

Seagate announces mini drives after retail debut

Nick Booth

STORAGE VENDOR SEAGATE HAS followed its move into retail sales with the launch of two hard drives: a 5GB pocket hard drive and a 100MB portable drive.

Seagate claimed the channel and OEMs have little role to play in selling many hard drives because the technology is so easy to install and use.

It claimed the 7cm diameter Pocket Drive is the world's smallest external hard drive. Despite its scale, the palm-sized USB device can store 2.5 to 5GB of data for between £119 and £139.

Seagate is marketing the device in terms of its ability to store 80 hours of digital music, 2,000 high-resolution 5Mp photos or 4.5 hours of MPEG-4 DivX format video.

"Sales of storage products at this end of the market are a commodity game," said Robert May,

managing director of managed services provider Ramsac.

"They're off the page now. The channel will have to ask itself how it can offer services around storage as anyone can plug in the hardware."

The portable external hard drive stores 100GB and costs £219.

One critic questioned the product description, however. "It's the size of a shoe box, so it's probably not that portable," a Seagate representative admitted.

Andreas Hass, Seagate's retail sales manager, said: "We did a great job selling via the channel and OEM, but now it's only incremental revenue.

"Now it's important to improve the brand and deliver, but we're not going to buy our way into the market by dropping prices."

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