Subject: PCI XP-32 expansion vs PCIe Win7-64 expansion
Posted by Wayne on Mon, 19 Oct 2015 20:18:36 GMT
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Hi gang,

This is a bit long but encompasses several circumstances, all of which are good to know.

After several different setups, two months of shipping wait time and a month of troubleshooting, here are my findings using an ATX 4 card mobo expansion chassis with two (audio tweaked) XP-32bit PARIS systems and one Win7-64
PARIS-64bit/ProTools11-64bit/EZdrummer2-64bit/SonyVegasPro13 -64bit video computer.

Host cards
EX-1094 (PCI host) qty 2 both in use
EX-1095 (PCIe host) qty 2 one in use (one spare)
EX-1035 (mobo) qty 2 one in use expansion chassis   (one spare) (EX-1035 is the mobo only, also needed is an ATX chassis and power supply

Setup: Interface:
Win7-64 studio #1 MEC (2 8-in, 1 8-out, word clock)
XP-32 bit studio #1 uses the same MEC as Win7 (shared MEC, only one PARIS system used at a time in studio #1)
XP-32 bit studio #2 MEC (identical to studio #1 except no word clock, internal sync)
ATX expansion chassis used in both studios - 3 EDS installed (keeping one EDS as spare)

Short history - I originally purchased two EX-1094s (PCI host), one EX-1095 (PCIe host) and one EX-1035 (mobo with 4 PCI slots) from SWD. The original package was delivered severely damaged with part loose in the box. I did a close visual and each component appeared OK. I installed the 1035 and couldn't get it to turn on so I emailed tech support at ExSys (they told me the 1035 and 1095 were probably defective). SWD sent me a new 1035 and 1095.

The new 1035 turned on until I installed it. What tha'? Mobo was installed in a former Compaq Presario ATX chassis. I changed the mobo installation screws (still metal) and it worked perfectly. The screw heads of the original mobo (removed from the Compaq mobo) might be in inches and slightly larger, and the ones that worked might be metric and have a smaller head size. (I'm speculating on this, but head size is critical so that it doesn't go outside the silver circle mounting area of the EX-1035 and short the board to the chassis). I examined the Compaq ATX case original mobo and the silver circles around the mounting holes are larger and these are the screws I originally used. I installed the 1st 1035 in the Compaq chassis with the different size head screws and it works perfectly too. Note: The EX-1035 mobo does not come with screws. Hope this helps future ATX expansion mobo installers.

Playback - I've got 60 channels of playback while recording 2 more (all 24bit) on XP (both comps) and Win7. My largest mix had 30 tracks. Submix A - 16 tracks and submix B - 14 tracks. I copied all 16 and 14 tracks into submix C and D respectively, and copied all the mixer channel settings. So two full 30 track mixes doubled up on 4 cards including some looped tracks. I record enabled 2 tracks on submix B and the whole mix plays while recording. I did not hear any delay

per se, except the mix is thicker and loses some stereo separation which I think is the slight sample offset of submix A to B to C to D. Stereo drums, bass, backing vocals, etc on A, pasted to C and stereo keys, horns, guitars copied from B to D and to an untrained ear it sounded fine. I did this copy procedure purely to listen to the sample delay and to see if 4 EDS and everything would play and record at once. This is not how I normally work. I also cleared submix C and D and record enabled 16 tracks on C. 30 track playback with 16 recording (24bit). Both XP machines and my Win7 machine are all using the same ATX expansion chassis. One XP machine has HT on the other does not. No difference.

The host cards remain in each separate computer with the interconnecting cable attached. One 1094 in studio #1 XP, one 1094 in studio #2 XP, and one 1095 in the Win7 computer. I use the same 1035 ATX 4 EDS expansion chassis for all 3 computers. After setting up the 1st computer four Scherzo's, I moved to the next computer and setup the four Scherzo's and then to the next computer. You only need to do this scherzo installation setup once. Now I can now move the ATX 1035 chassis from rig to rig to rig and it works perfectly. It is important to have identical interfaces and setup the patch bay identical, then save as the default project on each computer. The only thing I do now from comp to comp to comp is change sync source (if needed) and record path and everything falls in place.

Important finding:
The XP machines will record and play nice using the expansion chassis with 4 EDS cards but only with EDS efx's in use. I put one instance of iZotope Ozone 4 (mastering plugin - on native insert) on track 1 (stereo split, trk 1 and 2) and PARIS locks up. I removed one EDS (now 3 card) - same problem. I removed another EDS (now 2 card) - same problem. I used to run 2 EDS internally on my XP machine with no problem, but now the native plugin will not work when using the 1035 ATX expansion chassis on XP.

However - wait for it - iZotope Ozone 4 (native plugin) works flawlessly on Win7-64 with the 1035 ATX expansion and 4 EDS installed. So my Win7-64 machine has become my mastering machine and the XP's are for tracking, editing and mixing.

That about covers my experience. The two problems I encountered - screw head size and native plug-ins on XP. Other than that, I now move from comp to comp to comp quickly and efficiently which was my main goal and to progress toward Win7 as the XPs slowly die.

Best to all,
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