NEXTSTEP Compatible Component Program

Purpose of the Program

NeXT's NEXTSTEP Compatible Component program provides hardware vendors who have produced peripheral hardware or device drivers for the NEXTSTEP operating system with a level of approval for their products.

Logistics of the Program

Hardware vendors contact NeXT's marketing group to make arrangements for NeXT to test their hardware or device drivers. NeXT supplies the vendor with a contract and a test program to run against their driver to pre-determine any improprieties in their driver package (see Driver Requirements). When the product passes the preliminary test program, the vendor sends the product to NeXT for final testing.

Upon receiving the products for testing, NeXT's Software Quality Assurance group administers the test procedures specified in the contract. At the conclusion of testing, a test report is provided to the vendor.

If the product is approved, NeXT sends a letter of authorization to the hardware vendor stating the condition of the approval. The vendor signs the authorization letter, agreeing to its terms, and returns the signed letter to NeXT. At this point NeXT releases the "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component" logo artwork to the vendor to be used in accordance with the specifications of the authorization letter.

Any driver that is rejected may be considered for retesting at a rate of 30% of the original testing fee, with the stipulation that only bug-fixes to the original driver are to be tested. The fixed driver must be submitted for retesting within 21 days of email notification that the driver failed the initial testing. No additional features to the driver will be permitted. Any firmware or hardware revision to an adapter that results in the need for a bug-fix revision of a previously tested driver will be billed at 50% of the original testing fee. No additional features to the driver will be permitted.

Driver Requirements for Submission

All device drivers must be submitted in either config bundle form or package (pkg) form.

If a driver is submitted in package form, NeXT will produce a checksum for the package, which will be included in the test report. Only the image of the package submitted for testing will be considered "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component." If the driver is repackaged, the testing done by NeXT is invalidated, and the new package must be retested to be considered "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component."

If a driver is submitted in config form, NeXT will produce a checksum list for each file in the config bundle. This list will be included in the test report. Only the driver image submitted for testing will be considered "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component." If the driver is modified or rebuilt, the testing done by NeXT is invalidated, and the new driver must be retested to be considered "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component."

NeXT will provide a diagnostic tool to be run on drivers before submission for testing. This tool produces a list of warnings and errors regarding the structure of the driver bundle as well as the content of many of its files. This is provided as a service to save driver developers time and money. NeXT will not accept drivers for testing if this diagnostic tool indicates any errors or warnings unless a thorough explanation of each error or warning is provided with the submission.

Configuration Options
NeXT's testing procedures are based on an X4 configuration formula. A device driver will be tested against a specified combination (to be agreed to in the contract phase) of hardware that produces a product of 4 (e.g., one adapter in four different PCs, four adapters in one PC, 2 adapters in 2 PCs).

Testing Fees
These are the general fees that NeXT will charge for testing drivers and adapters:

SCSI	$3500
Ethernet	$3000
Video	$1500
Sound	$1500

The actual testing fees will be determined in the contract phase.

Distribution of Tested Device Drivers
NeXT will offer the hardware vendor the opportunity to distribute its tested and approved device drivers via

NeXTanswers. The vendor may chose to only release contact information via NeXTanswers.

Support Issues and Responsibilities

NeXT assumes absolutely no support responsibilities for any vendor driver or hardware product that bears the "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component" logo. NeXT only supports drivers that are "NeXT-Released" drivers.

"NeXT-Released" drivers

Any driver that appears on the latest release CD of NEXTSTEP for Intel Processors or is located in the Released drivers directory should be considered a "NeXT-Released" driver. "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component" drivers are not to be considered as "NeXT Released" drivers. "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component" drivers are listed in a separate directory.

Hardware vendors whose hardware is supported by NeXT-Released drivers automatically qualify for use of the "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component" logo, but an authorization letter must be completed prior to the release of the logo artwork.