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# THE ECONOMIC TIMES

## PC For Nothing: iT Will Come Free

### Hong Kong-Based Co Makes A Splash In Brazil And China, Wants To Do The Same In India

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**T**HE day may not be far, when personal computers are offered free of charge, with services bundled along with them. These free machines may serve the needs of business and take up social responsibility (read bridging the digital divide). Asiatotal.net, a Hong Kong-based technology company is offering its own brand of PC, called 'iT,' for free and it expects to make this a successful business.

Under its business model, Asiatotal.net will scout for sponsors or



partners whose logos or information will be instantly available on the PC at the touch of the designated key on the keypad.

However, industry observers do not see any lock-in value for the

sponsor as the user may not use these keys at all. Coupled with this, the PC is connected to the internet through dial-up modems, when most of the internet connections now available operate on the broadband route.

Without divulging the price of the PC, Asiatotal.net's CEO Judy Chen said its business would work on a revenue-sharing model, with the sponsoring entities on every PC given free.

The criteria of selecting the people who will get the PC free will be screened by Asiatotal.net. Its requirements are simple: the user should have a telephone connection, should not own a PC and should be from the lower income strata.

The company has already forayed into Brazil where it plans to ship around 1-m PCs, with the first 2 lakh units ready to be dispatched, with sponsorship from the postal and tele-

com departments. It has also entered into China, claimed the company.

Asiatotal.net's CEO Judy Chen said it is still looking for sponsoring partners. The participating companies can be from the sectors of education, medical, financial and entertainment segments, adding that it has not undertaken any kind of market research.

The company has the PC designed by Taiwan-based companies, with the manufacturing done out of China. Ms Chen said its PC is designed for internet connectivity and comes with a five-year warranty. This PC will not be available for sale.