SiFive Launches Unmatched Board Remotely

SiFive

The Challenge

A guiding light in the RISC-V community, SiFive was preparing to launch a new quad-core processor and evaluation board. Preorders were accumulating on Mouser and customers were eager to try out the new hardware. Normally a critical launch like this would require multiple trips to Asia to work hands-on with a CM, but this was impossible during the COVID-19 pandemic. A new path was needed.

The Solution

The SiFive product team selected Blue Clover Devices as a manufacturing partner and leveraged the firm's cloud-based tools and methods for keeping the project on track. The SiFive Unmatched board was the ideal match for Blue Clover's newest Production Line Tool (PLT), which was built to support remote programming and testing of Linux devices.

The Results

SiFive successfully launched its Unmatched board to showcase the Quad-core 64-bit Freedom U740 RISC-V processor. Immediately after the boards shipped, users were sharing screenshots of Quake and Doom "battle-testing" the hardware. The users enthusiastically praised the processor's capabilities making it an instant RISC-V standard-bearer. Moreover SiFive had unprecedented awareness of what was happening at the factory without getting on an airplane.

"By using their game-changing PLT, Blue Clover was able to take our instructions and quickly build up a production line to meet the demanding needs of our customers. We're happy with the visibility we get with the PLT."

— Chris Jones, SiFive's Vice President of Product

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