

Bluetooth GPS and PDA Explained

Traveling used to mean packing along detailed and illegible maps and compasses of questionable reliability. Given the number of times travelers had to stop and pull over to check a map, it's a wonder that we ever traveled at all! These days, modern travelers can easily find their way with a small hand held wonder called a GPS receiver.

Every since GPS became widely available on the market the need for maps and large navigational devices became redundant. Today's traveler can refer to the tiny computer screen on the GPS receiver to find exactly where to go. GPS receivers are electronic devices that can calculate your precise location on earth, by decoding signals received from satellites in outer space. Additional electronic products and software can then aid the GPS in pinpointing your exact location on a map. It's incredible technology for a small gadget with a relatively small price tag.

For increased convenience and usefulness, GPS receivers are often paired with other mobile devices. The PDA is one of the most popular mobile products used for this purpose. With a colored screen that can clearly display maps, and some hard drive space for map storage, PDAs are wonderful partners to GPS receivers. Consider the small size and light weight of a PDA as compared to other options like notebook and laptop computers, and it's easy to see why PDAs have become the first choice of modern navigators.

Integration poses a problem with using a PDA with a GPS receiver. Most PDAs are connected to GPS receivers with either a CompactFlash (CF) card, or conventional USB wires. The size of the GPS, added to the size of the PDA, plus a CF can create a bulky and cumbersome system. Using wires, on the other hand, can be inconvenient and actually limit the usability of your navigation device. Many people are finding the best solution to the problem is through Bluetooth technology.

Bluetooth Solution

Bluetooth wireless technology has become the open standard for wireless communication. Using Bluetooth technology, two electronic devices are able to communicate with each other, sending a receiving signals and transferring data, from up to ten meters away. The beauty of this technology is that the information is transmitted completely wire-free.

Bluetooth GPS Receivers

A Bluetooth GPS receiver is a device that uses wireless Bluetooth technology or Bluetooth electronics to transmit GPS data to a second mobile device that is capable of handling the same technology. In other words, a Bluetooth GPS receiver can only send data to a PDA that is also enabled with built-in Bluetooth capabilities.

There are many advantages to using Bluetooth GPS receivers with compatible PDAs for data transmission, rather than using CompactFlash or USB wires:

Wireless Connection

It's not always best to have your PDA and your GPS receiver located in the same position. Without wires to bind the devices, you can position your PDA and GPS separately in the most strategic locations, to provide the best results. For example, if you are using your GPS while driving, you can position the Bluetooth GPS receiver in a spot where it has a clear view of the sky, while mounting the PDA to your dashboard where you have a clear view of the screen. There are no wires to get in the way of your vision, or hamper your driving in any way.

CompactFlash Slot

If you are using Bluetooth GPS and PDA, you'll have no need to a CompactFlash. In this case, you can use the empty CompactFlash slot as a storage area for maps and other software required to optimize your GPS navigation.

Bluetooth GPS manufacturers will offer further benefits with their equipment. For example, many Bluetooth GPS receivers feature a POI (points of interest) database, pre-stored maps and route re-calculation function. Shop around to learn as much as you can, and compare models to find the one that suits you best.