

Nouveau For A \$10 NVIDIA Graphics Card?

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Created 26/01/2012 - 10:36pm

Submitted by srlinuxx on Thursday 26th of January 2012 10:36:13 PM Filed under [Hardware](#) [1] [Software](#) [2]

In this article is a look at the state of the open-source Nouveau Gallium3D driver on low-end NVIDIA GeForce graphics hardware. In particular, a \$10 USD NVIDIA retail graphics card is being tested under Ubuntu Linux on both Nouveau and the proprietary NVIDIA driver and is then compared to a wide range of other low and mid-range offerings from NVIDIA's GeForce and AMD's Radeon graphics card line-up with a plethora of OpenGL benchmarks.

The graphics card that is the focal point of this article is the NVIDIA GeForce 9600GSO. It is a few generations old, but recently was made available from a major Internet retailer for as low as \$10 USD with free shipping, thanks to an instant discount and then a mail-in rebate. Normal GeForce 9600GSO graphics cards are still retailing for around \$50 USD. This particular graphics card is the GeForce 9600GSO from XFX with a part number of PV-T96O-YHFC. This article is testing under an Ubuntu 12.04 development snapshot with package versions close to what they'll be found in the final release, which additionally makes this article a first-look/preview at low-end graphics cards under Ubuntu 12.04 with the open and closed-source drivers.

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