

Selected social media snapshots from twitter, private blogs and electronics forums

twitter



http://twitter.com/mangel_ajo

18 March: I converted the Audio_DSP.PrjFPG to the nb3000, and I'm (again) impressed with @Altium's C to VHDL compiler capabilities...

9 March 2010: Testing my new @altium license, and the Nanoboard 3000, it's really time-saving to have every needed tool for FPGA/PCB design fully integrated



<http://twitter.com/HansHuebner>

8 February 2010: playing with #altium designer - it's kind of "wow!", but i'm curious how it handles larger c/c++ projects.

16 January 2010: the altium nanoboard 3000 i got for xmas arrived yesterday. looks totally awesome so far. now waiting for 3 gb of xilinx dl's to commence



<http://twitter.com/Kryptoblog>

24 November 2009: "Just unpacked an Altium NanoBoard 3000. This really isn't your average FPGA proto board. Very, very slick and cool.

<http://blog.streamingcores.com/>

Altium NanoBoard 3000 - In The Box Experience

streaming cores

Monday, March 15, 2010

ALTIUM NANOBOARD 3000 - IN THE BOX EXPERIENCE

This series of posts is dedicated to the Altium NanoBoard 3000. I had the opportunity to play with it and like to share my experience with you.

The NanoBoard was released in September 2009 by [Altium Ltd.](#) It's a rapid prototyping platform for digital electronic designs consisting of an evaluation board, design software and royalty free [IP](#) for use in the onboard FPGA. In short, all the tools you need to start implementing your ideas. You can stop reading now, buy it from e.g. [Newark](#) for \$395 and get started. The 3000 is part of Altium's NanoBoard family a complementary product line besides the well know EDA tools. Maybe you're already working with Designer.



When I received the delivery and removed the outer packing I was impressed. Note, I had not opened the box yet. It reminded me of some consumer lifestyle product. It could have been a mobile phone or high-end notebook. Apple is well know for such a kind of great packaging. Not bad for an evaluation board!



Opening the box reveals the board + software. The black PCB with gold contacts has an undeniable elegance. Underneath is a separate box containing accessories, desktop stand, speaker board, IR remote (yes, a remote control) and the power supply.



The Quickstart Guide provides instructions for mounting the desktop stand and connecting the speaker board. After 10 minutes I had the final setup sitting on my desk. The software is shipped on a DVD. Installation on Windows completed successfully after a couple of minutes. No license is required. The eval board is your license/dongle.



Without having worked with it, this is clearly a highlight among the evaluation kits on my shelf. It's obvious that this product was designed by a team of professionals with a precise and common vision in mind. Every detail has been fine-tuned, from the packaging to the PCB. A good example for holistic product design. Thumbs up.

And now, you know why it is worth to consider the in the box experience. More details in the next post...

Posted by [Andreas Kaiser](#) in [Boards](#), [Development](#), [Tools](#) at [23:16](#)

New Kid on the Block - Altium Nanoboard 3000

Posted by [TT](#) on Sep 25, 2009 9:45:49 AM

Recently I received an e-newsletter from Altium, introducing their newly launched NanoBoard 3000 which they label "smarter than your average board". What caught my attention is the content highlighted in the e-newsletter that "it comes with everything you need to take your skills into programmable system design: the hardware, design software, IP that's ready to use and royalty-free, and retailing at only AUD495.00!"

Wanting to know more on this new NanoBoard 3000 from Altium, I clicked on the "Find out more" tab and was brought to the Altium Australia website. Being situated in Singapore, I found out from Altium's homepage that I will have to contact their distributors (Farnell Components Pte Ltd and PCB Graphtech Pte Ltd) for local support. There is also an Altium Wiki (<http://wiki.altium.com/display/ADOH/Home>) in Altium's website which is intuitive and contains all the needed information. I spent some time going through the Altium Wiki and the NanoBoard 3000 in Altium website, and look what I had gathered.....

Altium introduces the NanoBoard 3000 to provide an entry-point to explore the world of soft design in a low cost, accessible way which engineers like you & I will be glad to have. For starters, there is a choice of 3 different high capacity FPGAs (Xilinx Spartan™-3AN, Altera® Cyclone III or fixed LatticeECP2™ device) to choose from. I specifically like this variety of choices as this mean I can choose the most suitable FPGA for my design.

The NanoBoard 3000 includes a 12-month subscription to restricted version of Altium Designer Soft Design License, plus all software updates that are released during the 12-month subscription, including major releases. With this license, I am not bothered by licenses associated with FPGA development tool licenses: Altium Designer's software eliminates the need for FPGA licenses. All of that will be taken care of by Altium. Neat!

Looking through the specification of the NanoBoard, I found out that it has features which are normally found in much more expensive kits such as rich I/O capabilities including TFT touch screen, USB hub connections, Wireless, SVGA interface, tri-color LEDs, ADC/DACs.

The high quality LCD display analog resistor touchscreen enables the designers to develop rich interactive applications. The 2.4 inch panel features 240x320 resolution & 16 bit colour with a range of software drivers provided. The high speed USB capability include a 3-way USB host controller which allows the designer to plug in to human interface devices like keyboard and mouse. The high speed USB port allows the NanoBoard to be controlled from a master device such as a PC, providing access to a range of powerful FPGA instruments and debugging tools.

The SVGA interface allows the designers to connect to any SVGA monitors. The 3 8-bit analog R, G & B output signals are obtained from a 24-bit digital RGB signal that can be generated with ease using Altium software SVGA controller & software controlled API. The 4 channel 8-bit ADC is accessible from the FPGA via the SPI and providing a sampling rate between 50 & 200K samples per second. D-A conversion

is done by a 4 channels 8-bit DAC & again interface to the FPGA over the SPI bus. Both the ADC and DAC use 6-way screw terminals blocks, making external connectivity painless.

If wireless functionality is a must in your design, the wireless connection peripheral board will help you get there quickly with support to WIFI, GSM, GPS & Bluetooth. The software and FPGA software IP are provided as well to get the designer up & running fast, royalty free. The super bright LEDs come together with an easy to use controller & supporting software which make development & prototype in lighting application a breeze. The specification indeed looks good and I must say the NanoBoard 3000 is more bang per buck.

Wanting to know if I can migrate projects using Cadence OrCAD to Altium Designer, I called the technical support line of Farnell Components Pte Ltd but was informed by them that they only distribute the NanoBoards and not Altium Designer. However they have an interface called DesignLink which enables a designer working with Altium Designer to be linked to the Farnell's online store and access to Farnell data relative to linked parts such as local pricing, stock availability, datasheets etc during the design process and produce a Bill Of Materials (BOM) which is current to the market. I was also told that Farnell is the only company in APAC that can provide local inventory and local pricing for the BOM generated via DesignLink in Altium Designer. With regards to my enquiries on migrating OrCAD to Altium technology and the upgrade of the Altium Designer license in order to utilise the Designlink functionality, I will need to contact Altium or their vendors and distributors. So I proceed to contact the other distributor but unfortunately they have closed for the day. With such I dropped an email to Altium's support centre regarding my questions.

I must say I am very impressed with Altium's response rate because I received an email form the Altium's support centre which contains their reply to my questions the very next morning (maybe because Australia is 2 hours ahead of Singapore). They replied that migrating from OrCAD or PADS to Altium technology is a straightforward process with Altium Designer's unified data and file transition features. Altium Designer's translators import all documents in one operation and include specific support for both OrCAD and PADS design & library files. With a series of simple, interactive steps the import Wizard processes all files types to automatically create ready-to-use Altium Designer projects and integrated library files, while accurately processing essential design elements such as polygon pours, text positioning, simulation data, design rules, layer mapping, project structure, and schematic/PCB synchronization.

I am getting a NanoBoard 3000!