

Mobile PCs the new rage, shipments at 49.4 million

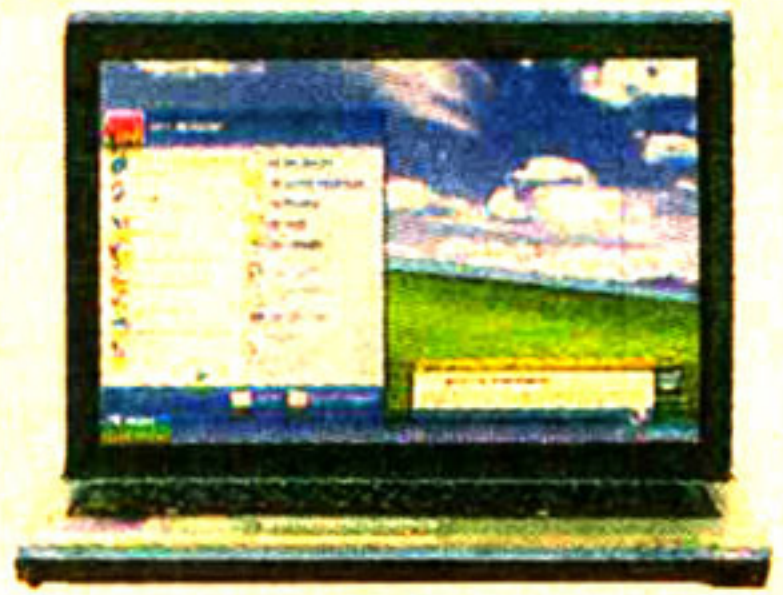
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Mumbai, May 25: Despite concerns that the slowdown in the European economy could lead to a recession again, mobile PC sales have picked up drastically across the globe. In a report, research firm Gartner has said that worldwide mobile PC shipments rose 43.4 % to 49.4 million (4.94 crore) units in the first quarter of 2010, from the corresponding period last year. This is the highest growth the segment has experienced in eight years and represents about \$36 billion in end-user spending.

Recently, research firm IDC said that the overall India PC market (mobile PCs and desktops) sales touched 22.40 lakh units during the first quarter 2010 quarter, a year-on-year increase of 33%. Sales of mobile PCs (notebook and mini-notebooks) computers grew 72% year-on-year, with 8.03 lakh shipments, the highest in a quarter.

Globally, shipments to the consumer segments continued to be the main growth driver, but there was an uptake in the professional segment, said Gartner. The research firm expects higher growth in the professional market by the year-end and 2011 as part of a larger refresh cycle. "Mini-notebook PCs were a big part of the bump in mobile PC shipments in the first quarter of 2010, with shipments growing 71 % over the same period last year," said Mikako Kitagawa, principal analyst at Gartner. "However, the share of mini-notebooks slowed in some regions, as consumers began to understand the limitations of mini-notebooks, especially in the face of aggressive price cuts of regular notebooks."

In India, sales of mini-notebook were driven by low prices. Sumanta Mukherjee, lead PC analyst, IDC India, said: "The mini notebook PC segment continued to show healthy growth in shipments, as more consumers



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sought affordable mobile computing. Intense competition forced a drop in prices, encouraging greater adoption."

Gartner said the average selling price of mobile PCs was \$732 in the first quarter of 2010, declining 15.7 % from the first quarter of 2009, when the price was \$868. Kitagawa said, "The average selling price for mobile PCs is expected to stabilise as sales into the professional market will grow, resulting in slightly higher average selling price compared to consumer mobile PCs."

HP continued to be the number one vendor in worldwide mobile PC shipments, as it accounted for 19.2 % of shipments in the first quarter of 2010. However, HP and Dell were the only vendors in the top-five to grow below the industry average. ASUS and Acer experienced the strongest growth rate among the top-tier vendors with shipment increases of 113 % and 48.4 %, respectively. Gartner analysts said this growth was driven by sales in the low-end consumer market.