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**iPod Domination**

**By David Smith**

iPod Is Dominating the Market, and There Is More to Come

iPod contributes 12–14% of total company revenues, a number industry experts believe will continue to increase. With this increase comes pressure on gross margins, as the blended iPod gross margin of 20% compares unfavorably with Apple's corporate average of 27–28%. The iPod helped augment Apple's growth by expanding its addressable market from the core computer market, which continues to grow, but at slower rates. To increase penetration of the rapidly growing MP3 player market, Apple launched the iPod Mini internationally in July 2004, and HP's iPod launch is scheduled for later in summer.

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Apple's entry into the digital music player market (MP3 market) with its popular iPod expanded the company's addressable market and signaled a turn in Apple's strategy. The iPod is a cultural phenomenon that is capitalizing on the convergence of digital consumer electronics and the computer, and Apple's position as an early mover enabled it to achieve the number-one position in the marketplace. iPod adoption continues to accelerate, with little indication of a slowdown. It took Apple approximately 18 months to sell its first million iPods, but its second million came in six months and its third million came in four. In fact, it appears that only its suppliers can slow it down, in particular the hard-drive vendors, which are having a difficult time meeting demand. Industry experts believe that iPod's growth will remain strong in the foreseeable future and do not expect any significant customer fallout stemming from Apple's inability to meet demand.

An analysis of the launch of the Sony Walkman in 1979 indicates the market opportunity for a revolutionary portable music player will remain strong for several years to come and Apple is expected to maintain a strong share for the next few years (unlike Sony's experience with the Walkman).

While iPod and iTunes generate significant awareness of the Apple product, they have done little to grow Apple's core Mac business. Experts attribute this mainly to Apple's aboveaverage pricing, along with continued ignorance on the part of consumers regarding the compatibility of Windows and Mac.

With regard to pricing, the average consumer desktop PC retails for \$1,019, which is \$280 below Apple's low-end price point on Apple's now, discontinued flat-panel iMac. Furthermore, the industry ASP is falling as most of the growth in the market is taking place in the sub-\$1,000 market.

With regard to the compatibility of Windows and Mac OS X, even though Apple made a concerted effort to educate consumers about the ease with which these two products work together, it has fallen on deaf ears for the most part. Apple made some progress through its retail stores, where it estimates half of Mac purchases are from first-time buyers, but for Apple's stock to work over the long term, the company needs to maintain share against Windows, at a minimum. Understandably, Apple wants to avoid selling PCs at a loss, but unfortunately the growth prospects for \$1,000-plus PCs are limited. This presents a conundrum for Apple longer term, but for now it maintains its current strategy. Incidentally, Apple's revenue share has held much better, and while this is not an often-discussed topic, revenue share is probably more important than unit share.

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### **How To Connect Your iPod To Your Home Entertainment System?**

**By Beverly Kane**

Music fans everywhere are tuning in to iPods. To get going with an iPod is not difficult. After you purchase one you can download off the computer, your favorite tunes, right onto the iPod. The flexibility of song choices and its small compact size make the iPod great for those seeking portability. Just like the Walkman's of old iPods can be used for exercising, walking, waiting in lines, simply clip it on and plug in your headphones or ear buds and go.

Now that you have taken all the time to search, find, and sort your own personal top 100 or so tunes wouldn't it be nice if you could use your iPod to play them on your supersonic, surround sound home stereo system? Or, if you are planning on throwing a party and have prepared a special song mix for it, you can simply download those tunes to your iPod and play them on your home system. Using some cables and a dock you could be on your way to enjoying your iPod tune selections at home as well.

Using the headphone jack on your iPod you can connect it to your home stereo. Visit a local electronics stores such a Radio Shack, and purchase a 3.5 mm RCA adapter cable. This is the same size as a standard headphone jack. Now you can connect your iPod to the amplifier's sound input. When you try this for the first time you should make sure your iPod's volume is set below its half way point. You will be using the stereo's control to adjust the volume. You don't want to blow your stereo's

## iPod Domination

amplifier speakers by having your iPod volume cranked. If you need to you can always adjust your iPod volume after you have determined that it is necessary.

Curious about universal docking? The universal dock works with multiple electronics devices, just like a universal remote. You can use a universal dock to connect your iPod to your computer. A cable should have come with your iPod when you purchased it for this purpose. When you put your iPod in this you are able to sync and charge it. When you plug your dock into an electrical outlet with your iPod Power Adapter you can also charge the battery. You can also dock your iPod to your stereo or speakers using an iPod AV cable or an audio cable from the stereo and now play music using your iPod. If you want to get really fancy you can control your iPod from a distance using an Apple remote control.

If your iPod has video capabilities or a color display you can connect it to your TV and view photos or watch videos. You can do this by using the iPod's AV cable or a S-video cable.

You can also connect your iPod to your car's stereo system using the auxiliary input on your car's stereo. Take a 3.5 mm cable with stereo connectors on each end and plug it into the auxiliary input. If your car's system lacks an input jack you can use a cassette adapter.

So, while an iPod with its ability to store your personal favorite tunes, may simply seem like an improvement on the old Walkman it has many more functions that you only need a few cables to utilize.

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