

Howto: Building a Cheap Nettop Media PC

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The origin of this project was an article on Lifehacker, however, i've expanded on it, and can point you in the way of actually getting this working. because i found the lifehacker article a good stating point for what I wanted, but left me short of sound and other items.

As with the lifehacker article, i too bought a nettop, the ASRock ION 330 is a good deal (which we have reviewed previously), with a decent sized 320GB hard disk and a good 2GB of RAM, and most importantly a NVIDIA ION graphics card. Which as the reviewer on lifehacker points out "NVIDIA ION graphics chip that can handle meaty HD video and export through an HDMI cable." This is important as the device will be plugged into my Samsung 37" HD TV. The unit is also quiet, and i mean REALLY quiet, unlike my Apple G5 which you know it is on, this thing, with the BIOS set to LED's turned off, its actually difficult to know if its powered on, its that silent. (Quieter than a Popcorn Hour as well), the added bonus as a media player, is the Multi region DVD drive. allowing you to play DVD's as well as stream media from a NAS or from the WWW. The unit is a glossy finished device, so if you have small ones with stiky fingers, this will get a bit messy looking on the outside.

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