

# Re: Using a second display adapter

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*Source:* <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Debian/2008-04/msg01890.html>

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- *From:* "Digby Tarvin" <[lists2008@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:lists2008@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Sat, 19 Apr 2008 19:06:55 +0000 (GMT)
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n Sat, Apr 19, 2008 at 07:53:58AM -0500, Hugo Vanwoerkom wrote:

Digby Tarvin wrote:

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Can anyone explain what happens hardware wise when a second adapter is present? For example, adding a PCI adapter to a system that already has an AGP card.

Just put the second one in xorg. conf:

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I assume that video memory for more advanced modes will be mapped to unique addresses by the PCI magic, but aren't the legacy modes like CGA etc tied down to fixed addresses (eg SVGA text mode to segment b000h)?

Is it possible to have have two text mode displays simultaneously?

No. Video of the Linux console is rather primitive. Only the first adapter has the VT's.

As soon as X dies you lose the other monitors/keyboards/mice.

Interesting, thanks, but not really what I had in mind on this occasion.

I am really more interested in the hardware level, not using Linux Console or xorg driver at all.

By text mode support I mean I would like to know if a second adapter can be configured (via a custom driver) to provide a block of memory

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whereby writing one byte to the memory results in one character displayed on a screen. The same hardware mode used by the linux console when not in framebuffer mode.

Ideally I would like to be able to tell Linux to keep its hands off the card so that I can write my own (non X, non glass tty) driver for it.

Although if the framebuffer driver can be put in text mode then that might do what I want without needing a new driver. Anyone know?

I only use Nvidia. Best cards best support although proprietary driver.

Unfortunately I think that probably rules out nVidia for me if I am looking at writing a custom driver. Details programmers documentation is probably my highest priority after the basic requirement that it be able to co-exist with another card, with clean/simple interface being the next priority (eg framebuffer directly addressible without any indirection).

Performance is definitely way down the list, as I'm not really planning in implementing support for fancy acceleration features.

Regards,  
DigbyT

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