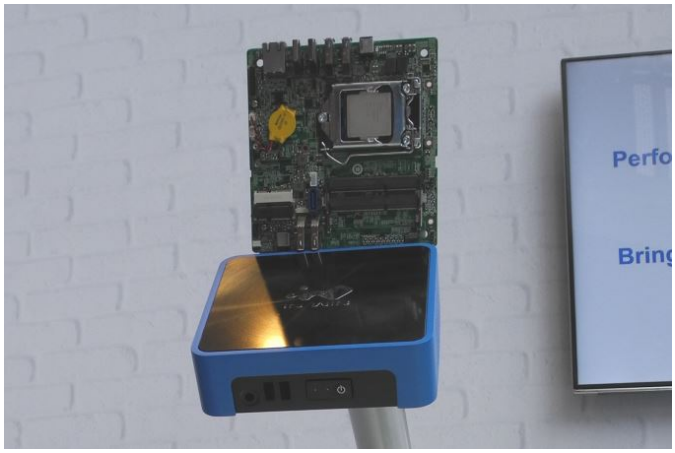
Intel Developer Forum 2015 involved more than RealSense cameras and Optane storage-- the company also presented what it describes as the smallest socketed motherboard standard, dubbed "5x5".



Named after their dimensions (5.5- x 5.8-inch, or 140 x 147mm), 5x5 motherboards have a 29% smaller surface area than the mini-ITX standard. The boards build on Intel's NUC mini-PC concept, and feature a land grid array (LGA) processor socket, two laptop-style SODIMM slots and storage in either 2.5-inch SATA or M.2 SSD form.

The standard puts the CPU in a fixed motherboard position, making it easier for designers to build cases with integrated cooling systems.

Intel says 5x5 motherboards can handle CPUs ranging from entry-level Celerons to high-end Core i7, so long the maximum thermal design profile (TDP) reaches a maximum of 65W. Thus, the company claims, customers can build sub-1 litre volume PCs with the same CPU upgradeability as a full-size desktop PC, if without full-size PCIe slots. Models will also be available with a choice of wired and wireless networking options.

Intel is still to tell when 5x5 motherboards will actually launch, but case makers should be announcing compact chassis designs supporting standard soon enough.

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