



Marketing Bulletin

AMB2002-05

March 1, 2002

Product Announcement:

AMPC™ 5.0

New Windows® Driver Software for the Falcon Now Shipping

Dear Alpha Micro Dealer:

Announcing the immediate availability of a new generation of software for the Falcon AMOS PC Coprocessor board: **AMPC 5.0!**

This product **easily installs** on your AMOS application running on a Windows PC. It also serves as the software foundation for the new, high-speed PCI Super Falcon board, which is scheduled for delivery in late April, 2002.

Features have been added with AMPC 5.0 since our original pre-announcement was sent in September, 2001. This bulletin details the particulars of the finished product.

Compatibility With All Modern Versions of Windows

AMPC 5.0 is highly versatile. It is a true 32-bit Windows application that works with Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows NT 4.0, Windows 2000, and Windows XP.

Full Networking and SCSI Support

AMPC 5.0 intelligently supports AlphaTCP and AlphaNET via true Windows networking. AlphaTCP has its own IP address, distinct from the Windows IP address. You no longer need to rely on Clarkson drivers, NDIS3PKT, or be inconvenienced by any other issues to get the old DOS networking working.

SCSI devices such as streamer, DAT, and CD-ROM drives are supported via native Windows SCSI. You can access ATAPI (IDE) CD-ROM drives as though they were SCSI drives.

Supports Up To 16 COM Ports

You are no longer restricted to four COM ports. AMPC 5.0 works with up to 16 COM port devices. Any device that Windows sees as a COM port can be accessed by AMPC. This includes PCI COM port boards, certain proprietary "Digiboard®-like" multi-port boards, and USB-to-COM port adapters.

Supports All Printers Seen By Windows

The three LPT port restriction has been eliminated. AMPC 5.0 works with up to sixteen printers - any printer that is defined in Windows. This includes PCI LPT port devices, USB, and network printers. You can set up different fonts and page layouts for a physical printer and assign "LPT" ports to these different printer configurations. You can also use the LPR server in AlphaTCP to access even more printers on the network.

Advanced Console Software

Special versions of ZTERM and AlphaLAN Lite called AMPCTERM and AMPCLITE, respectively, are included with AMPC 5.0 to serve as the console for the user running AMOS on the PC containing the Falcon. They take the place of the built-in console software in previous versions of AMPC. Both of them support the virtual terminal feature present in the previous console software, although unlike AMPC 4.x, each virtual terminal is counted in the AMOS user license calculation.

If you will be using the same PC that contains the Falcon to connect to another Alpha Micro system, you will also need the "regular" versions of AlphaLAN/Lite or ZTERM for that purpose. "Regular" AlphaLAN/Lite and ZTERM install in different directories and use separate registry entries to track their settings. For all practical purposes, they are distinct and separate products.

AMPCLITE and AMPCTERM communicate with AMPC 5.0 through Windows' network loopback mechanism. Consequently, you will need to have the Windows TCP/IP protocol installed on a PC running AMPC 5.0, even if you do not intend to use other network functions on that PC.

New GENDSK "Wizard"

The new AMPC Configuration program incorporates a new, more user-friendly "Wizard" to create new AMOS .DSK files.

Simpler, More Reliable, Unified Shutdown

Exiting the console terminal emulator, AMPCTERM or AMPCLITE, automatically shuts down the diagnostic window. Conversely, exiting the diagnostic window automatically shuts down the console terminal emulator.

Easy Installation

All of AMPC 5.0, including the networking interface, automatically installs from CD-ROM. You no longer have to worry about (or pay for) third party software such as NDIS3PKT or Direct I/O.

Configuration of AMPC 5.0 is via a Windows configuration program. No more manual editing of AMPC.INI.

Create Your Own Installation CD

One of the most significant features of AMPC 5.0 is the ability to create your own installation CD. You create your own installation routine and AMPC installs pre-loaded with your own application! You can even pre-configure certain AMPC parameters. Simply include your own pre-loaded .DSK file(s) containing AMOS, your programs, and data files. Your own bitmap logo displays during the installation process. This routine is burned onto a CD or made into a downloadable installation file.

AMOS has never been easier to install: Just pop in a Falcon board, install a CD, and in under half an hour your client is running your application!

Easy to Maintain

AMPC 5.0 is easier to maintain than previous versions. Every attempt has been made to adhere to Windows standards so that your customers and prospects perceive it as “just another Windows program.”

Pricing

AMPC 5.0 requires a new PIC Code. New Falcon board sales include AMPC 5.0 at no extra charge. Current Falcon users can upgrade to AMPC 5.0 for a nominal charge. Additional users for AMPC 5.0 will follow a new pricing structure.

AMPC 4.2a Still Available

You can still order Falcon boards with AMPC 4.2a, and add additional users to existing AMPC 4.2a sites, at the original AMPC 4.2a price structure. We will continue supporting those sites that are comfortable running AMPC under DOS.

The PCI Bus “Super Falcon” Is Coming Soon!

Soon we will be introducing our new, plug-and-play, PCI bus-based Super Falcon board! Its performance is similar to an Eagle 250, which is significantly faster than the current Falcon. The “Super Falcon” will be driven by software derived from AMPC 5.0.

The Strategic Importance of the “Super-Falcon”

The “Super-Falcon” system serves several marketing niches:

It offers an inexpensive, powerful entry-level system for small environments. This allows you to be very competitive in this segment and increase the size of your customer base. In addition, the “Super-Falcon” opens the door to potentially larger users by encouraging them to become familiar with your application before they invest in larger systems.

The “Super-Falcon” is also the ideal product for existing users or prospects who insist that your application run on a PC, whether the user count is large or small.

AMPC 5.0 is the first part of a new and exciting low-end AMOS product line. The Super Falcon will expand upon AMPC 5.0 by offering a high powered hardware solution for modern PCI bus systems, as well as significantly increasing performance that is long overdue on the low-end product.

We thank all of you that helped us create a product that successfully addresses the small system market niche. Your feedback was invaluable. The Super Falcon product, which will be introduced very soon, is the direct result of requests and comments you have expressed to us. Together, we continue to create products that accurately reflect the needs of today's marketplace.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rod Everett".

Rod Everett
Director of Marketing and Sales
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