

Global demand for lightweight notebooks surged by 248 percent in first quarter: GfK

Consumers in Taiwan bought over 42,000 ultra-thin notebooks over last six months

Sleek and stylish notebooks are all the rage nowadays and according to GfK, global demand for ultra-thin notebooks has been seeing consistent uptrend in the last four consecutive quarters which sold over 1.2 million units worldwide. Defined as notebooks 2 centimetres or less in thickness and weigh less than 1.5 kilograms, latest findings revealed over half a million of such devices worth nearly USD1.4 billion being snapped up in the first quarter of 2012 alone.

As rising number of makers enter the market with their offering of the latest super thin and higher-end versions of laptops, average selling price of these gadgets are also seeing a declining trend, making it more affordable for consumers to own one. The USD1507 average price tag for an ultra-thin notebook in the first quarter of last year now cost only USD1,389—almost 10 percent lower than a year ago.

Similar to the global phenomenon, this trend towards lightweight notebooks is also surfacing in the Taiwanese market. GfK Taiwan findings in quarter one of this year revealed a total of around 252,000 notebooks being sold in the country, of which nearly 8 percent, or 20,000 fell under the ultra-thin category. While the ultra-thin notebook market was only valued at USD 5 million a year ago, the segment has since expanded by 380 percent.

“Along with the rest of the world, Taiwanese consumers have also been eagerly embracing these new generation laptops— one of the latest trends in computing technology,” observed Ms. Lydia Huang, General Manager of GfK Taiwan. “The market registered a strong 267 percent surge in demand in the fourth quarter of 2011 over the previous quarter, thanks to the slew of new models introduced into the market to whet consumers’ appetite. In first quarter of this year, more than five times as many ultra-thin notebooks were sold compared to a year ago!”

The average price of ultra-thin notebooks in Taiwan has fallen by some 13 percent since the beginning of last year and today cost around USD1,241. As Taiwanese consumers’ options widens with increasing number of brands entering the market, findings show that models falling into the lower price range of USD1,499 and below have been gradually gaining share over the past three quarters. Over three in five ultra-thin notebooks purchased belong in this price range, while share of those in the USD 1500-1699 range has declined to 25 percent in the latest quarter.

“With the rising number of exciting yet more affordable varieties laid out in front of consumers, sleeker, lighter, and feature-pack ultra-thin notebook looks set to become a stylish and fashionable personal lifestyle device for many people,” said

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Ms. Huang. "Judging by its growing rate of adoption, we can anticipate manufacturers to be placing more emphasis and putting more investments into this highly potential ultra-thin notebook market which we can anticipate more exciting developments in the foreseeable future," she concluded.

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