

Cheaper alternative to Microsoft Office

By Subashini Selvaratnam

US-BASED Celframe has introduced a new office productivity suite called Celframe Office that has the same look and feel as Microsoft Office, but costs almost 80 per cent cheaper than Office 2003, according to its president Arun Pudur.

The strategy is to provide users with a cheaper alternative to help combat software piracy, he said.

Celframe Office uses the same document formats as Microsoft Office such as .doc and .xls plus the same document formats as Adobe Photoshop such as .psd, .jpg, .bmp and .html. It can also export documents to Adobe Acrobat's Portable Document Format (PDF) directly from any Celframe Office application. This means users can convert documents, spreadsheets and digital photos to this format for quick and easy online distribution or e-mailing.

In addition, the Celframe Office installer is just 20 megabytes in size, compared to Microsoft Office's over 600MB. And it takes 55MB disk space, compared to Microsoft Office's over 400MB.

"This means Celframe Office loads faster than Microsoft Office as the installer and disk space are very small in megabyte terms. Moreover, Celframe Office offers all its paid users free online support for life as well as free product updates, including fixes and security patches," Pudur said.

"We also offer visitors to download a free trial of Celframe Office before they decide to buy the product. In Malaysia, about 18,000 visitors have downloaded Celframe Office, and 3,000 of them are paid customers."

Celframe Office offers seven applications: Celframe Write (word processing), Celframe Spreadsheet (spreadsheet/numerical analysis), Celframe Power Presentation (for slide shows), Celframe Data Access (data management and database), Celframe Studio (a photo and image-editing package designed with Photoshop users in mind), Celframe Photo Album (to create and manage albums of digital pictures) and Celframe Draw (a page layout software that uses vector objects and allows users to design logos and insert pictures).

Besides these standard applications, Celframe has added another three applications: Celframe Sync (a synchronisation software), Celframe Post Box (an e-mail and messaging software that allows users to download e-mail from Yahoo, Gmail, etc) and Celframe Voyager (an Internet browser).

The company also announced the availability of two new software: Celframe Business Go Live! and Celframe HR Care and Employment Ads. Celframe Business Go Live! consists of over 2,800 essential business letters, agreements, business plans and others that users need in a daily business environment for all industries while Celframe HR Care and Employment Ads consists of over 1,100 professional letters and agreements and over 400 advertisement templates.

Visitors to the PC Fair technology event can get Celframe Office at RM249 for the Home edition (which excludes Celframe Power Presentation and Celframe Data Access) or RM399 for the Professional edition.

Celframe Business Go Live! retails at RM299 while Celframe HR Care and Employment Ads goes for RM199. Users can also purchase both software for RM366 at the fair.



Pudur says Celframe Office loads faster than Microsoft Office as the installer and disk space