

By ~~15/02/08~~ Botezatu, Hardware Editor

Hitachi Introduces 320 GB TravelStar 7K320 Drive at 7,200 RPM

The drive is expected to bridge the gap between desktops and notebooks

Storage specialist Hitachi has introduced a new notebook hard disk drive that packs 320GB of storage space in a 2.5-inch form factor. While the storage performance is not out of the ordinary, the new drive from Hitachi spins at 7,200 rotations per minute, just like an average desktop hard disk drive. 7,200 RPM 2.5-inch drives are extremely rare, especially because they would add extra load to the notebook's battery. However, the increased spindle speed accounts for higher data rates and removes the system bottlenecks. According to Larry Sweezey, director of consumer and commercial hard disk drives at the US-based subsidiary of Hitachi, the new 7K320 drives offer 60 percent more capacity and run applications 12 percent faster than the previous generation of 5,400 RPM HDDs. The TravelStar 7K320 models are part of the fourth generation of storage products from Hitachi and draw up to 12 percent less power. All the drives come with a Serial-ATA II interface, able to deliver peak data rates of 3 Gb/s as well as with a bulk data encryption security option. The manufacturer did not disclose which OEM vendors will embed the new Travelstar 7K320 drive into their mobile configuration, but such systems are expected to be available during the third quarter of 2008. When it finally slips into the retail market, the drive will sell for an estimative price of \$220. "Desktops went to 7,200 rpm a long time ago on 3.5-inch drives but there's always been a big gap between what a desktop hard drive and 2.5-in. laptop drive can offer around spin speed", said Sweezey. "We believe there are a lot of folks hungry for performance for systems running very heavy computing and video files", he continued. The drive is primarily aimed at gaming notebooks, compact systems as well as video recorders, blade servers and video surveillance systems.