

DETAILS

PRICE

- £3,695 / \$6,936* / €5,427*

*Currency conversion

PLATFORM

- Windows XP Pro (32Bit)

MAIN FEATURES

- 2x 2.6GHz Dual-Core AMD Opteron 280 processors
- ATI FireGL V7300 graphics with 512MB RAM
- 4GB PC3200 DDR SDRAM

MANUFACTURER: CAD2

WEBSITE: www.cad2.com



CAD2 Vision A280GT-64

Stylish and well-specified, the CAD2's beauty is much more than skin deep

CAD2's Vision A280GT-64 is certainly one of the most striking systems we looked at. With an attractive, grilled Lian-Li PC-V1000 chassis & yes wheels, it's stylish and easy to roll into position.

But there's a lot more to the Vision than just its looks. This is a carefully constructed system. Open up the side panel and a plethora of cowlings are revealed over the main components. As well as a pair of dual-core Opteron 280s running at 2.4GHz apiece, ATI's latest FireGL is provided, although it's the more modest V7300 with 512MB of memory. However, the cowlings are hard to remove, so if you need to perform any upgrades or maintenance, they'll get in the way. The CAD2 has a well thought-out storage system, too. A pair of 150GB Raptor 150 hard disks are striped together in a RAID 0 array. With their 10,000rpm rotational speed, the Raptors are the quickest SATA disks available. A third disk is also provided for more general data storage; in this case, a 300GB Seagate Barracuda. Despite the well-balanced components, the CAD2 didn't entirely bowl us over during testing. Its scores in SPEC Viewperf were slightly below average almost across the board, with the ensight-01 result the only highlight. Maxon Cinebench performance was also below par. Although rendering was what we'd expect from a pair of Opteron 280s, the hardware OpenGL lighting score was comparatively uninspiring. This was a disappointment, as there's a lot to like about the CAD2. It's extremely well-built, has all the right components to make a superb 3D visualisation workstation, and is competitively priced. It's also a reasonably quiet system, despite all the fans. But unfortunately, it was up against some stiff competition, against which it couldn't quite prevail.

VERDICT

PROS

- Fast dual-core processors
- Fast RAID 0 system disk array
- Fast ATI FireGL graphics

CONS

- Benchmark results let it down

RANGE OF FEATURES 7

VALUE FOR MONEY 7

OVERALL 7