

TRANSPHONE GOES PRO

Frank Zhou, inventor of the USB memory key and creator of the TransPhone – see www.TransPhoneInternational.com - goes from strength to strength. After selling out stocks of his proof-of-concept, entry-level TransPhone 1, Frank is now launching his company's TransPhone 1 Pro with March/ April availability.

For those new to the hybrid scene, the 3G GSM unlocked TransPhone is the same kind of device as the Asus PadFone – but at less than half the cost. (In fact, TransPhone International owns the US patents – dating back to 2002 - for this new kind of device). In both cases, sliding the phone into what TransPhone International calls a "TransPad" converts the phone into a tablet.

"The whole point of this configuration," Frank told us, "is that most people rarely need to use a tablet and a smartphone at the same time and that means they are spending quite a lot of money on duplicated processing, connectivity and storage electronics as well causing themselves additional hassle with two devices to manage and synch, and - if you want the tablet to have 3G - two SIM cards and extra contract hassles. When you add up all the unnecessary costs TransPhone eliminates, it wins Total Cost of Ownership wrestling matched by a wide margin."

From the outside the TransPhone 1 Pro model looks identical to the original TransPhone but inside the case pretty well everything which matters has had a major upgraded.

TRANSPHONE ON STEROIDS

Android 4.0 ICS has replaced Android 2.3.5 Gingerbread used by the original version and with it, TransPhone becomes hot-pluggable. In the original TransPhone, docking or undocking the phone from the TransPad killed whatever work you were doing and you had to start again from scratch after the docking or undocking process was complete. Of course, you could continue a phone call during and after the docking or undocking process, but that was about all. With Android 4, those days are over and whatever you were doing before docking or undocking the phone just carries on from where you were when you started the docking or undocking process – much the same way at is does on the Asus PadFone.

The original 3.5" TransPhone was using a 800 x 480 TFT screen and that now goes to 960 x 540 3.5" TFT while the 7" TransPad was running at 800 x 480 TFT and it too has had a resolution upgrade to 1024 x 600 TFT for the same 7" screen size.

Better still, the 800 MHz Snapdragon processor has gone and in its place is a dual core MTK processor running at 1 GHz. RAM has gone from 512 MB to 1 GB and the processor upgrade has made it possible to increase on-board memory from 512MB (in the models tested by the press) to 4GB on board, while still keeping the 32 GB SD card support for a maximum of 36 GB at any one time.

"With this configuration, Frank told us, "TransPhone Pro can hold its own against mid-range products and even against some of those at the high end. But when it comes to screen area, TransPhone 1 Pro offers three to four times as much screen area as the most expensive smartphones on the market. TransPhone Pro can't be beaten on price for its spec either when you add up the cost of a similar spec smartphone with the kind of phone screen resolution we offer and a similar spec 3G tablet.

TRANSPHONE PRO - \$239.99 ON PRE-ORDER

"My philosophy always has been to give the user MORE for LESS. When I invented the USB memory key the objective was to give the user a lot more portable storage for a lot less money and that plan succeeded very well. More expensive floppy storage (which was the standard way of doing things when I invented the USB memory key) is in the museum today and the USB key is the new portable storage standard.

"TransPhone is on the way to doing the same thing with connected tablets. My philosophy is that a

TransPhone is always going to cost you less to buy than the comparable quality of smartphone plus the comparable quality of connected tablet. It is also going to cost you a lot less to run and give you a lot less hassle. You'll find out just how much less when you use one – as I do for most of my work.

"Generally speaking, smartphones are more powerful and have more bells and whistles than comparable tablets. Compare the specs of Google's Nexus 4 phone and their Nexus 7 tablet for example, and you will see what I am talking about and it is the same for Samsung's products too. Starting with TransPhone 1 Pro, you can be confident that TransPhones are going to give you more for less."

"TransPhone Pro will retail at \$299 – the same price as the much less powerful proof-of-concept TransPhone 1. But to give everyone a taste of what we can do, we are accepting pre-orders on our website www.TransphoneInternational.com at \$239.99 (including shipping direct to your door from the factory by DHL) – essentially we are handing the retailer margin over to the user to say "thank you" for pre-ordering. We expect to be shipping in late March or early April. I think \$239.99 for this spec of smartphone and 3G connected tablet is going to be hard to beat. "

"At the same time we have also launched a 2.75G (Edge) TransPhone 1 model with all the same upgrades except that it has a 1 GHz single core MTK processor. This Edge model has been designed to keep the price at rock bottom for developing countries where the smartphone is often the only computer many people have. Transphone 1 Edge provides them with a pretty good smartphone and a pretty good connected tablet – a handheld connected computer in effect - at a retail price of around \$190 for the pair. When the quantities get into the millions, we can probably shave that down further. Again, that is going to be hard to beat.

"I am certain that the TransPad concept is the way of the future - just as the USB key has turned out to be. TransPhone 1 Pro is the first of a several pleasant surprises our team is working on for the world's smartphone users and the first quarter of next year is going to be exciting for all of us."