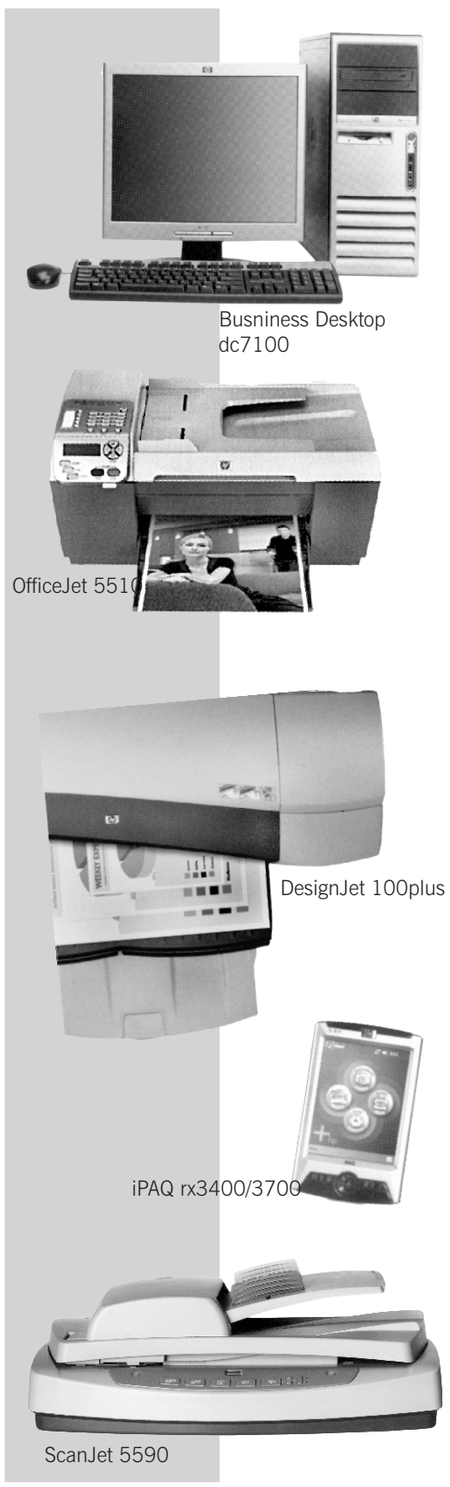
Tech News

HP unveils next-gen IT products in local market



NAFID IMRAN AHMED

ONCE again Hewlett Packard (HP), the world's largest consumer IT company proved their motto -- 'Invent', through the launching of its next-generation products for the Bangladesh market on October 7 at Hotel Sheraton.

At the event, HP showcased some of its latest broad suite of products, which included desktop PCs, notebooks, handheld devices, colour Laserjet and Designjet printers, Scanjet scanners, Officejet all-in-one devices, Proliant servers and storage work arrays.

HP officials at the launching ceremony

The launch was addressed by Steven Kim, general manager of customer solution group (CSG), Asia Emerging Countries (AEC). Bob Ang, general manager, Imaging and Printing Group (IPG), AEC and Thomas Chiam, director, Solutions Partners Organisation, AEC were also present at the occasion.

"As a global technology solutions provider to consumers, businesses and institutions, HP is focused on helping people apply technology in meaningful ways to their businesses, personal lives and communities," said Steven Kim.

Business Desktops

The new HP Compaq Business Desktops - dc7100, dx6100 and dx2000 - are designed or small and medium businesses (SMBs) enterprises, ranging from basic, mainstream and advanced level computing solutions.

"We simplified our business PC line to give customers a selection of desktops that meet a variety of business needs at every level and budget," boasted Joergen Jakobsen, vice president of Business PC, HP Personal Systems Group (PSG), Asia Pacific and Japan.

These new desktops come pre-loaded with the new Altiris Local Recovery Solution for PC backup, restoration and recovery. Desktops dc7100 and dx6100 series also include the Intel 915 Express platform. The dc7100 offers advanced security features with the HP ProtectTools Embedded Security Manager.

Business Notebooks

Two new business notebooks HP Compaq nx9040 and nc4010 were introduced at the event. Designed for mobile professionals, the nx9040 is equipped with wireless connectivity and long battery life, while nc4010 is a lightweight, ultra portable notebook that weighs only 1.59kg.

"HP delivers intelligently designed notebook PCs priced for the budgets of mobile customers in smaller businesses such as real estate agents and insurance adjustors to medium businesses with field sales teams," said Ted Clark, vice president of marketing, Mobile Computing, HP. "The nx9000 series features 802.11b/g wireless, so the customer will be connected wherever there is a HotSpot available," he added.

Hand Held Devices

To offer pocketsize productivity and enhanced digital entertainment capabilities at a great value, HP expanded the iPAQ Pocket PC lineup with the latest HP iPAQ rz1710, featuring integrated Personal Information Manager (PIM) and the iPAQ rx3400/3700 series Mobile Multimedia Companion, the first pocket PCs that allow users to view, capture, edit and print digital content.

The iPAQ rx3400/3700 series also includes Nevo Home Control software, allowing control of all home and office audio/video equipment with a single device. With the ability to control hundreds of consumer electronic devices, it works as a universal remote control.

Imaging and Printing

HP's initiative to aggressively drive colour mainstream across the market is worth mentioning as they declared the year 2004 as the 'Year Digital Colour Goes Mainstream'. The latest additions in the imaging and printing include:

- HP Colour LaserJet 2550: An affordable high-quality colour laser printer.
- HP Colour LaserJet 4650: A 21 pages-per-minute, in-line printer with Instant-on technology.
- HP ScanJet 5590: Digital flatbed scanner with a 50-page automatic document feeder with duplexing capabilities.
- HP OfficeJet 4255 all-in-one: Compact and affordable device with print, fax, scan, copy and phone capabilities.
- HP Photosmart R707: HP's first digital camera to feature HP Real Life Technologies, a series of technical advancements including HP Adaptive Light technology.
- HP DesignJet 30 and 130: Two large-format printing, six-ink and media systems for the graphic design, proofing and photography markets.

Servers and Storage

The next generation of HP Proliant servers ProLiant DL380 G4, DL360 G4, ML370 G4, ML350 G4 and BL20p G3 equipped with Intel Xeon processors were introduced at the event. These dual-processor servers running Windows and Linux also feature the Intel Extended Memory 64-bit Technology (Intel EM64T).

The industry's first storage array to support either SCSI or Serial ATA (SATA) disk enclosures behind a single controller shelf, the HP StorageWorks Modular Smart Array (MSA) 1500 and MSA20, a low-cost high-capacity SATA disk drive storage enclosure were also introduced.

At a press conference following the launch, HP officials said that Bangladesh is one of the three focused countries among the emerging nations and has a bright future in terms of ICT growth. But in order to achieve that infrastructure development is essential. HP looks forward to expand their business in Bangladesh, which has a growing IT market.

Oracle debuts E-Business Suite Special Edition for Bangladesh

FOR the first time, Oracle Corp, the world's largest enterprise software company announced the availability of the Oracle E-Business Suite Special Edition, a pre-configured, pre-installed package of ERP applications in Bangladesh. This was announced at a launching ceremony held on October 5 at Hotel Sheraton. The system will be sold in Bangladesh exclusively through IBCS-Primax, an Oracle software development and system integration house.

The package comprises the financial accounting, sales order management, inventory management, purchasing and manufacturing modules of the Oracle E-Business Suite and is configured to deliver affordability and speedy implementation, which meets the needs of smaller organisations. The Oracle E-Business Suite Special Edition comes installed and configured on a hardware server, and is ready for the customer to use upon its arrival.

Danish Yaqub, business manager, Oracle SAGE (South Asian Growth Eleconomy), introduced the Oracle E-Business Suite after a welcome note from IBCS-Primax.. "In E-Business Suite Special Edition, we have provided for the Bangladesh market a fixed scope, fixed price application suite that has been localised and tested. Installation is easy and controlled, reducing risk," said Danish.

Oracle E-Business Suite Special Edition has been designed specifically for companies that have 50 to 1,000 employees. The solution is bundled with a rapid implementation methodology to deliver key business and affordable pricing packages and enables mid-market companies to achieve critical business control and decision-making quickly and cost effectively.

The solution provides a lower total cost of ownership (TCO) through implementation of a complete bundle encompassing installation, software licences, maintenance, hardware and education. A lower TCO can be achieved through reduced complexity in the solution implementation, eliminating the need for extra administration and support resources, and lower entry pricing so that investments can scale with business growth.

The features and benefits of financial management solution of the E-Business Suite was presented by Amitava Sain, an Oracle financial management expert of Pricewaterhouse Coopers Pvt. Ltd.

Oracle confirms the solution can be completely implemented to achieve 'go live' status in 10 to 40 days delivering a system within a very short and predictable timeframe, enabling them to achieve faster return on their IT investments.

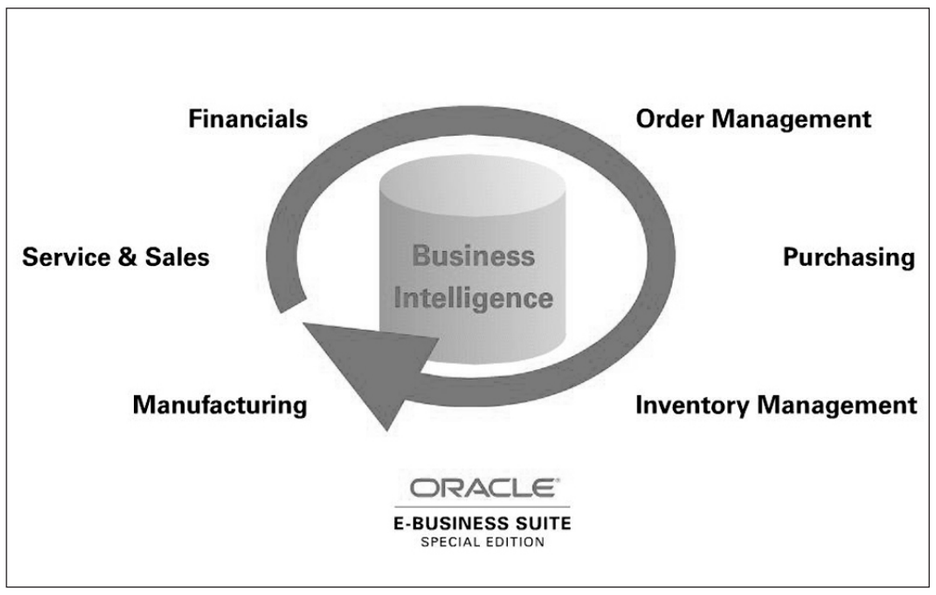
Product Details, Availability and Pricing

The Oracle E-Business Suite Special Edition comprises the following modules of the Oracle E-Business Suite:

-Financials
-Purchasing
-Inventory Management
-Order Management
-Discrete Manufacturing
-Sales
-Service
-E-Business Intelligence

Pricing starts at US$30,000 for a complete Oracle Financials solution, including application licenses, support, business reports, implementation, personalisation, hardware and user training. Detailed pricing information and conditions are available from Oracle partners.

BY NAFID IMRAN AHMED



Tech Contest

ACM-ICPC award-giving ceremony held

RIDWAN A KABIR

DHAKA once again witnessed a battle of the brains as the first round of the Asia-regional Dhaka site of ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest (ICPC) 2004 unfolded at the North South University (NSU) on October 8.

Hosted by the department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) of the university, ninety-two local teams along with four foreign teams came under one roof to compete for the winning title.

'Aladdin', the team from Fudan University (FDU), China won the first position while 'Explorer' from Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology (BUET) and 'SOC' from National University of Singapore (NUS) took the second and third positions respectively. NSU B team took the fourth position.

The contest was followed by a grand award ceremony in the evening on the same day at Hotel Sheraton chaired by Barrister Moudud Ahmed, minister of law, justice and parliamentary affairs.

Dr. Zafar Iqbal, chief judge of ACM ICPC 2004 Dhaka site and a number of noted high-level officials from BRAC,NSU and the Dhaka ACM ICPC 2004 organizing team were present at the event.

The remaining positions of the Dhaka site contest were taken by *Trinity* from American University in Bangladesh (AIUB), *Bug* from Indian Institution of Technology (IIT) Bombay, *Pride* from Khulna University of Engineering Technology (KUET), *Apocalypse* from Dhaka University (DU), *Pointer* from International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC), *Sphinx* and *Loopers* from BUET and *Golden Amalgam* from East West University (EWU).

PHOTO: STAR

The winning teams pose with the panel of guests at the ceremony

Out of the total of 10 Asia regional contests, the Dhaka site contest was the first one held. The remaining nine will be held by the end of this year. Asked why teams from China, Singapore and India decided to participate in the Dhaka site contest even though they have regional contest sites in their respective countries, Dr Haque reveals that competitions are tougher at their sites than in Dhaka.

"Thus their chances for winning are much higher than our local teams. The winning team was almost sure that they were heading for the World finals," added Dr Haque.

Winners of the 10 regional contests plus 8 Wildcard teams chosen from the runner-up teams will move on to the 2005 ACM World finals to be held in Shanghai, China from April 3 to 7.

Host teams often have an edge over others to win the Wildcards positions. "NSU might have had the chance to join FDU in the World finals in Shanghai if they were among the runner-up teams," states Haque.

Yonghui Wu, the coach of the FDU team said his team is hopeful about the friendships his team made on their trip to Dhaka.

"Maybe someday these kids will come together and do something for the IT sectors of both countries," Wu added.

Wu revealed that the FDU team members received their training during their preliminary school years.

Regarding school training on programming language, Dr Haque recommends that the primary and secondary schools of Bangladesh play a ground role in building a new generation of cybernetic population.

"It becomes difficult to train students who come to the University without sufficient elementary knowledge from their primary education," states Haque.

Tech News

Introducing XSTREAM NLOS

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

ACCESS Telecom (BD) Ltd and NextNet Wireless Inc. have officially launched of the XSTREAM NLOS, a broadband service for business and residential users.

The launching ceremony, held at Hotel Sheraton on October 7, signals the collaboration of one of the countries leading internet service providers with an internationally acclaimed provider of non-line-of-sight (NLOS) plug-&-play broadband wireless access systems.

"This is a high-quality broadband solution for Bangladesh. Through this product customers can connect to instant broadband service within the coverage area," said Zain Omar, CEO of Access Telecom (BD) Ltd at the event.

Bill Hagestad, director of NextNet's Asian Regional Sales and Ashfaq Ahmed, deputy general manager and head of corporate division, Industrial Development Leasing Company (IDLC) of Bangladesh Ltd were also present at the event.

The XSTREAM NLOS service provides efficient and reliable broadband service through Customer Premise Equipment (CPE), a small, self-installable portable modem that can be easily hooked up to any computer within the coverage area.

The CPE connects to the computer's Ethernet port and does not require the download or installation of any software. All one needs to do is power it up and plug it in. They will instantly be connected to the internet.

The XSTREAM NLOS service operates over a licensed 3.5GHz wireless spectrum, providing an interference-free wireless communication.

Access Telecom began research and development for XSTREAM NLOS in 2002, under a grant awarded by the US Trade Development Agency (USTDA), a foreign assistance agency of the US government. The extensive study of the DSL, cable, and wireless technologies available throughout the world determined that NextNet wireless NLOS broadband technology would be the most suitable wireless application in the context of Bangladesh.

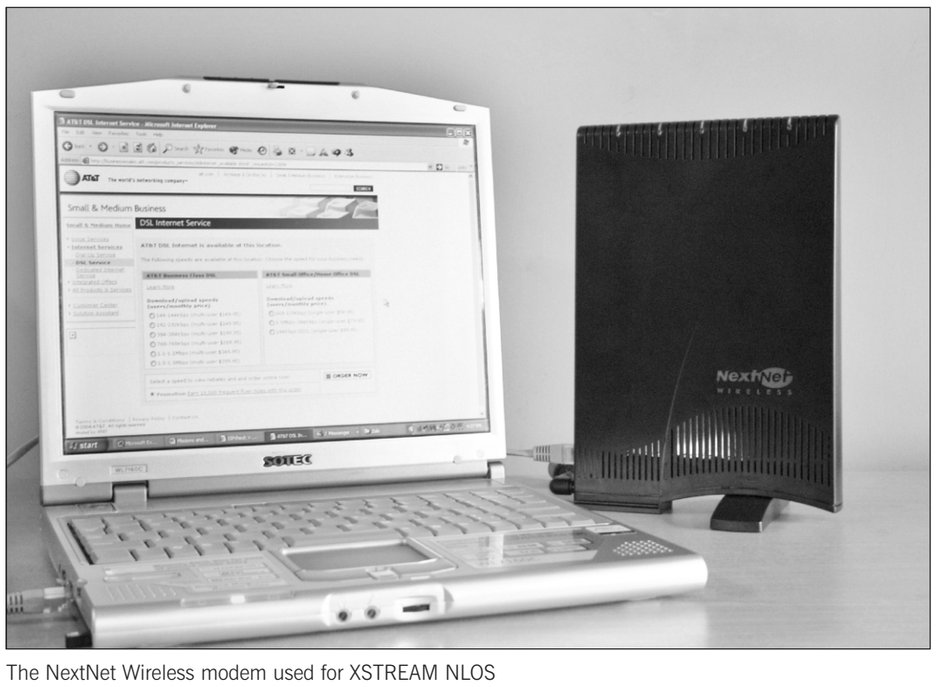
"The reasons behind the poor net connectivity and slow speed, as far as broadband services are concerned in Bangladesh, is mainly due to satellite congestion, low quality lines and modem sharing," Zaki Omar, director of Access Telecom(BD) Ltd, told StarTech.

Each CPE in Access Telcom's service has a 3 to 5 km street-level coverage and will therefore, be highly efficient anywhere in the city as well as in the suburbs, due to the four base stations set up by Access Telecom.

As opposed to the aforementioned services, the XSTREAM NLOS would provide a consistent, reliable maximum output to all subscribers within the coverage area.

"Currently, we have coverage through sites in Uttara, Gulshan, Banani and Bangla Motor," said Zain. "Within a short period we shall setup a base station in Motijheel and in the near future, in some part of Narayanganj," he added.

With 80 percent of the city covered, AccessTEL plans to expand their operations to Chittagong and Sylhet by the first quarter of next year.



The NextNet Wireless modem used for XSTREAM NLOS