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DStv Mobile Walka 7

Bigger, better TV on the go



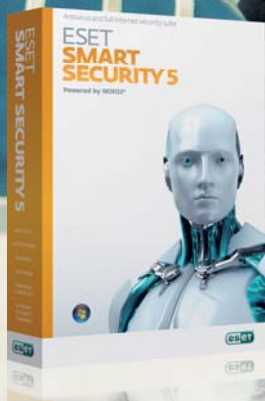
Netshield Nviromon-Lite

Your electronic house-sitter



Internet Security 2013 round-up

More features, better protection



The Internet Issue

110235



GALAXY Note II | Be creative



This simulated image of the Air-View feature shows how you can quickly preview photos in folders.



Introducing the GALAXY Note II. With amazing new features making it more advanced and easier to use. The crystal-clear 5.5" HD Super AMOLED screen makes reading messages, news or updates a pleasure. Air View saves you time by allowing for fast, simple document and email previews with just a wave of the S-pen, and it all runs fast and smoothly thanks to the powerful Quad Core processor and Android's new Jelly Bean operating system. Finally, creativity comes naturally to everybody.



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Available in Marble White and Titanium Grey.



Windows 8 in the age of tablets

Finally Windows 8 has arrived. Microsoft's latest operating system, with its strong emphasis on touch, is undoubtedly intended to counter Apple and Android's dominance in the tablet space. This is not only testament to just how important this segment of the market has become, but also to its significance in future. In the personal computing space it's becoming clear that the line between tablet and notebook has blurred. Microsoft's Surface and Acer's Iconia W700 (see p12) tablets are a good case in point. They contain basically the same processing power found in modern notebooks, and with an additional keyboard, there's very little to distinguish them from ultrabooks.

Windows 8 will not be to everyone's liking, but luckily the pressure from both Apple and Google will force Microsoft to constantly improve its offering. Just look at the amazing progress in the browser space – where Microsoft's once dominant Internet Explorer has been dethroned by Google's Chrome as the world's most used browser – to see what a bit of competition can do. Frankly, Windows 8 couldn't come a moment too soon.

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



6 Ford Focus ST: Aggressive to the max

Ford recently launched their aggressive Focus ST locally. TechSmart was on-hand in Port Elizabeth to take it for a spin and hear it roar.

8 Internet Security packages 2013

Internet Security packages have kept pace with increasingly sophisticated security threats by becoming smarter in their own right. Here are six of the best.

14 Asus VivoBook X202E notebook

We managed to get our hands on one of the first Windows 8 touchscreen notebooks in the country – Asus' sub-R6 000 VivoBook X202E notebook. Read our exclusive review.

17 Samsung Galaxy Note 2

The Note 2 is even bigger than its older brother, coming in at a pocket-bulging 5.5" of phablet goodness. We give you our first impressions Samsung's latest plaything.

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500 million. Android-powered devices activate globally, now at the rate of over 1.3 million per day.

Top Tech Titbits



Windows 8 launched

In no small way spurred on by the rise of the tablet market and a touch-driven market, Microsoft has launched Windows 8. With Apple and Android slicing up the tablet market, Microsoft had to do something, and they believe that the ready-for-touch Metro interface of Windows 8 is their best bet for future devices. Expect a slew of new touch-based notebooks, tablets and ultrabooks to start appearing soon. (Read our exclusive review of the Windows 8 Asus VivoBook X202E notebook on p.14).



Vodacom launches LTE services in South Africa

Local telecommunications giant Vodacom has become the first operator in South Africa to commercially launch its Long Term Evolution (4G) service locally. This service will initially only be available in Johannesburg via approximately 70 base stations, with other cities to follow in the near future. The company is aiming to have 500 sites enabled for LTE by the end of 2012.

In related news, 8ta is starting to trial their LTE services, with lucky participants receiving an LTE enabled router, mobile data modem, SIM card, and a 50 GB data bundle for free.



Compact back in fashion?

Apple finally made the much rumoured Mini-me version of its popular iPad official with the unveiling of the iPad Mini. Following in the footsteps of smaller tablets the likes of the Nexus 7, the Mini sports a 7.9" (1024 x 768 resolution; 163 ppi) touchscreen ready for one-handed operation. As expected it's both thinner (7.2 mm) and lighter (312 g) than the current version of the iPad (9.4 mm; 662 g), while it's powered by the same dual-core A5 processor as featured on the iPad 2.

But it's not only Apple that is bringing out smaller mobile devices, since Samsung has unveiled their new Galaxy S III mini. This Android 4.1 (Jelly Bean) operating smartphone sports the same design as the S III, but its spec sheet reads closer to that of the Galaxy S II, since it's powered by a 1 GHz dual-core CPU and boasts a 4" Super AMOLED touchscreen with a 480 x 800 resolution.



A billion smartphone users globally

The latest research from Strategy Analytics (SA) has revealed that there are now more than one billion smartphones in use worldwide. It has taken 16 years for the smartphone industry to surpass this historic milestone, picking up speed over the past two years with the market growing with close to 300 million smartphones since this period last year.



Cybercrime costing SA R3.7 billion annually

Cybercrime might be costing South Africa as much as R3.7 billion annually. This according to the annual Norton Cybercrime report, which also reveals that internationally, the direct costs of consumer cybercrime stands at \$110 billion. Every second, 18 adults become a victim of cybercrime, resulting in more than one-and-a-half million cybercrime victims each day on a global level. ❄

Hot New Products

Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3 45th Anniversary Edition

Unlike most of its AMG stablemates that provide drivers with blistering

performance whilst still enveloping them in a stately interior, this limited edition SLS AMG GT3 is race-car through and through. Complete with a creature comfort devoid interior, magno graphite matte paint job, steel roll-over cage, as well as six-point seat belts, this Merc is angrily rocketed forward by 6.3 liter V8 engine. Built to celebrate the anniversary of the launch of the first SL model, buyers get to open the famous gullwing door for the not-so bargain basement price of more than R5 000 000. Besides supercar performance, the super exclusive price of this car means that you will not see it in many other driveways, especially as there are only five of them out there.



The Dark Knight Trilogy

If, like us, you worship at the movie making altar of director Chris Nolan due to his phenomenal work with the last three Batman movies, then we have found the perfect congregational offering. This Dark Knight Trilogy Blu-ray set comprises of all three movies, namely *Batman Begins*, *The Dark Knight*, as well as *The Dark Knight Rises*, and also includes bonus material from all three films along with a far-too-brief 64-page excerpt from *The Art and Making of The Dark Knight Trilogy*. All this for the low-low price of around R262 on Amazon as of 4 December.

Louis Vuitton Tambour diving II Chronograph

Constructed out of 18K black gold, this one-of-a-kind water resistant Louis Vuitton wrist watch boasts a bright orange rubber strap that won't only get your attention underwater whilst you are diving, but also on the red carpet. It was designed for the Only Watch charity auction in 2011 and comes in a specially designed Louis Vuitton Damier Graphite canvas presentation trunk with matching black and orange alligator straps. This unique watch has once again become available via Antiquorum Auctioneers' fall timepiece auction, and has been valued between R174 000 and R288 000.



Pinel & Pinel Arcade PS Trunk

The Pinel & Pinel Arcade PS Trunk from Neiman Marcus is the perfect addition to any gamer's man cave. It sports a massive 55" Sony 3D LED HD display, mounted on a desk with a powerful 1800-watt sound system. The extremely lengthy list of accessories includes a PlayStation 3 gaming system, 24 PS3 games, two arcade-style fighting sticks, four PS Move motion controllers, two PS Move sharp shooter guns, two Formula 1 racing seats with Thrustmaster T500 RS Force Wheels, and four PS 3 wireless buzzers. The access ticket to this gaming heaven does come at a price though at about R286 000, but although this exclusive asking price may not include delivery, it does include the envy of all your friends and neighbours. ❄





IT'S TIME TO EVOLVE

Long Term Evolution (LTE) is here and Nashua Mobile is ready to connect you.

Also commonly referred to as 4G, LTE is a faster and more efficient network, for all your downloads, uploading of pictures and personal information for your social media. As Nashua Mobile offers the choice of all the networks, we are perfectly positioned to provide LTE to you as soon as it becomes available.

LTE is up to three times faster than the present 3G and offers a more stable user experience, with stutter – free video and almost instant picture downloads. Also because it is more stable, a large download will never crash half way through.

LTE is currently available on the Vodacom Network and with Nashua Mobile's long standing partnership with South Africa's leading network, we are in prime position to supply your LTE through this framework.

So, if you have the right device, then the time is right to activate your SIM and evolve to the new LTE generation.

Contact www.nashuamobile.com for more information and advice.

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SAVING YOU TIME SAVING YOU MONEY PUTTING YOU FIRST

TechSmart's

TOP 5

Hottest station wagons

Station wagons used to be as a desirable sight in your driveway as a hearse, signalling the death of gorgeous car design as well as sporty performance. In modern times though, parents everywhere can now opt for stunning estate vehicles that keep pace with hot hatches, whilst still offering the practicality these cars are renowned for.



5 Mitsubishi Outlander 2.4L GLS MIVEC AWD

Although the Outlander boasts more SUV than station wagon DNA, we included it within our comparison due to its similar pricing, station wagon design and performance levels. The Outlander sports a 2.4-litre DOHC MIVEC powerplant that churns out 125 kW at 6 000 RPM as well as 226 Nm of torque at 4 100 RPM, whilst not delivering the most economic fuel usage at ten litres per 100 km. Thanks to its SUV ability this car (unlike the rest of the estate troupe) is able to venture further off road than the mall parking lot or school rugby grounds. It features a four-wheel drive system that enables the driver to switch between a more economical front wheel drive only, and all wheel drive lock mode when you go off the beaten track.

Pricing for the GLS version starts at just under R400 000, which nets you a plethora of extras such as an electric Glass Sunroof, Hill Start Assist and a nine speaker Rockford Fosgate Sound System.



3 Volvo V60 T5 Elite

Besides supermodels, Sweden also exports some gorgeous looking cars, one of which is the V60 station wagon. It boasts a 1 999 cc four-cylinder direct injection turbo petrol engine that churns out 177 kW

at 5 500 RPM as well as a maximum amount of torque (320 Nm) between 1 800 and 5 000 RPM. The Swedish looker reaches 100 km/h in a hurried 7.7 seconds, whilst its 67.5 litre fuel tank will not be emptying in a similarly quick fashion seeing that the T5 utilises just over eight liters per 100 km.

Renowned for its safety, Volvo included an exhaustive list of safety features, including some innovative ones such as its Intelligent Driver Information System (IDIS). This system helps drivers avoid distractions during dangerous driving situations by switching off non-essential systems the likes of multimedia infotainment when it detects intense steering, braking or acceleration. As soon as things calm down, these systems will be reactivated. The V60 T5 Elite sports a very elitist price tag of R426 300 for the manual, R442 700 for the automatic.

1 Mercedes-Benz C-Class Estate C200 BlueEfficiency

Despite packing a much more practical luggage-engulfing derriere, the Estate features the same head-turning design as its sedan counterpart. Its 1 796 cc four cylinder powerplant churns out 135 kW at 5 250 RPM as well as 270 Nm of torque between 1 800 and 4 600 RPM. This allows the Stuttgart stallion to gallop to 100 km/h in 8.4 seconds on to a top end of 228 km/h, whilst fuel usage is down to an efficient sub-7.6 litres per 100 km level.

A number of advanced safety features assist drivers in preventing collisions, such as an adaptive braking system and adaptive brake light functionality. The latter flashes 5.5 times per second if the driver makes an emergency stop from a speed that exceeds 50 km/h, which warns the cars following you and provides drivers with more time to react. The price for all this sportiness and safety tech comes to R392 500, which sees the driver enveloped within a cocoon of luxury that incorporates ARTICO man-made leather and Eucalyptus wood.



4 Honda Accord Tourer 2.4 i-VTEC Exclusive

The silhouette of this wagon comes across as surprisingly sporty and it possesses the performance grunt to

back up its athletic design bark. This is due to its 2354 cc DOHC i-VTEC 16-valve in-line four cylinder engine that delivers 148 kW at 7 000 RPM and 234 Nm at 4 300 RPM, propelling the vehicle from standstill to 100 km/h in a mere 8.5 seconds on to a terminal velocity of 222 km/h. Despite the capable levels of performance, sensible drivers should be able to return fuel usage figures of around nine litres per 100 km.

Unfortunately, you do pay a premium for this level of performance and extra bit of elbow room that an estate car delivers, as this version of the Accord Tourer goes for R435 600 for the manual and R450 300 for the automatic, which is around R30 000 more than the sedan. For that money, buyers do get a bucket load of features including automatic bi-Xenon headlights, as well as front and rear parking sensors.



2 Audi A4 Avant 1.8T FSI Multitronic

The base price of R366 000 seems like a bargain compared to the other vehicles in this comparison, but once you tick off the optional extras that the

other cars come equipped with, the Avant quickly becomes a less desirable value prospect. Opting for Xenon Plus headlights for instance adds another R10 860 to the price.

Lack of spec bang for your buck aside, this is simply the best looking car within this comparison. It is powered by a new 1.8 litre four cylinder engine that pushes out 125 kW between 3 800 and 6 200 RPM, coupled with 320 Nm of torque between 1 400 and 3 700 RPM. This is enough go-juice to rocket the car from 0-100 km/h in 8.4 seconds on to an illegal top end of 215 km/h, whilst averaging fuel consumption figures of just six litres per 100 km.



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Ford Focus ST: Aggressive to the max

Tech-packed Focus ST lands on local shores

Ford has launched its all-new Focus ST locally, delivering a unique balance of outstanding performance, handling, refinement and style. TechSmart was at its local launch in Port Elizabeth to take it for an aggressive spin.



The Focus ST is powered by a 2.0-litre turbocharged EcoBoost engine that enables sensible drivers to obtain fuel economy figures of around 7.2 l/100 km, which is a 20% improvement over the previous Focus ST. More importantly though in a vehicle like this, is the fact that this engine churns out a 184 kW of power and a maximum amount of torque (360 Nm) that is delivered within a wide rev band, between 2 000 and 4 500 RPM. This is enough go-juice to propel the car from standstill to 100 km/h in 6.5 seconds, on to an illegal terminal velocity of nearly 250 km/h.

The right sound

It is not just the grunt of the engine that will put a smile on the faces of hot hatch fans though. Ford marketing manager, Gavin Golightly explains: "Every detail has been considered including optimising the sporty sound occupants experience. It leaves the driver in no doubt that this is a special car." Golightly is referring to the newly-enhanced sound symposer which relays the engine sound directly from the intake into the cabin. The engine sounds amazing, so much so that it will have you turn off the six speaker audio system in favour of the auditory symphonics emanating from the bonnet, whilst also encouraging you to keep your right foot planted.

Enhanced driver dynamics

Complementing the sporty performance of the engine is the Focus ST's enhanced driving dynamics that includes a new Sport Steering System with variable ratio steering rack, that reduces steering sensitivity when driving in a straight line and then increases sensitivity whilst cornering. This system links up with a comprehensive range of driver assistance features such as Cornering Under Steer Control (CUSC) and Torque Vectoring Control, which applies brake torque to the inner wheel through a corner in order to reduce understeer.

'The engine sounds amazing, so much so that it will have you turn off the six speaker audio system in favour of the auditory symphonics emanating from the bonnet.'

Having been given the opportunity to put these systems to the test on Port Elizabeth's Aldo Scribante race track, we can confirm that they work remarkably well, assisting you in pointing the car exactly where you want it within corners and hairpins.

"Ford's performance strategy is based on the fact that performance fans globally want the same thing. As a result designers focused on combining a rewarding driving experience with the ability to enjoy the car on a day-to-day basis," concluded Golightly.

ST1 and ST3

The new Focus ST will be available in five-door hatchback format in a range of colours including a lighter, almost yellow shade of orange dubbed Tangerine Scream, Spirit Blue, Race Red, Panther Black, Frozen White and Moondust Silver.

On the outside, the ST's sporty nature is conveyed by Ford's signature trapezoidal grille, bulging side skirts, roof spoiler that improves high-speed stability whilst reducing drag, and figure-eight style Chrome exhaust tailpipe. Inside, trim options include ST1 and ST3, with ST1 offering keyless start, cloth Recaro racing seats, a tire deflation detection system, and cruise control. Besides these features, the high-spec ST3 model adds auto-folding mirrors, keyless entry, rain sensitive wipers, 8-way adjustable leather Recaro seats and Bi-Xenon headlamps that incorporate LED daytime running lights. The ST1 goes for R309 000, whilst the ST3 carries an RRP of R353 000.

Focus customers will get a comprehensive four year or 120 000 km warranty, five year or 90 000 km service plan with service intervals staggered at 20 000 km intervals, as well as a three year/unlimited km roadside assistance plan. ♣

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On the defensive

Internet Security packages 2013

With the latest releases, internet security packages have kept pace with increasingly sophisticated security threats by becoming smarter in their own right. Here are six solutions well worth considering.

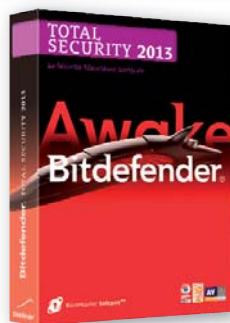


Eset Smart Security 5

R450 for one PC, for one year. R580 for three PCs.

Eset's current offering, Eset Smart Security 5, is the most budget friendly package on this list after Kaspersky's; costing R450 for one user for one year, but it is certainly no lightweight in the features department. Along with offering cloud-based, heuristic real time protection, the software also offers users an intelligent firewall, an optimised anti-spam module and a gamer mode, which postpones pop-up windows. Importantly, Smart Security 5 further scans DVDs, memory cards and flash drives (a potential weak link in one's security measures) for infection as well. Additionally, the optimised start-up procedure ensures users are protected from the moment they boot up, while Smart Security 5 further enables users to customise system behaviour to their liking if so inclined.

Visit www.eset.co.za



Bitdefender Total Security 2013

R500 for one PC, for one year.
R600 for three PCs.

Along with the virus, spam and anti-theft protection as offered in previous iterations, Bitdefender Total Security 2013 includes a few notable new features as well. One of these is Bitdefender Safepay, which automatically opens electronic banking and

ecommerce sites in its own, secure browser, while the new anti-theft feature is able to locate, lock and completely erase lost or stolen notebooks. Also new is the USB Immuniser, which 'immunises' flash drives from viruses when they are connected to one's computer.

Visit www.bitdefender.co.za

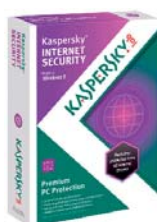


Trend Micro Titanium Maximum Security 2013

R640 for three PCs, for one year.

Taking into account the popularity – and vulnerability – of social networks, Titanium Maximum Security 2013 indicates dangerous links on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and Pinterest, while also boasting a Facebook privacy scanner which identifies settings that may make one's personal info vulnerable. Additionally, it caters to Windows 8 Metro by offering Windows 8 tablet security with Trend Micro GoEverywhere, and provides expanded support for up to three devices for one year. The product further gives users 5 GB of encrypted online storage with Trend Micro SafeSync.

Visit www.trendmicro.ae



Kaspersky Internet Security 2013

R417 for one PC, for one year.
R535 for three.

Kaspersky Internet Security 2013 introduces even stronger protection for one's financial information, with its Safe Money feature, which focuses on verifying the legitimacy of online banking, payment system and e-commerce websites. Also new is Secure Keyboard, which aims to foil keyloggers. Another new feature, particularly aimed at notebooks, enables the software to reduce its power load when one's notebook battery is running low. The software further brings a number of improvements to its anti-spam, antivirus and anti-phishing modules.

Visit www.kaspersky.co.za



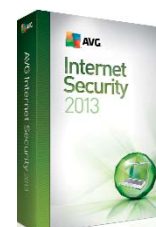
Norton Internet Security

R519 for three PCs, for one year.

The latest version of Norton Internet Security boasts five layers of protection which the company asserts can detect and eliminate malware more quickly than the competition. While Newly added is the ability to remove particularly invasive threats that are more difficult to eliminate.

Also on offer is improved SONAR behavioural protection, a network defense layer and Norton SafeWeb for Facebook which scans one's news feed and protects against dangerous links and unsafe websites.

Visit <http://za.norton.com>



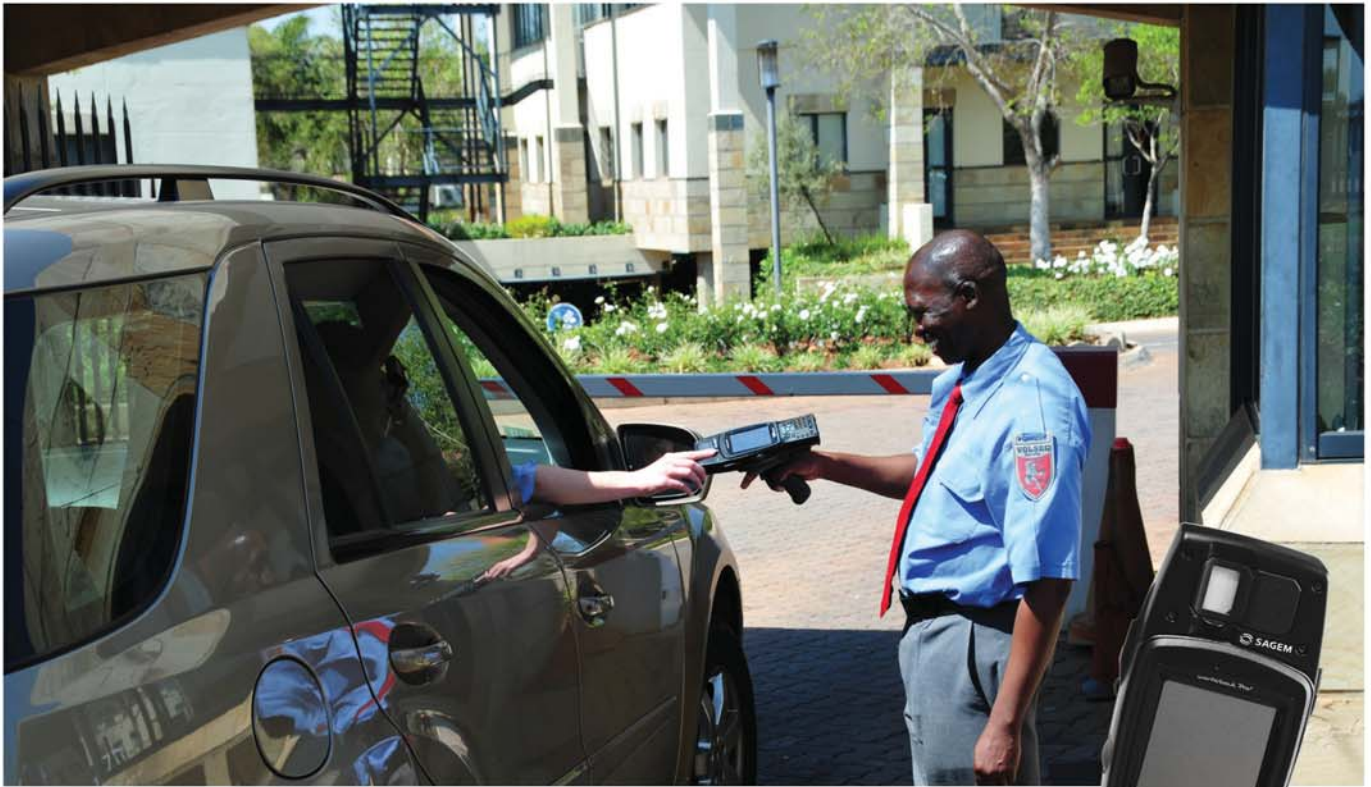
AVG Internet Security 2013

R350 for one PC, for one year.
R480 for three PCs.

The latest internet security package from AVG has paid particular attention to refining and tweaking its previous offering to offer greater ease of use. Internet Security 2013 boasts a revamped and new user interface that is aimed at catering for touchscreen devices, while AVG Turbo Scan is intended to deliver faster scans. The product further offers a very comprehensive range of protection, checking files before they are opened, websites before they load, and Facebook links before the user clicks on them. [RN]

Visit www.avg.com/za

15%. Local social network users who reported someone had hacked into their profile and pretended to be them.



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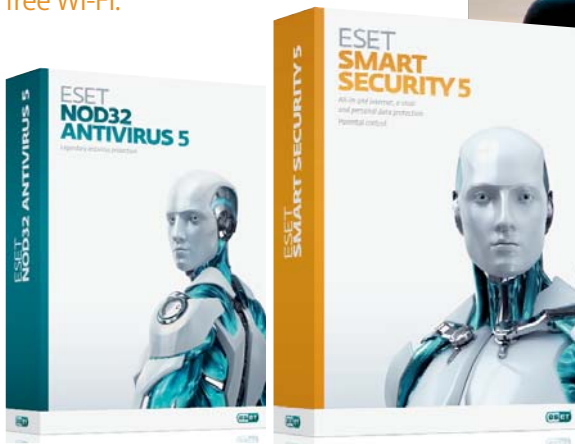


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Building profitable partnerships

ESET: Public Wi-Fi poses potential security threat

South Africans are being warned to exercise caution when accessing Wi-Fi in spaces such as airports, as increasing numbers of local users risk having sensitive personal information captured whilst using free Wi-Fi.



This according to internet security software provider ESET, who believes logging online to check bank balances, online shopping or sending emails over an unsecured Wi-Fi network, is a goldmine for cybercriminals.

"The airport is the ideal time to grab your laptop and send out a couple of emails using the free Wi-Fi hotspot offered at most airports – you connect and send, and are off on your way. What you don't know is that the free Wi-Fi may come with a hefty price tag, namely your sensitive data and online banking login credentials," says Carey van Vlaanderen, CEO of ESET Southern Africa.

What to watch out for

Unsecured Wi-Fi hotspots with unrecognisable names or ones that closely resemble the name of the official hotspot should raise immediate flags. Be especially wary of unsecured hotspots – they often don't require the user to use a password to gain access and validate user authenticity.

Whenever you shop online, log in to check your bank balance or catch up on e-mails, your computer has to send the login information across the Wi-Fi network. Normally, if you login

'Be especially wary of unsecured Wi-Fi hotspots that do not require passwords to gain access'

to a bank website, you'll see the bank address beginning with "https" rather than "http" which means the traffic is encrypted. If cybercriminals or online scammers succeed in capturing your encrypted credentials, they're able to use software later on to decrypt it. "Always use caution and pay attention to detail when using free public Wi-Fi," concludes van Vlaanderen

South Africans are cautioned to be aware of the following security threats whilst using free Wi-Fi:

- **Evil Twin Login Interception:** Networks set-up by hackers to resemble legitimate Wi-Fi hotspots.
- **Sniffing:** Computer software or hardware that can intercept and log traffic passing over a network.

- **Data Leakage (man-in-the-middle attack):** Cybercriminals can modify network traffic and let you think you are dealing with your bank while, in reality you are sending them all your credentials.

About ESET Southern Africa

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Toshiba Portege Z930 ultrabook

Small, light and mighty



At 1 kg, Toshiba's Portege Z930 ultrabook is the lightest one we have tested to date, but along with its thin and light profile, it still packs a serious performance punch.

In the Z930's case, light in weight does not equate to feeling poorly made, as the material used (magnesium alloy) is very durable. Despite its thin profile of 17 mm, we could not coax any creaking or flex out of the chassis – which is always a reassuring sign.

Compelling performance

Beyond this, the ultrabook boasts some impressive specifications. At its heart you will find an Intel Core i7 (3667U) CPU, clocked at 2 GHz, 4 GB of memory and 238 GB of usable hard drive space on the solid state drive. The integrated Intel HD Graphics 4000 is certainly capable enough in its own right, at least for most graphics task and some light gaming. The Ivy Bridge i7 processor breezed through general computing tasks; browsing the web, running applications and playing videos were snappy.

Reflect on this

The Z930 also hosts a matte screen, which dramatically reduces reflections, yet still offered up superb colour saturation and contrast. It further managed to avoid the overall dullness that plagues some other matte displays while being more restive on one's eyes than glossy screens. While viewing angles don't fare quite so favourably, its maximum resolution of 1366 x 768 (118 ppi), still delivered sharp text and crisp images.

'We can easily see business executives relying on this one.'

The Z930 sports a rather nice, chiclet keyboard, while the indented trackpad was responsive from edge to edge. It is supported by two firm mouse buttons, which we found a little too stiff and shallow for our liking.

Small touches, big differences

The company has opted to place its fan on the back and thus keep warm air away from the left and right sides, while keeping the palm rests cool as well. We were happy to see that the two USB 2.0 ports, one USB 3.0, HDMI, SD card reader and Ethernet ports were evenly spread across the back and sides of the machine. Additionally, battery life proved to be a few minutes shy of seven and a half hours.

To the point

The Portege Z930 is a very capable and powerful ultrabook, and we can easily see business executives relying on this one. It may be lightweight, but it's hardly cheap, as the Z930 has a rather pricey RRP of R18000. [RN] ❖

Acer Iconia W700 tablet: What you need to know

No holds barred Windows 8 tablet



Acer's first Windows 8 tablet, the Iconia W700, is certainly looking like it will be quite something, and may well be leading the Windows 8 tablet charge that we have been anticipating this year.

The tablet boasts an 11.6" IPS display, with a full HD 1080p (1920 x 1080) resolution, Intel Core i3 or Core i5 processors (Ivy Bridge), as well as an Intel HD Graphics 4000 graphic solution, as found in many a notebook and ultrabook. Continuing with the notebook-grade specifications, the Iconia W700 further boasts a 64 GB or 128 GB solid state drive (SSD), which plays its part on offering a claimed boot time of six seconds, as well as instant-resume functionality in 1.5 seconds.

'With notebook-like processing power packed in a tablet body, the Acer W700 looks set to throw conventional personal computing wisdom out the window.'

Just in case these high-end specs aren't enough to impress, ponder this: the device's body is about 12 mm thick and weighs only 1 kg, while offering a full working day's battery life of eight hours.

Business unusual

The tablet ships with a multipurpose cradle, which can be used to dock the tablet in several positions. The company elaborated that, when used in a landscape orientation, for example, the cradle can be tilted up to 70° for enhanced viewing, or 20° for convenient touch. It can also be used vertically in portrait mode for easy browsing and reading, while three USB 3.0 ports are included.

Along with 802.11n Wi-Fi the Iconia W700 tablet PC also packs an integrated G-Sensor, E-Compass and Gyro-Meter to take advantage of location based and travel applications. Also onboard: an HD 5MP rear camera that can capture full HD 1080p video, a front-facing HD 720p camera for video conferencing. An optional keyboard is available, and certainly looks like a must-have accessory.

To the point

With notebook-like processing power packed in a tablet body, the Acer W700 looks set to throw conventional personal computing wisdom out the window. As one of the main competitors against Microsoft's own Surface tablets, we suspect the W700 may just play a big part in ushering in the Windows 8 era with a bang. R11 000 for the i3 64 GB version, and R13 000 for the i5 128 GB version, available from major retailers. [RN] ❖

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Asus VivoBook X202E notebook

Viva the VivoBook

Asus' first Windows 8 touchscreen notebook has arrived – and it is a beautiful blend between touch tablet speed and notebook convenience.

Ever since tablets, with their convenient touchscreens and tactile interactivity, graced the computing scene, notebooks have battled to prove themselves as stylish and cutting edge as their keyboard less counterparts. For their part, many manufacturers seemed intent on pointing out, notebooks boasted superior processors and loads more storage space.

What would happen though, if you combined the inter-activeness of a touchscreen with the keyboard convenience of a notebook, and combined it with Windows 8's new-found love of touch navigation? Asus's VivoBook X202E appears to be the answer to this question.

Great value, right price

A dual-core Pentium CPU 987 clocked at 1.50 GHz, with 2 GB of memory can be found here, which is certainly not the greatest on the processor side, but is amongst the more recent mobile processors made for longer battery life. Nonetheless, we still found performance to be fast enough, certainly when scrolling through the various tiles on the Windows 8 desktop, while opening programmes didn't exhibit unbearable lag either. This is not surprising, considering that Windows 8 is apparently more resource friendly than previous Windows operating systems. Additionally, it must be born in mind that the VivoBook X202E is aimed at the mainstream market, as evidenced by the fact that it is coming in at below R6 000.

Built to impress

As we have become accustomed to by Asus' tablets and notebooks alike, the notebook is a well-built beauty. Elegantly robed in a mixture of chrome and black, the notebook looks, and more importantly, feels, extremely solid and well crafted. Suffice to say, neither the keyboard nor the screen flexed when we applied pressure, while the hinges held the screen firmly in place.

Speaking of the screen, we have come to expect bright, contrasty and glossy screens from Asus, and on this front, the VivoBook X202E certainly delivers. With a resolution of 1366 x 768, text and images on the 11.6" screen looked sharp, while colours 'popped' and the overall brightness of the screen, when cranked to the maximum, was above-average. As for the touchscreen's responsiveness, it is no less fluid and fast than the latest tablet to cross our path.

No less appealing is the chiclet keyboard, which has well spaced keys that

exhibited a very comfortable combination of springiness and depth. It is accompanied by a generously sized, responsive trackpad, that sits flush with the palm rest, and incorporates its two mouse buttons in the touchpad.

Fast on the draw

While our review model sported a 500 GB hard drive, what we really loved about the Windows 8 notebook, is that start-up times were negligible. This applied to whether we were booting up the machine from a powered off state, as well as when waking it from a sleep state.

On Windows 8, with the absence of the Start menu, we found the most elegant ways to shut down and set the machine to sleep, respectively, was via the power options. Admittedly, this is a facet of the new operating system that takes some getting used to, especially for those of us who have become accustomed to Windows' Start menu since Windows 98.

The net result: we eschewed trying to time how long Windows took to be ready for action in both scenarios on the VivoBook X202E – it was simply too fast to time accurately, and was comparable with iOS and some Android tablets.

The small details

As befitting the overall quality of the notebook, we found the sound to be similarly good, loud and clear, and certainly more than sufficient to watch movies and play games. Two USB 2.0 ports, a USB 3.0 port and an HDMI and Ethernet port are all onboard.

To the point

Besides from the excellent build, touchscreen, and very good display and keyboard, the VivoBook X202E further cements its distinction by, when going to print, being the only Windows 8 touch-enabled notebook available in South Africa for the mainstream market. We certainly cannot imagine any user being unhappy with what is on offer here, we certainly were not. It would be all too easy to recommend this to students, or those looking for the Windows 8 experience and yet don't want to break the bank.

The VivoBook X202E is currently only available at Incredible Connection for less than R6 000, although we are told it will be making its way to other channels in due course. [RN]

'The VivoBook X202E combines the inter-activeness of a touchscreen with the keyboard convenience of a notebook.'

ASUS recommends Windows 8.

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VivoBook X202E

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Beautiful, fast, fluid  Windows 8

HTC Desire X

Illuminating the budget segment



Not everyone has the budget for, nor the Pierre Spies sized hands, to work on the high-end Android models. HTC provides a decent mid-range offering in the form of the Desire X.

When it comes to smartphones, there remains a lingering mystery – why does HTC not sell better? The Taiwanese manufacturer has for the past few years been consistently producing some really good devices. Still, when you look at sales figures, they don't crack the top three manufacturers, usually lingering around number five.

Phones such as their latest mid-range offering, the Desire X, make a good case for questioning the company's underwhelming sales ranking. It is super sleek, complete with a gun-metal lining round the 4" screen, and a matte plastic finish on the back cover. At 9.3 mm thick, the device feels as smooth as a river pebble in hand.

As above, so below

Luckily the innards match the outards, since the Desire X is loaded with Android Ice Cream Sandwich and the best skin in the business, HTC's Sense 4.0 (well actually 4.0a, a slightly stripped down version). It is the same configuration found on the excellent One X (to which the Desire X bears a very close resemblance) and makes for hassle-free operation – the most you can ask from a phone OS.

'Sleek on the outside and speedy inside, the HTC Desire X is a solid mid-range offering in all regards.'

The OS is kept flowing smoothly by a dual-core 1 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon processor, with overall performance in line with other mid-range offerings, such as Sony's Xperia sola (featured on the right). In benchmarking, the Desire X was biting at the heels of some of last year's top contenders such as the Motorola RAZR and Galaxy S2 – testament to how fast processor technology is progressing – but slightly behind the sola.

Although there is 4 GB worth of internal storage, less than half is available for personal storage. For that you should rather depend on a microSD card, or, if you have Wi-Fi, on HTC's free offering of a delicious 25 GB worth of Dropbox storage for two years. Worth mentioning also are the 5 MP camera with HDR functionality and best shot selection (but no 720p video unfortunately); and the Beats Audio sound enhancements that works a treat when listening to music through earphones.

To the point

Sleek on the outside and speedy inside, the HTC Desire X is a solid mid-range offering in all regards (well, except maybe when it comes to video capturing). It will make you wonder why you haven't tried an HTC before. [MJ] ❖

Sony Xperia sola

Sola aims to be your sole mid-range choice



The latest addition to Sony's Android-powered Xperia range, the sola, offers some innovative features to help distinguish it from the rest of the mid-range smartphone crowd.

For one, the Android Gingerbread running device is Near Field Communication (NFC) enabled, a feature found in many high-end phones (except the iPhone 5). But what makes it different is the inclusion of two NFC Xperia SmartTags. These SmartTags are about the size of a R5 coin, and if you swipe the sola across one, it enables the handset to automatically perform up to ten commands.

'These SmartTags are easy to use and we actually found it quite practical.'

These include adjusting functions and settings, for example, one SmartTag can be placed on your work desk and programmed via the LiveWare manager app to turn Wi-Fi on, launch your personalised News and Weather page and set the sound profile to silent. At home, the other SmartTag can be set to turn the sound profile back to loud, activate your data connection and deactivate Wi-Fi. These SmartTags are easy to use (a bit of setup required initially) and we actually found it quite practical.

Besides SmartTags, Sony also included its floating touch (FT) technology. When you hover your finger just above the display, it will function as mouse pointer. Floating touch is currently limited to the browser and nowhere near as useful as SmartTags.

Design

The sola does not boast the most eye-catching design with its square-shaped, plastic candy-bar frame and soft touch rear cover, but it is sturdily constructed whilst also not feeling cheap. Sony equipped the phone with a 3.7" (480 x 854 pixels) Reality Display, which features the Mobile Bravia engine for enhanced screen clarity. Due to its relatively high 265 ppi pixel density, text is easy to read whilst photos and images look detailed. However, this touchscreen is prone to displaying reflections and glare when viewed outdoors in direct sunlight.

Powering the sola is a 1 GHz STE NovaThor U8500 dual-core processor, which delivers a smooth day-to-day user experience navigating the OS and running apps, while you also find 5 GB of storage and a microSD card slot.

To the point

Sony's Xperia sola is a solidly built mid-range Android smartphone that has managed to find a practical use for NFC technology. It goes for a RRP of R4 300, placing it up against some tough competition such as Huawei's Honor U8860 (R3 600) and Nokia's Lumia 710 (R4 000). [HD] ❖

First Impressions: Samsung Galaxy Note II



Creativity, inspired

The Galaxy Note II was launched towards the end of last month as the Samsung World Tour arrived in Cape Town. Our first impressions quickly fulfilled hopes that it would prove as alluring a device as the company's flagship smartphone, the S3.

The phablet boasts a slightly larger screen, 5.5" as compared to its predecessor's 5.3", which offers a little bit extra screen real estate for note taking and drawing. Nonetheless, the Galaxy Note II is ironically more ergonomic than its predecessor, as it is slightly taller and more importantly, narrower. This makes it easier to use with, and hold in, one hand. Additionally, the HD Super AMOLED screen, which offers a 1280 x 720 resolution (267 ppi), looks stunning, and caters to viewing movies in a 16:9 screen ratio.

Speed up

While the phablet comes with an 8 MP rear-facing and 1.9 MP front-facing camera with HD video recording, its S pen is a pivotal part of the Galaxy Note II's distinction. Thicker, longer and more comfortable than that found on the original Galaxy Note, the S pen also boasts 1024 levels of pressure sensitivity, which we found a boon in drawing fine details.

'It was the Note II's blisteringly fast performance that most impressed us.'

New features, such as Popup note, which open immediately when you pull out the stylus, and Air View, which enables users to receive a preview of content by hovering the S pen over an app, to name a few, are also on offer.

It was the blisteringly fast performance though, that most impressed us, as the device packs a 1.6 GHz Exynos 4412 quad-core processor and a full 2 GB of memory on the best Android OS to date – Android 4.1 (Jelly Bean). The company added that, in line with recent progress on the LTE front locally, the new Galaxy Note II would also be available in a version that supports both 3G and LTE.

To the point

The Samsung Galaxy Note II will cost in the region of R8 000 for the 3G 16 GB version (32 GB and 64 GB also on offer), while the price for the LTE option was not available when going to print. Now the decision is: the Galaxy SIII or the Note II? [RN] ❖

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Canon Expo 2012

Interview: Michelle Janse van Vuuren,
Marketing Manager, Canon SA



The Canon Expo will be returning to the Sandton Convention Centre from 30 November to 2 December 2012. TechSmart spoke to Michelle Janse van Vuuren, marketing manager at Canon SA, to find out more about what this year's event hold in store.



TechSmart: Last year's Expo was a resounding success, so much so that you're having another one this year. What are the lessons you've learned from previous event?

Michelle Janse van Vuuren: I think we were overall very well prepared last year and we will again ensure that we cover all the basics this year. We are definitely very excited about the upcoming Expo event and entrance will remain free because we want everyone who is interested in photography or small, medium and large business owners or anyone else who can benefit from our products, to come through and enjoy themselves.

Photographers are always eager to learn more, and your speakers are a big drawing card. Apparently there are even more this year?

When we knew we would be hosting the Expo in 2012 we immediately decided to offer visitors the opportunity to experience more speakers at the event. We will be running two speaker sessions simultaneously and even managed to secure internationally acclaimed photographers and Canon ambassadors including the photojournalist, Ziv Koren, and wildlife photographer, Brutus Östling. For the entire list of speakers and their topics those interested can visit our Expo website at www.csaexpo.co.za.

This was a super year for Canon regarding new releases. Which of the new cameras will be on display?

The Expo is a chance to showcase Canon's latest technology and this year will include the exciting EOS 6D full-frame and EOS M mirrorless camera; new additions to the EOS cinema range for professional independent videographers; and of course the long-awaited PowerShot G15. These are only a few highlights, but we want to encourage everyone to come and touch, feel and experience our product range.

There were some complaints that the specials offered at the Expo was not to everyone's expectations. Any news on the specials for this year?

We will definitely be offering a variety of specials and should we run out of stock, the same show specials can be purchased at dealers in the close vicinity over the Expo period. Visitors interested in purchasing products at the Expo can view the pricelist in the week prior to the event on the website.

We were astounded at the high quality of photos on display for the

photographic competition last year. What are the entries like for this year's crop?

They are looking absolutely amazing and we were blown away by the quality of the entries and the thought that went into most of them. I'm sure visitors to the Expo will agree with us once they get a chance to view them in the gallery area at the event.

Considering the array of talent we saw last year, what is your opinion on the state of photography in South Africa at present?

I believe our country has a lot of talent, which is evident when you consider the entries we see through the variety of ongoing photographic competitions we run in the media. We run these competitions because we want to encourage people interested in photography to actually live their passion and enjoy it at the same time. We cannot wait to showcase some of this talent at the Expo.

What advice would you give to someone contemplating buying a new DSLR and/or compact camera at the show?



I think it is very important to utilise this as an opportunity to come and talk to our product managers and experts. Some things to always consider are: 'what you want to use your new camera for', 'how often will be using it' and of course 'what you can afford'. We invite those considering

purchasing a camera to ask these questions and then actually play with and experience these cameras at the Expo to make an informed decision.

Any advice for people coming to attend the Expo this year?

There will be registration at the entrance so we please ask everyone coming through to register before entering. Also, if you do intend to bring along your Canon gear, please remember to declare them at the registration desk so that they can be tagged and marked as owned by you.

Should the waiting be long at one section of the Expo, please remember there are many things to experience and you can always come back to that specific area at a later stage.

Check the speaker sessions and topics prior to the Expo on our website to avoid disappointment and if you are interested in purchasing products, please also refer to the pricelist on the website (www.csaexpo.co.za) in the week prior to the event. We cannot wait to welcome you at our Expo. 🌟



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Join us at the Sandton Convention Centre for the Canon SA Expo, 30 November to 2 December 2012. Visit www.csaexpo.co.za for more information.

Canon

Share life in perfect detail

The future of capturing those all important moments in life easily and professionally – whether you're an experienced photographer or someone just looking to trade-up from your point-and-shoot – is here now! With Samsung's new range of Compact System Cameras – the NX Series – high quality images can be captured, shared and stored straight from your camera wherever you are in the world!

Tips for taking the perfect photo with the NX Series

So what makes the Samsung NX Series so distinctive in its category? This range of cameras stands head and shoulders above comparable products because of a number of simple, yet unique features. Here are some tips on how the NX Series can come to the rescue in the following scenarios.

You need that super sharp, crisp image

The professional grade 20.3 MP APS-C CMOS Sensor helps to capture highly defined images in the blink of an eye. Through an innovative approach to product design and industry expertise, the brand new sensor delivers amazingly brilliant colours that are crisp and true to reality.

Ready for your Spielberg moment?

Shooting videos with still cameras has always been an afterthought - the Samsung NX Series changes all of that. Built with a 1080 30p Full HD movie recording capabilities, the NX System transforms shooting video with a still camera into an artform.

You need that perfect shot in imperfect light

Whether you're a professional or just an enthusiast, everyone can use a helping hand to capture the perfect shot. The NX Series' Smart Auto 2.0 automatically analyses the shooting environment and then chooses the appropriate scene mode for the best possible results.

Control and access at your fingertips

With the NX Series, you have the opportunity to enjoy all of the benefits of the i-Function 2.0 feature. Unique to the NX Series, this lens system delivers an innovative new way of accessing and adjusting a number of key camera settings through a single button.

Needing the right exposure?

Calculating the right exposure can make the difference between a perfect photo and one that is not so perfect. You don't always have the option of selecting the correct ISO, but with the NX Series' Wide Range ISO (ISO 100 ~ 12800), you will never run into that type of problem.

When you need that pop of colour!

The NX Series helps you focus on your creativity while the camera does the work for you. With the Smart Filter lens and Selective Colour feature, you can emphasize certain parts of a photo or highlight specific colours for photos that will truly stand out and make your memories special.

Need a wider view of the world?

Bring home the dramatic impact of a panoramic image with the NX Series' Panorama and 3D Panorama feature. Conveniently placed on the mode dial for easy access, the panoramic shooting mode will enable you to easily capture vast landscapes with a push of a button.

Want to share your exciting photos instantaneously?

With built-in Wi-Fi capability, you can share any special and exciting moments on the move. Share photos with friends and family by using the Social Sharing feature - upload images on to sites like Facebook, YouTube or you can email the photos with a message directly from the camera.

A camera designed just for you!

The NX Series is raising the bar with its intuitive user interface, the Smart Panel. Professional-grade DSLRs are known to be difficult to use and can be intimidating for many consumers. This range differentiates itself from the competition by creating an interface with the user in mind.



SMART CAMERA



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The right lens for any situation.

Take professional-looking photos with the help of Samsung's professional-grade lenses. The lenses allow you to get closer to the action, while also capturing the panoramic views of majestic landscapes. Samsung's lenses provide you with the flexibility to capture an even wider range of images. Produce cinematic drama through a shallow depth of field, or get up close with a telephoto lens.

And that's not all. With Samsung's current range of 10 lenses and professional accessories, as well as the phenomenal features that this range offers, the NX Series eco-system ensures that all imaging ambitions can be realised, whatever the user's photographic speciality or interest.



Here is a list of lenses available with NX Series eco-system:

1. Compact Standard Zoom Lens 20-50mm F3.5-5.6 ED II - small in size but big on results
2. Wide Pancake Lens 20mm F2.8 - perfect companion for your camera
3. Standard Pancake Lens 30mm F2.0 - brightest lens in its class
4. Standard Zoom Lens 18-55mm F3.5-5.6 OI S III - designed for greater flexibility
5. Tele Zoom Lens 50-200mm F4.0-5.6 ED OI S - get closer to the action
6. Long Zoom Lens 18-200mm F3.5-6.3 ED OI S - one lens you can't do without
7. Premium Portrait Lens 85mm F1.4 ED SSA - lens for the professional in all of us
8. Tele Macro Lens 60mm F2.8 Macro ED OI S SSA - see the details you've been missing
9. Ultra Wide Pancake Lens 16mm F2.4 / - portability combined with performance
10. Wide angle Zoom Lens: 12-24mm F4 - wide angle lens maximizes perspective.

From filters to flashes, Samsung offers a wide array of compatible accessories. These accessories will add a layer of sophistication and professionalism to your photos. A well-executed flash can bring poorly lit images to life, while the appropriate filter can completely elevate your photo.



It's time to share life in perfect detail. It's time for Samsung NX Series.
Available at local retailers.





Avanade: Companies expanding role of devices for new sophisticated business uses

Microsoft Windows 8 to further accelerate use of tablets and smartphones in the enterprise

Rudi Greyling, Chief Technology Officer and Innovation Director, Avanade South Africa



Mobility is a normal part of everyday life. More than half of network devices in 2012 will ship without a wired port, according to Morgan Stanley Market Trends, and the majority of these devices are being brought into the workplace.

According to research commissioned by Avanade, a global business technology solutions and managed services provider, companies are embracing enterprise mobility and consumer technologies to help employees do their jobs in new ways.

Avanade's September 2012 survey of 599 C-level executives and IT decision-makers in 19 countries, shows more than six in ten companies (61%) reporting that the majority of their employees now use private computing devices in the workplace. Over half (54%) report the majority of their employees use smartphones for basic work functions such as reading email, web documents and calendar invitations.

A rise in tablet usage

The research also shows that tablets are quickly being adopted as key tools in a multi-device world. While one-third of companies (33%) report the majority of employees use tablets for simple work tasks, the exact same number of respondents – 33% – report the majority of employees use tablets for advanced business uses such as customer relationship management (CRM), project management, content creation and data analysis.

"What the research shows us is how ingrained

tablets have become in the workplace in less than three years since they hit mainstream," said Rudi Greyling, chief technology officer and innovation lead at Avanade South Africa.

"Companies are recognising the business value tablets can offer, and creating solutions and enabling access to business systems to capitalise on the opportunity."

Windows 8 – one to watch

The impact of Microsoft's latest operating system is also not to be underestimated. "With the release of Microsoft Windows 8 and Windows Phone 8, there will be a new wave of enterprise-ready mobility solutions entering the workplace as employees increasingly use their personal tablets and smartphones to get their jobs done more effectively."

'Windows 8 will usher in new smartphone features and tablet form factors, applications and services to improve business productivity.'

Furthermore, the introduction of Microsoft Windows 8 with its optimised Metro interface for tablets and touch, with the traditional desktop as backup, will bridge the gap between these devices. The addition of hardware optimised for Windows 8, for example, Microsoft Surface tablets, will give users the power and utility of a PC in a tablet form. Microsoft Windows 8 will

usher in new smartphone features and tablet form factors, applications and services to improve business productivity and the user experience.

"To take advantage of the value enterprise mobility brings, companies are redesigning the building blocks of their business," said Greyling. "Avanade's research reveals these leaders are modifying business processes like sales and marketing, and roles inside companies, such as HR staff, to make better use of mobile devices and other consumer technologies. Our work with customers and research studies show early signs that these changes are making an impact on revenues, profits and customer service." ❖

About Avanade

Avanade provides business technology solutions and managed services that connect insight, innovation and expertise in Microsoft technologies to help customers realise results. Its people have helped thousands of organisations in all industries improve business agility, employee productivity, and customer loyalty. Avanade combines the collective business, technical and industry expertise of its worldwide network of experts with the rigor of an industrialised delivery model to provide high quality solutions using proven and emerging technologies with flexible deployment models – on premises, cloud-based or outsourced. Avanade, which is majority owned by Accenture, was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation and has 16 000 professionals in more than 20 countries.

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DStv Mobile Walka 7 portable TV

TV on the go, now even **larger**



The Walka 7 comes across as a very decent upgrade to the original Walka handheld, offering a tablet-like viewing experience courtesy of its 7" (800 x 480 resolution) display. This is a well needed size increase from the original 3.5" Walka Handheld TV (320 x 240 resolution).

The increase in screen-size compromises on portability, making the 442 g Walka 7 less of a walk-and-watch device and more of a sit-and-view unit compared to the previous iteration. It is probably for this very reason that the device comes with a neat little stand offering two viewing angles, allowing it to sit comfortably on your desk so you can keep an eye on the latest rugby or cricket scores.

This, alongside improved audio via two 1.5 Watt speakers, makes it possible for more than one person to watch, although one at a time is certainly more comfy. For a more personal viewing experience, such as when riding the Gautrain, simply plug your earphones into the 3.5 mm audio jack.

Battery life and usability

We received about six hours of battery life from the Walka 7 (the original did three), while the viewing action is controlled via the Walka 7's on-board controls that allow you to adjust volume, set the necessary aspect-ratio and choose your channel. There's also a pull-out aerial on the top of the device which needs to be extended to pick up signal. Luckily it never got in the way.

The viewing experience is enhanced, but keep in mind that the Walka 7 provides a portable TV, and not HDTV, experience on the go. It is there to pick up and watch when the comfort of your couch and 40" telly are not available.

'Watching sport on Walka 7's 7" screen is indeed a much improved experience over the previous version.'

Why buy?

For us, the strongest reason to buy the Walka 7 (or any of DStv's other portable solutions) remains the availability of SuperSport (SuperSport 1-4 and Blitz), which provides access to the Springbok tests, Super 15 rugby and Premier League matches. Indeed, watching sport on the Walka 7's 7" screen is a much improved experience over the previous version.

Furthermore you'll find the following channels:

- AfricaMagic
- Channel O
- CNNi
- Discovery Channel
- Disney XD
- eNews Channel
- M-Net Series Mobile
- Sony MAX

Price and availability

Once you have made sure that you fall into the DVB-H coverage area (Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town are included, amongst others), you can pick up a Walka 7 for R900 as long as you have a TV licence. It is R200 more than the original Drifta, but well worth the extra bucks. Keep in mind that there is also a monthly subscription fee to DStv Mobile of R49, but DStv Premium subscribers need not worry since DStv Mobile for Premium (with access to M-Net Mobile) is provided for mahala.

The Walka 7 is available from MultiChoice centres and select retailers. For more information on this and DStv Mobile's other devices (the Walka, Drifta, Drifta USB and the recently launched iDrifta), visit www.dstvmobile.com.





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Netshield Nviromon-Lite

Home automation at your beck and call

With its Nviromon-Lite, Netshield has brought what may have once been considered science-fiction into tangible technological fact, to the benefit of home and business owners alike.

For many people, questioning whether they remembered to turn off the stove or lock the door prior to leaving their home, is an all too common experience. For others, working late and arriving home to an unlit house, is no less rare and just as disconcerting. It is during these times that one may well wish one's home was 'smarter'.

The good news is that two way communication between one's home and oneself is not a fantasy; rather, it is already a very real possibility, thanks to Netshield's Nviromon-Lite. The Nviromon-Lite enables users to employ – and enjoy – a number of smart home scenarios. For example, users can remotely switch on or off their lights, geysers or generators. Alternatively, they can use it to automate these processes, without requiring any further action on their part.

Putting your home to work

The multi-IO controller has six inputs where different sensors can be connected as needed, as well as five outputs, enabling users to customise according to their individual needs.

As the Nviromon-Lite has a GSM interface and provides for real-time communication via SMS, GPRS and voice call, it does require users to purchase a SIM from the cellular provider of their choice to be able to send or receive an SMS.

However, users can also opt to use the remote control, which allows for fast activation within a range of a 100 m when it is not always practical to use a mobile phone.

In order to configure the Nviromon-Lite and set it up according to one's needs, the included software needs to be installed on a Windows computer. For the not-to-technically inclined, the good news is that this

can be done using a user-friendly interface, which still enables powerful configurations.

Home away from home

The Nviromon-Lite can enable one to remotely open or close gates, serve as an alarm system when connected to movement sensors and sirens; and inform users via SMS of power outages. In a similar vein, having a home that alerts its owner if there is a fire, and remaining aware of what is going on at one's home when away, can bring a measure of peace of mind, particularly in a security conscious country. While this would be impressive on its own, there is even more the Nviromon-Lite can accomplish.

But wait, there's more

The Nviromon-Lite's broad range of applications means that as well as being imminently useful to home owners, it can be equally valuable when employed at remote sites, second properties and offices, and prove particularly pertinent to those with agricultural and industrial (or commercial) properties.

With regards to the latter, the Nviromon-Lite can be further used to monitor electric fencing, for building and electrical power management, as well as machine and process monitoring.

Additionally, it can also warn of intruders, smoke or fire, cable theft via SMS, and can even let users know when air-conditioners are creating conditions that are too hot or too cold, giving them the ability to remotely change the temperature in a room accordingly.

Conclusion

The scenarios in which the Nviromon-Lite can be put to work and provide peace of mind, are seemingly inexhaustible, extending beyond the examples given here. Along with remote access to one's property from anywhere, the Nviromon-Lite offers something even more valuable – the ability to respond to threats and emergencies as the situation arises, and that benefit alone may well prove priceless. 🌟





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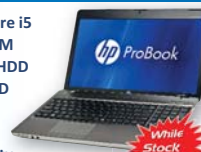
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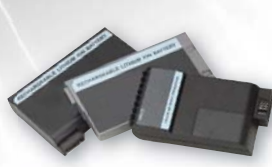
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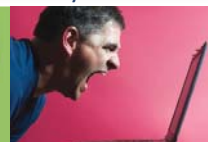


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Skype DUALphone 4088

Bridging the Skype and landline divide

The Skype DUALphone 4088 enables users to combine two phones into a single unit, allowing you to make Skype calls and traditional calls via a landline.

The world is far more connected than ever before, with certain businesses having to make plenty of international calls on a daily basis, whilst many families have members and friends living or working overseas. Currently, one can rely on Skype to make international calls and conventional phones to communicate over landlines to everyone else.

'The Skype DUALphone 4088 enables you to access both Skype and conventional telephony services from a single device.'

But what about a phone that combines the two? The Skype DUALphone 4088 enables you to access both Skype and conventional telephony services from a single device. It easily replaces your home – or office – landline phone, while also delivering additional handy dual network features such as making a conference call between users on traditional landlines and those using Skype's VoIP-based service. No PC is required to set-up, nor to run the device.

Features

In order to make use of all the 4088's services, you will need both broadband internet with an Ethernet connection and a landline. Whilst



setting up the 4088, you are able to link two Skype user accounts to its base station, with each base station being capable of

supporting up to four 4088 handsets. The phone is able to handle two parallel calls – one Skype call and one fixed landline call simultaneously. Seeing that the DUALphone is a cordless device, you are able to move about freely during calls over a maximum distance of around 50 m indoors and 300 m outdoors.

Other telephony features supported includes caller identity, for which purpose the DUALphone 4088 boasts a 1.5" TFT colour display that clearly displays a caller's Skype name and profile photo. It can also store up to 250 entries to its contact list (phone book), while its call history dates back 30 entries.

To the point

The Skype DUALphone 4088 is an extremely useful device for those who need to make overseas calls, providing users with the convenience of a cordless telephone together with all the call cost saving prowess delivered by Skype's VoIP service solution. It retails for a recommended retail price of R1 300. [HD]

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117 million and 169 million. Number of tablets that IDC expects to be shipped this year, and the total shipments expected for 2013, respectively.

goava VoIP software

Making cheaper local and international calls a reality

Making a call from your cellphone is probably one of the least employed features of your mobile, as call costs have remained high, whilst IM apps such as Mxit and Whatsapp are a far more cost effective method of staying in touch. For businesses with suppliers and clients abroad, as well as people with overseas-based family and friends, nothing comes close to the personal connection of a call though.

This is where the goava VoIP (voice over IP) service comes in, as it is a complete internet-based telephony software solution that allows users to make low-cost phone calls to both local and international telephone numbers. Unlike conventional internet-based VoIP services, goava provides customers with a telephone number, which is reachable from traditional fixed-line telephones and mobile networks from anywhere around the globe.

The software works on a wide range of devices, ranging from your home or work PC, through to smartphones (Android, iOS, Symbian), IP (internet protocol) desk phones and IP PABX devices. It is well suited to a home user, always-on-the-go smartphone user, small to medium businesses and business PABX customers, who need to make a lot of low-cost local and international VoIP calls from any of these devices. Enterprise grade leased line VoIP services are also available for business customers.

How does it work?

goava VoIP is a pre-paid service that offers call rates from as little as R0.08 per minute to other goava users as well as selected international



destinations. Furthermore, this software also enables some advanced telephony features such as a voice mailbox, an online address book, call forwarding, conference calling, real time account balance query, and number blocking. You receive your own dedicated telephone number that is contactable from a landline or cellphone worldwide, and in order to make calls, users simply need to keep their account balance topped up via iTunes, PayPal, or by buying international calling cards ranging from R50 to R500.

To the point

The goava VoIP service will assist locals to stay in touch with family and friends across the globe, whilst also helping local firms to keep their international business communications needs met for much less.

goava works on your smartphone from anywhere in the world where you have Internet access either through WiFi or Mobile Internet Data. This provides international travellers with the benefit of not incurring expensive roaming charges when making or receiving calls while abroad. You can use a SIM card from a local mobile operator in the country where you are travelling for Internet access and still receive calls on your South African goava telephone number. ❖

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Terms and Conditions Apply | Rates Effective from 1 November 2012 and subject to change at a later date.



Edimax 3G-6218n wireless 3G portable router

Always connected, anywhere



The Edimax 150 Mbps wireless 3G portable router, which supports both 3G/3.5G and cable/xDSL modems, is particularly ideal for those who wish to share an internet connection when on the move.

The device boasts a rechargeable Li-ion battery that can provide up to four hours of wireless connectivity from anywhere, and enables multiple users to share an internet connection at speeds up to 14.4 Mbps. The device, which is small (102 mm in width and a mere 16 mm in height) and thus very portable, simply requires users to connect a 3G USB modem to the USB port. While this is nothing new one can also use this router to connect a DSL modem via the integrated Ethernet port. Additionally, the 3G-6218n also enables users to tether their smartphones instead of relying on an external modem.

The portable router will automatically switch over to 3G when the wired connection is not available. Additionally, the company explained that the wireless data signal coverage range is three times greater than that offered by standard 802.11 g/b routers.

To the point

In essence, the Edimax 3G-6218n is a boon to road warriors, as it offers a convenient way of enjoying internet connectivity, in several ways, from wherever they may be. It has a RRP of R735.

Buffalo LinkStation Pro Duo NAS (4 TB)

Your data at your demand



It's common knowledge that for businesses and individuals alike, data has become a priceless commodity in its own right, that only expands as time progresses. While first rate security and protection of one's data is paramount, data simultaneously needs to be quickly accessed and shared.

The Buffalo LinkStation Pro Duo network attached storage (NAS) device caters to both these demands. Allowing for a considerable 4 TB of storage space, it enables users to backup multiple PCs and Apple Mac computers, tablets and smartphones from both one's office or home. The LinkStation Pro Duo also offers users the ability to take advantage of two hard drive enclosures, and boasts RAID support for greater peace of mind.

Further distinguishing itself is the fact that the device boasts a 1.6 GHz processor along with transfer speeds up to 72 MB/s, which the company asserts is nearly twice as fast as a standard USB drive. This means that users can use the storage device as an iTunes server, from which to stream music, movies and TV shows to multiple devices simultaneously. The LinkStation Pro Duo neatly answers the modern user and business's storage needs: making tons of data accessible in a protected environment. It has a RRP of R5 744.

For further information contact Miro Distribution on 086-123-MIRO (6476).

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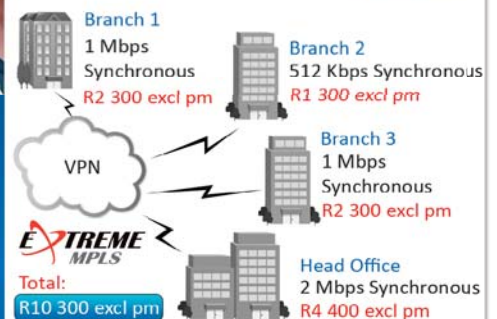
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Electrocomp US232R USB to RS-232 adaptor cable

Adapt or die

A USB to RS-232 adapter cable might not be the most interesting component, but it can become indispensable as time goes on.

For companies dealing with electronic equipment, the problem of legacy equipment is a very real one. As technology evolves, in many cases the latest products fail to comply with standards set by older gear. A practical example is the old RS-232 port, once very commonly found on PCs to connect to a range of peripherals including mice, printers, data storage and more. As better connectivity options have become available, it has become a relic of the past, replaced by the USB port as we know it today.

The problem appears when old equipment, such as printers, which only has these old RS-232 ports, need to be brought back into action. This is where Electrocomp's USB to RS-232 adaptor cable turns into your new best friend. It provides a simple way of adapting legacy serial

devices with RS-232 interfaces to the latest USB ports by incorporating a FTDI FT232R bridge chip. Apart from a small internal electronic circuit board contained inside the cable, there are also RS-232 level shifters and TXD/RXD LEDs to visually indicate whether there is data traffic flowing through the adapter.

Once plugged into a USB port, you can download drivers from www.ftdichip.com, which should make the US232R appear as a Virtual COM Port (VCP). The port is mounted in a rugged plastic enclosure capable of withstanding industrial temperature changes, and is available in 10 cm or 1 m lengths. ❄

About Electrocomp

Electrocomp Holdings is a dynamic technology driven South African group of distribution companies focusing their activities on Semiconductor and Integrated Platform Electronics (IPE) product sales and support, with strong engineering value added capabilities.

Market leaders

The company was established in 1980, and has become a well-respected, recognised market leader in the distribution of electronic components.

Electrocomp's main strength remains the local small to medium original equipment manufacturer market. These clients demand a high level of stock availability and a fast efficient service.

Contact information

Electrocomp's headquarters are situated in Linbro Business Park, with further branches located in Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban. Visit www.electrocomp.co.za for more information, or call 011-458-9000/32.



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Combatting workplace fraud through Identity Control

Many organisations across SA have introduced modern access control technologies to cut the losses caused by economic crime in the workplace. For example, within access-, attendance- and payroll solutions, the use of fingerprint-based identity control is now commonplace in environments ranging from mines and factories to warehouses and ports.

Ideco Biometric Security Solutions MD, Marius Coetzee, champions Identity Control as a practical business discipline that can deliver immediate returns in terms of risk reduction and loss prevention. Many of us are familiar with fingerprint applications in the workplace and we have seen their widespread use as a replacement for traditional access cards and PINs within access systems as well as in time and attendance solutions. Coetzee says that we should now perhaps be looking at fingerprint applications beyond the proven successes within these two specific areas of workplace security. He says: "Identity is at the heart of almost everything we do in the workplace and is an integral part of so many business processes."

Developing a security culture based on Identity Control

From the point where a person is considered for employment, through to when then they leave a company, Coetzee suggests that they should be included within a programme of Identity Control. "The first step is to confirm their identity and carry out some background screening," he states. Further identity-based controls should then be applied to govern who can do what, when and where.

'Identity Control is a practical business discipline that can deliver immediate returns in terms of risk reduction and loss prevention.'

Coetzee points out that the effectiveness of such policies is entirely dependent upon being able to identify the employee accurately and consistently and to create an irrefutable identity trail of such activities. And this is where fingerprint-based identification makes an enormous contribution to the whole process of Identity Control. "Traditionally, organisations have relied on access cards, PINS and passwords to identify their employees," says Coetzee, "but this creates a fundamental weakness in the process because anyone can use your card or your password."

Identity Control in IT

One area where increased Identity Control is obviously critical is within corporate IT systems – which are almost universally protected with nothing more than a password, PIN or card. Since these credentials are constantly exploited to enable illicit access and activity – from making fraudulent payments to stealing sensitive data – Coetzee believes it would make sound commercial sense to remove this glaring loophole in workplace security by replacing traditional IT access credentials with fingerprint-based Identity Control.



Payroll in the cloud – making life easier for SMEs

With Softline VIP you can try before you buy

Five years since its inception, the cloud is making life easier for start-up businesses and SMEs. This according to Sandra Swanepoel, director, Softline VIP, a leading HR and payroll software and services provider in South Africa and across the African continent.



Sandra Swanepoel, Director, Softline VIP

Payroll legislation is often a challenge for small businesses especially during tax season. Swanepoel says payroll software's move into the cloud, and the affordable pricing of cloud applications, has enabled companies to access a payroll system even if they employ two people.

Cloud making life easier

"In the past, most startup businesses would utilise manual processing until they reached at least 10 or 15 employees. A downside of this approach was the added stress of managing E@syfile submissions and issuing of tax certificates. As a result, the average size of a company now using a cloud-based payroll solution has come down to as little as five people," says Swanepoel.

She says that ease of use is definitely one of the drivers for a small business

when considering a payroll application. "We offer SMEs a 'try before they buy' option for the first month. This gives them the opportunity to experience the ease of use and tremendous time they save when using an online payroll application compared to manual calculations."

Added benefits

In addition, tax calculations and printing of professional payslips will reduce a significant burden for the small business owner and assist them to focus on managing costs and running their operations. According to Swanepoel, the biggest value for small companies lies in the time they save and peace of mind they are guaranteed when using software that is compliant with all legislation. She cites an example where VIP added leave functionality to its payroll application, allowing users to be instantly compliant with the basic conditions of employment where it pertains to annual, sick, maternity and family leave. "Companies can now also load leave transactions and link sick leave notes and applications to employee records. This will save them money and time as well as reduce the immense stress caused by managing manual leave systems," concludes Swanepoel.



For more information visit www.vipliquidpayroll.co.za.

Top 3. Most utilised PC OS' in Africa is Windows 7 (48.18%), Windows XP (43.33%) and Windows Vista (2.76%).

For more information on any of Ideco's Biometric Security Solutions, contact them on 0861-0-IDEKO (43326).



Fitness gear to keep geeks going

It would seem that with Nike's RunJozi events and the rise of SleekGeek, that fitness is back in fashion. Mantality offers some gadgets to help with your training.

Runtastic chest strap and receiver

Monitoring your heart rate during exercise can be a valuable tool for getting fitter quicker and, in-general, getting the most out of your regime. The Runtastic chest strap and receiver works with the Runtastic fitness app in order to track your heart rate within the app. This set is available to purchase from Mantality for a decent price of R700, which compares favourably to other solutions.

So how does it work? No prize for guessing where the chest strap goes, while the receiver plugs into your smartphone's 3.5 mm jack (don't worry you're still able to listen to music). For some this might be a slight pain, since this little square (about as large as a R5 coin) adds to your smartphone's bulk. Once initial set-up is done, there is no further hassles required since the Runtastic app immediately picks up the signal and should display your heart rate within a few seconds from start-up.

The Runtastic heart rate monitoring only works via the Runtastic app unfortunately, but having tested it, the app is great. We've been staunch supporters of Endomondo, with Runtastic as good if not slightly better, containing extra information such as weather and temperature, and added pace tracking on your maps.



Jabra Sport corded stereo headset

If you are running/exercising with your phone, trying to answer a call and have a conversation can be an awkward affair. Jabra's Sport corded stereo headset will help, since it includes an inline microphone and volume control so you don't need to worry about juggling your smartphone around while in full flight. The earphones are secured with behind-the-ear support, while three different sizes of earbuds are provided to fit snugly in-ear. R750.

Runtastic sports armband for mobiles

It's no fun jogging with a phone jangling in your pocket. And with smartphones only increasing in screen size, you need a better solution. Runtastic's sports armband can actually accommodate the 4.8" Galaxy S3 (only just though), while a small money slot will hold your race entry-fee change. ❖



Uniross Power Pod universal charger

Powerfully united



As much as convergence was meant to provide us with one device that would do it all, the reality is that we regularly carry with them multiple dedicated devices, each with their own power adapters.

This can lead to the annoying and all too common phenomenon of searching for available outlets in which to simultaneously recharge one's smartphone, iPod, portable gaming console and the like.

The Uniross Power Pod universal charger aims to address and mitigate this tangled mess, by enabling users to charge up to six small mobile devices at the same time. The power pod caters to a variety of connections, including those that rely on miniUSB and microUSB, and the proprietary dock favoured by iPods and the iPhone. Additionally, smartphones by Nokia, Samsung, LG and BlackBerry, as well as the Nintendo DSi and Sony's PSP are similarly catered to by the included ten interchangeable tips, which can be slotted into the power pod as needed, and then connect to the phone's power port. The PowerPod's circular surface is home to four such connections, while the base offers up an additional two USB ports.

It is available from Makro, DionWired and Incredible Connection for an RRP of R400. ❖

Win 3 x FIFA 13 for PS3!!!



TechSmart alongside EA Sports are giving away 3 copies of the hottest football simulator ever (see p.41 for review)



To win visit our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/techsmartmag) and simply tell us why you need FIFA 13 in your life. The best three reasons each wins a copy. The competition runs from 1 November 2012 till 30 November 2012. Winners will be notified via Facebook. Terms and conditions apply.



All these gadgets are available online from www.mantality.co.za.

Web Time Wasters



ASAP Science

youtube.com/user/AsapSCIENCE

ASAP Science is a prime example of the kind of gems that can be found online. The YouTube channel offers a great deal of fascinating insight into common experience, hosting several short videos that explain, in scientific yet engaging and easily understandable terms, certain phenomena. These include motion sickness, overeating, procrastination, the power of naps, the creation of pearls, and the science of orgasms, amongst others. Each video is accompanied by real time drawings which illustrate the concepts discussed. New videos are added on a weekly basis.



LastPass

www.lastpass.com

A requirement common to most websites is the need for a username and password. However, if like us, you frequent multiple sites that rely on these measures for their security, the different usernames and passwords can quickly pile up. Instead of using the same combination for all sites, a better option is to rely on a password manager, which is where LastPass comes in. Users can still employ multiple online credentials for different sites, while LastPass then relies on own master password to fill in the encrypted necessary details on one's behalf for each site. The browser add-on is free to download, and offers a premium version as well.



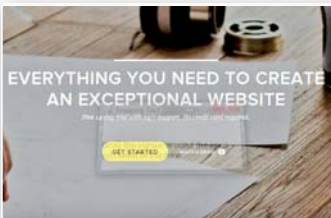
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Buffer

www.bufferapp.com

Buffer is ideal for busy people who want to share content with their social networks in the most time-economical way possible. The site enables users to add content to their personal 'buffer', which is then automatically shared throughout the course of the day via scheduled updates to the likes of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Users can find extensions for their browser (Chrome, Firefox or Safari) and download apps for both iOS and Android in order to send content to one's Buffer on the move.



Squarespace

www.squarespace.com

Building a customised, distinctive site can take more than its fair share of labour. Squarespace aims to mitigate this by combining creating pages, blogs and galleries into one. Pages can be imported from Tumblr, Wordpress and Blogger, while Twitter posts and Instagram photos can be incorporated into the site. Most importantly, the resulting site is scalable, meaning that it can be viewed on multiple devices and different screen sizes. While a 14 day trial is available, using Squarespace costs between \$8 (R64) and \$16 (R128) a month. Not interested in paying for a site? Check out www.wozaonline.co.za.

Around the web

- Los Angeles speedskater bit.ly/PY6yrT
- Find Art online <http://art.y>
- Cats in space, that's all <http://omgcatinspace.tumblr.com/>
- Dolphin super pod bit.ly/Q1IDKw
- Thrillseekers jump off cliffs in the Philippines bit.ly/P7XwgM
- How genius works bit.ly/geniusworks

TechSmart's top tweets



Here are the tweets that struck our fancy last month



Gus Silber @gussilber

Amazing vibe here at the start of #runJozi. So many people, so much energy. Almost makes me feel a little fond of Sandton.



Steve Jace @StevieJayce333

@techsmartmag the best mag in SA always Looking forward to the tech goodies YAH



Trevor Noah @Trevornoah

Tim Cook is the Thabo Mbeki to Steve Jobs' Mandela.
Expand



Nadia Neophytou @NadiaNeophytou

Standing next to a guy listening to Gangnam Style really loudly on his headphones. Can see he's just itching to bust a move.



Bazil the Bulldog @BaziltheBulldog

If you could choose between having a girlfriend and having FIFA 13, who would you start your season as?



Lewnatic @LewEvil

Smart phones, smart cars, smart water, smart TVs. And maybe one day, smart people.



Neil deGrasse Tyson @neiltyson

America 2012: The Learning Channel has HoneyBooBoo, History Channel has PawnStars: and the Science Channel has PumpkinChunkin



Nafisa Akabor @nafisa1

Dislike how standard screen sizes are just getting bigger. Phones should be designed with the average human hand in mind, not for The Hulk.



Khalifa @KKATHani

I love myself but I'm not "upload a picture of myself everyday on Instagram" love myself.



Andy Borowitz @BorowitzReport

Not taking anything away from Felix Baumgartner, but if you add up all the times I've fallen down it's way more than 24 miles.



Rudi Cronje @rudi_cronje

All the technology in the world - except for aircon in a plane when it's on the ground.



Conor Pope @ConorPope

"Tell me about Twitter, Dad." "Well son, we would piece together the news of the day by reading strangers' decontextified jokes about it."

TechSmart.co.za online poll results

Windows 8 – will you be upgrading?



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Apple iOS Apps of the month



Hobbit Movies

Fans of Tolkien and Peter Jackson's work are no doubt expecting something epic to begin later this year when *The Hobbit* trilogy begins, and hardly coincidentally, this free app has been released to fuel the fires of anticipation. The app also serves as the perfect companion to the rich lore contained within Tolkien's Middle Earth. To this end, Hobbit Movies boasts animated character portraits, a detailed map of Middle Earth and settings for the forthcoming trilogy.

IBM Think

This free, extremely interesting but rather hefty sized (513 MB) app for iPads, is focused predominantly on progress. Aimed at innovators and forward thinkers, IBM Think boasts an illustrated timeline that follows humanity's quest to understand the world; the far reaching role maps have played in society and how they have changed; and videos which explore milestones such as sending of man to the moon, how medicine was made personal. Simply fascinating.

AnyList Grocery List

For anyone who has rushed to the store only to forget half of what they need, AnyList Grocery List will certainly help with 'grocery store amnesia'. To this end, the app helps one keep track of different categories of shopping lists (such as travel, party planning, healthy eating) as well as a general grocery list. For the culinarily indecisive, the app serves up recipes by main ingredient, such as fish, chicken, beef and pasta. Another feature is integrated search. ❀

BlackBerry Apps of the month



App Locker

App Locker is a privacy protection tool that allows you to lock applications such as BBM, Facebook, Twitter and more. The app has one main feature, which is adding password protection to the apps you want to keep secure and private. For those who don't secure their BlackBerry's with a PIN, App Locker adds an important layer of security where it is needed most. So if you believe that what happens on your BlackBerry is for your eyes only, try App Locker for R12.

Real Football 2011

There are very few soccer games available on BlackBerry; however Real Football should keep football fans happy. With over 245 teams and nine different leagues to choose from, Real Football 2011 is quite comprehensive. As they say there is no I in team, so if you get tired of playing against the A.I. then line-up your mates via Bluetooth. Other features include different game modes such as 'Historic Challenges' and 'Become a Legend'.

Learn French

Learn French allows you to master the language of love, at your own pace of course. It has 107 self-contained audio lessons to help you along the way, while you can choose lessons according to your ability, with difficulties ranging from Newbie to Advanced. Also included are pause and resume lessons functionality and being able to access study tools. If you want to learn a new language on the move then Learn French is the way to go, just note its price tag of R34. [IF] ❀

Android Apps of the month



World Lens

Going on holiday to a French, Italian or Spanish speaking country, but do not quite have the local lingo down? World Lens can assist, since this augmented reality app enables users to point their smartphone's camera at a sign or restaurant menu for instance and have those printed words instantly translated into Her Majesty's English. You can buy it for R43 from Google Play which includes one in-app language.

Jaws Revenge

Within Jaws Revenge you assume control of the Great White shark that terrorised Amity Island in Steven Spielberg's classic horror movie. There are 40 levels to sink your mobile gaming teeth into, each sporting an all-you-can-eat seafood buffet consisting largely of unsuspecting swimmers, flocks of seagulls, windsurfers, as well as fishing boats. As you progress you can add to Jaws' abilities, building an unstoppable killing machine in the process.

Handcent SMS

Instant messaging (IM) apps have eaten into the market share of SMS/MMS of late, but this free app seeks to make SMS/MMS messaging appealing again by bringing a lot more features to the standard Android SMS/MMS messaging interface. These include group messaging, inserting voice notes and attachments, password protection for all or selected messages, as well as an integrated blacklist function to block spammers. Now if it could only make SMSs or MMSs cheaper... ❀

Smartphone top tips

Struggling to master your new smartphone? TechSmart is on hand to provide some helpful tips.

Apple tip

A rather nifty feature that can be found under Settings > General enables you to create custom shortcuts for your commonly used phrases. For example, specifying 'omw' as meaning 'on my way' enables you to simply type 'omw' in subsequent messages, and the phrase will automatically be expanded. It's a nifty way to create one's own shorthand that can also save a fair bit of time in messaging.

omw

BlackBerry tip

Here is a useful tip which might save you a bit of time. You don't need to pull the battery each time you need to restart your device. Reboot your BlackBerry by simply pressing the Alt, right Shift (the button next to sym which has an up arrow and aA), and Delete buttons simultaneously.

Android tip

Need a quicker way to access a particular homescreen? Simply perform a pinch-to-zoom on any homescreen and you will be taken to a fly-over view of all your Android smartphone's multiple homescreens. This enables quick access, or if you click and drag on any of these, move it in a different order, or, in the case of some smartphones, dump it in the trashcan to be deleted. ❀

Sci News



Glitter ball

A new planet is rocking the science world. In an upcoming article in the *Astrophysical Journal*, astronomers write about their discovery of a diamond-rich planet in a nearby galaxy. Like Earth, the new planet – 55 Cancri e – is a rocky place. But its chemical make-up is very different.

Chemical models showed that, unlike Earth, considerable amounts of carbon and silicon compounds but very little frozen water were available during the formation of the planet. The models further suggest that a thick graphite surface covers a diamond layer about three times the Earth's mass, below which is a layer of silicon-containing minerals and an iron core. But 55 Cancri e is a hot rock: with a surface temperature of well over 2 000 °C, you'd be better off finding your fortunes elsewhere.



Hear the fear

Just thinking about the sound of nails scratching on a blackboard gives us the chills. And now scientists say they know why. According to a study published recently in the *Journal of Neuroscience*, unpleasant sounds activate the fear centre of our brains, called the amygdala. A group of 13 volunteers

were asked to rate the unpleasantness of 74 sounds while having their brain activity monitored. Sounds rated highly unpleasant, like a knife scratching on glass, caused heightened neural activity in the amygdala as well as in the auditory brain. This implies that our brains are highly sensitive to unpleasant sounds, which researchers think may be because such sounds could signal danger. The results may help us to better understand conditions where people have reduced sound tolerance.



Typeface

Happiness is... a colon and a closing bracket. But according to a study published in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*, emoticons are not used as often as expected when it comes to text messaging. Over a period of six months, researchers collected more than 120 000 text messages from a

group of participants all using the same model of smartphone. Analyses showed that only 4% of the total number of text messages contained at least one emoticon, with happy, sad and super happy faces being used most often. Women were found to be twice as likely to tap an emoticon as men. The researchers suggest that because texting is perceived to convey simple, brief messages, it requires less socio-emotional context than other forms of written communications such as emails and blogs. >:o [LP] 🍀

Green News



Porsche unveils another desirable eco concept

German sports car maker, Porsche, pulled the eco wraps off its newest green sports car concept – the Panamera Sport Turismo plug-in hybrid – during the 2012 Paris Motor Show last month. Within a e-hybrid vehicle, the electric

motor is used whilst the car is driving at slow speeds with the petrol engine taking over when the electric motor's battery is running flat or at high speeds.

This vehicle can be driven with only the 70 kW electric motor in operation for a distance of 30 km at speeds of up to 130 km/h. If this is a little too slow for you, the driver can also call upon the electric motor's supercharged V6 petrol engine counterpart that delivers an additional 245 kW. Their combined power will rocket you to 100 km/h in less than six seconds, whilst combined fuel consumption remains blissfully low at less than 3.5 litres per 100 km. Porsche has not revealed when or even if this concept car will be going into production.



Sharp announces clear, see-through solar panel

Sharp has announced a new see-through solar energy panel, designed primarily for balcony railings and skyscraper windows. The Japanese company's semi-transparent black solar panel measures approximately

1.37 x 1 m and delivers a maximum energy output of 95 watts, which Sharp asserts is enough for both lighting as well as power generation.

This panel is only able to deliver a solar power conversion efficiency rate of just under 7%, which does not compare very favourably to conventional commercial solar panels that produce a conversion efficiency rate of up to 20%. However, see-through panels do hold a number of advantages over conventional solar panels. These include being able to generate electricity whilst allowing light into a room and acting as a heat shield.



Google's Oklahoma data center to make use of wind power

Web search giant, Google, has signed a renewable energy deal with the Grand River Dam Authority (GRDA), which will see the GRDA supplying 48 megawatts (MW) of wind

energy to the firm's Oklahoma data center. The wind power will be delivered later this year from the Canadian Hills Wind Project in Oklahoma.

Around 48 MW clean energy is enough to power a small city, according to Greenpeace who calls this move by Google one of the most forward-thinking by a firm and one that shows what can be accomplished when companies are serious about powering their operations via clean energy. According to Greenpeace, Google currently makes use of a local electricity mix of more than 50% coal power to power its Oklahoma data centre, which is one of the main facilities the company uses to deliver its services such as Gmail, Google Drive and search results. 🍀

More cool science



Why the discovery of a planet orbiting Alpha Centauri matters.
bit.ly/alphaplanet

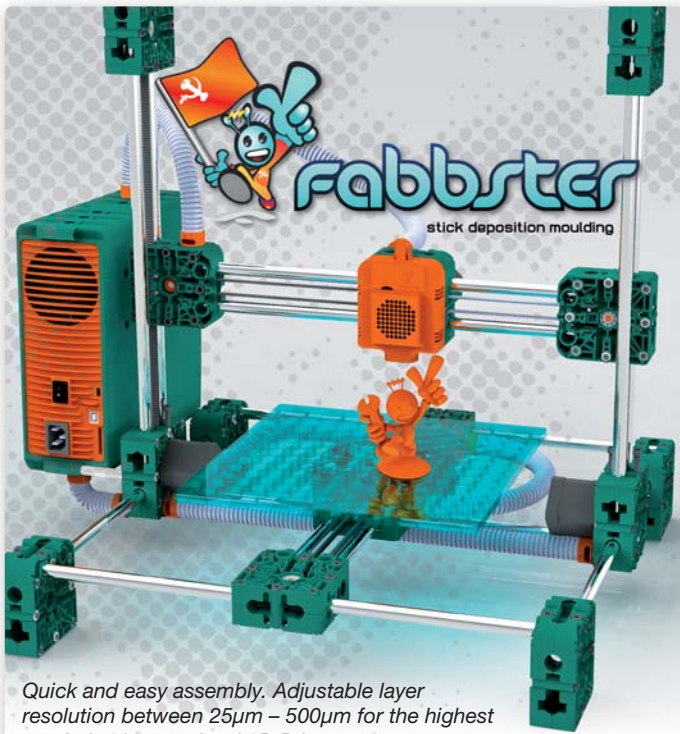
The full list of Nobel Prize winners.
bit.ly/nobelwon

Japanese 'sangaku' paintings reveal the sacred side of maths
bit.ly/sanmath

Green living tip of the month

If your office provides disposable cups for beverages, eliminate the need for them by bringing in extra glasses and mugs from home. Post a note in the lunch/break room requesting that your coworkers do the same. Keep the mugs in the lunchroom for anyone to use. Taken from 23 tips for earth-friendly living, available at bit.ly/23greenliving.





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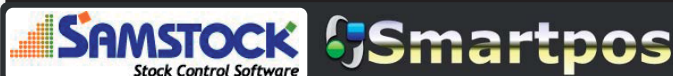
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OEG HD VIDEO RECORDING EYEWEAR

Don't get stuck behind a bulky old fashioned camcorder. Look sporty and stylish with a high definition eyewear video recorder that looks like you're wearing a regular pair of sunglasses. These Video Recording Sunglasses allow you to capture brilliant HD video as you see it and unlike our competitors' lower-cost models, these high performance glasses are made with top-level materials and components, which make them extremely durable and long lasting.



Lightning Reaction Reloaded

Put simply, Lightning Reaction has been the centre of attention at every party, gathering and get together – separating the big boys and girls from the wimps. When the sound stops and the signal light goes from red to green, get ready to scream, because the last to press their trigger gets a shock!



Powermonkey Extreme

The Powermonkey extreme houses a massive 9 000mAh capacity Lithium Polymer battery and offers users real power in a compact, durable shell. The unit is capable of recharging most 5V devices, including an iPhone up to 6 times, a Garmin Edge 800 up to 6 times and standard mobiles up to 12 times.



Adonit Jot Touch

Future, meet your stylus! Not all lines are created equally, so Jot Touch provides pressure sensitive input to deliver more accurate interpretations of your strokes. Using Bluetooth technology, Touch communicates with Jot Ready apps to give you a deeper experience on your iPad 2 or new iPad. Jot Touch is the next evolutionary step for precision styluses.



Looftlighter

The original Looftlighter is a Swedish patented invention that lights your braai or fireplace with super-heated air within 60 seconds. It can "fast-forward" your charcoal or briquettes and start cooking within minutes. The Looftlighter ignites anything from charcoal to wood with the touch of a button.



Cobra Tag

Misplacing smartphones, keys, laptops and other essentials is inevitable. The Cobra Tag and app uses a 2-way communication and separation alarm to link your essentials and your smartphone – ensuring you never leave your valuables behind. The Cobra Tag also includes a handy two-way finder.



Serenco Emergency Flare

This 16 led flare has 9 flash patterns. It is shock resistant, waterproof, floats on water and is durable. The magnet allows the flare to be attached to metal surfaces and the emergency flare can be recharged using a 12V car charger or a 220V wall charger that is supplied with the unit.



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1 billion. Apple is on pace to hit this iOS mobile device sales milestone by 2015.

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 * Butchery * Convenient Stores * etc



TechSmart's To Do List for November



To watch



Cloud Atlas

2 November 2012

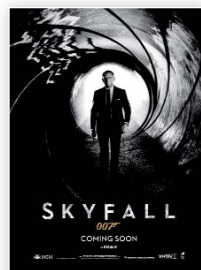
What a movie *The Matrix* was. *The Matrix 2* and *3*, not so much, but *The Matrix*, wow. Since then the Wachowskis have not really shown up on the radar, except for 2008's super-saturated over-the-top *Speed Racer*. Now they make a return with the sci-fi/adventure *Cloud Atlas*, and with a budget of \$100 million, the movie is already billed as the most expensive independent film ever. Featuring an ensemble cast, its non-linear story visits past, present and future, revealing much about kindness, the human spirit and the Butterfly Effect along the way. It should be a captivating affair, although we can't say we're excited about to see Tom Hanks as one of the main characters.



ParaNorman

9 November 2012

If you have not seen 2009's stop-motion *Coraline*, try to find it on DVD, since you are in for a bit of a treat (Neill Gaiman wrote the book, so that should give some motivation). Laika Studios, which was responsible for that little gem, has also created *ParaNorman*, a tale about a boy who can speak to the dead. Now unless you are John Edward, this type of claim is usually frowned upon, and the same holds true for poor Norman. But might he just be the only person able to save the town from the spectre of ghouls, ghosts and zombies? An interesting side-note is that 3D printers were used to create all the models' faces – the first time this has ever been done in a major movie.



Skyfall

30 November 2012

Our man James is back, this time luckily not during a writers strike, which some say was responsible for the ho-hum *Quantum of Solace*. So after already seeing Daniel Craig parachute with the queen earlier this year, why go and watch *Skyfall*, the 23rd Bond movie? One reason: a blonde Javier Bardem as the villain, Raoul Silva. If Silva contains even a touch of the madness on display from

Bardem's Anton Chigurh in *No Country for Old Men*, then Bond better watch his British bottom. Initial reviews claim that *Skyfall* might just be the best Bond in ages. We bloody hope so 007.

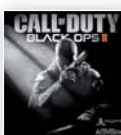


To Play



Halo 4

The latest chapter in Microsoft's Xbox 360 exclusive Halo franchise, Halo 4 is promising some more stellar sci-fi, first person shooter action when it touches down on 6 November. Players will once again step into the extra large shoes of the Master Chief, who is awakened by Cortana and finds himself on the alien world of Requiem, facing an ancient evil. Coming along for the ride is a new multiplayer offering, Halo Infinity Multiplayer.



Call of Duty Black Ops 2

The latest iteration in the hugely popular Call of Duty franchise is set to take place in the near future (2025) and sees the United States and China at each other's throats. What you can expect includes cutting-edge futuristic weapons, action-packed gameplay, branching storylines, narrative told via flashbacks, and of course, frenetic multiplayer that includes a zombies mode. Coming 13 November on Xbox 360, PS3 and PC. 🎮

Gear in the office

We never have enough space to feature all the products that made an appearance in our office. Here are some quick thoughts on a few of them.

Beats Wireless by Dr. Dre headphones

The distinctive Beats over-the-head headphones delivers an impressively crisp, distortion-free sound – that is if you have an original pair. But while hip hop fans will appreciate the accentuated bass levels, sound-purists may find it less appealing. With the wireless version you don't need to fuss around with cables thanks to a Bluetooth connection. RRP: R3 500. For more info contact Phoenix Distribution on 011-803-5437.



Nike+ TomTom GPS Watch

If you are a fan of the Nike+ running system then this is the watch for you, seeing that thanks to its built-in GPS technology it keeps even better track of your run. While it boasts an eye-catching design and some interesting on-screen motivations/reminders, it's let down by Nike's fidgety website and can't be recommended for power-users. R1 900.



Freecom Tough Drive 3.0 1 TB portable hard drive

The Tough Drive 3.0 does three things correctly: it comes in a soft silicone casing able to withstand a knock or two; there's an integrated cable so you don't need to remember your own; and it is USB 3.0-enabled so copying large files is not a tap-your-fingers-on-the-desk waiting affair. R1 500 from Verbatim on 011-253-4940.



Philips DCM5090 Sound Tower

The Philips DCM5090 Sound Tower provides not only a penetrating 200W RMS 3.1 sound-experience, since its pillar-like design is also an interesting talking-point. Meant as a docking station for iPods/iPads/iPhones, you'll also find a CD player and radio. If only it could connect wirelessly. R5 000, phone Philips for more info on 086-108-4456.



iFrogz Boost speakers

iFrogz Boost Nearfield Audio speaker boosts the volume of your music playing device courtesy of its dual 2 Watt speakers for louder audio on the go. If your device has external onboard speakers it can even do so wirelessly, as long as you don't expect crystal-clear sound. RRP: R500. Phone Gammatek for more info on 011-201-0800.



PES 2013

If it wasn't for FIFA 2013, Pro Evolution Soccer (PES) 2013 would be top of the rankings. With the latest iteration, Konami keeps PES on a graphical and gameplay par with FIFA, but, like all its predecessors, it is still hampered by a severe lack of official licensing and a rather uninspired career mode that feels bolted on. R300 for Windows PC, R600 on Xbox 360 and PS3.



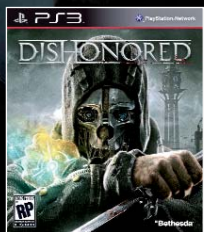
Of Orcs and Men

Looking for a buddy movie/RPG? Of Orcs and Men is it. You start play as the battle-hardened Orc Arkail looking to avenge his brothers killed by the corrupt Empire of Men, soon joined by a skillful Goblin named Styx. An interesting storyline and decent voice-acting make up for a so-so combat system, and although it is not a big-budget production, Of Orcs and Men still managed to keep us playing till the end. R400 for PC, R500 for console. 🎮

Dishonored

Honourably brilliant

If you like your games with plenty of intrigue and suspense, and a story that grabs you by the throat and doesn't let go, then you're going to love Dishonored.



You step into the shoes of Corvo, the Queen's Royal Protector, who has just returned from a mission to find a solution to a plague that is having a devastating impact on Dunwall. Upon arrival though, you are quickly confronted with further troubles: the Empress is murdered and the princess kidnapped, while you are branded as a traitor and sentenced to death as part of a sinister, insidious political plot. This sets the stage for a plan to find the princess and overthrow the tyrannical Lord Regent, who has claimed the throne.

Play your way

Dishonored is certainly stylistically realised, boasting a certain Victorian/Steampunk aesthetic, which makes the world immediately come to life as a distinctive setting in its own right. You can choose to play the game as a hardcore assassin, eliminating any and all that gets in your way, or rather, use a more stealthy approach, to subdue, rather than murder foes. Doing the former carries a price: the more deaths you leave in your wake, the higher your Chaos count, which results in more rats in the city, the expansion of the plague, and thus a grimmer conclusion. Along with your pistol and crossbow, you can also deal damage with a sword and a myriad of supernatural powers.

Power plays

It is the latter which further enable players to customise their Dishonored experience, as some powers lend themselves to assisting a stealthier approach, while others are more aggressively inclined. For example, Dark Vision enables one to see through walls and detect traps, and Bend Time slows time for short durations, while Blood Thirsty and Devouring Swarm unleashes a brutal flurry of fatal attacks and conjures a swarm of vicious rats, respectively.

'Dishonored is a gem of a game that simply has to be experienced, as it truly honours what games can be.'

Each power consumes a certain amount of mana when used, and cost Runes, which are scattered through the world, to purchase. You'll also find notes and books dotted around the city, which add greater context to the unfolding story.

To the point

It would be only too easy to gush over the breadth, depth and richness of the game on offer in Dishonored, and many already have. Suffice to say, it is a gem of a game that simply has to be experienced, as it truly honours what games can be. Unreservedly recommended. R600 including free delivery from LivDigital on 010-590-9281. [RN] 🍷

FIFA 13

Still the benchmark



Along with death and taxes, an annual FIFA release is pretty much a sure thing, with the latest iteration bringing some minor improvements over FIFA 12. Are these good enough to land FIFA 13 the top spot on your soccer game acquisition list?

Graphically, FIFA 13 has not improved much over

FIFA 12, and you'll need the detective skills of Sherlock Holmes to point to the enhancements. EA Sport's tinkering to the gameplay, however, is another matter. The company have managed to up their game thanks to advancements in the Player Impact Engine introduced in FIFA 12. Players now jostle for the ball more realistically, and this may give rise to more than a few penalties during a season as over-eager defenders tend to pull a striker's shirt if they can't keep up.

FIFA 13 also introduces its own new feature called First Touch Control, which means you now have to employ chest control for balls that are passed too high and take the heat off of balls that have been passed far too hard, before setting off goalward bound. This is not only more realistic, but also makes it easier for defenders to win back possession in certain one-on-one situations. This in contrast to previous iterations where it seemed that the players had glue on their boots, allowing the ball to stick no matter how terrible the passing service was.

Other changes

Beyond the minor graphics and more significant gameplay enhancements, FIFA 13 also offers some improvements within Career Mode. As a manager, you are now able to manage a club and a national team. Transfers are much more involved, as you have the ability to make enquiries to teams over players you want to purchase or loan, and request additional funds from your club's board of directors.

'As a manager, you are now able to manage a club and a national team, while transfers are much more involved.'

In addition, the excellent commentating from Martin Tyler and Alan Smith reflects your decisions as manager. For instance if you put a player on the transfer list, or your star delays renewing his contract deal, this will be a topic of conversation between the commentators which provides the title with an authentic TV-like feel.

To the point

It must be said that with FIFA 13, EA Sport's franchise remains the benchmark of football simulation titles. Its graphical and gameplay enhancements might not be that extensive, but due to its large list of authentically licensed clubs, engrossing Career Modes, and on-the-ball commentating, FIFA should remain the top choice. R600 including free delivery from LivDigital on 010-590-9281. [HD] 🍷

50% smaller. Size of new PS3 console, the PS3 Super Slim, as compared to the original.

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