

Hot HSPA devices

HSPA isn't just about high-speed access on your mobile anymore. More and more devices are embracing the high-speed connection protocol. So what devices are making waves right now, and which ones are likely to be in the headlines in the coming months?

By Stuart Miles



Left to right:

Sony Ericsson K850
Samsung i550
C-motech CHR-628

Just because HSPA is finding its way into digital cameras, MP3 players and laptops doesn't mean manufacturers are shying away from including the technology in their latest handsets.

Sony Ericsson is one mobile phone manufacturer who is embracing HSPA. Many of its high end products make use of the technology. The company is using HSPA technology to offer services such as its Blogger tool, which is available on its K850 camera phone. Users can take pictures with the phone's 5 mega pixel camera and send them instantly to a Blogger.com account to be posted on the web. It's an experience that wouldn't be possible without faster connection speeds.

Smartphone manufacturer HTC recently launched the HSPA-enabled HTC Shift and HTC Touch Dual phones. The Touch Dual is a touch screen device with slide out keyboard. It's aimed at the messaging-friendly consumer and small business market. If it performs as well as the HTC Touch, sales will be in the millions rather than thousands over the next six months. The HTC Shift combines the functionality of a mobile phone with a laptop to great effect. The ultra-portable device sports a 7-inch touchscreen display, full QWERTY keyboard, Wi-Fi and HSDPA technology. Instead of running Microsoft's Windows Mobile 6 OS, it will run a full version of Windows Vista and will work as a fully functioning computer.

Samsung is also starting to use HSPA over standard GSM to promote its new range of business smartphones. One of the latest, the i550 runs the Symbian OS and is aimed at those that want to have all the power of the Internet at their fingertips. Described as a "true multimedia device" by the Korean company, it has a 2.6-inch colour screen and functions for easy Internet support. It has a s60 dedicated web browser, trackball navigation and an ultra fast HSDPA connection. A 3-megapixel camera, video recorder and S-GPS/A-GPS navigation complete the line-up.

But it's not just mobile phones that use HSPA technology. One of the fastest selling devices in the arena isn't a mobile phone; it's a modem. The Huawei HSDPA USB modem is available from most operators including 3 and Vodafone in the UK. The device, which is simple to use, delivers fast Internet access for customers with a laptop. Where the success lies is its USB connection. Not only do laptop users without a PC card slot benefit, but also thousands of Apple Mac laptop customers as well.

Launched in September, Fujitsu Siemens' new range of professional notebooks - the "ESPRIMO Mobile" series - is aimed at travelling office workers. The ESPRIMO Mobile M9400, with its 14.1-inch WXGA TFT display, weighs 2.2 kilograms, comes with an integrated modem, LAN,



Clockwise from top left:
Fujitsu Siemens ESPRIMO Mobile, Dialogue Flybook V33i Lux Pro, HTC Touch, Huawei HSDPA USB modem from Vodafone, Cowon Q5 Personal Media Player, Samsung VLUU i70, HTC Touch Dual phone

Wireless LAN, embedded UMTS/HSDPA and Bluetooth. It allows users to connect to the Internet anywhere in the world.

For the fashion conscious laptop user, Korean company Dialogue has produced the Flybook V33i Lux Pro. Aside from its rotating screen, the laptop sports HSDPA connectivity as well as Wi-Fi, GSM EDGE connectivity, LAN, Bluetooth, 3G/UMTS, and GPRS all built in. Windows XP Professional is included alongside up to 2Gb of RAM and a 120GB hard drive.

Away from laptops, C-motech is offering an HSPA solution that allows you - via a USB connection - to create a wireless network from your computer for other users to use. The concept, which is similar to a Linksys Wi-Fi router product launched in 2006, allows users to share a connection with several people, but where this differs from the Linksys offering is that this model uses a PC data card rather than USB.

If you're more into entertainment, then Cowon and Samsung seem to be leading the HSPA devices from a non-work point of view.

The Cowon Q5 is a Personal Media Player, which aside from sporting MP3 and video playback, also sports HSDPA, Wi-Fi, GPS and Bluetooth connectivity.

The connectivity feature set allows users to surf the web if they get bored of watching videos, listening to music, or viewing photos. The

40Gb or 60Gb 5-inch touchscreen device even has GPS functionality.

Samsung has started to put the technology in its cameras. Announced earlier this year, the VLUU i70 has HSDPA functionality that enables users to upload images straight from the camera to a remote computer or website.

As a camera, the specs are fairly average, with a 3x optical zoom, 7.2MP of resolution, and ISO pu to 1600, but it shows that camera manufacturers are starting to experiment with different ways of getting images from the camera to your PC beyond Wi-Fi and are looking for that elusive USB connector lead.

So what of the future? Well, there are sure to be more HSPA products from all walks of life with a plethora of devices on the horizon.

Steve Jobs, Apple's CEO, has promised a 3G-enabled iPhone by 2008, which is sure to boost awareness of the technology further and open up the ability to surf the web on something faster than EDGE.

Likewise, BlackBerry maker, Research in Motion, is rumoured to be looking to launch a HSPA model called the BlackBerry 9000. The device, which is touted to launch in 2008, will supposedly come with HSPDA connectivity as well as offering Wi-Fi. It is also rumoured to boast a backup/restore function for workers worried about losing contacts and emails.