IBM Wireless Product Upgrades

IBM Wireless Unveils A Variety of Product Upgrades To Make Wireless Connectivity to CDPD Networks Easier

October 11, 1995, RALEIGH, N.C.

IBM Wireless, the leading supplier of wide area wireless networking solutions for business and individuals, has unveiled a variety of hardware and software enhancements for its wireless modems for ARDIS and Cellular Digital Packet Data (CDPD) networks. The new product enhancements will be available Oct. 31 through regular IBM distribution channels.

The IBM Wireless Modem for Cellular/CDPD now comes bundled with the IBM Internet Connection Kit, a software package that lets users connect directly to the Internet – wirelessly. Now, using CDPD networks across the country, users can ”surf the Net” just as they would at home or in the office – even when they can’t find an RJ-11 jack to plug in their modems.

Other enhancements to IBM wireless modems include:

- The Landline Connection Kit: With the Landline Connection Kit, users can turn their IBM Wireless Modem for CDPD into a traditional, landline 14.4 kbps fax/modem. They simply disconnect the radio modem, plug in the Landline Connection Kit and they’re ready to use the public switched telephone network to transmit and receive data or faxes.

  Priced at $99 retail, the Landline Connection Kit gives users the best of both worlds – both wireless and wireline – with just one modem.

- The Low-Profile Cable: Designed to make wireless computing more mobile and less obtrusive, the Low-Profile Cable is ”flattened” and conforms more closely to the notebook computer. Priced at $49 retail, the cable works with IBM Thinkpads and other notebooks with a PCMCIA Type II slot located at the right rear of the machine. The new cable can also be used with the IBM Wireless Modem for ARDIS.

- Redesigned PCMCIA and ”tray” options: The IBM Wireless Modem for Cellular/CDPD is available in two packaging options. The modem comes in a Type II PCMCIA form factor that can be cabled to an external radio transceiver via the Low-Profile Cable. It is also available in an easily installed ”tray” that fits inside the computer in place of a floppy disk drive.

  Available for the IBM Thinkpad 755CE, 755CSE, 755CD, and 755CX, the tray option has been redesigned to make installation and removal faster and easier. In addition, both the tray and PCMCIA options now feature a fold-down, half-wave antenna. The new antenna makes it easier for users to pack and transport their computer – without fear of breaking off the antenna.

  And the radio transceiver has been redesigned to place the LED status lights where they are more easily seen by the user. The transceiver now attaches to a sliding rail on the back of the computer so the user can slide it up to view the modem status lights. These changes also apply to the IBM Wireless Modem for ARDIS.

- Improved interface software: The IBM Wireless Modem for Cellular/CDPD now comes with a SLIP protocol interface, making it easier to use with most Internet Protocol (IP) applications. The SLIP interface works with the IBM TCP/IP stack, WRQ Reflection Version 5.0 and FTP SoftwareUs PC/TCP OnNet Version 2.0. Other protocol stacks are currently being tested.

  The SLIP interface has been designed to work with CDPD networks from GTE MobileNet, Bell Atlantic/NYNEX Mobile, Ameritech and Sprint Cellular and it has been certified by AT&T Wireless Services (formerly McCaw Cellular Corp.), the nation's largest cellular network operator and a leading proponent of the CDPD architecture.

"Some of these enhancements are small and some are more significant, but all were designed to make the IBM Wireless Modem for Cellular/CDPD more transportable and useful for our customers," said Andrew Fox, IBM program manager for cellular/CDPD products. "We will continue to listen to our customers and work with them to provide even better wireless hardware and software products."

IBM Wireless provides a complete range of wide area wireless networking products for all the leading wireless network architectures, including ARDIS, Mobitex, circuit-switched cellular and CDPD. Based in Raleigh, N.C., the group is part of the IBM Networking Hardware Division.