Fundamental Shift in Embedded Wi-Fi Market

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A wireless LAN is one in which a mobile user can connect to a local area network (LAN) through a wireless (radio) connection. One of the hottest technology markets, **Wireless LAN (**WLAN**), or** Wi-Fi**, is undergoing a fundamental shift**, according to In-Stat/MDR. The high-tech market research firm reports that in 2003 removable Wi-Fi PC Card adapters were displaced as the most popular Wi-Fi adapter by embedded Mini PCI card adapters

“The Wi-Fi Mini PCI card represented 49.1% of the Wi-Fi adapters shipped, and enabled most of the Wi-Fi mobile PCs (e.g. notebook and tablet PCs) in 2003,” says In-Stat/MDR analyst Norm Bogen.

“Conversely, PC Cards held a quickly eroding 38.8% market share in 2003 after dominating the market with a 58.3% market share in 2002.” In-Stat/MDR expects that the Wi-Fi Mini PCI card will continue to capture an increasing percentage of the total Wi-Fi adapter market over the next five years.

A recent report from In-Stat/MDR also reveals the following:

- The market for embedded Wi-Fi clients (including mobile PCs, PDAs and phones) will grow at a 66.2% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) to 226.0 million units shipped in 2008.

- After five years of healthy growth since its mainstream commercialization, the worldwide Wi-Fi hardware market (i.e. network infrastructure and adapters) finally surpassed $1.0 billion in (4Q 2003) quarterly revenues.

- There has been a significant growth in Wi-Fi-enabled notebook PCs, as 55.0% of the 32.1 million notebook PCs shipped in 2003 contained embedded Wi-Fi adapters.

The report, Wi-Fi Inside: The Embedded Wi-Fi Paradigm (#IN0401345WS), contains analysis and forecasts of the worldwide Wi-Fi market from 2003-2008. The report also includes analysis of products and strategies of major vendors.

More about Wi-Fi:

Short for wireless fidelity and is meant to be used generically when referring of any type of 802.11 network, whether 802.11b, 802.11a, dual-band, etc. The term is promulgated by the Wi-Fi Alliance.
Any products tested and approved as "Wi-Fi Certified" (a registered trademark) by the Wi-Fi Alliance are certified as interoperable with each other, even if they are from different manufacturers. A user with a "Wi-Fi Certified" product can use any brand of access point with any other brand of client hardware that also is certified. Typically, however, any Wi-Fi product using the same radio frequency (for example, 2.4GHz for 802.11b or 11g, 5GHz for 802.11a) will work with any other, even if not "Wi-Fi Certified."

Formerly, the term "Wi-Fi" was used only in place of the 2.4GHz 802.11b standard, in the same way that "Ethernet" is used in place of IEEE 802.3. The Alliance expanded the generic use of the term in an attempt to stop confusion about wireless LAN interoperability.

Source: In-Stat/MDR