

HP Plans to Go Even More Mobile

Hewlett-Packard is offering a number of updated laptops, along with a new tablet, which are geared toward enterprise users and will be some of the first PCs to offer Intel's Centrino Pro platform.

Hewlett-Packard is expanding its line of business notebooks with an emphasis on greater mobility and security.

At its Mobility Summit in Shanghai, China, which starts May 8, HP will roll out several new laptops geared toward business users. Included in this mix is a new tablet PC, the HP Compaq 2710p, which weighs 3.6 pounds and offers a 12.1-inch display.

HP will also feature a new ultramobile laptop, the Compaq 2510p, which also offers a 12.1-inch display and weighs less than three pounds. All the PCs debuting at the show offer Intel microprocessors.

Now considered the world's largest PC vendor, HP has placed a greater emphasis on notebooks and other mobile devices as more enterprise customers seek out laptops as an alternative to traditional desktops.

Although the company continues to design and manufacture corporate desktops, more of its sales stem from notebooks. In the fourth quarter of 2006, HP shipped more than 5 million notebooks worldwide and watched as its laptop shipments grew by 52 percent compared to the fourth quarter of 2005, according to an April 5 report by iSuppli, a market research firm.

Among all the various notebooks that will be on display at the show, HP will also show off five different models that will feature Intel's new Centrino Pro platform, which also features the chip maker's vPro technology - a series of management and security features built into the platform. HP also offers vPro in some of its business desktop models.

"We are the first to offer a broad portfolio of Centrino Pro notebooks," said Sarah Bussell, a senior product marketing manager for HP. "We believe that it will help us offer our customers enhanced manageability and security that they are looking for in business notebooks."

Intel's new Centrino Pro platform for enterprise users - along with its Centrino Duo platform for consumers - is debuting May 9 at several shows throughout the United States.

HP, which is headquartered in Palo Alto, Calif., will offer the Centrino Pro platform in its Compaq 2510p, 2710p, the 6910p notebooks, as well as in its Compaq 8510 and 8710 series.

Besides Centrino, HP is offering some of its own management and security tools for the new lineup of notebooks. Under its HP ProtectTools, a portfolio of security features and tools, some notebooks will come equipped with Drive Encryption, a feature that renders the hard drive unreadable if the laptop is lost or stolen.

Other features include QuickLook, which allows users to check calendars, e-mail and other personal information within 10 seconds of the PC coming out of its hibernation mode.

Most, but not all, of the new models also support two broadband options, including CDMA2000 (Code Division Multiple Access 2000), 1xEvDO (Evolution Data Optimized) technology from Verizon and AT&T's UMTS/HSDPA (Universal Mobile Telecommunications System /High Speed Downlink Data Packet Access) technology.

In addition to broadband, the notebooks will support draft 802.11n WLAN (wireless LAN) technology.

Finally, HP will revamp its notebook numbering and label schemes. Bussell said this will help simplify the process of selecting and ordering the company's notebooks.

The Ultra-Light series will now be sold under the 2000 label, while the 6000 series will now be the Balanced Mobility line and the 8000 series will be the High Performance line.

In addition, a letter at the end of the series will designate a notebook's features. Under the new labeling scheme, an "s" means standard, a "b" stands for business, a "p" means professional and a "w" stands for workstation.

At the start of the show, HP executives are placing the greatest emphasis on the ultramobile Compaq 2510p, which offers an Intel ultra-low voltage Core 2 Duo processor. The notebook also features 2048MB of DDR2 (double data rate 2) SDRAM (synchronous dynamic RAM) and a PATA (Parallel ATA) hard drive with up to 100GB of memory.

The show's other highlight is the Compaq 2710p tablet, which also features a low-volt Intel Core 2 Duo processor, an Intel GM965 chip set, a maximum of 4096MB of DDR2 SDRAM and a PATA hard drive with up to 100GB of memory. The tablet also works with either a touchpad screen or a pointstick.

The Compaq 2510p starts at \$1,599 and the Compaq 2710p starts at \$1,699 and each model will be available later this summer.

Within HP's Balanced Mobility series, the company will display a new version of its Compaq 6910p notebook with a 14.1-inch display, a choice of Intel Core 2 Duo processors, a maximum of 4096MB DDR2 SDRAM and a SATA (Serial ATA) hard drive with up to 160GB of memory.

The starting price of this notebook is \$1,349 and is immediately available from HP.

Other new notebooks that HP will have on display at the show include the Compaq 6710 series, the 6510b notebook, the 8710p notebook, the 8710w workstation, the 8510p notebook and the 8510w workstation.

The prices for all these laptops range from \$999 to \$2,499, according to the company.

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