

Low-Cost UMPC Sports Swiveling Display

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Data Evolution on April 26 announced its first ultra-mobile PC (UMPC), an "aggressively priced" device with a unique, swiveling display. The Cathena CX cuts cost, complexity, and power consumption by using a low-power AMD Geode LX800 processor, but consequently lacks the processing muscle of typical UMPCs.

Like most UMPCs introduced over the past year, the Cathena CX has a 7-inch, WVGA (800 x 480 resolution) LCD screen and runs various versions of Windows XP.

Unlike most UMPCs, however, its processor is an AMD Geode LX800 clocked at 500 MHz, a chip that's primarily aimed at embedded devices. While some small, UMPC-like devices target Windows CE or Windows Mobile with low-end processors such as the 520MHz PXA270 -- for example Sharp's EM-ONE, Seamless Internet's S-XGen, and Peace East Technology Development's "H10" -- virtually all Windows XP-oriented UMPCs feature 900MHz or faster ULV Pentium M or Celeron processors.

In addition to lowering the cost and complexity of the design, the LX800 SoC-style (system-on-chip) processor also consumes less power than ULV Pentium or Celeron processor. Accordingly the Cathena CX is priced lower than typical UMPCs and is claimed to provide 5 hours of

run time per recharge of its standard Li-Ion battery.

The device also boasts a QWERTY keyboard, rather than being limited to "soft" keyboard or pen input.

Given the Cathena CX's low-end processing power, it's not surprising that the company is positioning it as ideal for "education programs." Interestingly, Data Evolution introduced a Windows CE-powered notebook computer back in 2004; it, too, targeted the education market, along with government services.

The Cathena CX is currently available with a choice of Windows XP (Home or Pro) or Windows XP Embedded, and is priced from \$799 (depending on options).

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