

# Computex 2008: Low-cost laptop 'flaunting elegance'

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## Strong bridge

Global consumers are "absorbing" from record high oil prices and bad inflation. The credit crisis in the US has caused banks to tighten loans more. As a result, people are hesitant and reluctant to buy new or expensive high-end phones or cell phones.

Therefore, if lucky, the idea of low-cost computers might "scent" at this time. The cost of most popular PC products is no more than 500 USD.

Although the original goal is to target emerging markets, low-income customers . but models like Asustek's EEE are getting "unexpected" attention from the market. School development, fastidious like the US and Europe.

*" Initially, low-cost PCs were only designed for poor children in developing countries. However, PC businesses have quickly realized: even users in developed countries have a need. "* expert Jane Tseng of Topology Research Institute said.

Because mini laptops are thin and light, many people use them as an "additional" PC. After only 2 months of landing in the market, Asustek sold more than 350,000 Eee units. As for the whole 2008, Asus expects sales to reach 5 million units.

This unexpected success has encouraged rivals to jump into the game.

## Cheap and clean

At Taipei 2008 Computex, mini computers will be on par with a series of "green, clean", environmentally friendly PC designs.



Asus model of EEE mini laptop demonstration. *Source: Reuters*

Mini laptops "score" at high battery life, compact size, affordable price and strong wireless connectivity. Meanwhile, "green" laptops are impressive with ultra-thin, energy-saving screens and solar power systems.

" *We do not have a bag of money at this time. Therefore, when the price of oil increases, the more energy you can save, the better.* " share.

Asustek could not miss the opportunity to "scoff at martial arts" right at home. This Taiwanese computer brand took advantage of a new version of EEE, using Intel's micro-chip Atom platform and equipped with a wide-angle screen.

With this device, Asus claims users will do everything from storing video clips inside anti-flash "shock" to surfing the net "rushing" in the cafe.

Acer, Taiwan's most famous personal computer brand, will also try out on a new playground with a similarly low-cost PC. " *We will target new markets such as China and India, instead of the previous" Western "campaign* ," said Acer representative.

Located right next to Acer display booth, chip giant Intel will present a series of new processors targeting the ultraportable and popular PC market.

The company also actively promoted the idea of "netbook", which is the microcomputer used to surf the Net for a price not exceeding \$ 250.

## **Wimax**

Computex Taipei Organizing Committee said this year's fair attracted 1,725 participating companies, including "world tech giants" like Intel and AMD. The fair will officially open tomorrow and last until June 7.

Computex 2008 took place in the context of chip makers and monitors narrowing the output budget, to relieve

pressure on distribution channels. Besides, also starting this June, a wave of cheap laptops from HP, Dell, and Asus also landed in the market.

The interest that public opinion for laptops is cheap is so great that even the software giant Microsoft has to change its mind at the last minute.

The company claims that Windows XP will continue to appear inside cheap laptops after June 30, despite the schedule, since that time, the life cycle of XP will officially end. Research firm IDC predicts that worldwide PC shipments will increase 13% in 2008 to 296 million units. In the next two years, this number will grow at least 10% per year.

Another unique feature of Computex this year is that for the first time, visitors will be able to climb on buses equipped with WiMax-accessible laptops for free.

Many Taiwanese computer firms expect WiMax technology to take off soon and become the fourth generation mobile standard, but until now, WiMax technology is still groping quite slowly.

Even so, IDC still predicts that the WiMax infrastructure market will reach \$ 3.5 billion in revenue in 2011, three times more than in 2006. Intel chip giant also insists on betting on WiMax. Although many mobile networks in developed countries have decided to back up a rival technology called LTE.

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