

# Intel And Industry Leaders Spearhead New Storage Interface

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A new initiative to define a storage interface tailored to the unique needs of handheld and portable consumer electronic devices is being led by [Intel Corporation](#), [Hitachi Global Storage Technologies](#), Marvell Semiconductor Inc., [Seagate Technology](#) and [Toshiba America Information Systems](#).

These prominent companies are jointly defining a standard interface for small form factor disk drives that addresses the requirements of the handheld and consumer electronics (CE) market segments, including low pin count, low voltage, power efficiency, cost effectiveness and integration efficiency.

The announcement was made today at Intel Developer Forum in San Francisco.

"No disk drive interface exists today that is tailored to the needs of the handheld and CE market segments, so disk drives have had to make do with other interface alternatives that are complex and cumbersome or simply ill-suited to meet the needs of disk drives in space and power constrained tiny handhelds," said Knut Grimsrud, Intel's CE-ATA senior principal engineer. "With the explosive growth of portable consumer devices, the CE-ATA initiative attends to a tremendous need for an efficient small form factor disk drive interface. Collaboration with industry leaders to deliver a unified solution best addresses the needs of customers."

The benefits of CE-ATA are many. From an industry perspective, small form factor disk drive suppliers can take advantage of a storage interface tailored to the needs of such devices, resulting in highly optimized disk drive designs. Host silicon providers and product integrators will also benefit from the improved integration that the tailored interface affords due to its low pin count, favorable voltages and efficient protocol. For consumers, a disk drive interface tailored to the needs of the handheld and portable consumer market segments could spur storage use in innovative new products and lead to products with a more efficient storage solution.

The specification is scheduled to be completed in the first half of 2005. The first end products supporting the new technology could be available several months thereafter.

The new initiative is organized and operated in a manner similar to how Serial ATA was organized. CE-ATA is being developed separately from SATA because handheld and portable consumer applications do not have the same requirements for high interface transfer rates as mainstream computing, requiring instead modest transfer rates at maximum power efficiency. CE-ATA will focus on highly cost-effective integration and the highest power efficiency to best address the needs of small form factor devices and the handheld consumer market segments.

The promoter companies for CE-ATA are among the most prominent and capable companies in the small form factor disk drive and handheld consumer market segments. Many are also leaders in the Serial ATA International Organization, whose formation was announced today at Intel Developer Forum.

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