

Google backs green computer plan

Search engine giant Google and US semiconductor firm Intel have thrown their weight behind a massive scheme to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.



The ambitious plan sets out an industry-wide target to cut the amount of energy computers consume by 2010.

Energy-efficient computers will be more reliable, say scheme backers

The scheme is expected to cut emissions by 54 million tonnes a year - equal to 11 million cars or 20 coal-fired power plants, company officials say.

Hewlett-Packard, Dell and Microsoft have all signed up to the campaign.

Computers and other IT equipment have been blamed for causing as much global warming as the airline industry.

"We think we can have huge savings in terms of carbon footprint and energy costs," said Pat Gelsinger, senior vice president for Intel's digital enterprise group.

Costs to rise?

He estimated that using energy-efficient technology would make computers about \$20 (£10) more expensive and servers about \$30 pricier, but these costs would be offset by lower electricity bills.

Utilities will be encouraged to offer rebates to consumers who buy the 'green PCs'.

Manufacturers who agree to the climate-saving program agree to design, produce and sell equipment that meet the US Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star standard of 80% initially.

That will rise to 90% by 2010.

The initiative is an extension of the World Wildlife Fund's Climate Savers program, which helps companies to reduce their harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

Initial supporters also include Yahoo, Hitachi and Sun Microsystems.

In addition to the environmental benefits, Google co-founder

Larry Page said the initiative would also act to make computers better - more reliable and quieter.

Meanwhile in the UK, a new government taskforce has been formed to develop individual computers which use 98% less energy than standard PCs.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6747323.stm>