

## Acer launches Aspire one mini-laptop

# Acer sets bold target for sales of new mini-laptop despite competition from a growing number of rivals in a market jump-started by Asustek's popular Eee PC

By Dan Nystedt, IDG News Service

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Coming to the market late with a new product doesn't phase Acer. The world's third largest PC vendor launched its new Aspire one mini-laptop on Tuesday, forecasting sales of up to 7 million units this year and 15 to 20 million next year.

The new-mini laptop will compete with a growing number of rivals in a market jump-started by the popular [Eee PC from Asustek Computer](#) of Taiwan. Asustek has only forecast sales of 5 million Eee PCs this year, and it's had a six-month head start over Acer. The new mini-laptop also faces fresh competition from several new models announced at Computex.

Companies believe the market for small laptops that have 7-inch to 10-inch screens, weigh less than 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds), and connect wirelessly to the Internet is catching fire.

"This segment will be mainstream within the next few years," said J.T. Wang, chairman of Acer, during a news conference in Taipei. His company believes the [Aspire one](#), which will cost between \$399 to \$499, can attract a new kind of PC buyer, mainly people who want a low-cost, convenient mobile device they can use to surf the Internet from anywhere.

Acer's size gives it an advantage over some rivals due to its global market reach. But Hewlett-Packard and Dell are both bigger than Acer and are both putting out mini-laptops. And the makeup of Aspire one isn't that different from other mini-laptops launched recently.

Aspire one uses an [Atom](#) microprocessor from Intel, just like the latest Eee PC and other rivals, including Elitegroup Computer Systems' [G10IL](#) and Micro-Star International's [Wind](#) mini-notebook.

Similarly, Aspire one runs either a Linux or Windows XP OS, just like competing models. The rest of the specifications are up to the buyer, such as 512MB to 1GB of DRAM, NAND flash memory storage of 8GB or an 80GB HDD (hard disk drive). Aspire one can read five different kinds of memory cards as well as allowing internal memory to expand via the memory card port.

Buyers will also have a choice of battery. The standard battery on Aspire one can run for about three hours, but an optional six-cell battery can give up to eight hours of power.

For easy Internet access, Aspire one comes with Wi-Fi 802.11b/g and a choice of adding embedded WiMax or 3G modules. WiMax, which is broadband wireless Internet similar to Wi-Fi, hasn't rolled out broadly across the world, but 3G networks are up and running in many places. Acer could sell 3G-enabled laptops through mobile phone service providers, which could subsidize part of the cost of the hardware to prompt more people wanting Internet access to sign 3G contracts.

Aspire one will ship globally and hit store shelves in July.



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