

NICE / NEXTSTEP Compatible System Program

NeXT's NICE (NEXTSTEP Intel Compatibility Expert) / NEXTSTEP Compatible System program provides PC system manufacturers, vendors and system integrators with a means to test their systems for functional compatibility with NeXT's NEXTSTEP operating system.

Testing is typically done by a third party test engineer who has completed the NICE training program.

The Compatibility Test Suite yields a report as to the degree to which the specific configuration tested is compatible with a given version of NEXTSTEP.

The NICE Training Program

NeXT offers NICE training classes to PC vendors, card vendors, system integrators, third party test labs, etc. The pre-requisites are a knowledge of Intel-based hardware and the ability to install and configure NEXTSTEP on an Intel-based PC system. Upon completion of the program, the NICE graduate receives NeXT's Compatibility Test Suite to use in testing systems for NEXTSTEP compatibility. For information on registering for NICE training call NeXT's Telesales department at 800-848-NeXT.

A NEXTSTEP Compatible System Configuration

A "NEXTSTEP Compatible System" configuration is a specific PC system, fully fitted out with expansion cards and other specific peripherals, which has been tested by a NICE test engineer using a Compatibility Test Suite designed by NeXT.

A NEXTSTEP Compatible System must use device drivers that have passed the NeXT device driver testing process. Currently, these tests are available for NeXT-developed drivers as well as for third party developed drivers that have been approved through NeXT's third party testing program. (See "NEXTSTEP Compatible Component" NeXTanswer #1902.)

Testing a System with the Compatibility Test Suite

NICE test engineers use the Compatibility Test Suite to test complete hardware configurations (system unit plus add-on cards and peripherals) for NEXTSTEP compatibility. They then submit a full description of the

configuration under test along with the test results to the NeXT SQA (Software Quality Assurance) department for review. Note that NeXT SQA will not repeat tests (and may not even have the tested hardware in house); test results and system descriptions are audited for completeness only, and compatibility is assessed based on the pass/fail indications provided by the NICE test engineer. In other words, NeXT, Inc. does not test NEXTSTEP Compatible System for compatibility, but rather relies on input from NICE-trained third parties to determine this level of compatibility.

If NeXT SQA approves the submitted test results, NeXT will create an authorization letter for the party submitting the test results. Once the authorization has been signed by both parties, NeXT will send the "NEXTSTEP Compatible System" logo artwork to the company sponsoring the NICE test, which may then affix the logo to any product material for the specifically authorized configuration.

Support Issues and Responsibilities

NeXT will assume absolutely no support responsibilities for any product that bears the "Tested Compatible" logo. All support issues and responsibilities belong solely to the hardware vendor or integrator that submitted the test report.

Additional Information

"NEXTSTEP Compatible System" is a pre-requisite for a system to be considered for the NEXTSTEP Certified System program. (For more information on NEXTSTEP Certified System see NeXTanswer #1904)

For every NEXTSTEP Compatible System, NeXT will include information in the Intel Certified and Compatibility Systems Guide and listed on the NeXT web site at (<http://www.next.com/OpenStep/Products/NEXTSTEP/NSIntel/>). The amount of detail made available will be determined by NeXT and by the party submitting the compatibility test report.