

22. April 2008

## **NVIDIA GeForce 8800 GT upgrade for first generation Mac Pro**

Today I received the graphics update for my first generation Mac Pro. The card works silent and fine. Read here about my impressions and my quick test with Xbench.

What a surprise: Apple finally managed to roll out the midrange 8800GT graphics card from NVIDIA. I'm upgrading from the ATI X1900XT which was also a nice card for the Mac Pro and has still decent performance when it comes to Apples Pro applications like Final Cut.



### **Installation**

As a version junkie my Mac OS X is up to date and I decided not to make a backup. Usually I prefer manual backups but in this case I only trusted in Timemachine. So I opened up my Mac Pro as described in the nice graphics card manual. Disconnecting the power cable from the old X1900XT was no problem.

Unfortunately the cool Mac Pros' PCI holder was quite hard to open. Normally you can use your fingers to unscrew the clip, but I had to use a screwdriver. After this small action of force I released the PCI-Express latch and pulled gently the ATI card.

The new 8800 GT is much smaller than the old X1900XT and fits nice into the expansion slot. Unfortunately there is now an open PCI slot holder, because the 8800GT is half the height. What a pity for such a nice designed machine. I'm getting a new slot cover.

To make it short: The installation was easy.

## Windows

The 8800GT works fine under Windows XP 32-Bit although I had to install the current NVIDIA forceware drivers in Version 174.93 beta to get the new card recognized.

## Crysis

The high demanding shooter Crysis plays fine with all settings 'high' in 1600x1200. Activating antialiasing slows down the performance. So I guess the 8800GT is not ready for full native resolution on 30" displays. Currently I'm still using my old Iymaha S-IPS 21" monitor.

## Mac OS X Performance and Xbench

I just fired up Xbench and ran the standard graphics test. As already discovered the 8800GT seems to perform slower in this OpenGL test, but the gaming experience under Windows tells a different story. However the card feels fast under OS X and perhaps other people will perform real performance tests.

## Bottom line

The NVIDIA GeForce 8800 GT is the graphics upgrade for the first generation Mac Pros and works like a charm. Enjoy!

## Xbench 1.3: NVIDIA GeForce 8800 GT

```
System Info

Xbench Version 1.3

System Version 10.5.2 (9C7010)

Physical RAM 2048 MB

Model MacPro1,1

Drive Type SAMSUNG HD401LJ

Quartz Graphics Test 208.48

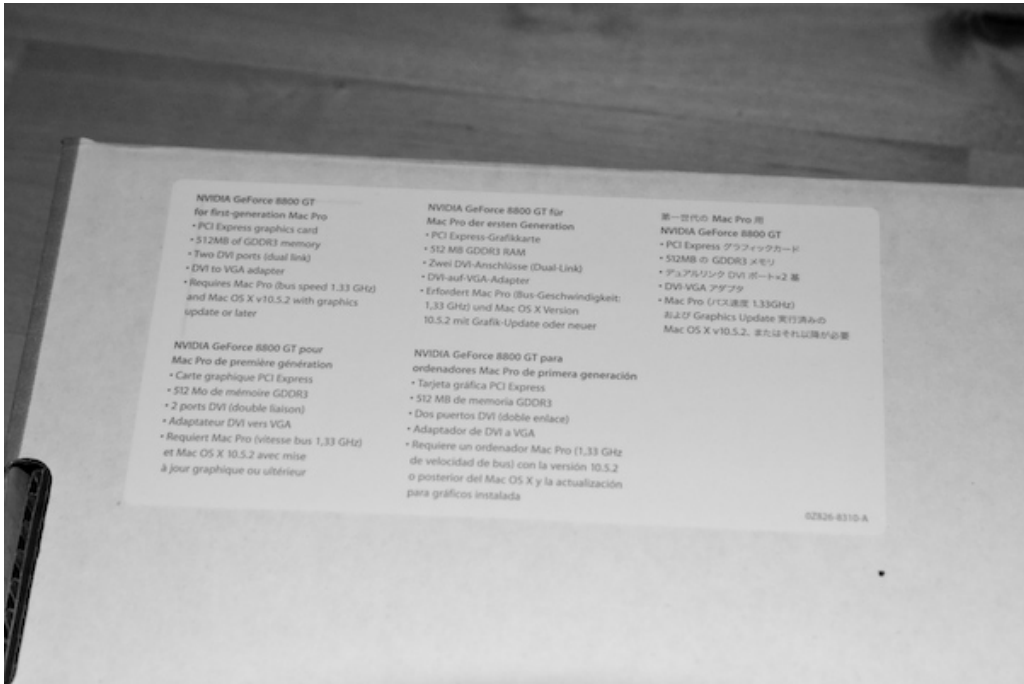
Line 185.33 12.34 Klines/sec [50% alpha]
```

```
Rectangle 253.37 75.64 Krects/sec [50% alpha]
Circle 207.71 16.93 Kcircles/sec [50% alpha]
Bezier 203.70 5.14 Kbeziers/sec [50% alpha]
Text 203.37 12.72 Kchars/sec
OpenGL Graphics Test 169.66
Spinning Squares 169.66 215.22 frames/sec
User Interface Test 307.94
Elements 307.94 1.41 Krefresh/sec
```

**XBench 1.3: ATI X1900XT**

```
System Info
Xbench Version 1.3
System Version 10.5.2 (9C31)
Physical RAM 2048 MB
Model MacPro1,1
Drive Type SAMSUNG HD401LJ
Quartz Graphics Test 208.75
Line 184.98 12.32 Klines/sec [50% alpha]
Rectangle 254.40 75.95 Krects/sec [50% alpha]
Circle 207.19 16.89 Kcircles/sec [50% alpha]
Bezier 204.17 5.15 Kbeziers/sec [50% alpha]
Text 204.47 12.79 Kchars/sec
OpenGL Graphics Test 249.07
Spinning Squares 249.07 315.96 frames/sec
User Interface Test 323.22
Elements 323.22 1.48 Krefresh/sec
```









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- **TaX Developer Cookbook**

Edition Winter 2008

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