

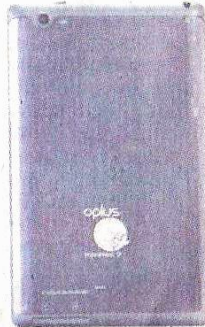
Grab a tab

AT LESS THAN RS 12,000, THE MANTRA IS TO GET SMARTER WITH TABLETS. A DETAILED REVIEW SHOWS THE BUYER INDEX ON THE RISE, FINDS **SUCHAYAN MANDAL**

Even a few months back, someone found speaking on a tablet made an odd sight, inviting curious glances. But with a revolution in the making, the trend changed when tablet with calling facility became the most in thing in the gadget world. As the last quarter witnessed shipment of a whopping 1.20 million tablets in India, the market is booming with the "T thing". While India waits for tablets with Windows OS to come, we tried a few tablets that cost less than Rs 12,000 and comes with Android OS. To be honest, our trial was for a few days and it won't be wise to announce a verdict. To be frank, expecting budget tabs to perform at jet speed sans glitches isn't wise on the customers' part. But all these tabs are jack of all trades, where you play, get entertained and communicate. The tabs, which offer a roller coaster ride in a pocket friendly budget include:



Oplus XonPad 7 : Available only through snapdeal.com, The sleek and metallic finish Xon-



pared to dual core processor ones, this processor is faster and works without getting hanged when HD videos or games are tried. With a 7" screen, the tab sports a 5MP and 2MP cameras at the back and front respectively. Single SIM 3G calling feature gives Oplus an edge at a price of Rs 9,900. The sleek design with good resolution makes it preferable.

Xpad Turbo: Simmtronics, with its fourth position in tablets' market share, is a desi entrant completely understanding the true Indian mentality. Its newly launched Xpad Turbo with a dual core processor and 512 MB RAM is

pad is powered by a 1.2 GHz Cortex A7 Quad Core processor and a DDR 3 RAM of 1 GB. As compared to dual core processor ones, this processor is faster and works without getting hanged when HD videos or games are tried. With a 7" screen, the tab sports a 5MP and 2MP cameras at the back and front respectively. Single SIM 3G calling feature gives Oplus an edge at a price of Rs 9,900. The sleek design with good resolution makes it preferable.

sleek and stylish. The edge that it gets at a price of Rs 8,999 is its dual sim facility of 3G + 2G. Though the positioning of mic can be improved, the tab achieves the literal label of being "pocket friendly". Sporting a 7" screen and a 2MP primary camera with secondary camera of 0.2 MP, the tablet fits in your jeans' front pocket without much hassle. High speed data transfer, that makes Simmtronics one of the leading players, is available in this product as well.



Karbonn Smart Ta Fone A39: A sleek and metallic slate finish gives this HD enabled tablet a glamour quotient. A 512 MB RAM and Dual Core processor



powers the Rs 8,990 product. The tablet has a 7" screen and calling features with 3G advantage.



Dell Venue7: At Rs.10,999 a top notch tab from premium manufacturer like Dell is a bliss to pocket. This is 7-inch tabis powered by Intel dual core Atom and 2GB RAM. The lightweight tab with 3MP rear camera is value for money.

Iball 3G 7271 HD7: With dual SIM calling facility (3G), this tablet is powered by dual core processor cortex processor, the same that drives Lenovo Yoga. Priced at Rs 8,999, the tablet sports a 2MP rear camera with flash.

Videocon VT85C: With Android 4.2.2 Jelly Bean, this device runs on a 1.2Ghz Dual-Core Cortex A9 chipset. The tablet that smartly wears 5MP rear camera and a front VGA camera, is priced at Rs 8,999. Google Nexus 7 2012 is also available at a budget price.

Simmitronics to make smartphones

New Delhi: Tablet maker Simmtronics on Thursday made a foray into smartphone segment with the launch of two Android-based handsets at a price starting from ₹3,499 and also announced an investment of ₹200 crore in the new business. The company introduced two handsets under the Xpad brand at a price ranging from ₹3,499 to ₹8,999. "The company will invest ₹200 crore in the smartphone segment. We expect overall revenue of ₹800 crore by the end of this financial year," Simmtronics MD Indrajit Sabharwal said. — PTI

Domestic vendors bid for Aakash

■ Handset makers are caught in a fix over maintaining the price of the tablet at a mere ₹2,500

New Delhi, Jan. 19: Handset makers which have manufacturing plants in the country have expressed interest in bidding for Aakash 4 tablet order but are finding it difficult to maintain the price level of ₹2,500 apiece in the absence of government support.

Canadian phone maker Datawind which has supplied about 1,00,000 low-cost Aakash tablets to the government till date says that it would be a challenge to supply the device at ₹2,500 a unit due to rupee volatility and other factors.

"We will be able to bid for Aakash 4 at a price below ₹2,500 a unit.



WILL AAKASH REMAIN A DREAM?

Datawind which has supplied about 1 lakh low-cost Aakash tablets to the government says that it would be a challenge to supply the device at ₹2,500 a unit due to rupee volatility and other factors.

It is a challenge to maintain it at that level. We have seen fluctuation of 20% in the value of rupee, says Datawind.

DOMESTIC MAKERS:

Besides Datawind, domestic firms like Simmtronics and others have shown interest.

SIBAL'S PET PROJECT:

The Aakash project was Union minister Kapil Sibal's brainchild when he was the HRD Minister.

However, it is a challenge to maintain it at that level. We have seen fluctuation of about 20 per

cent in the value of rupee and the uncertainty remains," Datawind CEO Suneet Singh Tuli said.

The Aakash project was Union minister Kapil Sibal's brainchild when he was the HRD Minister.

Low-quality products will fail to qualify technical bids. We will qualify but maintaining desired price level in present form is a challenge as most of the components are imported. There are duties on components which should be waived.

— I. SABHARWAL
Simmtronics MD

The idea was to provide low-cost computing device at subsidised rate to students to enable

them access internet for educational purposes.

The Directorate General of Supplies & Disposals has floated a tender for the latest Aakash tablet with technical specifications of 7-inch scratch resistant capacitive touch screen, Wi-Fi, 2G, 3G and 4G connectivity, 4GB internal storage, external memory card slot with storage capacity of up to 32 GB, front camera etc. However, the number of units to be supplied has not been mentioned in the tender. The last date for submission of bids has been deferred till January 23.

Besides Datawind, domestic handset maker

Simmtronics and other vendors, who wished not to be named, expressed interest in bidding for the latest Aakash tablet order.

Simmtronics said its "price will be competitive," but did not reveal the likely price to be quoted in the bid. "Low quality products will fail to qualify technical bids. We will qualify but maintaining desired price level in present form is a challenge as most of the components are imported. There are duties on components which should be waived as Aakash 4 will be supplied to government," MD Indrajit Sabharwal said. — PTI