

Tablet PCs grow popular with consumers

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With a series of high-decibel launches in the past one year, tablet PC is the new buzz word in the world of technology. A recent survey conducted by US-based firm Yankee group expects the global tablet market to soar to \$46 billion by 2014. Closer home, more than 13 brands have already made a presence in the market with over 30 different models ranging between Rs 3,500 and Rs 42,000.

Samsung India, one of the major players in the segment, maintains tablets are the key focus area and a prime category for the company. Ranjit Yadav, country head, Mobile &



The sale of tablets in India is expected to be at par with that of laptops by 2013, even as experts doubt the utility of the product.

IT, Samsung India said: "The Indian market is growing at a phenomenal pace and company estimate suggests close 55 million tabs will be sold by the end of 2011. Samsung is already targeting a 50% share of the Indian tablet market this year."

"Since its first launch in 2010, tablets have had a steady growth in the market. By the

end of 2013, the sales of tablets are expected to be at par with that of laptops," said Pearl Uppal, CEO and co-founder of fashionandyou.com.

Asus India, another major player in the segment, claims it is regularly updating its tablet range for the competitive Indian market. "The tablet market in India is zooming amazingly. There

is a stiff competition with the introduction of low-priced tablets; they're within anyone's grasp. The wide spread acceptance and considerably advanced features and facilities has certainly proved out to be a boon for the expanding tablet market," said Alex Huang, country head, system business group, ASUS (India).

Suneet Singh Tuli, CEO Datawind, which is manufacturing Aakash, the world's cheapest tablet, said: "Tablet PC market in India is quickly picking up the pace in terms of adoption. Analysts were projecting the tablet market in India to be a mere 250,000, as recently as two months ago. However, the government of India is hoping to put between 10-12 million devices in the hands of students across In-

dia by the end of 2012."

Global chipmaker Intel is also warming up to the tablet market. The company is expected to roll out its next-generation Atom processors for tablets and smart phones by next year.

Interestingly, users and industry experts are divided on the popularity of tablets. While some maintain that there is no particular utility of tablets, others believe the product seamlessly bridges the gap between smart phones and computers.

"Unlike smart phones which highlighted a clear benefit for the consumers and therefore became a relevant gadget, tablets are still to establish its relevance. Most tablet consumers are not sure about the purpose of this device, therefore its

role is still undefined. Tablet manufacturers need to make the product more relevant for consumers through their features," said technology expert Anmol Kapoor.

"It (the aggressive marketing strategy used by most companies) is just a hype to create demand for tablets, as practically very less people are using it. Carrying a screen bigger than your mobile phone is a problem, but on the contrary tablets are handy as compared to laptops. People need to get used to that fact," Ankit Lamba, editor-in-chief of Av Beat, a B2B magazine high on audio visuals.

Thirty-two-year-old bank executive Dinesh Kumar, who has been using a popular tablet for the last two years, echoes a similar sentiment. "I

bought my tablet thinking it would take up the place of my laptop. However, now I use it only as an entertainment device when I am travelling."

However, several others re-tort the claim by saying that tablet is the best device in the era of convergence. "It has become very popular with my entire family. I use it for my office work and my kids use it for games. The screen size is very user-friendly," said tablet user Subhash Choubey.

Tablets are portable when compared to computers and definitely more user friendly, have a bigger screen to work on, if compared to a smart phone. They also have apps which make work easier and faster," said Yogesh Bansal, founder and CEO of career networking site Apnacircle.com.