

For Immediate Release

News Release

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PCMCIA Launches New Compliance Program for ExpressCard, the New Hardware Expansion Standard

ExpressCard Logo to Help Consumers Identify Interoperable Systems and Modules for Plug-n-Play Expansion of Desktops and Notebooks

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CeBIT, Hannover, Germany, March 19, 2004 – PCMCIA, a leading technology trade association, today announced a compliance program for ExpressCard™, the new, high-performance I/O module standard for desktop and notebook computers. Consumers will be able to identify compliant products by looking for the ExpressCard logo--an orange, energetic rabbit signifying mobility and high performance--that assures users that ExpressCard products have passed stringent interoperability and compatibility tests. Applications include flash memory, communications, multimedia and security.

PCMCIA will hold a press conference at 9 am, Friday, March 19, in Room 14 of the Convention Center, to announce product support for the standard and a new compliance program.

“This new compliance program is designed to give the consumer the confidence that they can buy systems or modules bearing the ExpressCard brand and know that they are compatible,” said Brad Saunders of Intel Corporation and chairman of the PCMCIA. “Even novice computer users will be able to expand their system’s capabilities by simply selecting products featuring the ExpressCard logo, which indicates to them that they can confidently plug the product into their desktop or notebook system and they are ready to go. This brings a whole new level of ease-of-use to any computer user.”

(more)

PCMCIA Launches Compliance Program

ExpressCard technology brings new functionality to computer users not found in today's PC Card. In addition to easier installation, the ExpressCard standard supports 'all modules in all slots,' enabling users to move modules between desktop and mobile systems. ExpressCard products also support sealed-box expandability in desktop systems. Users will no longer need to open their computer chassis to add flash memory, networking, multimedia, security or other hardware.

Based on the successful USB compliance program, the program requires manufacturers to undergo extensive compatibility testing, including self-testing and interoperability workshops where modules are tested in both desktop and mobile systems. Manufacturers can also use test houses that offer support for both phases of the compatibility testing. All testing is under the umbrella of PCMCIA.

The ExpressCard standard is the next generation of PC Card technology used in more than 95% of all notebook computers for adding new hardware capabilities. The ExpressCard interface supports both the PCI Express* architecture and Universal Serial Bus (USB)* 2.0 standards in a single slot. ExpressCard modules will be available in two sizes: 34mm and 54mm by 75mm x 5mm. ExpressCard technology is expected to replace CardBus, the current standard for PC cards. Dell, HP, IBM, Intel, Lexar Media, Microsoft, SCM Microsystems and Texas Instruments are among those supporting development of the new standard under the PCMCIA umbrella. ExpressCard products are expected to become generally available starting in late 2004.

About PCMCIA

PCMCIA is a non-profit trade association founded in 1989 to establish technical standards for PC Card technology and to promote interchangeability among computer systems. Already a feature in almost every notebook and palmtop computer, PC Card technology empowers users to configure systems and create unique, integrated solutions to meet their computing needs. Based in San Jose, California, the association has approximately 120 member companies worldwide. The PCMCIA also has a specification development and co-publishing relationship with the Japan Electronics and Information Technology Industries Association (JEITA) covering PC Card and Smart Media technologies.

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Editor's Note: Photo available at www.expresscard.org.