



FireWire® 800/1394b Drivers for Windows®

General

Apple® recently launched the FireWire 800 technology, but until now, support for Windows has been unavailable. Since Microsoft has not committed to provide Windows support for FireWire 800, OrangeWare has moved ahead and developed those drivers.

The OrangeWare FireWire 800/1394b driver provides support for both host controllers and 1394b-to-IDE bridge devices. Hardware developers can get a jump on offering this new technology to the lucrative PC upgrade market by licensing the drivers from OrangeWare.

Specifications

- Supports Oxford OXUF922 and Initio INIC-2430 1394 bridge chips. Support for future chip manufacturers will be provided when they become available.
- Supports native mode FireWire 800, 1600 and 3200.
- Meets all IEEE 1394b published specifications.

The Importance of Using OrangeWare Software Driver Support

Developers have wrongly assumed that Microsoft currently supports the FireWire 800 specifications. This is a serious problem. What gives FireWire 800 the appearance of Windows support is that the hard disk controller chip manufacturers have put a temporary fix into their firmware that corrects the hard disk data stream on the fly to accept FireWire 800. This causes acute problems for the hardware developer:

1. The firmware fix overhead results in slower transfer rates, which are eliminated by using software drivers.
2. The firmware fix only handles disk drives, and as end users connect other peripheral types, they will not function.
3. CardBus developers must use a FireWire 800 driver to manage CardBus/PCI bridges or they will not function.
4. The OrangeWare driver enables optimization of specific manufacturer's chipsets by taking advantage of proprietary registers.

Both Initio and Oxford have signaled the elimination of the temporary fix in their next chip release, which means a FireWire 800 driver must be used or else the FireWire 800 hard disks will not operate.

To address this situation, developers should immediately license and begin to ship OrangeWare FireWire 800 drivers to prevent future problems with the new chips. This will insure compatibility with all 800, 1600, and 3200 Mbps FireWire technologies and associated devices. Most importantly, the OrangeWare drivers will eliminate the future channel chaos, which will result from sudden incompatibilities with other FireWire 800 and newer devices.

About OrangeWare Software Design

OrangeWare is the foremost developer of complex low-level drivers for Macintosh OSX and Windows operating systems. Our most successful development with an estimated 97% world market share is the USB2.0 driver for Windows 98SE, me, 2000 and XP. Other driver expertise includes Bluetooth, audio, video, wireless networking, and SCSI. Major customers include Intel, VIA, nVIDIA, Dell, Belkin, ATEN, and many others.

Contact Information

For more information and/or evaluation copies of the software drivers, please contact Julie Montez at (714) 998-9003 ext. 111, or at Julie_Montez@orangeware.com.

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