



MOBILE ELECTRONICS NEWS.CO.UK

ZENEC
ZE-NC510:

AFFORDABLE AV
PACKED WITH
FEATURES



THIS IS THE FUTURE OF LOOKS WITH AFTERMARKET FEATURES



1 031089031 891089031

JUNE 2008



ZENEC

EMOTIVE MONICEIVERS

...connecting to the aftermarket

ZENEC DELIVER 3D SAT NAV, MOVIES AND HANDS-FREE FOR HALF THE PRICE OF A SHOWROOM UPGRADE



COULD THIS BE THE FUTURE OF THE HEAD UNIT?

E GO could be three letters that spell more for our industry's future success than 'I.C.E.'. As the sales of aftermarket head units continue to slow, could this new unit from Zenec turn the market around? We look at the most exciting head unit of 2008.

It is not often that a head unit comes along threatening to completely revolutionise the way our business works. But when we received a tip-off from Andy Simmer of Connects2 that he needed to show us something 'rather special' at Sinsheim we were understandably excited. Running up to the show, Connects2 had spent a long time working with Zenec on the hardware and integration development of this head unit. The relationship grew so strong that it made sense for Connects2 to look at taking on the distribution of the head unit in the UK - a brave move!

Andy had a trick up his sleeve and was keen to show M.E.N what was new from Zenec. As well as traditional single and double DIN units which we look at later in this feature, the new units Andy was keen to show us were the ZE-MC2000, and the ZE-NC2000 due later in the year. These units have been designed to look like a factory VW head unit but with aftermarket functionality and price.

THREE REASONS TO BE EXCITED

The ZE-MC2000 is aimed at customers who want all the spec of an aftermarket unit but with cosmetics of a factory unit. The bonus you can offer them is all the features they want at a price way below that of a main dealer option. If you were to ask VW for an upgrade to a factory head unit to deliver navigation it would cost nearly £2000, request DVD, navigation, SD card and USB support as

well as iPod connectivity and you can forget affordability. Prices have not yet been released by Connects2, but we expect the retail price to the customer to be the right side of four figures for all that and more in the ZE-NC2000 unit. The beauty is you get the product margin, installation revenue and the customer gets a unit finished to OE standards yet with more features than they ever thought they could afford. Now you can see why we predict big things for this concept.

GOING INTO DETAIL

From rumours we picked up from Zenec's German representative at Sinsheim, Zenec has already started work developing the E GO head unit range to cover all major car manufacturers. The VAG version has been released first in order to quench a huge market demand for

an affordable AV and navigation upgrade. The new E GO unit comes in two formats: the ZE-NC2000 with DVD and navigation and the ZE-MC2000 which is cheaper by virtue of navigation being an external option. The finish of the units has been designed to integrate seamlessly with the illumination colours and cosmetics of the unit matching perfectly with the rest of the dashboard. Even the font used for the buttons and controls mimic those of a factory produced unit. This unit was primarily designed for the VW Golf Mk5 but will also install to the Jetta, Eos, Passat, Caddy, Tiguan, Touran and even the new Scirocco, due out soon. It will also be possible to fit the units in SEAT cars such as the Altea, Leon and Toledo with minor modification.

WITH THE INSTALLER IN MIND

Because the units have been designed for specific manufacturer applications the wiring, chassis and connectors are all designed for true plug and play fitting. It then becomes your prerogative as to how much you choose to charge the customer for fitting which can easily be completed in under an hour. When invoicing the customer, keep in mind how much a main dealer would charge and it won't be hard for you to be more competitive and affordable in comparison. Connects2 is keen to point out that this new head unit opens up a whole world of potential new business with your local VAG dealer too. If you can deliver profit to the dealer alongside your own credentials as a trusted local independent for the install work, they will be very happy. Not only that, think of the additional potential for the sale and installation of external equipment such as hands-free brackets or reversing sensor kits for example.

COMPATIBILITY AND EXPANSION

As a result of the huge amount of work carried out by Connects2, the new Zenec units are 100% compatible with the factory VW steering wheel buttons. This means your customer will retain full functionality from the steering wheel or stalk mounted controls. The built-in CAN Bus system deals with all this so there is no need for an external adaptor.





GENERAL FEATURES OF ZE-MC2000 AND ZE-NC2000:

PLAYBACK OF: CD, CD-R/RW, MP3, WMA, OGG, DVD±R/RW, DVD-MP3, DVD, MPEG4, DivX 5/6, VCD, SVCD, JPEG, Picture CD **SCREEN:** 7in/16:9 LCD touch screen display
AMPLIFIER: digital output stage with 4 x 50 Watts (5 x 50 Watts with ZE-NC2000) RDS radio tuner, Dolby digital and Pro Logic II decoder, USB connectivity 'hub' (only with ZE-MC2000), iPod direct connection, integrated Bluetooth module, SD card readers and theft protection by code.

The ZE-MC2000 is supplied with a 'Media Link' box and a fly lead. This means the interface box can be hidden anywhere up to a meter and half away from the head unit. Media Link contains ports for USB, a 3.5mm jack plug socket, an iPod connection and A/V connections for both audio and video expansion. Media Link could be mounted in the glove box as a multimedia connectivity hub for the passengers the front face also has a convenient SD card slot built into it too. Those customers looking for extra media expansion can always have the DVBT tuner option fitted by a specialist, again for extra revenue. This is Zenec part number ZE-DVBT25 or DVBT10 depending on whether you want a diversity or non-diversity set-up.

BLUETOOTH HANDS-FREE

As if this new unit didn't offer enough, it also has built-in wireless hands-free capability via Bluetooth. This turns the screen into the handset and brings all the functions you would expect offering customers even more functionality without the need for expensive add-ons.

NAVIGATION

The ZE-NC2000 model features full European mapping covering 42 countries. The processor is rapid, at 400Mhz, and, we are told, calculates routes and distances quickly. The iGo8 software contains the latest 3D city representation. We watched a demo of this new system and it is very impressive watching built-up areas rendered in 3D. This feature does not cover every city but many are covered now and we are assured that the database will expand rapidly. Of course all the usual features expected from a modern nav system are there including zooming in and

out at junctions, searching by POI or address/postcode as well as stored addresses and previous destinations. If your customer opts for the ZE-MC2000 and wants to upgrade to navigation at a later date that is not a problem as the GPS module can be added later and controlled from the MC2000 screen.

CONCLUSION:

When this unit hits the UK it will take a short time for the public to 'get it'; it is up to independent dealers to actively promote the concept. It is the single best helping hand any company has given the independent dealer to get their foot in the door of their local VAG dealer too. This unit and those that follow it will open up a huge potential client base who would like the benefits of multi-format and navigation but a) thought it too expensive and b) were a little sceptical of 'aftermarket' units. Connects2 has opened up a whole new potential growth area for the car audio specialist.

ALSO NEW FROM ZENEC:

As well as the 'OE' concept head unit featured here, Zenec has released two additional units along the traditional lines of aftermarket single and double DIN set-ups.

Both units share functionality just in different formats depending on the application needed. Both the NC510 and NC520 models come with full European navigation mapping as standard. Every conceivable format is handled including DIVX, MPEG4 and MP3 to name a few. The screens are both 7in, 16:9 touch controlled widescreen formats. The internal digital amp supplies 4x50W for the single DIN ZE-NC510 and 5 X 50 W for the double DIN ZE-NC520. Dolby Digital and Pro Logic II decoders handle movie sound tracks nicely. Inputs can be from many sources including iPod direct, RDS tuner, SD card slot and then of course built-in Bluetooth integrates the hands-free duties. System expansion can be from add-on DVBT tuner or maybe reversing camera.

To find out more about the Zenec range from Connects2, either call 0845 257 5588 or go to connects2.com.

