



PolyStation SLI2-FX57

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The PolyStation SLI2-FX57 is the first fully functional SLI system to appear in a Cadalyst workstations roundup. Though many vendors offer SLI-capable systems, Polywell Computers is the first to provide a full implementation for review. In the past, we've looked at several SLI implementations, but none were quite ready for prime time. With the PolyStation, there were a very few display glitches on the MAXBench4 benchmark, particularly with the NVIDIA MAXtreme 7.00.03 accelerated driver, but none were major.

The Polywell system posted a total index score of 164 on the C2006 benchmark and a score of 75.31 on the proe-03 viewset of SPEC ViewPerf 8.10. The combined high/low average for the MAXBench4 benchmark running under 3ds max 8 with the NVIDIA MAXtreme 7.00.03 accelerated driver was 159.47.

The PolyStation SLI2-FX57 was housed in a compact 16.8" x 7.5" x 19.6" case similar to the one used by @Xi in this roundup, except that the Polywell case is predominately black with a matte aluminum front panel. This attractive case features a bottom front panel that provides two USB 2.x connections, one FireWire connection, and sockets for plugging in headphones and a microphone. The system offers ten drive bays, four of which are internal 3.5" bays. Power is supplied by a Seasonic 600W 80 Plus high-efficiency PFC power supply, which should be adequate to support both graphics cards and almost any commonly found expansions.

Inside the case is a 2.8GHz AMD Athlon64 FX-57 micro-processor seated in an Asus A8N32-SLI motherboard that uses the NVIDIA nForce 4 SLI chipset. As delivered, the PolyStation SLI2-FX57 contained 2GB of DDR 400MHz RAM, out of a possible 4GB total. Graphics were accommodated by two PNY/NVIDIA FX 3450 PCIe express graphics cards linked via SLI. Testing was done with NVIDIA drivers v.8.1.9.8.

Though you'd expect the additional graphics card to increase system noise, the PolyStation SLI2-FX57 was very quiet, likely the result of a case with good acoustical engineering.



The first fully functional SLI system to come through Cadalyst Labs, the PolyStation SLI2-FX57 includes two NVIDIA FX 3450 graphics cards working as one.

The PolyStation SLI2-FX57 system incorporated two Western Digital SATA 74GB hard disks in a RAID 0 configuration, for 148GB of hard drive space. The system arrived with two optical drives, a Sony DVD-R/W and a Sony DVD-CDR/W combination drive. A 7-in-1 floppy/card reader combination completes the drive inventory. A Logitech Cordless Mouse and Logitech keyboard provide system input.

The Polywell PolyStation SLI2-FX57 achieved an A for its excellent 5/3/2 (years of coverage for parts/labor/onsite) warranty, which also includes 24-hour replacement parts and 24-hour technical support. System pricing, including the two FX 3450 graphics cards with an SLI bridge connecting them, is \$4,150, not bad when one considers that a

large part of the system cost resides in the two graphics cards.

Though a few minor glitches remain to be worked out of the SLI configuration—apparently in the graphics driver end of the equation—this technology, plus the excellent overall quality of the workstation and its components, makes the Polywell PolyStation SLI2-FX57 deserving of a close look.