

Re: OT: Can modern PCs run 5-1/4" floppy drives?

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- *From:* Robert Baer <robertbaer@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 05 Oct 2007 00:35:30 -0700
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Joerg wrote:

Hello Folks,

Got a new desktop from Dell (Vostro). Looking at the BIOS is only lists one drive letter (A) and just has the 3-1/2" option. Does this mean it can only run one floppy drive and it must be 3-1/2"?

I wanted to put two in there, one being the lone 5-1/2" I've got so I can retire the old machine. Once in a blue moon a client wants me to redesign something from the ice age and often there is stuff on those old floppies. Which of course I then dutifully carry over onto a CD.

Also, does anyone know the Foxconn G33M02 motherboard that's in those machines? Foxconn only has the specs for the G33M which is grossly different. Beats me why. Anyhow, I wanted to run LPT and RS232 off of there (guess I can forget that one...) and figure out whether it can drive two VGA monitors. The "documentation" that Dell furnished online this time was, to say it politely, mighty disappointing. Writing to OEM suppliers has never yielded much.

If the BIOS is limited that way, you are stuck unless you can find a compatible BIOS that does support 5-1/4 floppies *IF* they left the firmware ("hardware") for that support on their ASIC.

Back in the "good old days", from CP/M to 486's at minimum, the FDC chip(s) supported "deleted records", which were used in databases prior to the use of indexes.

That firmware option disappeared with one of the Pentium BIOSes (do not remember which one).

The other option is to find a compatible daughterboard that does support 5-1/4 floppies.

If you do, completely check it out the same day you get it, to make sure (a) it works with your computer, and (b) absolutely nothing else was altered (always for the worse).

If you do not get all you need, send it back for full refund.

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