI 8X (ASRock Graphics Interface), 3x 32-bit PCI bus & Ix AMR slots
Built-in Features	Ix floppy, Ix serial, Ix parallel, AC97-compliant audio, 8x USB 2.0 ports (6x rear, 2x bracket-mounted), 2x Serial ATA, 10/100Mbps LAN chipset on-board, graphics chipset on-board.
Bundled Items	ATA133 cable, 1x FDD cable, 1x SATA cable, 1x COM port bracket, driver CD, I/O shield
Price	RM275
Warranty	Two-years
Contact	Intranet Sdn Bhd
Telephone	(03) 7804 7878
URL	www.asrock.com.tw

Extreme factor

This board features the Intel 865GV chipset with built-in Intel Extreme Graphics hardware and supports the latest Intel Pentium 4 processors including the new Prescott processors. Other highlights include 800MHz front side bus support, and the ASRock Graphics Interface (AGI) port which is basically ASRock's AGP port with AGP 8X support.

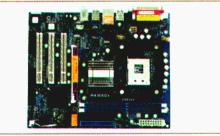
Being a small form factor board, it offers less expandability options though – only three PCl slots and two DIMM slots for memory modules up to DDR400 specification. Still, the board already has built-in graphics, audio and LAN hardware, so there's little need for the PCl expansion slots except for specialized hardware such as video capture cards, TV tuners and dedicated sound cards.

Number crunching

The board was tested with a 3.20GHz



All the usual suspects are here



Prescott-ready Micro-ATX board

Prescott processor with Hyper Threading Technology enabled and two sticks of 256MB DDR333 memory modules on a fresh installation of Microsoft Windows XP Professional. The micro-ATX form factor doesn't deter from performing well with a fast processor; compared to the reference system, the Prescott processor does make a difference and this should be good for CPU-intensive applications such as video editing or number-crunching programs.

Performance aside, the board's only limiting factor is the lack of expansion options to give it an edge over bigger boards that provide more DIMM and more PCI slots. At least there's Serial ATA which seems like it's becoming a standard on all motherboards these days, like on-board AC'97 audio and LAN chipsets.

In a Nutshell

Sometimes performance isn't everything and one must also look at other aspects like supported features to ensure that a motherboard fits your requirements; this small board certainly looks like it would fit the requirements of a good budget system or a cheap home server.

