

New Category of Mobile-Computing Products Announced by palmOne

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A growing number of people today want access to greater volumes of digital business, personal, entertainment and online content that is as mobile as they are -- and just as varied. To meet this need, palmOne, Inc. today signals the creation of a new category of mobile-computing products -- the mobile manager. The first product in this category is expected to be announced later this month.

According to CNet News, palmOne will introduce LifeDrive Mobile Manager on May 18. The \$499 device will come with a 4GB Hitachi Microdrive and two flavors of wireless networking - Bluetooth and 802.11b Wi-Fi.

The introduction of a new category reflects usage patterns palmOne has tracked over time, especially among customers for its premium products. Customers of palmOne's high-end Tungsten T3 handheld computer, for example, show a strong affinity for taking full advantage of the included DataViz Documents To Go software, which puts Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents at their fingertips. Customers also have asked palmOne to provide them with convenient ways to carry, file and manage rich digital content, such as music and video. While overlap exists, palmOne has identified three major customer segments and assigned three corresponding product lines to better serve them. They are as follows:

-- Mobile managers are designed for customers who are eager to take full advantage of the trend toward "digital everything" -- from documents and email to music, images and video, as standalone files or

in organized folders;

-- Handhelds attract customers whose first and foremost interest is in basic organization tools, such as calendar and contacts. These customers often incorporate additional applications and add music and images to their handhelds, but their central purchase driver is organization.

palmOne's Zire(TM) branded handheld computers serve consumers, and Tungsten branded handhelds serve mobile professionals in this customer set; and

-- Smartphones attract customers whose primary interest is in a single converged device that is an outstanding phone that also delivers excellent email access and organization. The Treo smartphone from palmOne serves this customer set.

"In studying customer trends, we found that some people want to carry dozens of documents and hundreds of songs while others want to carry a thousand-plus photos and enjoy videos," said Page Murray, palmOne vice president of marketing. "Organization functions were highly valued by nearly all our customers, but some wanted much more business and personal file-management capabilities. We listened and will deliver a new category of mobile-computing product that will let customers fuse their own mix of personal and business content in ways never before possible in either handheld computers or smartphones.

"We'll bring to market a new type of product that simplifies our lives and makes work and play more productive and more fun," said Murray. "Stay tuned."

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