

## Title:

Future Zune players set to challenge entire portable devices industry

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## Summary:

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## Keywords:

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## Article Body:

Microsoft has not been exactly forthcoming with specifications of future Zune devices but they have unveiled hints that intrigue the public and encourage tech enthusiasts to keep an eye on Redmond in the future. Although Microsoft has made some mistakes during the Zune launch no one has completely discounted their efforts and what Zune means to the portable device market.

<p>Just as Microsoft released their Zune MP3 player, the company confirmed the rumors spreading over the tech industry that they are preparing a lineup of devices that would compete with almost every existing handheld player on the market. According to Microsoft, their future technological innovations would connect home, office and automobile audio-visual systems and enable users to experience multimedia entertainment at their fingertips. It's their Live Anywhere Initiative and the Zune family of devices appear to be the "Anywhere" component.</p>

<p>The trademark of Zune, which filed documents describe as a "family of multimedia devices" rather than one product, draws quite a bit of attention from many handheld enthusiasts and critics. Many bigwigs from the industry opined that Microsoft is having a "risky game" with existing multimedia devices, threatening them all as the company develops new devices under Zune trademark that would integrate functionality that are offered by separate portable devices nowadays. Many are concerned with Microsofts abandonment of their previous market endeavors such as the Plays4Sure program. Microsoft defends their position by claiming they plan to support both Zune and Plays4Sure as two separate programs. The Zune devices will allow Microsoft more control over the device design and upgrade progresssion.</p>

The Zune system's trademark documents submitted to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) expose that one of the future features of Zune family would be electronic games. This means that Microsoft intends to have their own product representation in handheld games industry that is currently dominated by companies such as Sony and Nintendo. The software giant's confidence on their handheld game device venture is strengthened by the success previously realized by their own Xbox as you may remember, it became the world's number two game console when it was launched, surpassing the game entertainment veteran, Nintendo. A Microsoft portable game player has been discussed since the beginning of the Xbx was introduced and many have looked forward to the "Xboy" for quite some time. Many in the industry have high hopes for the [Zune game player](http://www.zunemax.com/zune-games/) and there is no longer doubt that one is being planned, the only speculation left is what will a Zune gaming device do?.

Microsoft has partnered with several big companies to develop future Zune devices. With the information leaked in the filing of device prototype at FCC from a consortium involving Microsoft, it revealed that their current partners are Intel, Dell, Phillips and HP. Rumors were confirmed by Microsoft and its partners that they are currently working on a smart phone dubbed the [Zune phone](http://www.zunemax.com/zune-phone/). Though the company did not confirm that their new Zune device is aimed to compete with Apple's iPhone that will be launched on June 2007, they said that it would be available on the holiday season of the same year. The revelation of the Zune and iPhone would potentially stir telecom companies as these new products take advantage of wireless VOIP. Wireless VOIP would be attractive to public because calls are generally cheaper because they are routed through the Internet.

Microsoft is getting involved with everything; would seem true statement when other Zune devices scheduled for release. The company's greater cross-platform ambitions apparently would strike existing handheld manufacturers and encourage them to undergo massive re-strategy either to keep their dominance on their market or to protect their product's existence. As these competitions push technological development and innovations more rapidly, it is clear that Microsoft is trying to steal the crown from companies as they join the handheld battle of the fittest.

The only question that remains is that if the software giant will be able to realize their plans. While future Zune devices will not immediately materialize, people involved in the industry have plenty of time to wait and see; and it begins with the Microsoft's first Zune device. Microsoft's attempt to topple down Apple's market-leading iPod is merely the beginning of a long, exciting battle in the portable player market.

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