

# Lost No More

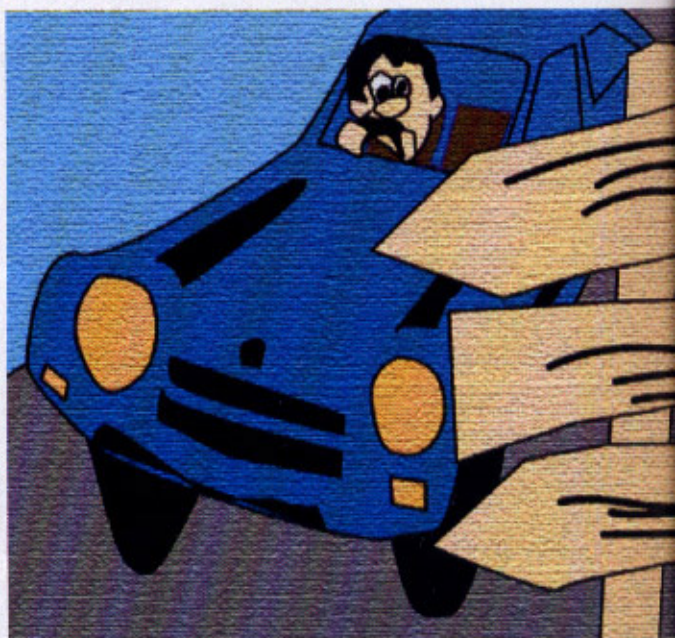
India's nascent GPS market is expected to boom in the next two years with services like tracking and navigation apps finding many takers

**F**inding a location in a foreign country or any of the Indian cities or even getting lost in your own town are instances people encounter often. However, gone are the days when the only option to reach your destination was by asking a stranger for directions or letting notorious Indian taxi drivers take you for a ride. Enter the world of GPS, where finding your way is a child's play, and it's a lot of fun using it too. In fact, there is a joke doing the rounds that people deliberately get lost just to use their GPS-enabled devices.

On a more serious note, GPS as a technology is revolutionizing the navigation space like never before, the proof of which comes from the nascent but growing adoption of GPS services in India. Once an exclusivity of the developed world, GPS is increasingly becoming common-place in emerging geographies like India.

## Market Dynamics

According to estimates, the global GPS devices market is estimated at an excess of \$4 bn in 2007. Some major players globally include Trimble, Leica Geosystems, SiRF, and CSI Wireless. Meanwhile, industry estimates pegged the Indian market size at \$22 mn in 2006 with a potential to reach \$448 mn by 2012. The main drivers of this growth would be the logistics vertical, which will heavily use GPS for tracking. Apart from that, individual consumers and car navigation



systems are also supposed to drive the market in terms of revenue.

The concept of digital maps did not exist in the past in India, and despite the IT boom, paper maps claimed its dominance. But the scenario changed when commercial applications of satellites manifested in the form of GPS. In India, though the GPS market is still emerging, it has started generating interest among the larger section. Till 2004, there was little consumer awareness about the value of digital

maps and location-based services. With the launch of mapping and directions portals like MapmyIndia.com in September 2004, in India, followed by the worldwide launch of Google Earth depicting satellite imagery in 2005, and then Yahoo India Maps in 2006 (powered by MapmyIndia maps), consumers realized the benefits of being able to search for maps and directions easily, print customized route maps with turn-by-turn directions, and then carry it with them.