

i-technology



Kapil Sibal displays a low-cost computer tablet at its launch in New Delhi, India. The device looks like an iPad and is 1/14th the cost.

iPad Knock-Off Unveiled

Tablet is a fraction of the cost

(AP)—It looks like an iPad, only it's 1/14th the cost: India has unveiled the prototype of a \$35 basic touchscreen tablet aimed at students, which it hopes to bring into production by 2011.

If the government can find a manufacturer, the Linux operating system-based computer would be the latest in a string of "world's cheapest" innovations to hit the market out of India, which is home to the \$2,127 compact Nano car, the \$16 water purifier and the \$2,000 open-heart surgery.

The tablet can be used for functions like word processing, web browsing and video-conferencing. It has a solar power option too —

though that add-on costs extra.

Mamta Varma, a ministry spokeswoman, said falling hardware costs and intelligent design make the price tag plausible. The tablet doesn't have a hard disk, but instead uses a memory card, much like a mobile phone. The tablet design cuts hardware costs, and the use of open-source software also adds to savings, she said.

Varma said several global manufacturers, including at least one from Taiwan, have shown interest in making the low-cost device, but no manufacturing or distribution deals have been finalized.

India plans to subsidize the cost of the tablet for its students, bringing the purchase price down to around \$20.

"Depending on the quality of material they are using, certainly it's plausible," said Sarah Rotman Epps,

an analyst at Forrester Research. "The question is, is it good enough for students?"

Profitability is also a question for the \$35 machine.

Epps said government subsidies or dual marketing — where higher-priced sales in the developed world are used to subsidize low-cost sales in markets like India — could convince a manufacturer to come on board.

This and similar efforts — like the Kakai Kno and the Entourage Edge tablets — show that there is global demand for an affordable device to trim high textbook costs, she said.

If it works, Epps predicts the device may send a shiver of cost-consciousness through the industry.

"It puts pressure on all device manufacturers to keep costs down and innovate," she said.

Facebook Addresses Privacy Concerns

(AP)—Facebook is rolling out a new feature that requires outside applications and websites to tell users exactly what parts of their profiles have to be shared for the apps to work.

Applications already had to ask users for permission to access anything in their profiles that wasn't public. But these services didn't have to specify what information they were using. Such information can include your photos, your friends' birthdays or your e-mail address.

Under the new policy, the services will say which aspects of a profile they will mine, but the user still won't be able to pick out which pieces they want to grant access to. They have to either grant permission or disallow the app from working at all.

Facebook has come under fire for the way it treats the information its nearly 500 million users post on the site. Most recently, privacy advocates and lawmakers have complained about Facebook's "instant

personalization" feature, which draws information from users' profiles to customize a handful of other sites.

Partly because of criticism and partly because of the site's growth from a small network for college students, Facebook's privacy settings became complicated and often confusing over the years.

In response, Facebook simplified its privacy settings though some critics still say these changes don't go far enough.



Social media such as Facebook and Twitter have become powerful tools that influence what people buy.

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2010 Minority Business

President Ronald Regan established Minority Enterprise Development Week in a statement on December 17, 1982. It is celebrated a full week in the first part of October. Our challenge today is to enhance the ability of minority Americans to participate in the market economy and to achieve greater economic independence. We are indebted to minority entrepreneurs for their contributions to our economic well being. They bring innovative products and services to the marketplace, create jobs and provide training to thousands of workers.

The Nation is undergoing the most difficult economic times in decades. With the high price of gas and a national economic down-trend, we are facing our most challenging times in America. However it is up to our small business communities to be able to aid in the recovery.

Minority Americans share in the aspiration to have the opportunity of business ownership. Every year the number of minority business ownership has increased representing the hope for opportunity. It is important to look at how minority businesses have added to Oregon's economy and its growth in the global market. The Portland Observer recognizes the contributions every year of disadvantaged, women-owned, minority and small emerging businesses with its Minority Business Special Edition to provide information and profile local minority business.

Please join us in this year special on September 22nd, 2010. The deadline for advertisements will be Wednesday, September 14th, 2010 and for editorial submissions it will be September 9th, 2010.

TriMet Connects with Smart Phones

Transit riders who use smartphones, such as BlackBerry, iPhone and Android phones, can now access transit information quickly and easily at m.trimet.org.

TriMet's new mobile-friendly website loads fast and is easy to navigate. It features the most popular internet rider tools such as TransitTracker, real-time arrival information, trip planner, service alerts and route and system maps.

Thirty-six third-party computer applications are also available at trimet.org. The apps, created inde-

pendently by third-party developers using TriMet's open data, provide a variety of information to improve the rider's experience.

The apps include trip planning, maps, bus and rail schedules, GPS location of the nearest stops, trip planning via text messaging and saving planned trips. TriMet has created some very successful applications itself including an interactive map and TransitTracker.

To view the applications go to trimet.org and click on "App Center" on the home page.