

A Turbocharged Experience

Palit Radeon HD 4870 Sonic (OC) Dual Edition

BY MICHAEL LOW



Unlike Palit's previous HD 4870 offering which pretty much stuck to ATI's reference specification, the HD 4870 Sonic Dual Edition is determined to set itself apart from the crowd. One such feature is named Dual BIOS, which implements a Sonic and Turbo mode which increases the memory and core speed further than its pre-OC self with a flick of a switch.

The card shares the same red PCB design and like the others, occupies two PCI slots. But unlike many of its other HD 4870 siblings, the card ditches the reference design in favor of one that provides better airflow while keeping the card quiet. This is achieved by having an open-case design with dual fans and heatsink that envelope the card. The forward thinking folks at Palit opted for a DisplayPort instead, so no S-Video support but good news for owners of DisplayPort-enabled monitors.

Performance-wise, this card definitely has an edge over other HD 4870 cards out there. Please understand that tests were done in both, Sonic and Turbo modes and the results from both modes were staggeringly close that we chose to use the ones from Sonic mode for the purpose of this review. The card does predictably well with a 3DMark06 score of

13893 and non-DX10 games such as Quake 4 ran silky smooth in our tests.

Moving on to DX10 games where the card really shines, Company of Heroes performed really well at an average FPS of 56.1 with everything set to High, no small feat for a non-dual GPU card. Its 3DMarkVantage score was P8665, the highest score so far for all reviewed single GPU HD 4870 cards.

With Crysis, we are able to play the game at close to 30 FPS even when running at 1680 x 1050 resolutions on Very High and 2x AA settings applied. Playing at 8x AA resulted in unsightly choppy frame rates. You can try to turn it down a notch to 4x AA with 1280 x 1024 resolutions where the lag is less apparent. Our advise, however, is to stick with 2x AA for best results. The difference between Sonic and Turbo mode was not that apparent, both in benchmarks and games, but it's good to know that the option is there. The card was hot to the touch but the heat does get dispersed really well thanks to its open-case design.

The Palit Radeon HD 4870 comes bundled with the basics you'll need to get the card up and running. There's the power adaptor, driver disc,

quick start guide, DVI to VGA dongle and HDMI to DVI dongle. To those thinking of a dual card setup, please take note that the CrossFire X Bridge Interconnect cable is not included in the box.

Overall, this Palit offering is definitely a step up from other HD4870 cards we have reviewed so far. Gamers with a preference for single GPU cards should find this upper midrange card at just the right price point and performance.

SPECIFICATIONS

Slot	Radeon	Memory	CrossFire	Price
PCIe2	HD 4870	512MB	Yes	RM 1090

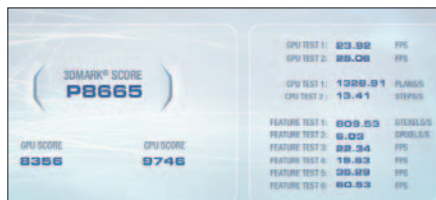
Model: HD4870 Sonic Dual Edition
Core: 775MHz
Memory: 4000MHz (4x 1000MHz)
DirectX Support: 8 and below, 9.0a (Shader Model 1), 9.0b (Shader Model 2), 9.0c (Shader Model 3 / HDR), 10 (Unified Shader Model 4 / Vista), 10.1 (Unified Shader Model 4.1 / Vista SP1)
I/Os: 2x DVI-I, 1x DisplayPort
Cooling System: Fan / Dual-Layer
PSU Required: 500W, 6-pin + 6-pin Dual
Warranty: One-year
Contact: Atek Computer Trading / Convergent Distribution (M) Sdn Bhd / Enlight Computer (M) Sdn Bhd / MediaForte (M) Sdn Bhd
Telephone: (03) 7880 9151 / (03) 2144 1881 / (03) 2381 4483 / (03) 7960 6868
URL: www.palit.biz

Available at
PLAZA LOW YAT
 shopping centre

HWM'S VERDICT

Features: **8.5**
 Performance: **9.0**
 Value: **8.5**

8.5
 Out of 10



Great DX10 performance from a single GPU card to feed your gaming needs

