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Friday 25th March 2005

Notebook fuel cell a reality this year?

[Ingrid Marson in Hannover](#)

ZDNet UK

March 10, 2005, 18:00 GMT

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[CeBIT](#): Another fuel cell prototype has been launched but this time it comes with a firm commitment to launching a finished product this year

Taiwanese company Antig Technology has developed a compact prototype fuel cell integrated into a notebook PC.

The prototype, which is the size of a CD-ROM disk and is pictured below, was demonstrated at CeBIT trade show in Hannover, Germany, on Thursday. The company also showed off a prototype 12W fuel cell for notebook PCs and a prototype fuel cell charger for mobile phones.

Commercial versions of the prototypes for notebooks and mobile handheld devices are expected to be available by late 2005.

Fuel cells are the next generation of battery technology and are being developed to extend the battery life of mobile devices.

Devices such as mobile phones, notebook computers, cameras, PDAs and MP3 players tend to use Lithium-ion batteries, which experts claim are approaching the limit of their capacity.

Fuel cells, which generally use alcohols for fuel, can offer up to five to 10 times the power per unit weight of a Li-ion battery, according to hardware suppliers such as [Fujitsu](#).

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Although experts agree that fuel cells have the potential to mark a significant step forward in battery performance, much of the promise of the technology is still theoretical.

Joseph Reger, the chief technology officer of Fujitsu Siemens, which is also developing fuel cells, said that one of the main drawbacks with fuel cells is safely refilling them. "You have to refuel it by injection," he said. "As it uses methanol, which is hazardous substance, there is an issue with that."

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