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Tech Trends Issue January 2012



Smart Publishing founding partners: Mike Joubert (TechSmart editor), George Grobler (business manager) and Suzanne Rall (print media manager and former TechSmart editor).

100 TechSmart issues – a perspective

As I worked my way through the TechSmart archive to prepare for our 100th issue, it gave me great joy to see how far the magazine has progressed. What started as an idea discussed round a cold beer in 2002, has resulted in Smart Publishing, a company now employing more than 30 people, with three magazines in its stable and a burgeoning digital division currently busy with some amazing stuff.

As with all worthwhile undertakings, it was bloody hard work. At the beginning, our knowledge about publishing was as limited as our budget. With such a new magazine, advertisers were sceptical to climb onboard, while our business model – a free magazine providing quality content sustained by advertising and a large distribution, was yet unproven. We were supported by some special people along the way, none more so than Dr Wessels Smuts of Business Print Centre, in which TechSmart found a willing partner for a number of years.

Since our first issue in 2003, consumer electronics has become an integral part of everyone's lives, with smartphones, notebooks, tablets and the internet all around us. This was one of the main reasons why we started TechSmart; to provide an easy to understand technology magazine, informing people about the tech choices available. With the magazine, and also with our website, which drew close to 48 000 unique visitors in November 2011, I hope we've achieved that.

I sometimes wonder if I would ever have committed to the project if I knew how much hardship and sacrifice would have been involved. Looking at this month's cover, seeing all the previous ones stacked neatly next to each other, there is no doubt I would do it all over again.

To all our readers and advertisers, thanks for all your support since 2003, without you, we are nothing.

Enjoy the 100th issue,
Mike (michael@techsmart.co.za)

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As the first ultrabook that we've tested, Asus' Zenbook left us amazed. See what all the fuss is about.

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With a screen size much larger than a regular smartphone, Samsung's Galaxy Note leaves a lot of questions unanswered. We try to provide some answers.

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Nikon has made the move to a new mirrorless standard that they call Nikon 1. We go on a shooting spree with their J1.

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Movies have blessed us with a number ultra-cool vehicles. Here we check out our favourites.

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Top Tech Titbits



iPhone 4S now available locally

December brought another reason for Apple fans to rejoice, with the arrival of the

highly anticipated iPhone 4S to South African shores. MTN announced that the phone was available on several packages, starting from R499 pm (MTN 200) for the 16 GB model, R649 pm (MTN 350) for the 32 GB model and R819 pm (MTN 500) for the 64 GB model.

Vodacom also announced a variety of contract options, while pricing the iPhone 4S at R7699 for the 16 GB model, R8999 for the 32 GB model and R10 299 for the 64 GB model (once off purchase).



Goodbye, Sony Ericsson

At the beginning of December, Sony Ericsson confirmed that the Sony Ericsson brand

would be phased out as by the middle of this year, after being acquired by Sony towards the end of 2011. Instead, the company's new smartphones would be sold under the Sony label, as the electronics giant pursued a "four screen" proposition. This entails providing Sony users a greater degree of integration between a connected PC, TV, tablet and smartphone. With Sony Ericsson already making use of the Sony trademarked Cyber-shot and Walkman brands, we suspect that the move towards Sony-only smartphones should be seamless.



Galaxy Nexus coming to South Africa

Samsung and Apple's tech duel continues, with

Samsung announcing that its latest 4.65" Galaxy Nexus smartphone was inbound. The Nexus, which is the first to run Android 4.0, is expected to arrive early this year, at a price tag between R6999 and R7299.

Alongside its 8.94 mm thin profile, the phone will sport a HD Super AMOLED display and a resolution of 720 x1280, while a 1.2 GHz Cortex-A9 dual-core processor and 1 GB of RAM should ensure fast performance. A newly designed five megapixel camera, 1080p video capture and Near Field Communication will round off its features. ❖

Hot New Products



Stormtrooper motorcycle suit

One of the most iconic uniforms from Star Wars has been faithfully replicated by Canadian company UD Replica, recreating the Shadow Trooper and Stormtrooper's sinister armour using form-molded leather. Ideal for bike riding in style, or actually just walking around with, these motorbike suits also offer built-in CE-approved body armour to fully protect motorbike riders. It's not cheap, starting from R9365 from www.udreplicas.com.

T-shirt with integrated drum machine

Keeping with the innovative clothing theme, the electronic drum machine t-shirt offers up nine different drum kits, and the ability to create complex beats, straight on your shirt. The drum kits have seven professional grade drum sounds each, such as rock drums, retro 808, discotek, techno punk, classic jazz, bass invaderz, chiptune, zapf dingbeats, and scratchy. Once a drum loop has been created (up to three minutes) additional beats can then be layered on top to create a rhythm. Now this is what beating your chest should look like in the 21st century. Available for \$30 (R240) from bit.ly/tshirtdrum



Toyota Fun-Vii concept

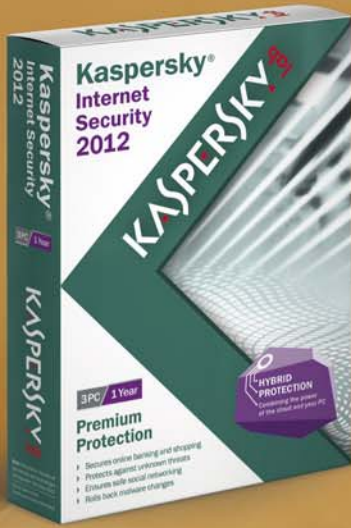
Is Toyota's Fun-Vii concept a car, K.I.T.T. from Knight Rider or billboard? The answer is all of the above. Described as a "Smartphone on four wheels," the Vii (Vehicle, interactive, internet) boasts an exterior that can be personalised by, you guessed it, downloading an app. The interior can also be modified to fit the driver's mood, with some of its functions accessible via smartphone.



iLuv ArtStation Pro Audio Dock

Why should Apple have all the accessory fun? The iLuv ArtStation is made for the Samsung Galaxy tablet range, including the Galaxy Tab 7 Plus, the Tab 10.1 and 8.9. The docking station neatly houses the tablet, enabling it to act as an entertainment centre for playing back music, movies and TV shows. Portrait and landscape viewing options are catered to, while the included remote stores magnetically against the back of the system. www.i-luv.com. ❖





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Sci News



Leap frog

Frogs' legs give them a jump(ing) start. And now scientists think they know how it works. According to a study published in a recent issue of the journal *Biology Letters*, frogs' calf tendons stretch and then recoil to thrust them forward. Researchers implanted metal beads into four frogs' shin bones, ankle bones and leg muscles, and then filmed their jumps in slow motion using 3D X-ray videos. The footage showed that as the frogs prepare to jump, their calf muscles shorten, while the attached tendon stretches for about a tenth of a second. At the start of the jump the tendon recoils, which provides a burst of energy to push the animal forward. The researchers think it's one giant leap forward in understanding animal locomotion.



Sweet temptation

If steering clear of the office vending machine was one of your New Year's resolutions, we have some good news. According to a study in the journal *Appetite*, a short, brisk stroll around the block can keep you off the choc. About 80 volunteers who regularly snack on chocolate at the office were asked to either take a 15-minute walk or rest before attending to a task at their desks. A bowl of chocolates was available to all participants. Those who exercised before sitting down at their desks ate, on average, half the amount of chocolate as the non-exercisers, regardless of the difficulty of the task at hand. The result supports earlier reports that exercise can curb our craving for high-calorie foods. So, next time you want to take a bite, rather take a hike.



Bedtime stories

Our early ancestors slept tight – and without having the bugs bite. Researchers write in a recent issue of the journal *Science*, that they uncovered fossil evidence of people using insect-repelling plant material for bedding at the Sibudu rock shelter in KwaZulu-Natal. Dated at 77 000 years, these finds are almost 50 000 years older than those previously reported as the earliest evidence of early humans sleeping softly. The fossilised bedding consisted of a compacted layer of stems and leaves almost a centimetre thick and spread over an area up to 3 m² inside the cave. The plant material seems to be River Wild quince, known to ward off bugs, and the researchers think the cave dwellers most likely benefitted from the plant's mosquito-repelling properties. [LP] 🍀

More amazing science

A condensed podcast course in quantum mechanics and particle physics: bit.ly/higgsquantum

The woolly mammoth to be cloned: bit.ly/woolmam

Sir Isaac Newton's annotated *Principia Mathematica* and other papers online: bit.ly/newtonpapers

Eco News



Vodacom tests renewable fuel cell energy system at COP17

In order to provide uninterrupted cellphone service to the 15 000+ delegates that attended COP17 in Durban last month, Vodacom deployed a hybrid-energy base station. This hybrid energy system came about due to space limitations that wouldn't allow for a full solar array or wind turbine solution. It gains 30% of its energy from solar and wind technology with the remaining 70% coming from fuel cells. Fuel cells are quiet and produce no particulate matter, with the byproducts of this station only negligible emissions of carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide. In combination with renewable energy, this hybrid system produces 45% less CO₂ than one connected to a local grid.



BMW & Toyota park under same eco roof

BMW might be famous the world over for its M-branded sports cars but the company is no stranger to green tech, having unveiled its sublime looking i8 sedan (pictured above) and i3 city car concepts last year. The German car and motorcycle maker has now signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with eco-car leader Toyota concerning a mid-to-long-term collaboration on next-generation environment-friendly technologies. Amongst other things, these two companies will be collaborating on research in the field of lithium-ion battery technologies. BMW will also supply 1.6 and 2.0 liter diesel engines to Toyota from 2014 in Europe.



Solar solution for lights and cellphone charging

A tech ray of hope is about to shine on electrically disenfranchised Africans, as Econet Solar unveiled its standalone electricity solution dubbed the Home Power Station. The unit consists of a solar panel, battery pack, energy management module, four LED lights and a cellphone charger. The units' solar panel charges its battery, allowing it to provide lighting for four rooms and enough power to charge a mobile. Users can purchase the Home Power Station at a small upfront cost and pay for electricity the way one would for prepaid airtime on a pay-per-use basis. It is expected to be commercially available in the first half of 2012. Visit www.econetsolar.com. 🍀

Other interesting eco news

City of Cape Town launches plan for energy and climate change: bit.ly/ctcityplan

Bill Gates pitches nuclear reactor tech to China: bit.ly/billgatesnuke

Solar installations atop of Apple's new HQ might be amongst largest in US: bit.ly/applesunroof

Self-cleaning laundry: A new nanoparticle layer, which enables cotton to clean itself when exposed to sunlight, could mean the end of laundry day.

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THE BIG 100

Celebrating a hundred issues of TechSmart

In celebration of making it to 100 issues (and still going strong), it's only appropriate to scan over the past few years to see how TechSmart (and tech in general) has evolved since we started in 2003.



Year 10
Year 9
Year 8
Year 7
Year 6
Year 5
Year 4
Year 3
Year 2
Year 1

In today's technologically advanced society, we often receive an overdose of information for which we have little or no use. TechSmart aims to enlighten its readers with relevant, useful information on new products and services in the technology field." With these words former editor, Suzanne Rall, kicked off the first issue of TechSmart magazine.

Printed on tabloid-sized newsprint, the magazine, just like technology, has evolved into something quite different over the past number of years. What you have in front of you is the product of a lot of hard work, and lessons learned, from 100 issues published. Since 2003 when we started, we've seen big bodied cellphones progressing to big screen smartphones, hefty notebooks slimming down to ultra-thin ultrabooks, and broadband becoming available not just via ADSL but also 3G. Here's a look back at that first issue of TechSmart, and the progression made since.

Brands most featured as a cover product

- 2003: HP (4x)
- 2004: Motorola (4x)
- 2005: Samsung, HP (3x)
- 2006: Panasonic (3x)
- 2007: Garmin (5x)
- 2008: Toshiba (3x)
- 2009: Nokia, Edimax (4x)
- 2010: Asus, Canon (4x)
- 2011: Samsung, Asus (3x)



All the cellphones

- First ever cellphone on a cover: Motorola T720i, March 2003
- First Nokia: Nokia Xpress SMS, Jun 04
- First smartphone incorporating PDA, calling, GPS and Wi-Fi: HP iPaq hw6915, Sept 06
- Apple iPhone, Feb 07
- First BlackBerry: BlackBerry Storm, March 2009
- First Android device, HTC Magic, Jun 09



HTC Magic

Four consoles featured on the cover

- PSP, Sep 05 + Dec 06
- Xbox 360, Oct 06
- PS3, Apr 07
- Nintendo Wii, Nov 07

Six strange things on the covers

- An ant farm
- A brain
- A teddie bear
- Super Mario breakdancing
- A giant pencil
- Two robots



Ant Farm

Apple on the cover

- Apple iPod 40 GB, Nov 2004
- Apple iPhone, Feb 07
- Apple iPhone 3GS, Sep 09
- Apple iPad, Aug 10, also first modern tablet making an appearance
- Apple iPhone 4, Oct 10

Cover girl hair colour

- Brown: 15
- Black: 11
- Blond: 10
- Red: 8

10 significant TechSmart covers



March 03, Issue 1. First TechSmart issue printed on A3 newspaper, folded into A4 format. Distribution 100 000.

Feb 04, Issue 7. Move from newspaper to magazine format.



May 04, Issue 10. White cover background replaces coloured one.



Aug 04, Issue 12. First issue theme appears: The DIY Issue.



Nov 07, Issue 50. 50th issue celebrated.

Feb 08, Issue 53. Models make an appearance on the cover.



March 09, Issue 67. Coloured background replaces white one.

Oct 10, Issue 85. Thicker cover and paper.



Aug 11. First TechSmart SME Guide makes an appearance.

Jan 2012, Issue 100. 100 issues of SA's largest tech magazine.



Issue 100 | January 2012

Where it all started TechSmart 1/1, March 2003

Cover story:

ADSL comes to South Africa

Our first ever cover story heralded the arrival of ADSL in SA. Available in 2003 was a Telkom ADSL offering with a download speed of 512 kbps and a cap of 3 GB. It would set you back R680 with an ISP fee of R250. Telkom currently offers a 1 Mbps uncapped line for R658, while 10 Mbps lines are available.

Products reviewed:

AOpen 1846 notebook (Intel Pentium 4 processor, 256 MB of RAM, 20 GB hard disk). R16999. For that price you can buy the Asus Zenbook (Intel Core I7, 4 GB RAM, 256 GB SSD) and have cash to spare.

We said then: "With a 20 GB hard disk drive you are also insured not to run out of space quickly."

Handspring Treo 270 communicator. R8800

We said then: "The feature that TechSmart found most impressive is that you can install thousands of other colour-enabled Palm OS applications, like games, photo viewers and documents editors, as well as existing data from another Palm OS device."

Games reviewed: FIFA Football 2003, The Sims, Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2, Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell.

Website featured: Wikipedia, which then just celebrated a milestone of 100 000 articles. It now has over 3.8 million articles in English alone.

Other features:

- We looked at popular search engines, suggesting Aardvark.co.za and Ananzi.co.za for local searches, while recommending Google.com for international searches.
- We said then: "Google is regarded by many as the most powerful and effective search engine available."
- Flood of visitors to online news as Iraq was attacked on 20 March 2003.
- We talked about a new storage device called USB flash drives available in sizes between 16 MB and 512 MB, costing in the region of R550. You can now buy 32 GB for the same price, while Kingston recently released a flash drive with a massive capacity of 256 GB.

Our first advertisers

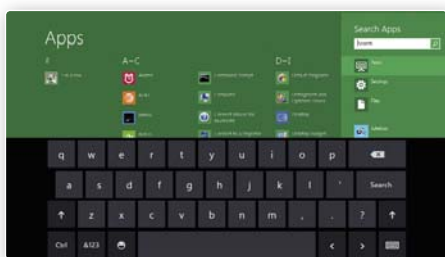
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- CFD International furniture
- www.smsmessages.co.za
- Megarom Interactive



Top tech trends: What to expect in 2012

In the technology space, 2011 was certainly an eventful year, and we anticipate that 2012 will be no less interesting. Technological progress certainly seems to be accelerating exponentially; with developments reshaping the tech landscape within short periods. Keeping that in mind, here are our trends that we anticipate for the year ahead.

For PCs and tablets: Windows 8



The phrase every dog has its day may well apply to Microsoft this year, with 2012 potentially being Windows 8's time in the sun. More than updating its already successful Windows 7 platform, the company has been in need of a unique offering to enable it to compete with Apple's iOS and Google's Android on the tablet front. Additionally, it needs to make up for lost time, as the company undeniably fell behind its rivals in the tablet race during 2011, with Apple's iOS and Google's Android platform taking the lead.

For starters, Windows 8 brings an attractive new Metro interface to the table (familiar to those who've used Windows Phone), which is far more modern than its previous iterations. Most importantly, while Metro can be navigated with a mouse and keyboard, it has been designed to serve as a touch interface as well.

As on Windows Phone 7, the operating system centres around using live tiles. These can accommodate everything from different apps, files, media players to links and RSS feeds. The tiles will also be able to provide information without needing to first be opened. Additionally, apps will be able to work together; practical applications of this could include attaching a photo to an email from a variety of locations, such as Facebook or Flickr, as well as one's hard drive. From what we've seen, it's an intuitive and enjoyable experience.

Already two companies, Nokia and HP, are banking on Windows 8, as both have expressed their intention to create tablet's running on Microsoft's new platform. Meanwhile, Microsoft is hard at work enticing developers to turn their attention to developing apps for Windows 8 – by offering them a greater percentage of profits than afforded by the Android or Apple App Store once they reach a certain level of sales.

A good licking: Android Ice Cream Sandwich



The world's most widely utilised mobile platform is about to get even better with Google marrying the ease of use of the Android Gingerbread smartphone OS with the visual eyecandy that is its Honeycomb tablet OS, resulting in Ice Cream Sandwich (4.0, ICS). Having one version of Android running on smartphones and tablets is crucial for the company, as it goes a long way towards fixing the rampant OS fragmentation that's making life difficult for app developers.

Some of the features found on ICS include resizable widgets, a new font optimised for HD display and the use of adaptable onscreen buttons in place of hardware buttons. Google included a new mobile web browser that sports the ability to sync your mobile bookmarks with Google Chrome, while Gmail users will appreciate the improved Gmail app, allowing them to quickly swipe through emails in their inbox, even when they're offline.

Find it here:

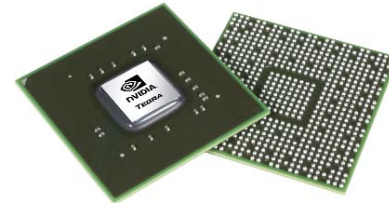
The first smartphone operating on Android 4.0 is Samsung's Galaxy Nexus which should arrive in SA early this year (see p2), while ICS will make its tablet debut on the Asus Eee Pad Transformer Prime, which is also the first tablet powered by Nvidia's quad-core Tegra 3 processor, becoming available in March locally.

Super Ultra! The rise of the ultrabook



Think about Kate Moss, but with the power of Bismarck du Plessis. You're now close to imagining the biggest thing the notebook industry have experienced since the netbook came and went. See p11 for more info.

Tegra 3: Processor of Promise



More power and better battery life are what Nvidia's Tegra 3 system on a chip promises for both tablets and smartphones. See p12 for more on this quad-core processor.

Bigger is better for screen size



Cellphones seem to be coming full circle – they started out large (and admittedly chunky) – became very small, and now, larger screens seem to be the order of the day. Two years ago the Samsung Galaxy's 4" looked big, now 4.2" screens have become the de facto standard. The Galaxy Nexus sports a 4.6" screen while the Samsung Note hybrid (see p12) is pushing the pocketable boundaries with its delicious 5.3" screen. Will we be looking at 5" ruling the smartphone roost at the end of the year?





Look mom, no hands. Handless control matures



Besides unveiling the new iPhone in October 2011, Apple also introduced Siri, an intelligent digital assistant for the 4S.

Although voice commands and web search functionality weren't new, Siri's ability to understand context was, allowing users to speak naturally when they ask it questions. Not to be outdone, Google is working on a Siri rival called Majel, named after departed actress Majel Barrett-Roddenberry who provided the computerised voice of the Starship Enterprise in Star Trek.

It's not only voice that we'll use to interact with devices, as Face Unlock for Android 4.0 enables users to unlock smartphones via face scanning, whilst gesture-based control comes to the PC this year courtesy of Microsoft's new Kinect hardware for Windows PCs.

And we predict even more of the cloud



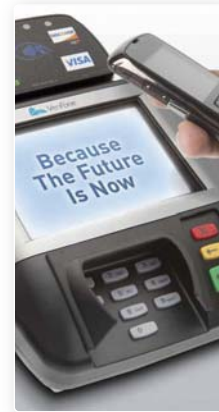
It seemed that everywhere we turned last year, we heard one word: cloud. In 2011, cloud was everywhere, in work, in business, in play, and we expect cloud to become even more prolific in 2012.

Microsoft has launched its cloud based Office 360 service in South Africa (see p15), while Apple's iCloud service and Google's own Docs offering are also available. And then of course, there are already more cloud-based apps than you can shake a stick at. Most particularly, OneNote, Evernote, and Any.do seem intent on proving that people really do want to store their notes and to-do lists in the cloud.

Last year we also saw the start of cloud-based gaming, with OnLive launching in the middle of the year, providing high quality gaming performance without the need for the expensive hardware to back it up.

Yes, cloud is already prominent, but in 2012, we suspect this trend will only continue, and grow.

Just swipe your phone: NFC payments



Expect near field communication (NFC) to become more of a catchphrase this year, as the ability to transfer information wireless using this hardware-based technology becomes more visible. Absa's rollout of its NFC payment project should enable people to start paying for small purchases, tickets and

transportation using only their smartphone, by tapping their device of choice to a reader. This while Standard Bank's Beyond Payments subsidiary also implemented South Africa's first cashless NFC system at the Oppikoppi Unknown Brother rock festival to great success last year.

U in? The start of the next-gen consoles



Nintendo's Wii console has always appealed to the casual gamer, with hardcore gamers opting for one of the HD consoles (PS3 or Xbox 360). The company is looking to change this with the Wii's successor

dubbed the Wii U, which will reportedly boast an IBM quad-core 3 GHz CPU, 768 MB of RAM (possibly 1 GB) and an AMD Radeon-based high definition GPU. Its hardware power puts the new console firmly in the same league as the Xbox 360 and PS3, and enables it to offer full HD (1080p) graphics. More impressive though is the new console's controller that could almost be mistaken for a tablet, since it features a 6.2" touchscreen, accelerometer, gyroscope, camera, a microphone and speakers.

Integrated entertainment



One of the more exciting trends happening right now, and which we expect to see more of this year, is integrated entertainment. Examples of this include internet enabled TV's which are already available and which we anticipate will include even greater functionality in the near future.

Sony's four-screen strategy sees them punting better integration between TV, smartphones, tablets and PCs, while Apple also has high hopes for Apple TV, with rumours that you'll be able to wirelessly stream a movie to TV, with the ability to pick up your iPhone to continue where you left off. Another example can be found on the forthcoming PlayStation Vita, which will enable users to stream content between their PS3 and the portable device. This means one will be able to start a game on the PS3, pause it, and start playing from the same spot using the Vita.

Prices are falling (hopefully)



During 2011 we saw the prices of entry-level smartphones (but not the number of functions) drop below R2000, allowing many more users to purchase one. This year we hope to

see the prices of these devices dropping to under R1500, while we also wish to see 7" tablets becoming available at this price point (Amazon's Kindle Fire retails for \$200, about R1630). What about 10" Android tablets? R3000 will make us happy, but with a weaker Rand it's looking increasingly more difficult. [RN+HD]



Top tech trends: What to expect in 2012 cont.

Intel: four tech trends on the rise

Genevieve Bell, Intel fellow and director of Interaction and Experience Research, recently shared four trends in technology that are on the rise, and what they can lead to in the years to come.



Digital DIY: the emergence of virtual creativity

Over the last few years, new technology has encouraged people to passively consume content. However, there is a pent-up desire and aspiration towards an active type of involvement and getting creative. As a result, people are getting into digital DIY, and this could lead to a rise in creative activities such as people personalising software.

Small data – resisting the notion of big data

In the business world, there's a lot of talk about 'big data'. However, what people are really interested in is the 'small data' in their lives. They care about what's on their Facebook wall; on their Twitter feed and so on. In the hands of companies, this information is part of big data but in the hands of human beings it's small data. We're beginning to see people resisting the notion of big data because they don't want to be part of data analytics.

The emergence of women as early adopters of technology

Women are emerging as dominant users of technology. Falling prices and new devices that help women perform multiple roles – parent, worker, care-giver, social organiser, cleaner, cook and so on – are driving this trend. If technology continues to become more user-friendly, women will become even bigger users.

A re-balancing of our relationship with technology

There are currently two models for people's relationships with technology. The first is characterised by technology that is 'needy'. Devices need us to provide permissions, passwords and so on. The other template has entailed intelligent machines that go crazy and want to kill us. But we're seeing a rebalancing of our relationship with technology and are moving to a third model.

Computers are beginning to anticipate our requirements. This trend is all about devices getting smarter and better able to look after us. With the continued advances in technology, devices are finally growing up. 🌟

We want more:

Wireless connectivity everywhere

We don't want any wires to come close to gadgets. The more wireless connectivity between devices the better, with Samsung's KIES and Motorola's MotoCast being a good example of wireless syncing made relatively easy.

Better battery life on smartphones

How is it that smartphones can become wafer-thin with functionality that allows you to do almost anything, but they can't provide more than a day's worth of battery life?

Better local Apple App Store

The local Apple App Store is paltry when compared to the US version. Give us a reason to be legit and not sign up with a false address for the US one. Oh and while you're at it, why not drop the ridiculous prices on Apple products here in SA?

Backlit keyboards

We loved it in the Samsung Series 9, the Dell 15z and the Lenovo X1. The convenience a backlit keyboard gives typing in darkened rooms should be a de facto part of the notebook experience. 🌟



Trends we predicted for 2011: How we fared

Tablets everywhere

We hit a definite bulls-eye with this one, although it was almost expected. Apart from the iPad 2 launching, just about every PC and smartphone manufacturer released an Android-based tablets. Sales in Q3 2011 for example showed a 264.5% year on year increase. Although final figures are not in yet, market research company IDC predicted worldwide tablet sales to have topped 63 million units in 2011, while JP Morgan forecasts a massive 99 million tablets to be sold in 2012.

Internet + TV = Smart TV

Yes we saw internet-connected devices from Samsung, Sony and LG, but they just did not feature as prominently as we thought. As this stage these sets still struggle with easy text input, while streaming services offered overseas, such as Netflix, are not available locally. The fact that there is a price premium on these TVs also did not help.

Your next phone will be a smartphone

Seeing someone with an old Nokia? It's only because their smartphone has been stolen.

Android everywhere

At the end of last year Google announced that 700 000 phones per day are being activated with their Android operating system. It has become the go-to operating system for handset manufacturers (excluding BlackBerry, Apple and Nokia), with the Android Market also celebrating 10 billion apps downloaded. All five of our Top 5 entry-level smartphones of 2011 ran Android, while four of our Top 5 high-end smartphones sported the little green robot onboard. We think we can claim that prediction.

3.5G goes 4G

Although countries such as the US and South Korea started offering 4G services and handsets to the public, SA has not quite gone the distance. MTN and Vodacom have started testing long-term evolution (LTE) technology, which should eventually replace the current 3G standard. Since SA's move to digital television has been delayed time and time again, it's preventing the freeing up of much needed spectrum that can be allocated for 4G. Hopefully we'll see some movement at the end of this year. 🌟



Ultra what? Unravelling the ultrabook

You can certainly expect the word ultrabook to be mentioned more than once in 2012, but what exactly is an ultrabook, and how does it differ from notebooks and netbooks?

Simply defined, ultrabooks are a new category of notebook, integrating even better weight (< 1.5 kg) and size (< 25 mm) advantages than current thin-and-light notebooks, but without sacrificing performance. It is aimed at offering users a means to create and consume content in a sleek, light, secure and elegant device, without having to compromise power, as is the case with netbooks. Additionally, ultrabooks offer instant-on access thanks to Solid State Drive storage and above average battery life. Like all new tech, prices will be high initially but should become more accessible to a broad market as time progresses.

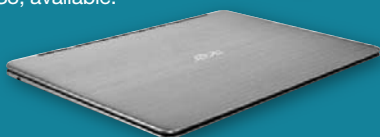
In a way, the ultrabook could be called a version of the best of thin-and-light as well as performance notebooks. A prime example is Asus's Zenbook UX31 (on the right), which is ultraportable, while still boasting a powerful Core i7 processor and very good battery life. ❁

Here's what you can expect from manufacturers:

Toshiba Portégé Z830, Q1.



Acer Aspire S3, available.



- Samsung Series 5, Q1
- HP Folio 13, Q1
- Lenovo ThinkPad ultrabook, Q2
- Sony ZX2 series, Q2

Ultra-appealing ultrabook

Asus Zenbook UX31



With ultrabooks set to make a big impact on the notebook market this year, Asus' Zenbook sets the bar very high.

It's not often that a notebook, or mobile device for that matter, honestly blows us away but Asus' Zenbook UX31 excels in just about every key area. The design on the device is elegantly beautiful and uncluttered while its solid aluminium body balances simplicity of design with a modern, futuristic aesthetic. The most remarkable feature of the 13.3" Zenbook is how

thin and light it is, weighing in at a barely noticeable 1.3 kg, that made it a pleasure to take anywhere.

In use

However, the Zenbook's appeal extends beyond its appearance, since it packs a second generation Intel Core i7 2677M CPU running at 1.8 GHz and 4 GB of RAM, along with integrated Intel HD Graphics 3000 (but no AMD or Nvidia GPU offering). Opening and running multiple programmes, browsing the web, playing videos and working on office was fast and responsive, and made the Zenbook a joy to use. Despite the high-end processor, we were pleasantly surprised by how little heat it produced.

The 13.3" screen also impressed; boasting a 1600 x 900 resolution that offered outstanding clarity that was sharp and clear indoors and still visible outdoors in direct sunlight, along with a generous range of viewing angles.

Key components

The chiclet keyboard – unfortunately not backlit – offered keys that were well spaced along with a large responsive trackpad. Superlative sound, thanks to Bang and Olufsen audio, a micro HDMI port, one USB 2.0 port and one USB 3.0 port along with a headphone out jack, are all on offer here, as is an SD/MMC card reader.

Thanks to a 256 GB solid state drive providing the storage, the Zenbook took only 21 seconds to boot from an off state to be ready for work. From sleep, it took a mere five seconds for the notebook to wake up. On a full charge, the Zenbook offers a battery life (with Wi-Fi on and screen at maximum brightness while playing video) of just under a commendable five hours (4 hours, 42 minutes). Pushing brightness down to 50% gave us closer to 6 hours.

To the point

The Zenbook is a work of art in computer form – a beautiful screen, speedy processor, superb sound and overall attention to detail make this notebook a winner. [RN] ❁

"The Zenbook is a work of art in computer form."

Four FAQ's answered

Samsung
Galaxy Note



Is it a smartphone or a tablet? The hybrid Samsung Galaxy Note tends to evoke this and a number of other questions when placed on the table. We try to answer four of the Note's most Frequently Asked Questions.

1. Jeez it's big! Is it not uncomfortable?

Indeed it is, and yes, but less so than expected. The Note's 5.3" screen is supposed to provide a middle ground between the 4" smartphone and the 7" tablet. It is at its most uncomfortable pressed against your head when making calls, since it feels a bit like talking into a small serving tray. However, carrying it around in your jeans proved to be less obtrusive than we thought.

"The beautiful 5.3" screen made it very easy to read mail, browse the web or read ebooks."

2. So what can the Note do?

Everything your smartphone does, including calling, only with a bigger screen. Samsung did a sterling job with the Super AMOLED display which has a resolution of 800 x 1280 pixels, meaning a higher pixel count than on most smartphones and on par with some 10" tablets. Websites displayed superbly, certain games looked excellent, and it was a joy to use when snapping and viewing photos, along with very decent full HD movies.



3. What's that in your other hand?

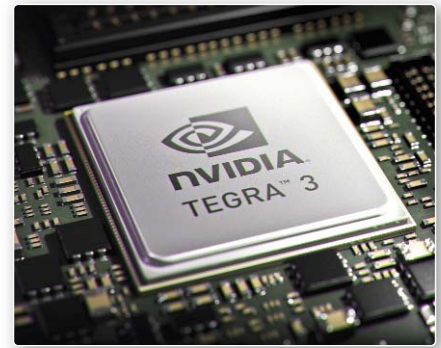
It's the Note's S Pen stylus, reminding us of the good old days of the classic Sony Ericsson P900. Those for whom note taking is of prime concern, the S Memo app allows you to scribble away. You can also pull in photos to write on, and share your notes via MMS, Facebook or email. For those with an artistic bent, S Choice provides a number of creative apps via the Samsung Apps store. There are

clear benefits of such a stylus for creative types, but after the initial fun of scribbling with the stylus it barely moved from its slot at the back of the device.

4. Should I buy one?

To be honest, we're in two minds about this. The beautiful 5.3" screen made it very easy to read mail, browse the web or read ebooks, and we do suspect we'll have a problem with moving back to a 4" screen after our testing period comes to an end. So we won't mind the Samsung Galaxy Note replacing our smartphone or even a 7" tablet, but we would still buy a separate 10" tablet rather than only depend on the Note. That said, the very expensive asking price (R8000) of this hybrid device should automatically solve the "buy or not?" dilemma for most. [MJ] ❖

Full Article
bit.ly/notefaq



Tegra 3: Processor of promise

While we loved the performance offered by mobile devices sporting the dual-core Tegra 2 processor, and there have been plenty of them, it was the announcement of Nvidia's Tegra 3 that really piqued our interest.

The quad-core ARM Cortex A9 CPU processor plus GPU, code named Kal-EI (Superman's name on Krypton), is set to offer up to three times the performance of its predecessor, along with significantly less (60%) power consumption. The processor includes a fifth CPU companion core, which is specifically designed for work requiring little power, and which shuts down the four main cores when heavy processing is not required.

In real world terms, this means longer battery life; even more powerful devices; the ability to open and load applications faster; and browse the internet with greater responsiveness. Additionally, tablets and smartphones that are based on Tegra 3 will be able to take advantage of the processor's 12-core Nvidia GeForce GPU, for an enhanced gaming experience better able to render modern 3D games such as Frontline Commando.

Tegra 3, if it delivers all it promises, will place mobile devices in a position to be significantly more powerful than their PC counterparts of yesterday, and usher in the future. ❖



Tegra 3 to feature in:

- Asus Transformer Prime
- Asus Padphone (pictured docked in tablet)
- HTC Edge smartphone
- Tablets from Acer and Lenovo

A brighter Torch

BlackBerry Torch 9810

While Research In Motion (RIM) could have sent its new BlackBerry Torch 9810 to the plastic surgeon, it opted not to, with the new model sporting a similar design and exactly the same dimensions and weight as the previous model.



Instead the company signed it up for sessions at the smartphone gym, resulting in the more muscular Torch, powered by a faster 1.2 GHz processor.

The new Torch operates on RIM's latest mobile operating system, BlackBerry 7 OS, which looks a lot like OS 6 but is a lot faster and smoother to navigate. This is due to the inclusion of Liquid Graphics, which employs a dedicated GPU and the speedier CPU to deliver quicker and more fluid animated menu transitions within the user interface.

Like its predecessor, this smartphone combines RIM's excellent QWERTY keyboard with a 3.2" capacitive touchscreen. But while the 480 x 640 resolution isn't on par with the iPhone 4's (640 x 960) Retina display, it allows for much snazzier looking websites and photos than the previous Torch 9800's display.

So while the Torch 9810 is virtually indistinguishable from the outgoing model, its under the hood improvements makes for a much shinier Torch that can blind touch-and-type rivals like the Nokia E6. It goes for an RRP of R6559. [HD] 🍷

Spot the difference:

BlackBerry Torch 9810	BlackBerry Torch 9800 (2010)
CPU:	
1.2 GHz	624 MHz
RAM:	
768 MB	512 MB
Internal Storage:	
8 GB	4 GB
Display Resolution:	
480 x 640	360 x 480
Camera:	
5 MP, 720p	5 MP, VGA

Not just a slim body

Motorola RAZR XT910



As with many phone manufacturers, the move towards Android was Motorola's saving grace, and although they lost a lot of traction here in SA, the new RAZR has ample reasons to turn Motorola's fortunes around.

The RAZR is extremely thin, and apart from the slight bump at the top of the phone, its 7.1 mm thick body is significantly thinner than the Samsung Galaxy S II's 8.5 mm, if 1.4 mm matters to you.

"A slim body, an excellent screen and enough features to leave any gadget geek grinning."

Having said that, the RAZR is both longer and wider than the S II, and it's specifically the extra width that might be a slight bother.

Stream your PC

Apart from sliding into even the tightest hipster jeans, the Android 2.3.5 running RAZR brings with it another excellent feature – MotoCast. With this you can select folders on your PC which you can remotely access via your phone. Sitting in the office wanting to listen to a track on your home PC? Not a hassle, since MotoCast shows you all the music on your home PC, allowing you to stream, or download, it to the phone.

MotoCast is pretty much a hassle free process to set up, with the main deal requiring a Motorola username and password and then selecting the folders you want shared. We were very surprised that this was basically it – soon we were streaming movies, music and pics on our device, with the option to download too. A special word of warning is needed though; you go through data faster than matrices through beer on special at Margate, so make sure you are connected to a Wi-Fi network. Your PC also needs to be connected to the net.

Added extras

Apart from its slim body and MotoCast, the RAZR further boasts a gorgeous 4.3" screen (540 x 960 pixels, 256 ppi, Gorilla Glass) that was a pleasure to watch movies on. Motorola



also did a sterling job with keeping the RAZR up to speed in respect to performance. It showed during benchmarking, where the RAZR moved up the smartphone ranks to claim second place behind the Galaxy S II (excluding the Galaxy Note on p12).

A slim body, an excellent screen and enough features to leave any gadget geek grinning, lifts the Motorola RAZR to one of our current favourite Android devices. R6999. MicroSIM card needed. [MJ] 🍷



Do you remember the original?

The year is 2004. SA is awarded the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Million Dollar Baby is crowned king at the Oscars and Outkast's Hey Ya! rules the airwaves. It's also the year that the super-thin RAZR sees the light of day. With a sexy super-thin clamshell body, it won the hearts and pockets of many, luring them away from the then big player – Nokia. With a body of only 14 mm thick and weighing 99 g, the RAZR range eventually sold over 130 million units over a four year period.



Small bottle, big poison

Nikon J1

It's not often that we are surprised by a new gadget, but when we started taking pics with the J1 there was a moment when we were just amazed.

Is the screen at the back really this good? How does it get these accurate light measurements? Why is it so fast? It turned out that a minimal amount of effort on our side was rewarded with maximum results.

Small in stature, not in nature

Put the J1 next to Nikon's D3100 entry-level dSLR and the size difference is very noticeable. In fact, comparing body size, the J1 is the same size as Canon's G12 compact camera, just thinner. The trouble becomes apparent when the additional lens is factored in, making it not pocketable if the lens is added (except perhaps with the smaller 10 mm lens). But this interchangeable lens is, of course, one of the main differences between the J1 and its compact competition.

Despite its plastic body, the J1 looked extremely stylish thanks to its minimalistic appearance (at least at the front) and also felt solid in hand. Nikon could have done more for a better ergonomic grip, while the flush buttons on top (power, video, shutter) could have been more pronounced. The J1 carries for the most

part the same functionality as larger entry-level dSLRs, while also making functionality readily available via buttons on the back, although a physical mode dial (for selecting P, S, A, M, Auto) is missing. We also sorely missed a manual focus ring on the lens. For the Nikon owner who already has a number of older lenses available, there is a mount adaptor (FT1) available for the Nikon 1 mount.

“A minimal amount of effort on our side was rewarded with maximum results.”

A solid 460 000 pixels on its 3" LCD screen (although not fold-out as the Sony NEX range) did an excellent job at displaying images and videos – much needed since no optical viewfinder is present.

V1 or J1?

So what are the differences between the J1 and Nikon's other camera in the 1 range, the more expensive V1? Count in higher pixel density on the back LCD screen, an electronic viewfinder, a magnesium body that's also bigger in size, a multi-accessory port and a dust reduction system. That said, the J1 comes with a flash, and a very decent one at that, while the sizeable difference in price – R9699 vs. R6800 also needs to be taken into account.

If you are looking to progress from a compact system to one with interchangeable lenses, without struggling with a large device, the Nikon J1 comes highly recommended. It's compact, very responsive and required very little input to capture some good quality images. Visit www.nikon.co.za for more info on the Nikon J1. [MJ] ❖



Nikon 1 – the jump has been made

Nikon has introduced its mirrorless 1 range in SA, so what is Canon going to do?

Small has become big business in the last few years, most particularly, in the realm of cameras. While compact cameras are the obvious go to devices for those seeking to carry a small and low weight camera around, their biggest disadvantage, which sets them apart from their larger DSLR siblings, is their inability to accommodate multiple lenses.

Into the chasm between the two, the Micro Four Thirds mirrorless standard (and others) stepped three years ago, offering the best of both worlds – small camera bodies with an array of interchangeable lenses. It was done by removing the reflective mirror found in dSLRs used to project light to the viewfinder. Prime examples of this include Olympus' PEN E-PL2 and Panasonic Lumix DMC-G3.

Making a move, and waiting

Two big players in the photography field were noticeably absent from the move towards these smaller-sized cameras – Nikon and Canon. Until now, with Nikon's introduction of its Nikon 1 system. “This is Nikon's most significant announcement since we introduced the digital camera 14 years ago,” said Takami Tsuchida, the president of Nikon Europe. It's also Nikon's first change in mount in 50 years.

With two models available, namely the Nikon J1 and V1, and four NIKKOR lenses on offer, Nikon's system looks set to make some nice inroads.

The question is of course, how is Canon going to respond? As Nikon's main competitor, the company has always had a “we'll jump if they jump” approach to the mirrorless standard. To be honest, we can't wait to see what Canon will come up with, since Nikon has set a very decent standard. Nikon's move also does not bode well for companies such as Olympus, Panasonic, Samsung and Sony, who've up to now had free reign over the (limited) mirrorless market. ❖



Microsoft Office 365 cloud trial goes live in SA

As the inevitable march towards cloud computing only accelerates, Microsoft joined the cloud revolution with its launch of Office 365 public trial, currently live and available to the South African public.

The trial allows South African businesses and users to try Office 365 for free for up to 90 days.

Office explained

Office 365 is the company's next-generation cloud productivity service for professionals and businesses of all sizes. Hosted in the company's data centres, Microsoft Office applications are at the heart of Office 365. It allows users to access cloud-based versions of Microsoft's Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, Outlook and other Office applications. Users are also privy to Microsoft Exchange Online (email, calendar and contacts), SharePoint Online and Lync Online.

No prerequisites required

No current Microsoft infrastructure is needed to make use of Office 365, since the service is browser-based, and it can be run from internet connected PCs, notebooks, tablets (iOS, Android,

Windows 7) or smartphones. Users also don't need to have a Windows Live ID to sign in.

From small to large

Office 360 is particularly targeted at small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Microsoft South Africa's marketing and operations director Melanie Botha explained that the offering will enable smaller companies to benefit from access to the same business productivity solutions used by major enterprises, on a scalable pay-as-you-go basis. Botha pointed out that small companies could get access to several technology tools they may not have had before.

"Access cloud-based versions of Microsoft's Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, Outlook and other Office applications."

These include access to email, important documents, contacts and calendar on nearly any device including PC, Mac, Windows Phone, iPhone, Android, BlackBerry and Symbian phones; 25 GB mailboxes for each user and the



ability to send attachments up to 25 MB; and integrated IM, presence and online meetings with audio-conferencing, video-conferencing and multiparty data sharing.

Along with professionals and small businesses, the service will also be made available to medium to large businesses as well, with additional benefits, such as 24/7, IT-level support over the phone, internet or email. Official local pricing for both services has yet to be announced.

To the point

If our current usage of cloud-based services such as Dropbox, Gmail, Google Docs and Adrive is anything to go by, we anticipate other cloud-based offerings, such as Office 365 becoming indispensable to many of its users. Go to www.office365.co.za to find out more. ☘

Router to the max

Belkin Play Max Wireless Router

When you think of exciting technology, more than likely tablets or smartphones come to mind, rather than routers. However, Belkin's Play Max Wireless router has plenty to offer.

Setting up a router can vary in convenience, from being a confusing nuisance, to being easy and quick. Belkin's router is the latter, with the process taking us about 25 minutes. Our one word of advice is to have your ISP username and password available ahead of time, along with the included card containing the network name (SSID) and password.

Performance

Testing our connection speed through the Play Max gave us a very good 19 ms ping speed, however, it was the wireless performance that we were most interested in, considering the router supports IEEE 802.11n. On this front, we weren't disappointed. The router offers two

wireless speeds – 2.4 GHz, for streaming data and pictures, and 5 GHz for streaming more intensive media such as video and games. Either way, we noticed a considerable bump in speed when streaming wirelessly.

"The Play Max brings numerous value added features along for the high-speed ride."

Features galore

The router itself has four Ethernet ports to connect other wired PCs on one's network, as well as two USB 2.0 ports that support external hard drives or flash disks in both FAT32 and NTFS format.

This allows one to connect an external hard drive and enable the router to continue downloads when one's PC is switched off. The integrated Torrent Genie facilitates one to download large media files and torrents directly to an external drive via the router. For frequent downloaders, this could be particularly useful, enabling users to perform downloads at night without having to worry about keeping their computer running.

Additionally, connecting an external drive enabled us to make all the contents of that drive accessible to our network. Yet another feature, BitBoost, allowed us to prioritise which activities



took preference when our network was experiencing heavy usage. For example, if busy on a Voice over IP conference call, BitBoost enabled us to make bandwidth available for this first and then allocate the remainder of our bandwidth to other network applications.

To the point

Belkin's Play Max Wireless Router does what it needs to excellently, but brings numerous value added features along for the high-speed ride. It's well worth a place next to your ADSL line and home or small office setup. Mail for stockists: belkinsales@tudortech.co.za [RN] ☘

HP's tips for data protection

Now more than ever before, protecting a company's data is of utmost importance. With many employees bringing their own smartphones and tablets to work, expecting full access to the company network, corporate and confidential data can be all too easily exposed. Additionally, hacking is always a problem, as are viruses on the network, brought about by inconsiderate use of portable flash drives or email. What can be done to better protect critical company data?



invent

As companies face tighter budgets, smaller security staff, and growing data containment challenges, hackers are becoming increasingly

sophisticated. However, threats to a company's security are not just external, they can, and are often even more likely to, come from within.

This is made worse by the fact that there are few easy answers in the fight to reinforce data security, while organisations find themselves facing a multitude of challenges. These include:

- The proliferation of smartphones and other mobile storage devices.
- Data endpoint sprawl and difficulty in centralising security management.
- Threats by privileged insiders with access privileges.
- Customised and targeted malware attacks.
- Information and device sharing in cloud computing environments.
- Stringent compliance and data breach disclosure requirements.

Be smart with flash memory

The good news is that there are options available that can help enterprises meet these challenges and secure their data.

Smart businesses are incorporating advanced technologies that can detect devices as well as actively encrypt the data that is stored on them, whether this is of a personal nature or not. Regardless of who owns the device, companies can focus on protection against both malicious and unintentional data theft with encryption software, which puts protected data in permanent lockdown mode.

Additionally, advanced technology offers several valuable features. These include specialised monitoring to detect when devices are accessing enterprise resources (such as databases, files and intranets), the ability to lock a lost or stolen device, and a way to prove that data stored on a particular storage device is protected.



Protection protocols

Controls may also be put in place to prevent the use of USB flash storage devices. Without the ability to use any USB storage devices on the endpoint, the likelihood of a data breach or infection by USB-malware is significantly reduced. However, end-users who are accustomed to using company-issued or private USB storage devices, may find themselves having to re-evaluate processes and procedures. This policy is almost certain to produce significant user resistance. As such, it should only be adopted in scenarios where the risk of very sensitive information being breached is high, or where special circumstances apply, such as a shared system in a public area acting as a kiosk.

Security on a stick

A number of commercially available, self-encrypting USB storage devices already exist and are available on the market. These products aim to provide the convenience of a USB drive with enforced encryption, which resides on the device itself. An even more secure approach is to allow users to utilise their own USB devices, and to enforce encryption on them. This approach enables users to continue to use USB devices that they own, but reduces the risk of a breach by ensuring that any data on them is well secured.

Employer's options

There are a number of considerations that must be taken into account when deciding to allow users to utilise their own USB devices. These include the protocols that can be put in place regarding use of the device outside the corporate network.

Portable storage devices, especially those owned by employees, will often be used outside of the corporate network. While this may seem entirely sensible to many users, any drive that has

been used within the network (and which therefore may contain highly sensitive information) should never be used externally, as this greatly reduces the risk of an employee copying sensitive information from one computer to another. The alternative is to allow users to copy information onto a USB device, as long as the information is encrypted while being copied to the device.

Secondly, companies also need to consider that the majority of removable media storage devices used within the company's network may belong to employees, and likely contain information which is either not sensitive or may belong to the user. With this in mind, organisations may wish to put in place controls that will encrypt only new information added to the removable media device.

Conclusion

With the ever-expanding mobility of the enterprise, data threats are introduced anywhere, from the home office to the cyber café, causing exposure of highly sensitive corporate data. The demand for a highly mobile workplace is only going to increase, so implementation of removable media encryption is a must. As corporations become increasingly mobile, implementing removable media encryption, and following best practices in doing so, is becoming imperative in keeping one's enterprise clear of potential data breach. ❁

Sources:

Hewlett-Packard – "Guide to Data Protection: Best Practices"
<http://welcome.hp.com/country/us/en/prodserv/storage.html>

Credant Technologies – "Removable Media Best practices" www.credant.com

For more information, please contact Gregory Deane at HP on 082-882-4444, or email gregory.deane@hp.com.

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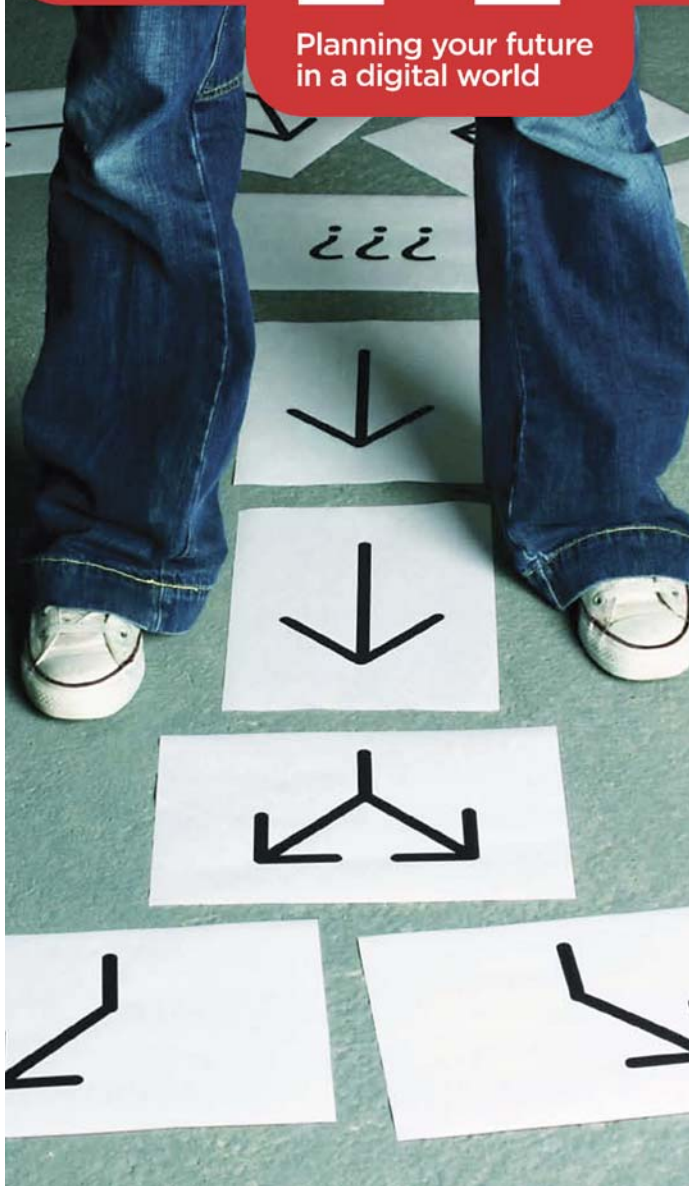
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hp.co.za/streamline



GET INTO IT

Planning your future
in a digital world



What exactly is IT? To start at the most basic level, IT stands for information technology. Broadly speaking, IT is a kind of verbal shorthand for the millions of interconnected computers, networks, and server farms – the digital infrastructure that supports the internet and makes today's nonstop information flow possible.

CompTIA®

Everything depends on IT

All major institutions – from research labs to major soccer teams – consider IT an essential part of their operations. IT is at the heart of every major industry, from banking and finance to manufacturing and retail services.

Why study IT?

The digital world is expanding so rapidly that it's creating IT job openings faster than trained people can be found to fill them. Older workers are retiring in droves, but there aren't enough high school and college graduates with the technical skills to step into their shoes. Right now there are more than 600 000 unfilled IT jobs globally in business, education, healthcare, government, all branches of the armed services, and the intelligence community. Which is why, whether you're in high school or college, now is a great time to start taking the classes that will get you into a career in IT.

Getting ahead in IT

Getting CompTIA certified is the important first step in laying the foundation for your future in information technology. This foundation will help you determine what to do next, and how to move to the next level in your technology career. Honing your digital skills – and getting proof of that with your CompTIA certification – puts you in a position to choose from a number of IT career tracks.

It pays to get IT

In a digital world, digital literacy is an essential survival skill, and certification is proof that you have it. Certification makes you more competitive and more employable, which is why you should regard it as a required part of your IT education. Our research reveals that, in the competition for entry-level jobs, applicants with high school diplomas or college degrees who included IT coursework in their academic load fared consistently better in job interviews – and were hired in significantly higher numbers – than their counterparts who neglected to add a technical component to their education.

CompTIA certification gives you a foundation – and a springboard

Do you have the skills that employers are looking for? CompTIA certifications show employers that you have the fundamental knowledge they desire, making you an attractive candidate. The types and levels of technical skills required to succeed in IT will vary depending on the position you're seeking. CompTIA certifications make sure you have a broad understanding of the technology landscape as well as the duties and responsibilities of various technical jobs. And they confirm that you've acquired the education and training necessary to get that job.

CompTIA is your first step into IT

Let CompTIA help you find the most rewarding career path in information technology. CompTIA is a global non-profit trade association that certifies IT professionals. As you acquire technical skills, you need proof of those skills, and that's what CompTIA certification provides at every level. And if you're planning to earn vendor-specific certifications from Microsoft, Cisco, or other companies, CompTIA certifications are a great foundation for those, too. ❁

Jobs in IT

There are more jobs and job categories in IT than we can possibly list in this article.

Here are just a few of them:

- Computer Support
- Network Administrator
- Systems Administrator
- Virtualization Specialist
- Data Security Analyst
- Systems Security Database Administrator
- Computer Programmer
- Technology Manager
- Web Designer / Developer
- Digital Media Specialist
- Video Game Developer
- Software Engineer

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Netshield: Quality comes first

More products in the Netshield range

While technical components and product features certainly have their merit, Netshield's main concern revolves around producing quality products that can satisfy their customers' needs.

To this end, the company offers a variety of additional products, namely Media Converters, Switches, GBIC and Compatible SFP Modules, Netshield X21 compatible cables and Netshield Fibre Patch Leads.



Media Converters

Netshield's media converters can be grouped into three categories, namely Fibre to Data, Fibre to Video and Fibre to Voice converters. Additionally, the company offers both locally produced and imported ranges.

The local range can be identified by product codes that start with 'NTF' and, while they are slightly more expensive than their imported counterparts, they also offer superior quality. As

the true bridging converter assures that there is no delay in data transmission, it is typically used in applications where no such delay of data transmission is wanted, such as Fibre to IP (camera) scenarios. These converters are available in 10/100 only, have a lifetime carry-in warranty and are slightly bigger than their imported counterparts. The table top versions have plastic casings and come with an internal Power Supply Unit (PSU), while the rack mountable versions can be mounted in a 6 and 16 way chassis. It is also possible to mount both imported and local Netshield media converters in one chassis, as well as mix 10/100 and 10/100/1000 (1 GB) as the chassis only supplies power. The chassis comes standard with one power supply.

The imported range of converters can be identified by product codes that start with 'NB,' and they are competitive both from a price and quality point of view when compared to other media converters on the market. These bridging converters can act as two-port switches, and are available in 10/100 or 10/100/1000 (1 GB). However, a slight delay might occur in data transmission, depending on the layout of the users' network. This range consists of table top units that come in metal boxes and have external Power Supply Units (PSU). If many of them are used on one site they can be organised, along with their metal box, into a Netshield 14 way chassis. They can also be converted to fit into a Netshield 6 or 16 way chassis.



GBIC and Compatible SFP Modules

The Netshield compatible GBIC or SFP Module is an expansion module that connects to a switch – such as those from offered by 3Com, HP, Cisco, Nortel or Avaya – and adds fibre capabilities. The GBICs are available in 1 GB, while the SFPs are available in either 1 GB or 10 GB. The difference between the two is that the GBIC modules are suited for use on the old standard switches and the ports are approximately the size

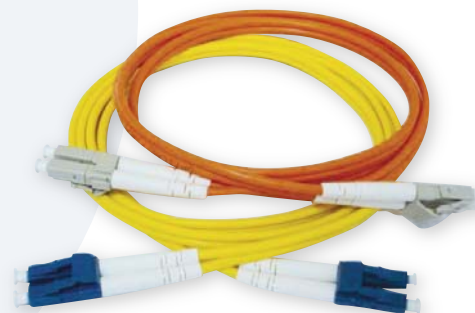
of a match box, while SFP modules are used on the new standard switches and the ports are half the size of their GBIC counterparts.

Switches

Netshield offers a lower-end table-top 10/100 Ethernet switch, which has copper ports and is available in 5, 8, 16 or 24 port variations. The 5 port and 8 port units come standard with plastic casings (N5PFES/N8PFES), while the 16 port and 24 port units come standard with metal casings (N16PFES/N24PFES).

Netshield X21 Compatible Cables

X21 compatible cables are typically used between the modem and the Cisco or 3Com Router. The cable has a DB15 connector, which can either conform to the Cisco HD60PW standard and has a large connector, or Smart Serial, which is approximately the size of a USB connector. While the compatible cables come in standard lengths of 1.8 m, longer lengths are also available.



Netshield Fibre Patch Leads

Fibre patch leads can either be standard or ruggedised, which offer extra protective shielding. While Netshield's range is standard, ruggedised ones can be obtained if quantities justify it.

Fibre patch leads are used between the splice tray and equipment such as a media converter or a switch. It is always important to remember that a fibre patch lead has two sides, and is able to transmit as well as receive, and thus it is important to take into account the connector on both sides. Netshield's range is available in single mode and multi mode. While standard lengths are 1 m, 3 m and 6 m, other lengths can be obtained. ❁

For enquiries on any of these products, contact Netshield on 086-111-4428 or 012-841-0320, or visit www.netshieldsa.com.

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Internet freedom threatened. Google, Twitter, Flickr and Ebay are opposing the US 'Stop Online Piracy Act', condemning it as amounting to China-style censorship of the internet.

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Norton Online Family Report reveals new insights into children's internet use

South African findings unveiled in Norton study



Marian Merritt,
Norton Internet
Safety Advocate

The latest edition of the Norton Online Family Report sheds new light on the realities and risks of growing up in the digital age. This year's report identifies the new issue of "cyberbaiting," a growing phenomenon

where kids taunt their teachers, then capture the distressed reactions via cellphone videos. In addition, the report reveals a surprisingly high number of kids taking liberties with their parents' credit cards for shopping online.

In South Africa, 78% of kids said that they have had a negative experience while online, with 61% reporting a serious negative experience, such as receiving inappropriate pictures from strangers, being bullied or becoming the victim of cybercrime.

The report also shows that kids across the world who are active on social networks open up more doors for content or situations that can be tricky for them to handle: globally 74% of kids on social networks find themselves in unpleasant situations online, compared to 38% who stay away from social networking. Parents are setting ground rules for online use, which helps kids have a more positive experience. The Norton Online Family Report shows that in

South Africa, for those households where rules exist, the "good kids" who follow the rules stay relatively safe, with 68% having had a negative experience online, the percentage increases to a staggering 95% among rule-breakers.

Teachers at risk of cyberbaiting

One of the more shocking examples of using social networks for bad behavior is cyberbaiting, where students first irritate or bait a teacher until he or she cracks, filming the incident on their mobile device so they can post the footage online, embarrassing the teacher and the school. In South Africa, 30% of teachers have personally experienced or knows another teacher who has experienced this phenomenon.

Perhaps because of cyberbaiting, 69% of South African teachers say being friends with students on social networks exposes them to risks. Still, 31% continue to "friend" their students. Only 55%, however, say their school has a code of conduct for how teachers and students communicate with each other through social media. 87% of teachers call for more online safety education in schools, a position supported by 80% of parents.

Raiding mom's digital purse

Globally, 23% of parents who let their kids use their debit or credit card to shop online say their kids have overspent. 30% of parents, however, say that their child has used their debit or credit card to shop online without consent. And more than half of parents (53%) who let their child shop online using their online store account reported that their child has used it without permission.

But saving money isn't the only reason to set clear guidelines about online shopping and safe internet behaviour. In South Africa, 90% of parents whose children have been the victim of cybercrime have also been a victim themselves

– an increase from the average of 84% among South African online adults. (Norton Cybercrime Report, 2011)

"Parents and teachers play an enormous role in keeping kids – and themselves – safe online, and this year's Norton Online Family Report shows a real need for further education," said Marian Merritt, Norton Internet Safety Advocate. "While 79% of South African parents say they talk to their kids about online safety, 57% still secretly check their children's online use and 37% look at their social network use behind their backs. Having an open dialogue with kids in a safe environment like at home or school can be much more effective, along with arming children with the tools they need to stay safe. "The research into children's online activities by the world's largest internet security firm also uncovered:

- Only 5% of parents in South Africa say they have no idea what their children do online, but 10% of children in SA think their parents have no idea about their online activities
- 34% of SA kids say they sometimes stop what they are doing online if they know their parents are watching
- 72% of SA parents have house rules about how much time their kids can spend online and only 49% have set parental controls on the family computer
- 25% of kids in SA have experienced a negative situation on their mobile phone, 10% had been bullied by mobile phone and 5% said they had experienced other cybercrime/negative situations on their phone
- Of mobile users in SA, aged 12+, 12% say they'd received sexually suggestive or nude images of someone they didn't know and 7% had received them of someone they did know. ❁

For more tips on how to keep your kids and yourself safe online, please visit: www.norton.com/familyresources. For more findings from the Norton Online Family Report globally and by country, please visit: www.norton.com/cybercrimereport.

Best Buys

Get the new year started on the right foot. Here are some great tablet ideas to get you going.

Spirit M9500 8" tablet

The Spirit M9500 tablet provides a better viewing experience by adding an extra inch to its screen size – a good 8" instead of the regular 7" found on many other tablets. It also runs the more up to date Android 2.3 (Gingerbread) OS with a very solid 1.2 GHz Cortex A8 processor under the hood. Included are Wi-Fi, 3G connectivity with the ability to make calls and aGPS. It also has a mini USB port, while its 16 GB worth of memory can be expanded to 32 GB via microSD card. Its capacitive touchscreen has a resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels, while the device itself has dimensions of 215 x 160 x 8 mm.



R3500

Spirit M6500 7" tablet

The Spirit M6500 7" tablet runs on a powerful 1.2 GHz dual-core processor and is now also available in red, white or black. This Android 2.2 tablet does not only connect via Wi-Fi, but is also capable of making calls or downloading data via 3G/ GSM connectivity. It has heaps of ports, including a mini HDMI and a mini USB port. With 16 GB of onboard memory, and the ability to expand on this via microSD card, the M6500 is a must-have this year.



R3300

Spirit Data Accessories

One of the benefits of Spirit tablets is the low cost of accessories. Take for example the leather look carry-case with embedded keyboard (R260), which not only protects the tablet but also makes typing a breeze. There is also a car mounting bracket (R74) which allows one to make use of the Spirit M9500 and M6500's GPS capabilities. A car charger (R68) ensures that you never run out of juice while on the road.



R260

R74

Both units include Bluetooth. For more info contact Spirit Data on 011-781-6992/7926 or email tablets@spiritdata.com.



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Silently and automatically. How Microsoft will be updating Windows users' browser to the latest version of Internet Explorer from the beginning of 2012.

TechSmart Movie Vehicle Lust

Movies have blessed us with a number of alternative means of transportation we would dearly love to get our hands on. Here are a few we lust after.

Batman's Batmobile: The real muscle car



"My other car is a Prius."

Batman's Batmobile for the Christopher Nolan movies is our ultimate vehicle of choice. Nothing screams unstoppable or hijacker resistant like this iconic car. It should also make light work of N1 traffic, while no blue-light brigade will dare ask you to move aside. The films' production designer described the Batmobile as being a cross between a Lamborghini and a tank.

Tron Light Cycles: Travel at light speed

Tron Light Cycles don't just look spectacularly futuristic, they are dangerous and almost meld man with machine in a way that isn't creepy in an H.R. Giger kind of way. More importantly, they are extremely fast, requiring unparalleled reflexes. Beyond looking like they could provide the ultimate thrill for those who like to live on the edge, Light Cycles came to mind when we thought of life in the fast lane. In Tron: Legacy, a two seat version of the Light Cycle was introduced, named the Light Runner, which was able to run off the grid.



"When I said I wanted to travel light, this is not exactly what I meant."



"Beam us up Scotty, and please remember our clothes this time."

Star Trek Transporter: Instantly anywhere

Granted, this may not be an actual vehicle, but it's still the most convenient transport device ever imagined. Feel like a shopping trip in Dubai or a quick vacation in Hawaii? Not a problem. In August 2008, physicist Michio Kaku predicted that a teleportation device similar to those in used the series would be invented within 100 years' time.



"What if you go back in time and accidentally run over John DeLorean?"

Back to the future DeLorean DMC-12: From here to then

Most cars take you places – Back to the Future's DeLorean DMC-12 takes you to times. Think how handy this would be to go back and buy shares in the small start-ups called Google, Microsoft or even a 'fruit company' called Apple. An electric DeLorean is actually being manufactured and is due for launch in 2013. [RN] ♡

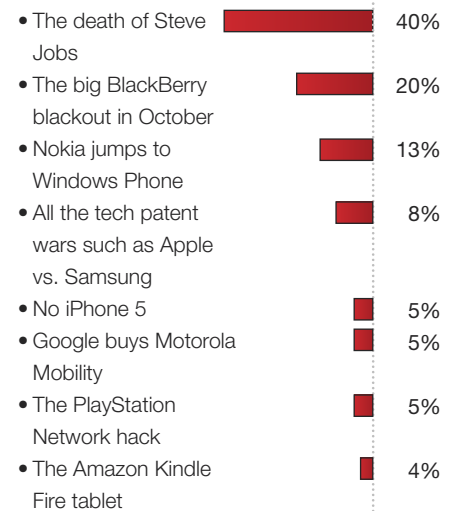
TechSmart's Top 5 most read reviews of 2011



1. Asus N43SL notebook bit.ly/n43sl
2. Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1 P7500 tablet bit.ly/p491do
3. BlackBerry Bold 9780 smartphone bit.ly/usm4W1
4. Samsung Galaxy Tab tablet bit.ly/viux8P
5. Huawei IDEOS S7 Slim tablet bit.ly/tTZwfg

TechSmart.co.za online poll results

What was the biggest tech news of 2011?



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Most used Twitter hashtags for 2011: 1. #Egypt 2. Charlie Sheen's hashtag of choice #tigerblood 3. The concise summary of Twitter users life creeds #threewordstoliveby.

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Android Apps of the month

With over 100 000 apps available at the Android Market, we would like to help you get to the good ones first.



AirDroid: Take Control

AirDroid lets you assume control of your Android Froyo, Gingerbread and Honeycomb devices from a web browser. Some of its features include the facility to transfer files between your PC and mobile, manage SMSs and install, uninstall and backup apps on your device. Contacts can also be managed, in case you have contact details spread across many different devices. Additionally, a feature we particularly appreciated is the ability to share text from the clipboard between your Android device and your PC. Just make sure you're connected to the same Wi-Fi network. The app is compatible with Android 2.1 or later, although Android 4.0 is not supported yet.



DSTV Guide: TV addicts

TV addicts already know that the remote control and TV guide are essential accessories. Forget having to constantly search for the printed magazine, DSTV's free TV guide is now available on the Android platform. While not as slick as the iPad version, it is still very useful nonetheless, showing seven day schedules for all channels, which can be selected and filtered according to your choice. Each entry gives a brief description of the current title. This means no more having to page through scores of channels you don't care about to find the screening time of that movie you wanted to see.



Piggy Adventure

Piggy Adventure is a free puzzle platformer which sees you alternately controlling a pig, cow and bird to traverse levels and reach exits that they can only accomplish together. Whereas the cow brings brute force to move bricks, the bird can jump high to reach switches, while the pig is a bit of a blend of both. The game is colourfully illustrated, but its cute and endearing style is also matched by some genuinely thought provoking puzzles. The more cerebral game is a pleasure to ponder and jump one's way through, making giving it a whirl a no-brainer. Note: This game is incorrectly called Angry Piggy in the Android store.



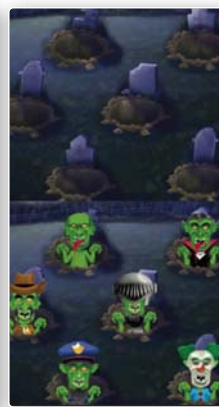
Apple iOS Apps of the month

You'll never come close to going through all the apps in Apple's App Store. Let us suggest the best.



Flipboard: For fun

Apple's iPad App of 2011 enables you to create a personalised magazine out of everything being shared with you, whether it is Instagram photos, tweets, or Facebook status updates. The design of the app and the way users get to literally flip through the content is simply amazing. You get to fill the Flipboard app with all that's important or simply that deemed to be the most interesting and stimulating. Opting to connect Flipboard to all your social networks turns the app into a very stylish rendezvous for all your social network info, bookmarked web articles, news stories from your favourite tech and news sites, photos and the like.



Beat the Zombies

Zombies have been munching at the brains of pop culture for a while now, featuring prominently in the TV, gaming, anime and movie spheres. In Beat the Zombies you get to do your bone crunching best at beating back the living dead. Besides offering a multitude of zombie types to target (clowns, ninjas, cowboys and cops), the game also features various modes. Timeless mode is an enjoyable and never-ending zombie bashing match, but our favourite modes though are the challenging Wanted and Memory mode. In the latter you are required to hit zombies in the order that they ducked back into their graves.



Viber: Make free calls

Viber is a VoIP iPhone application that allows you to make free phone calls, share photos or your location and send free text messages to other iPhone users that also have the app installed. It's similar to Skype, but unlike Skype you do not have to add users to your contacts via their Skype name or email address, as your phone number is your Viber ID. This makes using the application a lot simpler. Viber works over Wi-Fi as well as 3G, but just make sure that you use it within earshot of a Wi-Fi network in order to avoid nasty data bill surprises come month's end.

Android Tip of the Month: Factory reset

There are numerous instances in which you may want to wipe all personal data off your Android device, such as selling your phone or perhaps passing it on to a family member. Doing so is actually easy, provided you know where to look. On HTC phones, go to System > SD & Phone storage > Factory data reset. On Samsung devices, navigate to Settings > Privacy > Factory Data Reset. On Motorola, the phone can be restored to factory setting by going to Settings > Storage Settings > Format internal storage.

If you have an external microSD card you want to keep, either remove it or ensure you don't check "Format microSD card" as well.

iPhone tip: Screenshot feature

Windows 7 has a useful feature called Snipping Tool, allowing users to capture a screenshot of whatever is being displayed on their PC screen such as a website for instance. iPhone users are also able to do this by simultaneously holding down their smartphone's home and lock buttons. Shots are saved in the photos folder.



1 billion. According to Strategy Analytics HTML5-compatible mobile phone sales will reach this figure in 2013, up from 336 million this year.

AMAZON KINDLE



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Powermonkey Extreme

Powertraveller has upped the ante in the outdoors portable charging market with their new wilderness-friendly powermonkey-eXtreme model. Designed specifically for charging iPad, iPhone and other tablet devices.

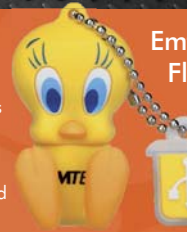
Alarm Clock Video Recorder

This all-in-one Alarm Clock Hidden Camera with DVR, lets you keep track of what's going on in your home or office without raising any unnecessary eyebrows.



Choken Bako Dog Coin Bank

The Choken Bako bank has just about the happiest, hungriest dog you'll ever meet sitting on top. Drop some coins into his dish and he immediately goes for it.



Emsc Looney Tunes Flash drives

Your favourite cartoon characters now as USB flash drives! As usual, this new range of USB drives guarantees high performance within an



GSM Listening device

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Industrial Strength Cell Phone Jammer

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76%. A study has revealed that the clear majority of photos uploaded to Facebook by British users contains an inebriated subject or allegedly drunk person.



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HP 635

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R4895

Acer Aspire 5733

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Acer TM5760

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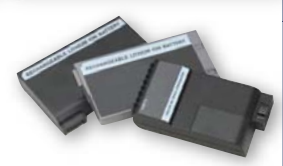
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Web Time Wasters

Have a few minutes to spare and looking for a good browse? With our monthly Web Time Wasters we bring you the best the web has to offer.



50 Best Animal Photos Of 2011

bit.ly/incredianim

For this month's Web Time Wasters we have chosen a few ecologically minded, and certainly very inspiring sites to spend some time with. The first of these is the 50 best photos of animals in 2011. Many are heart-warming (dogs being rescued from natural disasters), some are amazing (a two headed tortoise), and one that begs the question – how do you give dental treatment to a lion? Answer: with five vets, a great deal of care, and plenty of life insurance. It can take a while to load, but it is so very worth it.



Meteorwatch.org
bit.ly/timeearth

If you would like to gain a broader perspective as the year begins, how about watching a timelapse video of the earth from the International Space Station? At meteorwatch.org, you can do just that, set to rather entrancing music. Additionally, you can keep track of meteors, view incredible images of meteor showers, do some sky gazing from your computer or tablet, and even watch the live launch of satellites into outer space. And if you want a less digitised introduction to stargazing, a beginner's guide to binoculars and telescopes can also be found here.



Ultimate Adventure Bucket List 2012

on.natgeo.com/buck12

Compiled by National Geographic from recommendations made by twenty of the world's top explorers and extreme athletes, this site features twenty dream adventures (for the truly hardcore), and twenty dream trips (for the rest of us). Whether it is skiing in the Selkirks, dogsledding the boundary waters, surfing the Mentawai Islands, or perhaps kayaking alongside Orca's, there is an adventure on offer to tantalise every taste. Start planning, keep saving. 🍀



Best of the rest:

Carlsberg stunts with bikers in cinema
bit.ly/carlsbiker

Draw a Vermeer with just one line
vimeo.com/27405001

A dog/ man eats/ slurps
bit.ly/maneatsdog

A lizard playing video games
bit.ly/lizgame

Pitchfork's best music videos of 2011
p4k.in/bestmusvid

Google Zeitgeist 2011



2011: The world in searches and tweets

At the end of each year Google provides their Zeitgeist list of fastest rising search terms, while Twitter gives the low-down on popular tweets. So what did people search/ tweet in 2011?

Google Zeitgeist 2011: Top 5 fastest rising search terms

1. Rebecca Black
2. Google+
3. Ryan Dunn
4. Casey Anthony
5. Battlefield 3

South Africa's top 5 fastest rising search terms for 2011

1. Whatsapp
2. Rugby World Cup
3. Royal Wedding
4. Facebook
5. Amy Winehouse

TOP 5 TWEETS gathering the most tweets per second (tps) in 2011

1. MTV Video Music Awards, Beyonce pregnancy announcement, 8868 tweets per second
2. Troy Davis executed, 7671 tps
3. FIFA Women's World Cup final, 7196 tps
4. Brazil out of Copa America, 7166 tps
5. New Year's Day well wishes, 6939 tps

Top 10 fastest rising consumer electronics searches

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Mac App Store | 6. iPad |
| 2. Sony NGP | 7. iPhone |
| 3. Guitar Hero | 8. Nintendo 3DS |
| 4. Mozilla Firefox | 9. Mortal Kombat |
| 5. Duke Nukem Forever | 10. iPod |

Top 10 fastest rising consumer electronics searches

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Amazon's Kindle Fire | 6. iPad 2 |
| 2. iPhone 4S | 7. HTC Sensation |
| 3. Sidekick 4G | 8. Samsung Nexus Prime |
| 4. HP TouchPad | 9. Sony NGP |
| 5. SPB Shell 3D app | 10. iPad 3 |

TechSmart's favourite Tweets

- donpacket** Don Packett
If I could YouTube what I just saw, I'd call it "Big fluffy cushions and the flying tuna salad!"
15 Dec
- AlanTheHangover** Alan Garner
There are 3 levels of pain. 1. Pain 2. Excruciating pain 3. Stepping on Lego.
15 Dec
- Glynnryan** Glynn Pearson™
My mother text me "What does IDK, LY & TTYL mean?" I answered: "I don't know, love you, talk to you later." Mom: "Ok, I'll ask your brother"
5 Dec
- JacoRoux** Jaco Roux
Chuck Norris has an Intel CPU on an AMD Motherboard
1 Dec
- KerryHaggard** KerryHaggard
#thatawkwardmoment when you do such a good job of resetting the office router that you kick everyone off the Internet for two hours. <blush>
30 Nov
- benedickelly** Ben Kelly
Why can't all computers have an option to "never print US Letter, always print A4 instead". It seem logical to me.
30 Nov
- Rene** Rene
Facebook needs these buttons: dislike, Who cares, & are you an idiot?
30 Nov
- ShannonThoughts** Shannon
50 bucks New Road, midrand :) RT @TechSmartMag: Kingston unveils 256 GB HyperX 3.0 flash drive. Yours for only R6799.
bit.ly/uS9gCw
21 Nov
- simondingle** Simon Dingle
I've discovered a really efficient fault-logging solution for Telkom: 1 - Spot technician 2 - Flag down 3 - Offer beer and give address
21 Nov
- princess_dom** Dominique Warr
when I write lol, often I'm not really laughing out loud, it's more like an inner giggle.
18 Nov



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Over four to one. The rate of legitimate game sales for The Witcher 2 (1 million+) to pirate copies (more than 4.5 million).



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Mind blowing action

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3

Predictable as its elements may be, Modern Warfare 3 proves that the Call of Duty series has not lost any of its appeal.

At this point, we know what to expect from Call of Duty – over the top action, superlative combat, a bit of a muddled story and ultimately a game that will sell millions of copies. Call of Duty Modern Warfare 3 meets all these expectations.

Storyline

Modern Warfare 3 starts off by picking up where Modern Warfare 2 left off. You begin the game on the brink of death – and then your predicament gets really bad, as you are immersed in the middle of a full out war against an invading Russian menace which has its sights set on global domination. The story is told from a variety of perspectives, each of which has a role to play in the conflict.

“The game’s most stellar highlights come from its action sequences”

Gameplay dynamics

The action is often unrelenting, at times even exhilarating. This is heightened by silky smooth gameplay dynamics (picking up and firing a variety of weapons, aiming, strategically using grenades, reloading, taking frequent and essential advantage of cover). However, the game’s most stellar highlights come from its action sequences, as these boast levels of finely tuned mayhem that could have come straight from the Michael Bay Guide to Destruction.

As strong as it is, Modern Warfare 3 is not without its flaws. One of these was pacing, with one frenetic round of frenzied action being followed too closely by another, leaving us rather numb to the impact of each after a while. Thankfully, it did improve after a few missions, punctuating fire fights with some more stealth orientated sections.

Multiplayer mayhem

The game offers a variety of brief Special Ops levels, which you can either play alone, co-operatively with a friend in split screen mode or online. Additionally, online multiplayer modes on offer include the familiar Team Deathmatch and Free for all, along with search and destroy. The new Kill Confirmed mode, and capture the flag-like Team Defender are also available.

To the point

As an overall package, Modern Warfare 3 has plenty on offer and is extremely well polished, offering up often exhilarating action and superlative combat. For action and first person shooter fans, this makes it a must-play. [RN] 🍌

Saints Row: The Third



Over the top in every way

There are games that pay painstaking levels of attention to creating the most realistic, true to life experiences possible. Then there are games which flex their middle finger at realism in favour of being as outlandish and humorous as possible. Saints Row: The Third is one such title.

After forming the Saints-Ultor Media Group we find that the the Saints street gang has transformed into a household brand name, peddling Saints-branded merchandise ranging from bobblehead dolls through to clothing. However, The Syndicate, a legendary criminal fraternity, crave a huge slice of the Saints’ operations and if they don’t get it, they will settle for their heads. The Saints crew will obviously not stand for this and take the fight to The Syndicate within the vast city of Steelport.

Graphics & Gameplay

Saints Row: The Third is pretty competent on the graphical front, when it comes to recreating the huge city of Steelport to explore. Although very good, the graphics are definitely not such a big drawcard as the title’s spectacular action sequences, ridiculously over the top humour

and antics, as well as enough swearing to rival Mafia II. Taking over the city involves completing challenges ranging from “normal” ones, such as stealing vehicles for clients, to the ridiculous, such as surviving an army of pistol-carrying zany mascots during a twisted reality show. Besides the missions, you are able to high-jack virtually any type of vehicle in the game and snap-up businesses that are for sale.

Issued with a baseball bat and pistol to start with, you quickly get access to more guns and weapon upgrades as you level-up and earn cash. Our only issue with the gameplay is the convoluted way you select weapons, since you press the circle button to call up the weapons menu and switch in between the main guns and secondary fire (bombs) items using the two analogue sticks.

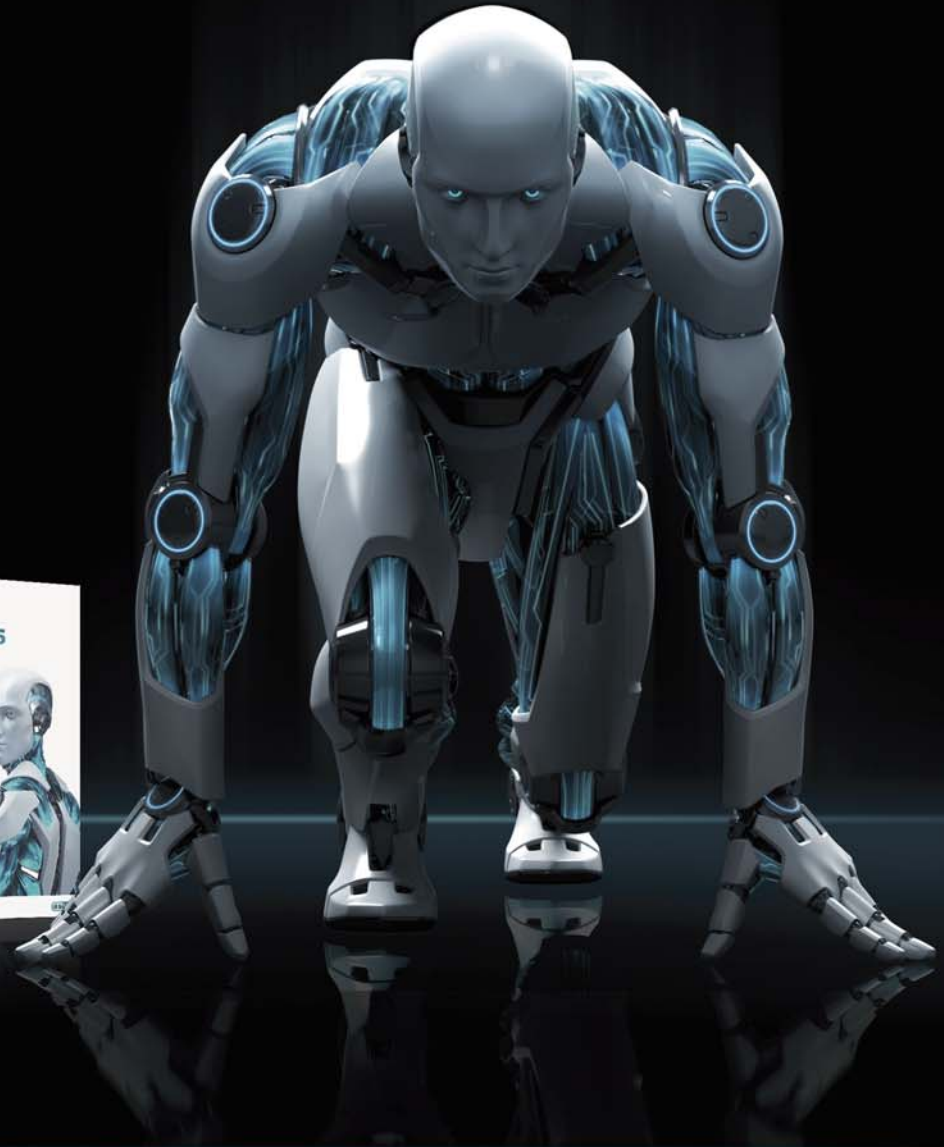
Final word

Saints Row: The Third boasts some fantastically fun gameplay and overboard action sequences. If you are grossed out by toilet humour and easily offended by foul language then give this title miss, but if you like your gaming action to be fast-paced and without limits then this title should be on top of your most wanted list for the bounty of R599. [HD] 🍌

Full Article
<http://bit.ly/3rdsaintsrow>



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