

Papershow is portable whiteboard, presentation, more

October 21 2009, By Craig Crossman

It all began with the blackboard that lets you write on a large surface for all to see and that can be easily erased. To this day, blackboards continue to be found mostly in schools. It's how teachers communicate their ideas to their students in the classroom setting. However chalk can be fairly messy so the whiteboard was invented in hopes of replacing them.

But for schools, blackboards mostly remain the surface of choice. Whiteboards however have become very popular in the office environment. Colors are more vivid against the white surface and there's virtually no mess when using them. The next logical step was to make the whiteboard go digital and that's exactly what Papershow is all about.

The Papershow system is comprised of three components. The first is a Bluetooth digital pen that wirelessly transmits what is being written onto a sheet of special paper which is the second component. The interactive paper has frames of microscopic points which can be seen by the pen's infrared micro camera. As you write, the pen uses them as reference locators making it possible to track its position which translates into what it is that you are writing. The third component is the USB key which plugs into any available USB port on your computer. This acts as a receiver that takes the pen's tracking information and converts it into whatever you are drawing. The Bluetooth pen's range is about 20 feet from the USB Key.

The USB receiver also contains the Papershow software so no

installation is required to use the pen. Just plug it in and begin writing. When you remove the USB key, nothing remains on the computer. This is especially nice if you know there's a computer waiting at your destination. Just plug it in and you're ready to go. The USB key also has 250 megabytes of memory so that your entire presentation can be loaded onto the key, making it a truly transportable device.

Papershow also has the ability to import any PowerPoint presentation you create. Just select the import option and your PowerPoint file will be converted into a Papershow presentation. Using a color printer (the printout must be blue so that the pen's camera can see it), just print the converted PowerPoint file onto the Papershow paper. From there, you can control the entire PowerPoint presentation by simply tapping the pen on any of the paper's navigation menu items on the right side of the page. Other icons on the paper let you control the pen's color, line thickness, create geometric shapes such as circles and squares, and even draw arrows as well as perfectly straight lines. There's also an Undo and Privacy which lets you immediately blank the screen display until you are ready to proceed.

Images you draw onto the paper can instantly appear on a projection screen, a flat screen TV or on any computer's screen running most any of the popular web conferencing applications. So people in the same room or anyone connected to the Internet can immediately see whatever you draw on the paper.

There are options that let you convert your drawings to a PDF file and the ability to email whatever it is that you draw. Papershow currently works on any Windows PC. A newer version that will run on both Windows and Macintosh computers is planned for release in the first quarter of 2010. The Papershow Kit (\$199.99) includes the Digital Pen, USB key, a sample of Interactive paper, a binder that can hold the interactive paper via its pre-punched holes, and a small case to hold the

pen and USB key.

A different radio frequency can be selected so as to not interfere in case more than one Papershow is being used in the same location. Included are several different pairs of color rings to match each pen to its corresponding USB key.

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