

No Thunderbolt for Acer PCs

Written by Marco Attard
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Acer stops making PCs carrying Thunderbolt interconnectors, since the company believes USB 3.0 offers similar performance with greater peripheral compatibility and lower costs, an Acer spokesperson tells CNET.



"We're really focusing on USB 3.0-- it's an excellent alternative to Thunderbolt," the company says. "It's less expensive, offers comparable bandwidth, charging for devices such as mobile phones, and has a large installed base of accessories and peripherals."

In 2012 Acer was the first company, together with Apple, to lead the initial push towards making the Intel-created Thunderbolt mainstream with the Aspire S5 ultrabook.

The connector transfers data at up to 10Gb/s in both directions and simultaneously connects displays. Future versions promise data transfer speeds of up to 20Gb/s.

In comparison maximum USB 3.0 throughput clocks at 5Gb/s, with future versions to improve performance to 10Gb/s-- perhaps not fast enough for high-performance external storage devices, but still ideal for most other consumer-grade peripherals.

Despite Acer's dropping out Intel remains bullish regarding the technology. "PC adoption is increasing," Intel Client Connectivity Division director Jason Ziller says. "There are more than a dozen new 4th-generation Intel Core processor-based platforms already launched with Thunderbolt... with more coming throughout 2013."

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The company also insists Thunderbolt will remain targeted at premium, not mid-range or value, systems for at least for "the next couple of years."

Machines on the market featuring Thunderbolt connectors include the Dell One 27 AIO PC, the HP Spectre XT 15-1401 touchscreen laptop, the Asus G750 gaming laptop and the latest Apple MacBook, iMac and the next-gen Mac Pro models.

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