

Dell Introduces New Ultra-Mini 12-Inch Netbook/Notebook

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Dell Inspiron Mini 12

(PhysOrg.com) -- The race for lean and mean has a new entry. Dell introduced the Inspiron Mini 12 in Japan with some fanfare and a whole lot of interesting features. Dell's Senior Product Manager John New spoke with Laptopmag's Mark Spoonauer to explain the differences in the new Inspiron Mini 12 from other ultra-portable notebooks.

Dell's Mini 9-inch has had reasonable success. So, Dell decided to leap from 9 to 12, bypassing other minis and offering a full keyboard, Webcam, 802.11b/g. Windows Vista, a choice of hard drive capacity, a new Intel Atom processor and a dynamic 1280 x 800 12.1-inch display. The big news is the Inspiron Mini 12 will be available in the USA in late November and is priced under \$600.

According to John New, the Inspiron Mini 12 will come equipped with the newly developed Intel Atom processor Z520 or Z530 instead of the standard Intel Atom N270. The new Atom processor will have a clocked speed of 1.3 GHz or 1.6 GHz with heightened energy efficiency. A 3-cell battery will be shipped with the Mini 12 with the option of paying an additional \$79 for a 6-cell battery. The battery life for the 3-cell is 3-hours and the 6-cell claims a 6-hour battery life.

Mr. New advises users to not expect the same performance level as a dual-core processor with say 3-GB RAM and a 5400 RPM hard drive. The Inspiron Mini 12 will come with a choice of 40 GB, 60 GB or 80 GB hard drive 4200 RPM. The Mini 12 has a 1-gig RAM and will premier with Windows Vista only. By the end of 2008 Dell hopes to introduce the model with Windows XP and Linux. Inspiron Mini 12 has multiple USB ports and will accommodate a USB Mobile Broadband card, but it does not have an internal antenna for plug n' play capability.

An optional DVD/multi-drive will be made available for the Mini 12, but users will find it time consuming to rip a DVD with this system. The Inspiron Mini 12 is designed for users who spend a lot of time using a Web browser, Web mail and perhaps updating their Twitter account. It is a super-mobile 2.7-pound netbook/notebook with a very slim and trim 0.92-inches to 1.09-inches depth. Its dimensions are only fractions larger than the Mac Air and other ultra-portables, but the cost is about 1/3 of the price of these models. According to Mr. New, the Mini 12 represents an interesting category to get in and Dell will continue to invest in it because it is not going to go away.

In other news, Australia's APC news reporter David Flynn quotes Evan Williams, Dell's Regional General Manager for Sales and Marketing, the company is in final stages of developing an embedded 3G-mini card for the Mini 9 and Mini 12. Currently, Dell has agreements with Vodafone and Telstra embedded 3G in its regular notebook line. The mini line does

not have Ubuntu Linux 3G technology yet. Dell recognizes the distinct advantages for some users preference for Linux, but is still in the testing phase for 3G connectivity. According to David Flynn, the Dell Inspiron Mini 12 will be released in Australia for \$999.

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