

Power Supply Booster and GeForce 9800GTX Video Card

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A second power supply for your computer?

Have you ever lusted for a newer and more powerful video card? Well I have. My computer power supply just did not have the juice to supply the latest hot video cards. Replacing the current power supply is obviously the cheapest way to go. But when the computer was assembled, after the power supply was plugged into the motherboard, the power supply connections were covered up by metal supports that were riveted in place to hold other items! So replacing the power supply was not an option.

I saw an ad for a supplementary power supply that could fit into a hard drive space. This could solve my problem. Hey – it listed for \$84.00 – how could I go wrong?

It arrived very well packed. Even though this is much smaller than the conventional power supply, the metal box looked like it was made out of heavier gauge metal. It is very well made and has good instructions (lots of pictures) about how to install it.

One needs an empty slot large enough for a hard disk drive. This unit is specifically designed for a PCI Express motherboard.

The installation is easy, but it does take time. It did involve a slight bit of cosmetic surgery to the plastic front of the computer. The photo shows the power supply before it was fully inserted into the computer.

More information is available from the web site, www.ATXPowerSupplies.com.

The unit is called FSP Booster X3 – 300 Watt Power Supply Booster. It lists for \$84.00; shipping and handling brought it to \$94.32.



When I bought this computer it had a video card that only supported one monitor. I purchased a new video card that would feed two monitors. If you spend a lot of time on the computer, you may find the second monitor a necessary addition to make your life easier. The video card I purchased was a compromise, because of the power supply. That card would not support DirectX.

So when *Photoshop CS4* arrived, things changed. *CS4* says that it has moved some processing from the motherboard to the video card, and if one does not have an up-to-date card, some of the functions will not be available.

When *CS4* starts up it gives a message that certain newer video cards will give superior performance. Adobe even supplies a link to their site listing the latest cards they have found to be compatible with *CS4*. Since EVGA offers a limited lifetime warranty, I went with their **GeForce 9800GTX**, and am happy with it.

It took me 3½ hours to install the extra power supply and video card. Would I do it again? You bet. But I wouldn't recommend it to anyone who isn't comfortable messing around inside the computer.

Installing the new video card was interesting. It takes up two slots. After it was inserted into the correct slot, I noticed that it squished a cable onto a heat sink. Even though the cable is for a function that I do not use (wireless keyboard – it was too slow) I still did not like the idea of the cable on the heat sink. So I had to remove the card.

The card is held in place with a lock that is on the left side of the card. The card uses only one slot, on the motherboard, but it is double-wide and fills up the space to the left of the card. This is where the card release is located.

By using one of my dental instruments, I was able to release the card from the right side. I removed it, moved the cable, then replaced the card. I then moved some of the other cards around, so the extra fan I had installed to keep things cool would provide better air circulation. If you are not comfortable doing that sort of stuff, better let some computer guru do it for you.

Any questions, feel free to e-mail me at