



INSYDE H2O FAQ 2006

Q: What is InsydeH2O?

A: InsydeH2O is Insyde Software's firmware product line designed to replace traditional PC BIOS. It is an implementation of the Intel's Platform Innovation Framework for UEFI /EFI. The UEFI/EFI specification defines a new model for the interface between operating systems and platform firmware. This interface consists of data tables that contain platform-related information, plus boot and runtime service calls that are available to the operating system and its loader. Together, these provide a standard environment for booting an operating system and running pre-boot applications. This product line is the next generation of PC BIOS technology.

Q: Why is InsydeH2O important to the evolution of the BIOS market?

A: Many industry specialists believe that the need for a change in BIOS technology is required to further innovations in the market. Legacy BIOS is over twenty years old and it has become a large mass of code, described by many as "spaghetti." It has grown to become a barrier to innovation in the industry. The technology of InsydeH2O removes the barriers caused by old-style BIOS.

Q: How does InsydeH2O benefit makers of server, desktop, mobile and embedded computers?

A: This new technology provides: faster time to market for new hardware platforms; greater productivity and lower costs developing and maintaining firmware; and streamlined methods for testing and qualifying PCs on the manufacturing line, greatly improving production speed. UEFI/EFI drivers have a modular structure and are reusable. They are written in C language, allowing for a large population of C-programmers to perform PC firmware development. Also, the built-in UEFI/EFI shell saves substantial time during manufacturing tests. Finally, InsydeH2O provides a very good environment for developing and deploying pre-boot applications that can lower PC vendors support costs and provide differentiation.

Q: Do engineers need special skills to work on InsydeH2O?

A: In the past, BIOS software was written in Assembly Language, slowing productivity. InsydeH2O is developed in C Language, providing ODMs and OEMs a wider pool of software engineers for "BIOS" development.

Q: Is InsydeH2O ready for ODMs and OEMs?

A: ODMs and OEMs can start using this new technology now! The first commercial product using InsydeH2O shipped during the fourth quarter of 2003 on Gateway 610 Media Center PC. Moreover, Insyde Software has also launched the Mobile and Desktop Edition products with Server Edition and Embedded Edition in the near-term roadmap.

Q: Will Insyde continue to support BIOS?

A: Yes, Insyde will continue to provide the same level of quality and support for its legacy BIOS customers. Insyde Software offers its customers a choice. MobilePRO BIOS will continue to be offered now and in the future.

Q: What types of PCs does InsydeH2O™ support?

A: InsydeH2O supports mobile and desktop PCs. Soon embedded systems and servers will also be supported.

Q: How complete is InsydeH2O for mobile platforms?

A: Yes, Insyde has developed complete support for mobile features on Intel mobile platforms and existing notebook PCs. This has been validated by Intel and our customers.

Q: Does this technology only support Intel CPUs and chipsets?

A: No, the technology is CPU and chipset technology-neutral. It can be used to support any CPU or chipset technology, including (but not only) Intel's IA-64 (Itanium), IA-32 x86) and XScale. Also, it applies equally to other chipsets and CPU vendors and architectures, such as those from: VIA, SIS, ATi, NVIDIA, AMD, VIA, Transmeta and other CPU vendors and architectures.

Q: What operating systems does InsydeH2O support?

A: InsydeH2O supports any UEFI/EFI-aware OS. With the optionally available CSM (Compatibility Support Module), InsydeH2O also supports all existing OS's: namely DOS, Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows 2000 and Windows XP.

Q: Does InsydeH2O meet WHQL requirements?

A: Yes, InsydeH2O meets all WHQL requirements under the HCT 11.2 test program.

Q: How fast is the speed of system boot?

A: InsydeH2O meets the HTC test requirements. It takes less than 10 seconds for S3 resume, 25 seconds for S4 resume, and 35 seconds for the complete boot process. Also, the boot times can be adjusted to meet the demands of different products.

Q: Who will provide UEFI/EFI drivers?

A: Insyde and many hardware vendors provide UEFI/EFI drivers, just like they provide BIOS support or option ROM support. Manufacturers can provide their own special UEFI/EFI drivers by following the UEFI/EFI specification.

Q: How is Insyde Software related to Intel's EFI?

A: Insyde Software has been working with Intel for over 3 years on EFI Framework related technology. Insyde is one of only two companies in the world that is currently licensing an implementation of Intel's EFI Framework - InsydeH2O. Intel is not licensing any of the EFI Framework components to the industry nor are they going to be providing ODMs/OEMs with the EFI Framework support. They will rely on their ecosystem partners such as Insyde Software to bring these things to the market.