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ASSET's New Interposer Opens Test Access to Intel® Xeon® Processors 5500 Series and Core(TM) i7 Processors

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CPU's debug port can be accessed for validation, test and debug on Intel-based circuit boards

Richardson, TX (Sept. 22, 2009) - With ASSET® InterTech's new LGA1366 interposer, design, test and field repair engineers are able to access the debug port on the Intel® Xeon® Processor 5500 Series and Core(TM) i7 processors, which are based on Intel's new Nehalem microarchitecture, after the processors have been placed on a circuit board. ASSET (www.asset-intertech.com) is the leading supplier of open tools for embedded instrumentation.

Cost and size considerations often cause many circuit board manufacturers to either remove the circuitry required to access the processor's debug port or to remove the connectors on the circuit board which would link to this circuitry. ASSET's interposers and top-side adapters overcome this problem for the purposes of the more cost-effective non-intrusive board test technologies such as processor-controlled test (PCT) on ASSET's ScanWorks platform for embedded instrumentation. In addition to providing a lower cost-of-test, non-intrusive board test (NBT) also offers improved test coverage over the older intrusive test technologies such as in-circuit test (ICT).

ASSET's LGA1366 interposer provides a direct interface between the CPU on an assembled circuit board and PCT on the ScanWorks® platform. The non-intrusive PCT test technology can apply tests, diagnostics and debug routines to the entire circuit board through the Intel® processor without placing physical probes anywhere on the board. Unlike intrusive test technologies like ICT, which require expensive bed-of-nails fixtures for testing circuit boards, PCT on ScanWorks is a non-intrusive technology that relies on software. It tests the electrical integrity of a board and applies functional tests at processor speeds through the CPU's debug port.

"With this interposer and ScanWorks" PCT capabilities, manufacturers can achieve greater test coverage on Intel-based circuit boards," said Larry Osborn, ASSET's technical marketing manager for PCT. "And PCT is just one of the NBT technologies on the ScanWorks platform. Also on ScanWorks are boundary-scan test and Intel®'s own embedded instrumentation technology, Interconnect Built-In Self Test (IBIST). When you consider the test coverage that these NBT technologies provide, you quickly realize that the ScanWorks platform has a much better cost-to-coverage ratio than any of the older intrusive test technologies." Reviving dead circuit boards

In addition to the enhanced test coverage that ASSET's interposers and top-side adapters make possible in manufacturing, they can also be applied very effectively in repair operations. Some circuit boards are broken to the point where they cannot launch an operating system (OS) or even the kernel of the OS, the Basic Input/Output System (BIOS). Since most functional test techniques require a running BIOS or OS, traditional functional tests cannot be performed on these circuit boards and they cannot be repaired. Fortunately, ScanWorks" PCT tests do not require an OS or BIOS. As a result, the precise diagnostics of PCT can locate faults and failures on otherwise dead circuit boards. The manufacturer can then repair these boards and recoup some of the costs associated with them.

Compatibility with third-party CPU emulation tools

The LGA1366 interposer's standard Intel® debug port (XDP) header connector allows third-party CPU emulation tools to access the Intel® Xeon® processor 5500 series and Core(TM) i7 processor debug ports, even when a XDP header is not provided on the circuit board.

Pricing and availability

The LGA1366 interposer is available now from ASSET InterTech and its distributors. Pricing starts at \$2,900. For product information, call 888-694-6250, fax 972-437-2826, e-mail ai-info@asset-intertech.com or visit www.asset-intertech.com.

ScanWorks® - The Embedded Instrumentation Platform

ASSET, through its ScanWorks platform, is applying the experience it has gained from two decades as a leading supplier of boundary-scan test tools to the development of open embedded instrumentation tools. The boundary-scan infrastructure that is embedded into chips and circuit boards is one of several technologies that can form the basis for an embedded instrumentation toolset. In recent years, ASSET has significantly enhanced its ScanWorks® platform with embedded instrumentation capabilities such as processor-controlled test (PCT) and tools for Intel® IBIST (Interconnect Built-In Self Test).

About ASSET InterTech

ASSET InterTech is the leading supplier of open tools for embedded instrumentation for design validation, test and debug. The ScanWorks platform provides automation, access and analysis tools in one environment. Users can quickly and easily validate and test semiconductors, circuit boards or entire systems during every phase of a product's life, including design, manufacturing/repair and field maintenance. ASSET InterTech is located at 2201 North Central Expressway, Suite 105, Richardson, TX 75080.

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