

Cool, classy, easy: Tablets fit the bill

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Subodh Nair runs a professional sports training centre in Delhi and has for years made presentations to prospective customers—mostly schools—off his laptop. Now, though, he is planning to buy an iPad which, he says, offers much better quality of pictures and graphics and make the presentation that much more impressive.

"Tablets are also easy to carry around, and an iPad carries with it a certain class



that is bound to

impress my customers," Nair adds.

Apurwa Sharma, a mother of two kids, is looking to buy a tablet with calling facility. "When I heard that there are tablets with calling facility, I decided I needed one. It is way more convenient for me to carry one device rather than carry a laptop and a mobile phone. I can make and receive calls, check out the latest updates sent by my kids' school, make online payments and browse the internet," she says.

The sheer convenience and 'cool' factor of tablet computers, combined with prices that cater to a range of budgets and users, has resulted in a burgeoning demand for tablets, whether it be the top-range Apple iPads or Samsung and Asus' tablets or Indian makes such as Micromax and Karbonn.

Although the Indian tablet market is still at an early stage compared to the developed markets, it is showing tremendous growth. According to a KPMG report, more than a million tablets were sold across the country in the October-December quarter of 2012 alone, and shipments for the entire year crossed three million units.

So, why are tablets such a rage? There are many reasons: Access to thousands of

apps for entertainment, productivity, education, even keeping tabs on one's health and fitness. There's also good design, convenient sizes, and simpler user interfaces to deal with than on personal computers.

"Consumers prefer tablets with Wi-Fi, and the most popular screen size for tablets is 7 inches. Those sell like hot cakes. Android-based 7-inch tablets constituted more than 90 per cent of the sales in Q3 of 2012", says Jaideep Ghosh, partner, KPMG India.

While the vast majority of tablet owners use it to browse the net, catch up with friends on social sites and watch movies/music videos, there are

many who buy tablets for gaming. "I prefer a tablet for gaming because unlike a gaming console that needs

an output which has to be plugged into a TV screen, I can use a tablet stand-alone. Wherever I am, I am able to indulge my fancy for gaming," says Mohammad Mudasser, who works at a leading consultancy firm in Mumbai.

To cater to this growing segment, Simmtronics Semiconductors recently launched a made-in-India gaming tablet, the X-Pad Super Tab, which offers a 4-in-1 multiple video viewing option. "We have powered the device with the latest quad-core processor for a superior gaming performance", said Indrajit Sabharwal, MD, Simmtronics.

While there are both global and Indian brands flooding the domestic market, targeting different consumer segments with specific features, the winner must have a clear product differentiation and be competitively priced, says Apratim Sharma, country product manager, Asus India.

"The trick is in being unique. For instance, Asus focuses on offering a tablet with a dock— it is a tablet, but when docked, it offers the flexibility of typing on a physical keyboard, turning into a notebook with extended battery."

Stronger and growing adoption by the education and enterprise segments should see tablet sales cross three million units this year, according to industry estimates.

Simmtronics 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