

new products

As ever, there are some great new gadgets on the market this month, so you might want to consider adding some to your home or office setup. To help you sort the duff from the desirable, we share our views on some of the more interesting product releases

Kodak EasyShare system

Digital camera, software and dock

Kodak has launched the latest version of its EasyShare package, adding printing abilities as well as presentation and email facilities. The software will be bundled on the CX4230 2Mp (megapixel) digital camera, although it requires Camera Dock II (sold separately) to access all the features.

The CX4230, which features a 3x optical zoom, allows users to print at the touch of a button, or you can choose to send images to be processed online. A Share button on the camera lets you mark photos to be printed, emailed or stored as favourites. When the device is docked these images are automatically printed or emailed, depending on your choices.

Kodak has also unveiled the 2.1Mp LS420 limited edition camera, available exclusively through Jessops. This compact device is finished in brushed silver metal and has a 3x optical zoom. It uses the same docking system as the other EasyShare cameras.

Kodak: www.kodak.co.uk/go/easyshare

Price: CX4230 £170.20, Dock II £50.05, LS420 £212.75



Premier Electronics USB Flash drive

Flash drive

This handy little Flash drive has been designed to transfer files that are too big to email or fit on a floppy disk, but too small to justify burning a whole CD. The silver, pocket-sized device stores an impressive 22 floppy disks' worth of information on its 32MB of memory. The drive simply plugs into a PC, allowing you to read, write, copy, move and store data from the hard disk. The Flash device is available in 32 to 512MB capacity versions and Premier Electronics claims it can contain data for up to 10 years. Used on a PC running Windows 2000 or later

it works automatically and does not require any additional drivers, however older operating systems will need supporting software.

Premier: 01922 634 652

Website: www.premierelect.co.uk

Price: 32MB drive £32



Hi-Grade M6500 series

Notebook

Hi-Grade's M6500 notebooks are designed to go anywhere within the range of a wireless network – as long as you pay a further £95 for the necessary 802.11b card.

There are two models in the series – the 1800 and 2000 – and both incorporate Intel's Mobile Pentium 4 processor, running at 1.8 and 2GHz respectively. The 1800 features 256MB of RAM, a 30GB hard disk and an internal 10-speed DVD-ROM. The 2000, on the other hand, offers 512MB of RAM, a 40GB hard drive and a combo CD-RW/DVD-ROM drive. The silver-encased devices each have a 15.1in screen and the keyboard offers a range of connectivity options, including a PC Card slot and four USB ports. Both models feature a built-in modem and ethernet networking. Software includes Windows XP Home, Microsoft Works Suite 2002 and McAfee AntiVirus software.

Hi-Grade: www.higrade.com

Price: M6500-2000 £1,399, M6500-1800 £1,149



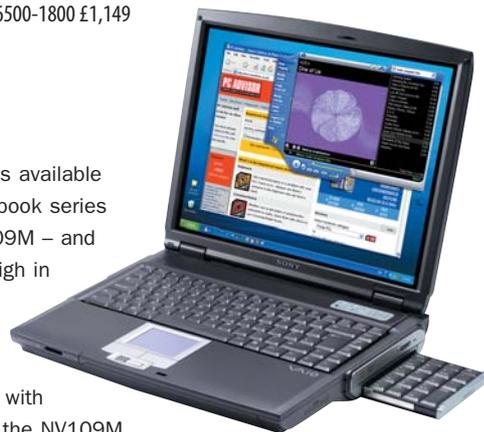
Sony NV100 series

Notebook

There are two models available in Sony's new notebook series – the NV105 and NV109M – and both of the devices weigh in at 3.9kg. The main difference between the two portables is that the NV105 comes with a 14.1in screen, while the NV109M features a slightly larger 15in display. The NV109M also includes some other extra goodies, namely a MiniDisc player and subwoofer, while the cheaper NV105 comes with only a floppy drive, although the MiniDisc can be added at an extra charge. If you go for this option, the Net MD drive allows you to copy your music on to MiniDisc, but there's no data support which is a missed opportunity. Both machines feature Intel's Mobile Pentium 4 processor, running at 1.6GHz, plus 256MB of DDR (double data rate) RAM and 30GB hard drive.

Sony: www.vaio.sony-europe.com

Price: NV105 £1,361; NV109M £1,074



Hitachi I-mega

Digital still camera

Hitachi has released a lightweight hand-sized digital camera that is also light on the wallet. The I-mega features a 1.3Mp (megapixel) image sensor, which equates to a top resolution of 1,280x960. The Hitachi costs just ¥12,800 in Japan, around £70, which makes it one of the cheapest 1Mp-class cameras on the market and an attractive option for digital photography novices. It has 8MB of built-in memory and a slot for SmartMedia cards. It also features a 2x digital zoom and USB interface to connect it to a PC. While it is currently available in Japan, unfortunately there's no UK release date yet.

Hitachi: www.hitachi.co.jp/new/cnews/2002/0424b/index.htm

Price: approx £70



Handspring Treo 270

PDA phone

Handspring has launched the latest version of its Treo PDA (personal digital assistant) phone, the 270. Among the enhancements to this model are a 12bit colour screen, a backlit keyboard and an improved software bundle. The Treo 270 also offers longer talktime than its younger sibling, the 180 – up to three hours and 150 hours standby – thanks to its bigger battery and better power management. As far as its other specifications are concerned, the Treo offers the same 16MB of onboard memory and 33MHz Dragonball processor as the Treo 180. The unit is GPRS (general packet radio service) ready, but there is no firm date as to when this feature will be usable, so don't buy it just for that. It also comes without a POP3 mail client, although there are plans to offer the Treo Mail service to UK customers later this year.

Handspring has also just previewed the new Treo 90, a colour PDA (personal digital assistant). It retains the Treo brand thanks to its lack of a Springboard slot, the interface used by Handspring's Visor range, which here has been replaced by an SD (secure digital) card slot. Currently the Treo 90 is only available in the US, but it is slated for launch on these shores later on in the year.

Handspring: www.handspring.co.uk

Price: Treo 270 £255, Treo 90 £477



Casio Exilim EX-S1 and EX-M1

Digital camera and combined camera/MP3 player

Casio has made what it claims is the world's thinnest digital still camera equipped with a monitor. The Exilim range includes two models, the EX-S1 and the EX-M1. The EX-S1 is the size of a credit card, while the EX-M1 is the same size but slightly thicker. Both cameras can record 1.2Mp (megapixel) still images and 30 seconds of 320x240 moving images. The EX-M1 also offers MP3 audio replay and 50-minute voice recording on its 12MB of internal flash memory. Both devices have a 4x digital zoom, a slot for either an SD (secure digital) or MMC (multimedia card) and a 1.6in colour TFT (thin-film transistor) screen. The Exilim will be rolled out in Japan from the end of June and a European release is expected at the same time.

Casio: www.casio.com

Price: EX-S1 around £190, EX-M1 £250

Canon Ixus DV3

Digital video/still camera

In Japan Canon's popular Ixus range is called the Ixy and, to many people, the name is closely associated with small digital still cameras. But Canon, with the launch of the Ixy DV3 in Japan, is hoping people will soon think of digital video cameras, too. The new camera has a 680,000-pixel image sensor, which is great for video, but easily outclassed by most digital still cameras. However, the DV3 should create nice snapshots at 1,024x768 resolution and store them on an SD (secure digital) memory card. The video format is MiniDV and the camera features both DV (digital video) and USB interfaces. The basic battery promises up to 55 minutes of use with the 2in LCD (liquid crystal display) switched on, or 75 minutes when using the digital viewfinder. European release dates weren't known as we went to press.

Canon: www.canon-sales.co.jp/dv/lineup/ixydv3/index-j.html

Price: TBC

