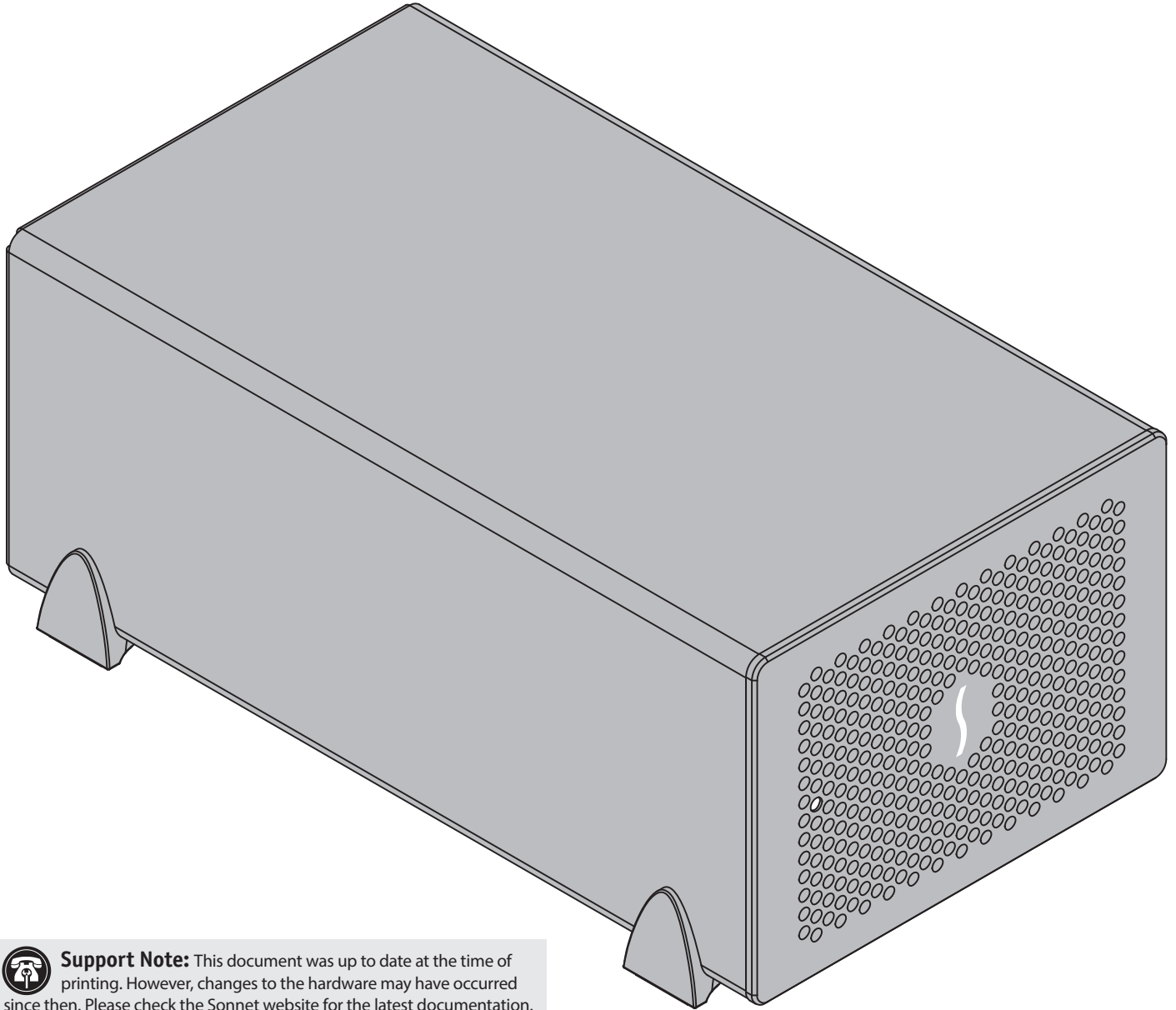


# User's Guide

## for Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe Desktop Thunderbolt to PCIe Card Expansion System



**Support Note:** This document was up to date at the time of printing. However, changes to the hardware may have occurred since then. Please check the Sonnet website for the latest documentation.

1. Go to <https://www.sonnettech.com/support/kb/kb.php>
2. Navigate to and click the Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe link.
3. Click the Manual link.
4. Click the Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe User's Guide [English] link and then check the Document Version information. If the version listed is later than this document (**revision J**), click the Download Now button for the latest version.



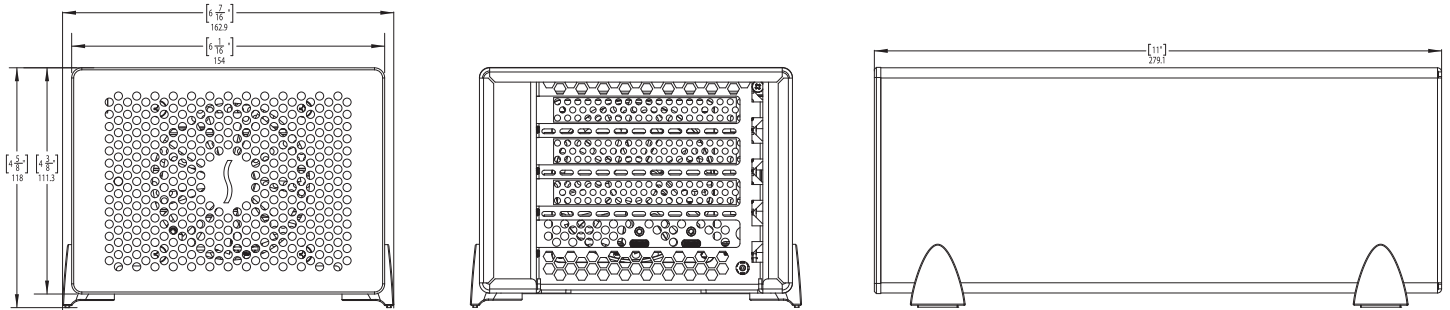
For  
Windows



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## Chapter 1 – Introduction and System Requirements



### Introduction

Congratulations on your purchase! Echo™ Express SE III and Echo Express SE IIIe are Thunderbolt™ expansion systems for PCIe cards. Through either chassis' PCIe slots, you may connect three adapter cards to any computer with Thunderbolt ports to expand its capabilities and add connectivity beyond what's offered through its native ports.

### Mac Compatibility

- Mac (M series)
- Mac (Intel) with Thunderbolt 3 ports
- macOS 13+

### Windows Compatibility

- Windows computer with Thunderbolt 5 or 4 ports
- Windows 11 22H2 build 22621.819 and newer

### Linux Compatibility

- Linux computers with Thunderbolt 5 or 4 ports
- Linux Kernel 6.1, 6.12

### System Requirements

While Echo Express expansion systems require no drivers, most expansion cards you install do; Thunderbolt-compatible drivers to enable them to work properly through the Thunderbolt interface are required. More information on which cards are compatible with Echo Express SE III and Echo Express SE IIIe is available at: <https://sonnettech.com/support/>

### Preparing to Use the Echo Express Chassis With a Mac Computer

The drivers required to support the Echo Express chassis are installed as part of macOS; there are no preparation steps beyond updating your computer to macOS 13 or newer.

### Preparing to Use the Echo Express Chassis With a Windows Computer

The drivers required to support the Echo Express chassis are installed as part of Windows 11 22H2 build 22621.819 and newer; there are no preparation steps beyond updating your computer to that version or a later one.

### Preparing to Use the Echo Express Chassis With a Linux Computer

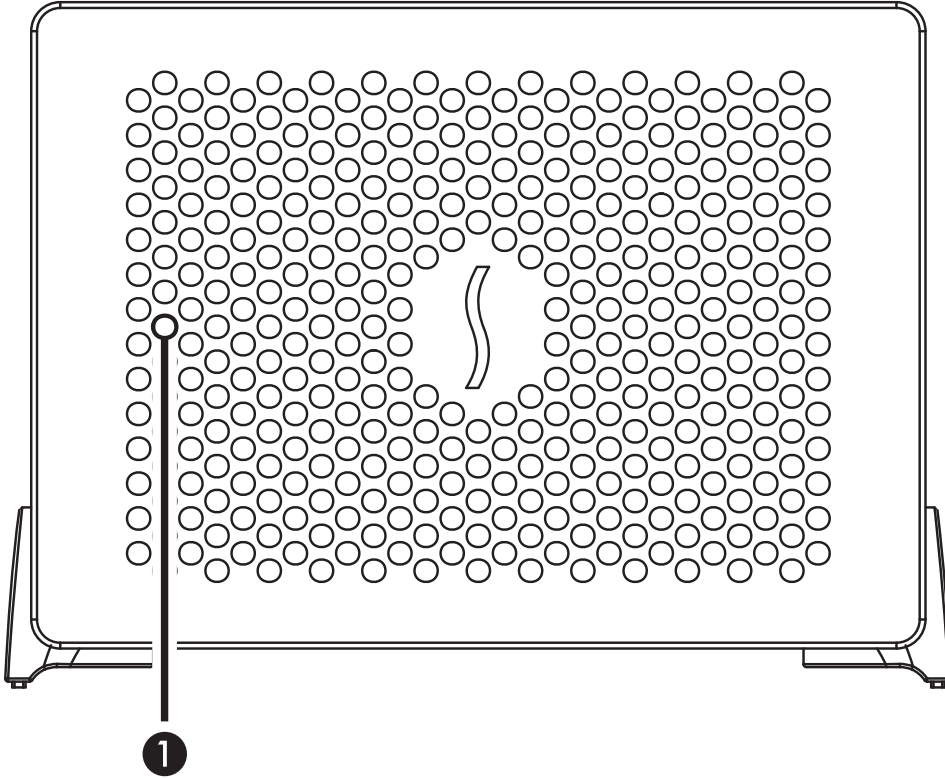
The drivers required to support the Echo Express chassis are installed as part of Linux Kernel 6.1 and 6.12; there are no preparation steps beyond updating your computer to a compatible Linux Kernel if necessary.

## Chapter 2 – Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe Description

### Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe Exterior

#### 1 – Power Indicator

This lights when the Echo Express chassis is powered, the Thunderbolt cable between the Echo chassis and your computer is plugged in securely, and the computer powered on. Note that if the Echo chassis is connected to another Thunderbolt device instead of directly to the computer, any other Thunderbolt devices connected between the computer and Echo chassis must also be powered on before the Echo chassis' power indicator will light up.



#### 2 – Threaded Nuts for ThunderLok

Attach the included Thunderbolt connector retainer clip here.

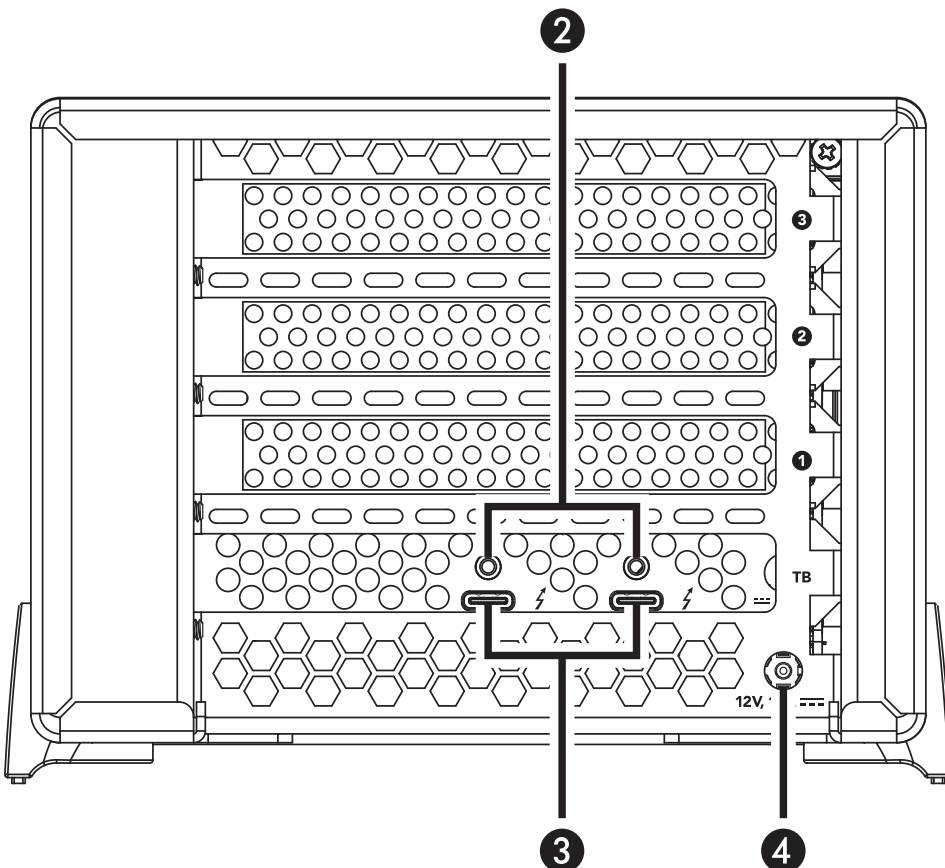
#### 3 – Thunderbolt Ports

Connect the included (or other certified) Thunderbolt cable between either port and your computer's Thunderbolt port (or other Thunderbolt device in the chain connected to the computer).

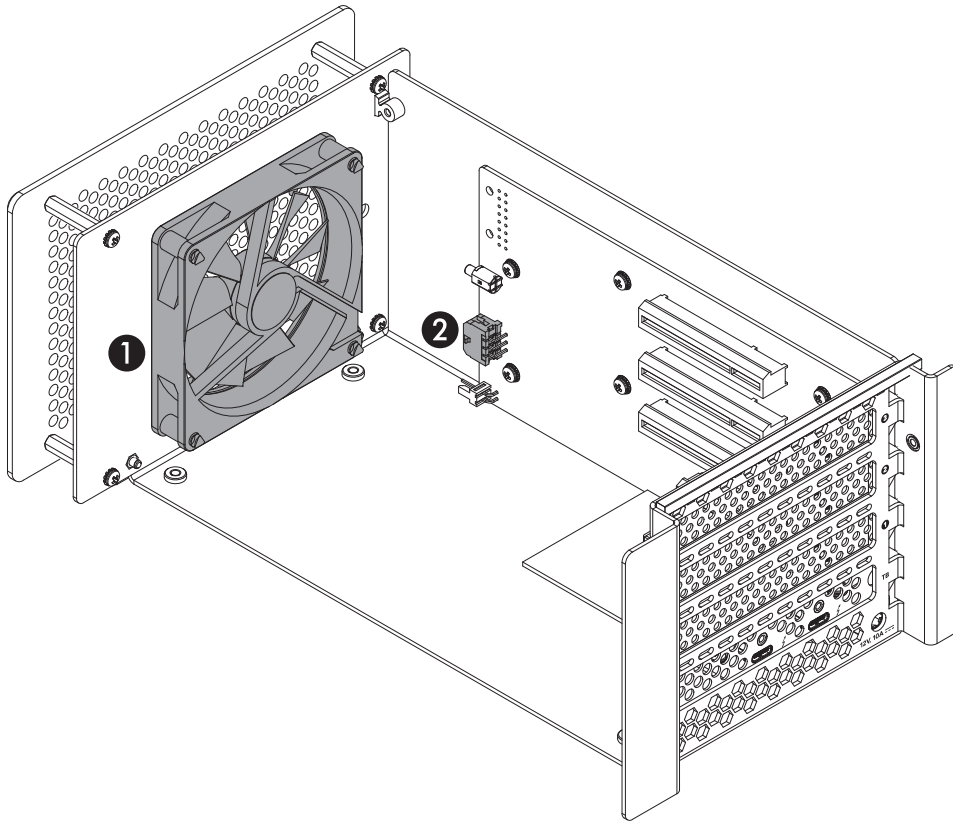
The second port may be used to connect to another Thunderbolt peripheral device, display(s), or a USB device (when connected with the proper cable).

#### 4 – 12V DC Socket

Connect the included DC power adapter to this connector.



## Chapter 2 – Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe Description



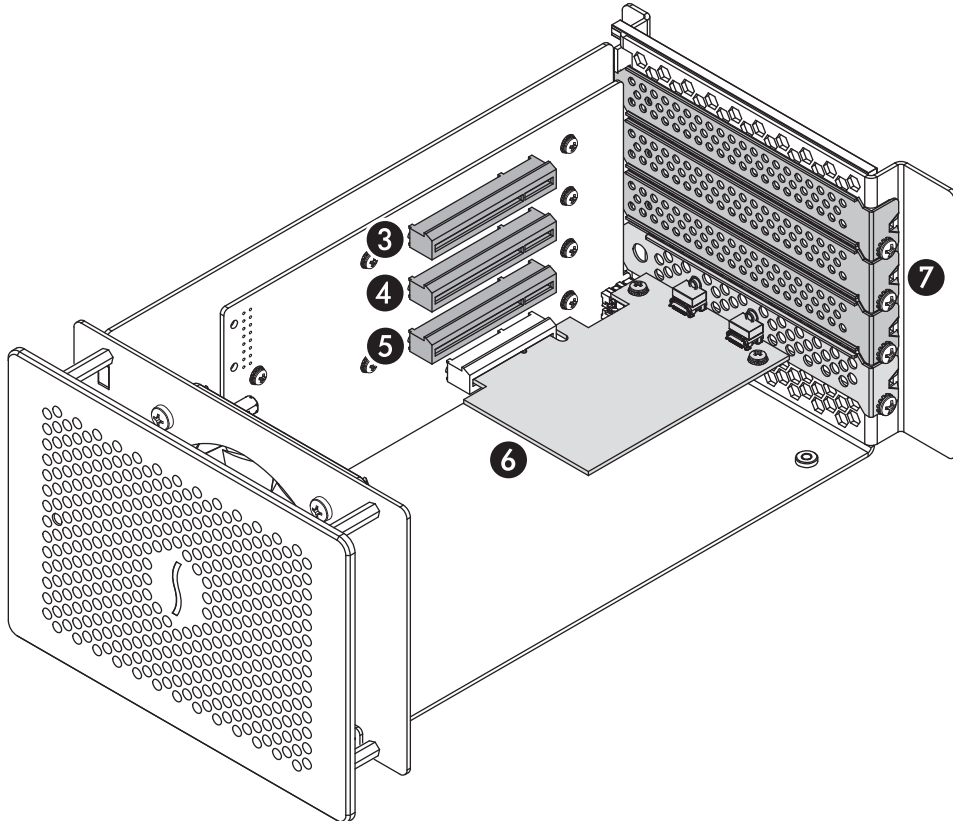
### Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe Inner Assembly

#### 1 – Fan

The temperature-controlled fan provides cooling for the installed PCIe cards and the chassis' supporting Thunderbolt circuitry. It operates quietly when the card is running cool, and automatically speeds up in steps as the temperature rises. Do not block the vent holes on the front or back of the chassis to prevent overheating.

#### 2 – 6-Pin Auxiliary Power Connector (Echo Express SE IIIe only)

Plugged into this connector is the auxiliary power cable for an adapter card requiring extra power.



#### 3 – PCIe Slot 3

This is an x8 mechanical (x4 electrical) PCIe 3.1 slot. It is also compatible with PCIe 4.0, 2.0, and 1.1 cards.

#### 4 – PCIe Slot 2

This is an x8 mechanical (x8 electrical) PCIe 3.1 slot. It is also compatible with PCIe 4.0, 2.0, and 1.1 cards.

#### 5 – PCIe Slot 1

This is an x8 mechanical (x8 electrical) PCIe 3.1 slot. It is also compatible with PCIe 4.0, 2.0, and 1.1 cards.

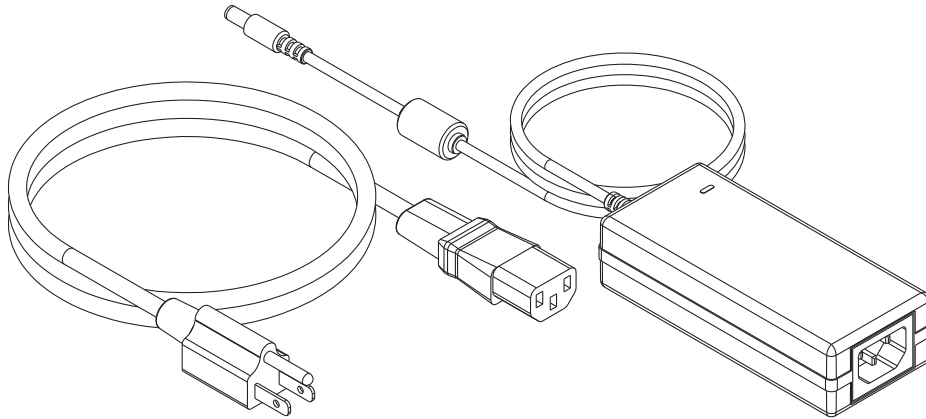
#### 6 – Thunderbolt Interface Card

This is installed into its own slot and may not be moved to another slot.

#### 7 – PCIe Slot Access Covers

These cover openings in the chassis when PCIe slots are unoccupied.

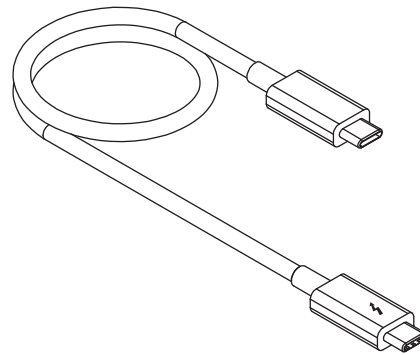
## Chapter 2 – Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe Description



### Power Adapter and Cord

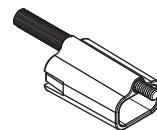
Connect the power adapter to Echo chassis' 12VDC socket. Note that the power indicator on top lights when the adapter is connected to AC power.

Connect the power cord between a power outlet and the power adapter. Note that the power cord included with your product may appear different than the one pictured here, depending on where the product was purchased.



### Thunderbolt Cable

Connect this cable between the Echo chassis and one of your computer's Thunderbolt ports (often indicated by a  $\lightning$  logo), or other Thunderbolt peripheral device in the chain connected to the computer. Connecting the Echo chassis to a computer port marked with the generic USB icon ( $\text{USB}$ ) or USB Charging Port icon ( $\text{lightning bolt}$ ) is NOT supported.



### ThunderLok™ Thunderbolt Connector Retainer Clip

This clip secures the Thunderbolt connector plugged into one of the Echo chassis' Thunderbolt ports to prevent accidental cable disconnection. This clip is compatible with Sonnet Thunderbolt cables.

## Chapter 3 – PCIe Card Installation and Chassis Setup Steps

1. Remove the Echo chassis from its packaging, and then set it upside-down on a soft, flat, level surface.
2. Using a Phillips screwdriver, remove and set aside the four screws securing the outer case to the inner assembly (Figure 1).



**Support Note:** To avoid damaging components due to static electricity discharge, wear an antistatic wrist strap while working inside the Echo chassis.

3. Flip over the Echo chassis. Place one hand on top of the outer case. Remove the inner assembly by gently grasping its faceplate by the edges and pulling (Figure 2). Set aside the outer case.

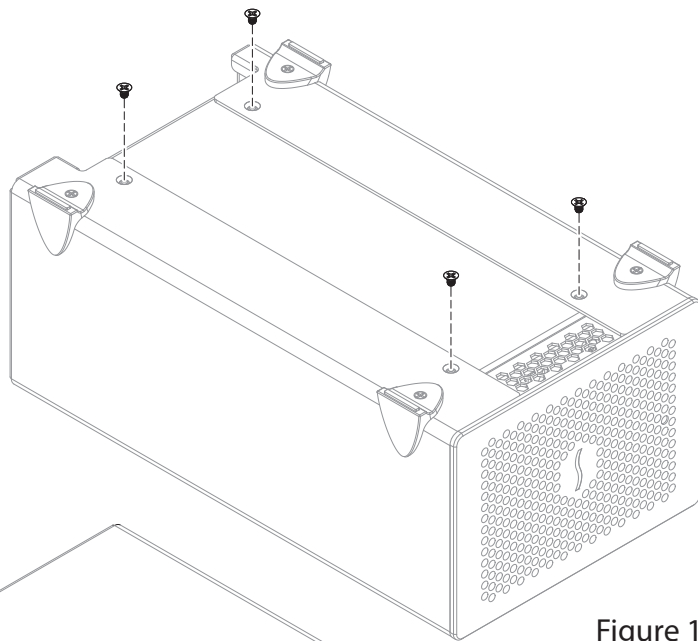


Figure 1

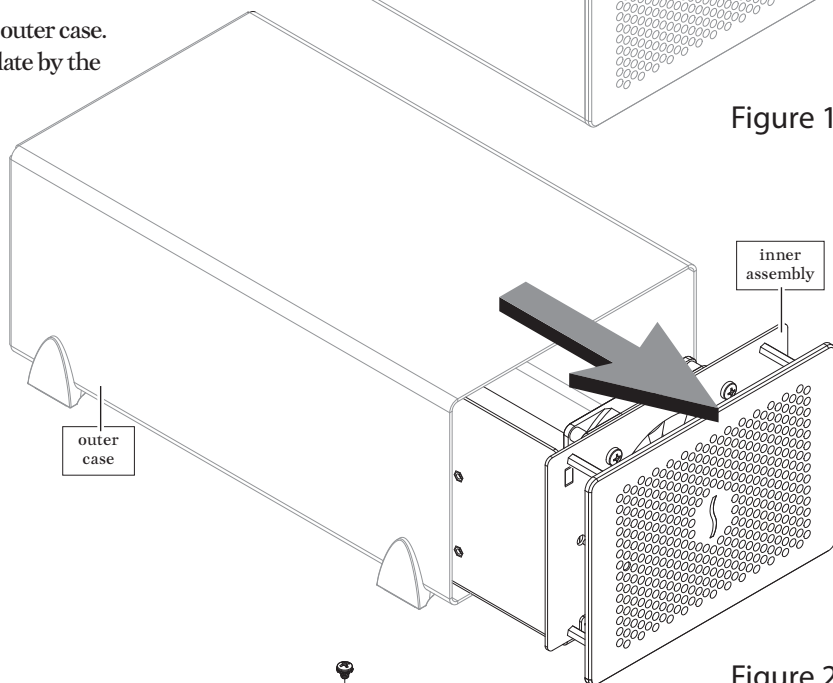


Figure 2

4. Turn the inner assembly on its side with the PCIe slots facing up. Remove and set aside the screw securing a PCIe slot access cover from the Echo chassis' inner assembly (Figure 3).
5. Remove and set aside the loose slot access cover (Figure 3).
6. If you are installing more than one card, repeat steps 4 and 5 as necessary with the remaining slot access covers.
7. **OPTIONAL STEP:** If you are *not* installing a PCIe card which requires auxiliary power, go to step 8. Otherwise, locate the auxiliary power cable, remove the cable twist tie securing it, and then move the loose connector aside for later connection.

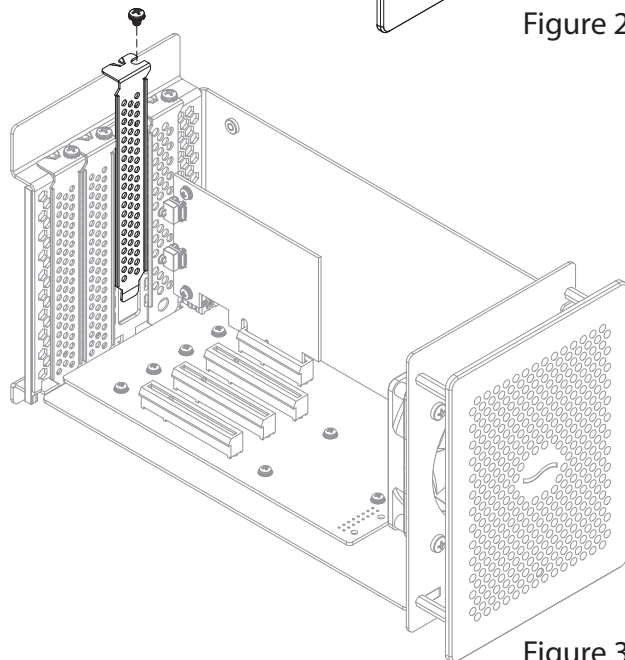


Figure 3

## Chapter 3 – PCIe Card Installation and Chassis Setup Steps



**WARNING:** When handling computer products, take care to prevent components from being damaged by static electricity; avoid working in carpeted areas. Handle expansion cards only by their edges and avoid touching connector traces and component pins. Also, avoid touching the Echo Express SE IIIe chassis' circuit boards and any of its components.

8. Remove a PCIe card from its packaging, handling the card by its edges and without touching any components or gold connector pins.



**Support Note:** If you are installing an x8 PCIe 1.1 card (like certain 10 Gigabit Ethernet cards), installing it into slot 1 (furthest from the Thunderbolt interface card) may result in reduced performance. We recommend you install it into either slot 1 or 2 for best performance.

9. Line up the card's connector with the slot, and then gently but firmly press the card straight into the slot; do not rock the card or force the card into the slot. If you encounter excessive resistance, check the card's connector and the slot for damage, and then try inserting the card again (Figure 4).
10. Secure the card using the screw you removed previously; do not overtighten the screw (Figure 4).
11. Repeat steps 8 – 10 if you are installing any additional cards. Replace and secure any PCIe slot access covers where an empty slot remains.
12. For Echo Express SE IIIe Users: If you installed a card which requires auxiliary power, connect the auxiliary power connector to it now.
13. Flip the inner assembly back over to its upright position. Place your hand on top of the outer case, and then gently insert the inner assembly back into the outer case (Figure 5).
14. Turn the Echo Express chassis upside-down, and then using the four screws you removed previously, secure the outer case to the inner assembly; do not overtighten the screws (Figure 6).

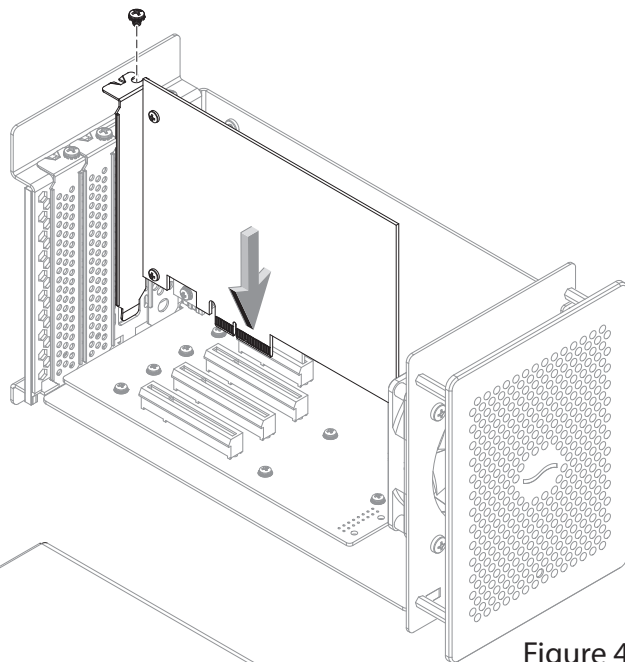


Figure 4

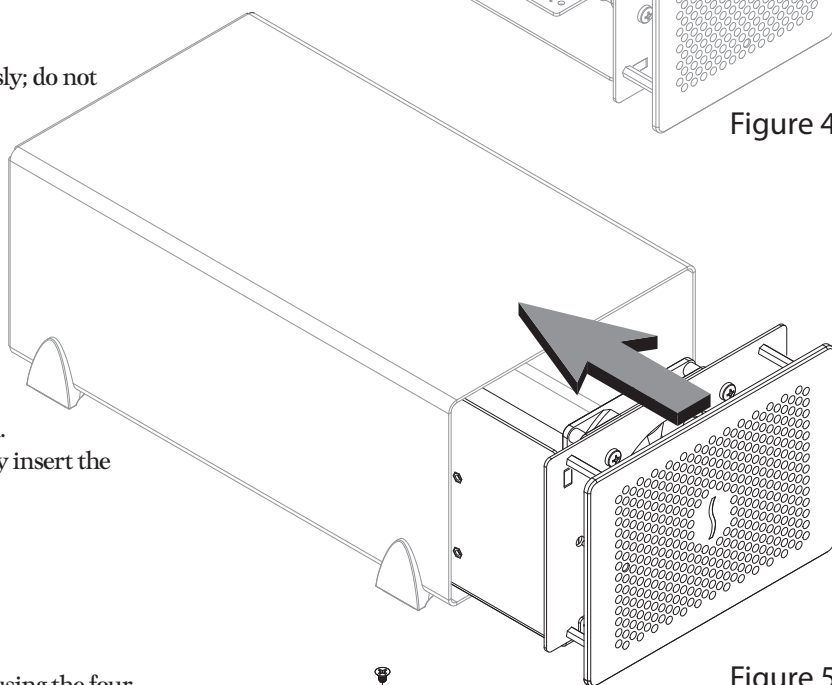


Figure 5

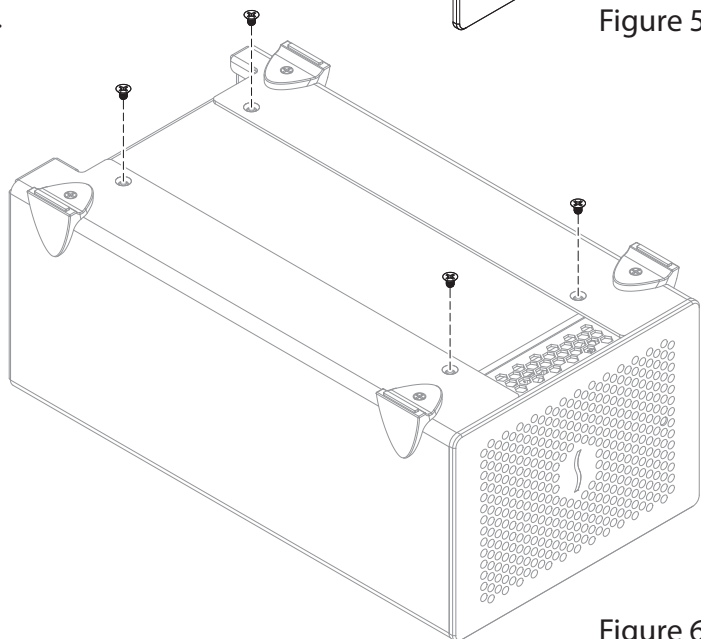


Figure 6



## Chapter 3 – PCIe Card Installation and Chassis Setup Steps

15. Turn the Echo chassis right-side-up.



**Support Note:** The Sonnet ThunderLok Thunderbolt connector retainer clip secures the included Thunderbolt cable to the Echo chassis to prevent accidental disconnects. The included clip is compatible with Sonnet Thunderbolt cables.

To attach the clip to the cable, remove both items from their packaging, and then insert the connector through the connector clip as shown (Figure 7). Note that the connector will pass all the way through the clip; when you connect the cable to the chassis, the clip will secure the connector.

16. Connect the included (or other certified) Thunderbolt cable between a Thunderbolt port on the Echo chassis and a Thunderbolt port on your computer, or other Thunderbolt device in the chain connected to the computer (Figure 7). Note that cables or computer ports marked with a generic USB icon (🔌) or USB Charging Port icon (🔌) are NOT compatible. Secure the retainer clip to the chassis if you attached it. If you are daisy chaining additional Thunderbolt devices, connect another Thunderbolt cable between the downstream device and the open Thunderbolt port on the Echo chassis.

17. Connect interface cables between devices, PCIe cards, and computer as necessary.

18. Connect the included power cord between a wall outlet or power strip and the power adapter; verify the connector is plugged in securely. Note that the power adapter's power indicator will light at this time.

19. Connect the power adapter to the Echo Express chassis' 12V power socket. Note that the power indicator on the Echo chassis will not light until the computer, and any other Thunderbolt device connected between it and the Echo chassis, is powered on.

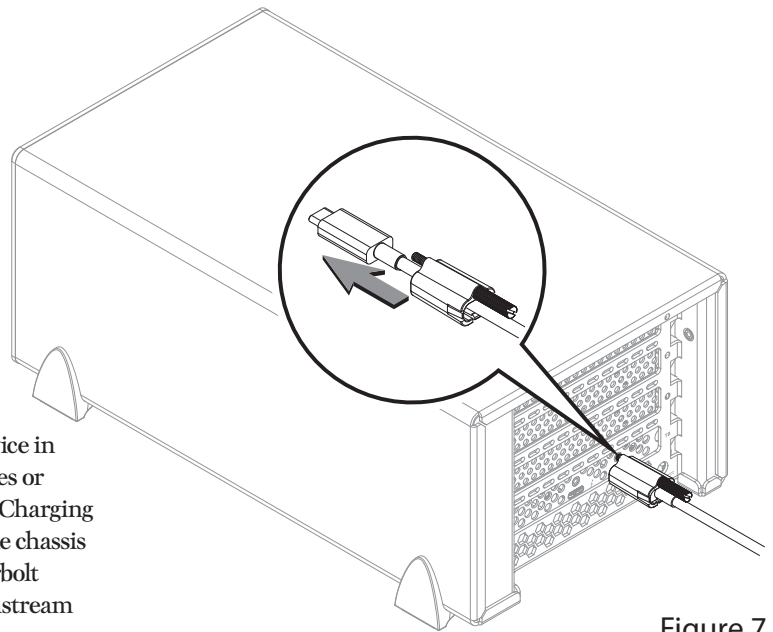


Figure 7

## Chapter 4 – Complete Setup and Configuration

### SETUP AND CONFIGURATION STEPS—MAC USERS

#### A – Confirm the Echo Express SE III or SE IIIe Chassis is Recognized

1. With the Echo chassis powered and connected to the computer, turn on the computer. Note that if there are any other Thunderbolt devices connected between the Sonnet chassis and your computer, they must also be powered for you to perform the following steps.
2. Press and hold down the Option key, and then from the Apple menu, select System Information; a *System Information* window will open.
3. In the *System Information* window, click Thunderbolt... under the Hardware header in the left column.
4. In the top right column under the Thunderbolt... Device Tree header, you will see the computer, followed by Thunderbolt Bus, and then “Echo Express SE-III TB3”.



**Support Note:** If “Echo Express SE-III TB3” is not listed, disconnect and reconnect the Thunderbolt cable between the computer and Echo chassis. Note that it is not necessary to shut down the computer before disconnecting and reconnecting the cable, so long as the installed cards are Thunderbolt-compatible.

#### B – Confirm the Installed Cards are Recognized

1. In the *System Information* window click PCI under the Hardware header in the left column.
2. At the top of the right column, the installed cards are listed (if not, you may to install drivers before the cards are recognized). Click one of the cards; you should see “Yes” next to Driver Installed and Tunnel Compatible, otherwise the card or driver may not be Thunderbolt-compatible.



**Support Note:** While Echo Express chassis don't require drivers, installed cards require Thunderbolt-compatible drivers to enable their use.

#### C – Install Card Drivers (If Necessary)

1. Launch a web browser, and then go to your card manufacturer's website. Download and install the latest drivers according to the manufacturer's directions.
2. Restart your computer; your Echo chassis is ready to use!

### SETUP AND CONFIGURATION STEPS—WINDOWS USERS

#### A – Confirm the Echo Express SE III or SE IIIe Chassis and Installed Cards Are Recognized

1. With the Echo chassis connected to a power source and to the computer, turn on the computer. Note that if there are any other Thunderbolt devices connected between the Sonnet chassis and your computer, they must also be powered for you to perform the following steps.
2. When the computer boots for the first time after you connected the Echo chassis, an *Approve New Thunderbolt™ Devices* window appears. From the drop-down menu select Always Connect, and then click OK.
3. Right-click the Windows Start button, and then select Manage; the *Computer Management* window appears.
4. In the *Computer Management* window, click the category each card type you installed to expand the listing; a generic adapter listing will appear. After their drivers are installed, the listings will change to display the names of the installed cards.

#### B – Install Card Drivers, If Necessary

1. Launch a web browser, and then go to your card manufacturer's website. Download and install the latest drivers according to the manufacturer's directions.
2. Restart your computer; your Echo chassis is ready to use!

## Chapter 5 – Tips, General Information, and Known Issues

### TIPS, GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Keeping the Cards Cool

With its optimized airflow design and temperature-controlled fan providing cooling at all times, the Echo Express chassis provides adequate cooling for the installed cards. *Do not operate the Echo chassis with its cover off, and do not block any of the vents!* Otherwise, the installed cards and Echo chassis' components may overheat.

#### Hot Plugging the Echo Express Chassis

When certified Thunderbolt-compatible cards (used with Thunderbolt-compatible drivers) are installed in the Echo chassis, you may connect and disconnect the chassis while the computer is on. Of course, if you have anything connected to the cards, such as storage devices, cameras, etc., follow proper procedures for disconnecting those devices before unplugging the Echo chassis.

#### There's No Need to Unplug the Power Adapter

Because an Echo Express chassis automatically powers on and off with the computer to which it's connected, there's no power switch, nor is there any need to disconnect the power adapter or power cable under normal use.

#### Power Indicator LED Operation

The chassis' power indicator only lights when the computer to which it's connected is on, and turns off when the computer is sleeping or powered off. Note that the power adapter's power indicator remains lit as long as the adapter is connected to a live power outlet.

#### Connecting Additional Thunderbolt Peripheral Devices

The Echo chassis includes two Thunderbolt ports; the first is reserved for connection to your computer, while the second supports daisy-chaining of up to five additional Thunderbolt peripheral devices.

#### Using Expansion Cards Without Installing Drivers

Some Thunderbolt-compatible expansion cards, like Sonnet's Allegro™ Pro USB 3.2 PCIe cards, use inbox (built into the operating system) drivers, and are ready to use out of the box.

#### Not All Mac-Compatible Cards Work With M Series Macs

While this product is compatible with all M series Mac computers, not all PCIe cards that work with Intel-based Macs have M series-compatible drivers. We recommend you contact your PCIe card's manufacturer to verify that existing drivers support M series Macs.

#### Replacing a Card After Initial Installation

Shut down the computer, and then disconnect all cables from the Echo chassis before opening the chassis and replacing the card; PCIe cards are not hot-pluggable!

#### Echo Express SE III/SE IIIe Provide Upstream Power

The Echo chassis can provide up to 15 watts to bus-powered Thunderbolt 3 peripheral devices, enabling them to operate without connecting an additional power adapter.

Using the Echo Chassis to Charge Your Portable Computer  
MacBook Air and MacBook Pro computers with Thunderbolt 5, 4, or 3 ports, and all PC laptops with Thunderbolt 5 or 4 ports may be charged *slowly* via the Echo chassis' Thunderbolt port (via 15W Power Delivery).

### KNOWN ISSUES

#### Not all PCIe Cards Will Perform at 100%

Thunderbolt PCIe bandwidth is limited to about 2,880 MB/s. While most cards will operate at full performance, some may not because they require more bandwidth than Thunderbolt can provide.

#### Not All Thunderbolt Cables Deliver Full Performance

Full performance from the Echo chassis requires the use of the included (or other certified) Thunderbolt.

#### Operating System (OS) Updates May Break Compatibility

*Specific device drivers that work under one OS version may not work under a later version. Before updating your computer to the latest OS, we recommend that you contact your PCIe card's manufacturer to verify that the existing drivers work. Note that other computer software updates may also break compatibility.*

#### Some Devices' Performance May be Affected by Where They Are Connected in a Thunderbolt Chain

However small, Thunderbolt introduces latency to a device chain. If you expand with additional Thunderbolt expansion chassis, you may need to experiment with which cards work better in chassis closer to or farther from the computer in the chain.

## Chapter 6 – Safety Precautions, FCC Compliance, and Support Information

### SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Please read this section carefully before proceeding. These precautions explain the correct and safe use of this device, thereby helping to prevent injury to you or others, and also help you to minimize the risk of damaging the device.

#### Warnings

Always follow the basic warnings listed here to avoid the risk of serious injury or death from electrical shock, short-circuiting, fire, and other hazards. These warnings include, but are not limited to:

- Do not attempt to modify the enclosure. If this device appears to be malfunctioning, contact your reseller or local distributor.
- Do not drop the chassis; dropping or mishandling the chassis may result in a malfunction leaving the product inoperable.
- Do not expose the device to rain, use it near water or containers that contain liquids which might spill into any openings, or in damp or wet conditions.
- If unusual smells, sounds, or smoke come from the device, or if liquids enter it, switch it off immediately and unplug it from the electrical outlet.
- Follow the instructions in this manual carefully; contact your reseller or local distributor for additional advice not covered in this User's Guide.

#### FCC Compliance

Echo Express SE III and SE IIIe comply with Part 15 of the FCC Rules. Operation is subject to the following two conditions: This device may not cause harmful interference, AND this device must accept any interference received, including interference that may cause undesired operation.

#### Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Listed Power Adapter

The 100-240 VAC to 12VDC power adapter included with Echo Express SE III and SE IIIe is UL Listed.

### Contacting Customer Service

Before contacting Customer Service, please check the Sonnet Web site ([www.sonnettech.com](http://www.sonnettech.com)) for the latest updates and files. When you contact Customer Service, please have the following information available:

- Product name
- Computer model
- PCIe card models
- A System Report (macOS) or a Microsoft System Information MSINFO32 (Windows) report (Windows), along with a description of the issue(s) you are encountering with your device

If further assistance is needed, contact **Sonnet Customer Service** at:  
E-mail: [support@sonnettech.com](mailto:support@sonnettech.com)

#### Japan Customers

Contact Sonnet Customer Service Japan at:  
E-mail: [jp.support@sonnettech.com](mailto:jp.support@sonnettech.com)