



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Califone[®] Expands USB Headset Offerings

Headsets enhance Internet-based audio to increase impact of instructional media

CHATSWORTH, Calif. (June 29, 2005) – A multitude of new technologies such as video/audio streaming, podcasts, voice recognition software and voice over IP are increasing in popularity in education, but these technologies depend on high-quality audio for the greatest impact on learning. *Califone*, Inc., the premier manufacturer of quality audio technology for the education market, today announces the addition of two new USB headsets to allow for faster access to digital media files and better quality sound.

The QED 2004-2005 Technology Purchasing Report states that more than 38 percent of school districts use videostreaming, 27 percent use voice recognition software and 19 percent use voice over IP. In addition, between 12-20 percent more school districts are evaluating using these technologies. The *Califone* USB headsets allow students to access Internet-based audio including tutorials, music and games faster and more efficiently for cleaner, crisper sound than headsets with traditional plugs can provide. For example, a student could download and listen to the president's speech broadcast live over the Internet or listen to school online radio programs without static or disrupted audio using the *Califone* USB headsets.

The company introduced the first USB headset specifically designed for school use in 2004. With the addition of the new backwards compatible USB 2.0 headsets, *Califone* offers an advanced audio solution at different price points and options to meet a variety of school needs. All three feature durable ABS plastic construction, reinforced connectors, adjustable headbands and replaceable leatherette ear cushions to withstand the rigors of daily instructional use.

Califone now offers a trio of USB headsets safety-certified for school and library use:

- 3064 USB Multimedia Stereo Headset
- 3066 USB Deluxe Multimedia Stereo Headset
- 4100 USB Headset

“As more and more educators are using new technologies to deliver curriculum, the quality of audio from instructional applications and the Internet has become an issue,” said Tim Ridgway, vice president of marketing for *Califone*. “Audio quality should not affect student learning, but it can without the proper equipment. Our USB headsets greatly decrease disruptions to digital audio and improve sound quality.”

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Almost all computer manufacturers, including Dell and Apple, have discontinued installing conventional 3.5mm plugs in favor of USB ports, because data can be transferred more quickly and efficiently. Direct USB 2.0 connectivity offers schools true plug-and-play performance because no sound card is needed.

The USB technology coupled with flexible boom microphones on the headsets create an ideal device for language arts and foreign language instruction as well as for assisting ESL/ELL students. In language and literacy centers as well as in computer labs, the flow of audio is critical to student learning in language fluency and comprehension. Because USB headsets allow for faster access to media files, students can listen to spoken language at the actual rate of speech without moments of silence or static feedback. In addition, their responses can be recorded more clearly.

For added audio support, the 3066 and 4100 USB Headsets feature noise-reducing ear cups to minimize ambient noise. Since ambient noise can decrease a student's ability to hear the audio coming from their headphones, students often turn up the volume to drown the unwanted noise out. The ear cups fully cover the ears and shut out sounds from a student's surroundings, so the student only hears the audio he or she needs to hear.

The USB headsets are supported under Windows 98, ME, 2000, or XP and under Mac OS 9 or X and retail between \$39 and \$53. To order, contact a *Califone* dealer, or for more information on the full line of *Califone* products, call 1-800-722-0500 or visit www.califone.com to view the entire *Califone* catalog.

About *Califone*

Califone was founded in 1946 and continues to be a leader in the design, development and manufacturing of audiovisual and supplemental curriculum products for use in education, presentation and professional markets. The company offers a complete line of audio solutions, wireless systems and multimedia products for small, medium and large presentation needs. *Califone* serves millions of educators and children in the PreK through higher education school environments and has expanded to serve business and industry, houses of worship, parks and recreation and other presentation markets as well. For more information, visit www.califone.com or phone (800) 722-0500.

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Editor's Note:

High-resolution photos are available. Please contact Tim Ridgway or Charlene Blohm for photos.