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Having to deal with all the latest technology around us, I sometimes wonder who is controlling who. Location based services, the semantic web, cellphone apps, virtualisation, social networking – where are all these things taking us? Some talk about the Singularity – a point where tech and humankind converge after which we simply cannot predict the outcome. Alas, it seems like we have succumbed to that old Chinese curse because we are indeed living in very interesting times. Here at *TechSmart* we are willing to walk the walk of this new tech-filled lifestyle. But our print magazine simply does not contain enough space to provide you with the amount of info we want, that's why you should also join us at [www.techsmart.co.za](http://www.techsmart.co.za). Online you'll

find much more news, articles and in-depth reviews.

You might notice a few changes in layout. A big thanks to our designer Brett Wilson for the excellent work he put into sprucing up the magazine. I think it's definitely easier on the eye.

Mike Joubert <[michael@techsmart.co.za](mailto:michael@techsmart.co.za)>

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\$5000: The cost to have your genome sequenced, down from \$1 million in 2007. <http://tinyurl.com/dmam7a>

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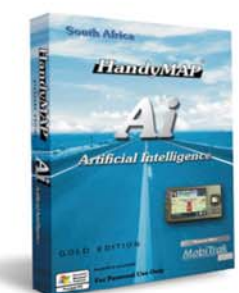
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## Letter of the Month

Dear TechSmart team,

I have known and read with interest and anticipation your magazine since its inception and it helped me with my computer changes throughout the years. I would like to ask you guys for some advice. What are the considerations when buying a webcam? Sincerely

Ivan Kovacic, Pretoria, Willows

Hi Ivan, Image quality should be your main concern; therefore the webcam's resolution and maximum frame rate are the two biggest factors to consider.

A resolution of 640 X 480 is more than sufficient. Any larger and your connection needs to be really decent to support it and the reality is that our connection speeds in SA pale in comparison to larger markets. Any lower and you may as well not bother transmitting video via the net.

A frame rate of 30 fps is also decent, anything below is just irritating. Be warned however, the actual frame

rate you achieve while transmitting is unlikely to reach this maximum consistently for reasons too numerous to mention.

Additionally, if the cam is for your notebook it needs to have a clip or some other means of attaching it to your screen. Some webcams only come with a base stand and are consequently only useful for desktop use.

Other things to consider are whether you want a built-in microphone and if you require a device with decent digital zoom. Taking it a step further, features such as pan and tilt are available, but such features really are just a matter of personal taste. Check out our *HOW TO: Set up a Webcam* feature on our website at: <http://tinyurl.com/c9yaj9>. [TM]



Hi Ivan. Thanks for your letter and congrats on winning *CSI:NY* for PC courtesy of Megarom Interactive. [MJ]

Hello, I would like to take a few moments to write to you regarding *PTAWUG!* Who is *WUG?* Pretoria Wireless User Group. It is a wireless network spanning across almost the entire city of Pretoria/Tshwane. What is *WUG?* Easy, it is a 24/7 wireless LAN! We have various uses, ranging from gaming servers, VOIP, IRC and any other use you have for a TCP/IP network. There are no monthly fees, no subscriptions, no cap limitations and no hassle. Speeds vary according to your connection's signal strength. All that is needed is to determine whether you have Line of Sight (LOS) to the highsite. If you have LOS, purchase your hardware and you're set.

Anyone looking to join can get more info from [www.wug.za.net](http://www.wug.za.net) or [www.ptawug.co.za](http://www.ptawug.co.za).

Denzil van der Merwe

Hi to all at TechSmart, I recently installed a program called "Power DVD" on my laptop, when the installation finished I found that all the songs I saved on my PC have the PowerDVD icon emblem instead of the original Windows Media Player, this was without an option for me to accept it or not. I would like to have the icon back to Windows Media Player. Please help. Thank you,

Isaac Isaacs

Hi Isaac. It is actually quite easy to change that in XP and Vista alike. Open the folder containing one of the files you want to associate with *Windows Media Player (WMP)*. Right click on one of the files. Click on properties, it should open with the "General" tab showing. Next to "Opens with" you'll see a button called "Change". Click it. It will most probably show a *WMP* icon as one of your options. Click the *WMP* icon and press Ok. All those file types will now open with *WMP*. [MJ]

Letters shortened due to space restrictions.

...appointments, reminders, invitations, promotions...

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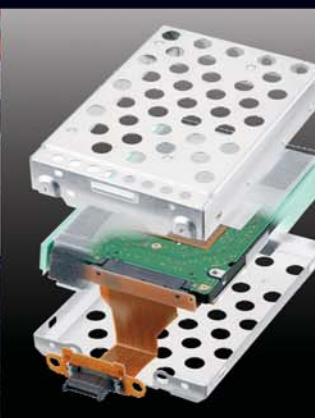
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Voted as best live act in SA and having played to sold out shows from Ibiza to Tokyo, Cape Town electronic act Goldfish are so hot right now you can hear them sizzle. TechSmart spoke to Dominic Peters (the blond one, by way of identification only) to find out what they've been up to.

### Did you ever in your wildest dreams expect to become so successful?

It has been truly amazing, and we are incredibly lucky to have this happen to us. I suppose we always hoped we'd be 'successful', but I don't think we realised how well Goldfish would start to do or what it would entail for us.

### Technology must play a huge role in what you do?

It does. But I also have an amazing talent for making something crash within an hour of having it. Dave calls it my Bermuda Triangle effect... We both just got our new Macbook Pro's and they have been making our lives WAY more productive and fun. And I haven't managed to crash mine... yet. We are all about combining technology with the analogue and acoustic world. Technology is always more powerful when it's used in a creative way... and we also love using stuff in ways they weren't supposed to be...nearly always voiding their guarantees. Oh well!

### What are you currently up to?

We are working on some cool new material, and tweaking our live show at the moment in preparation for our overseas tour which is coming up.

### Tell us something no one knows about you.

I make a mean roast chicken...and Dave likes bass fishing... and we both love to surf. Cape Town bru.

### What other music acts have you played alongside?

We have been really lucky to play gigs with guys like Basement Jaxx, Faithless, Paul Oakenfold, Macy Gray, Maroon 5, Fatboy Slim, Audio Bullies, and Fedde le Grande.

### The term "reinvention of the DJ" seems to be synonymous with Goldfish. Do you agree?

I think we kind of combine the best of a band and the best of a DJ into one thing. It was quite a process figuring out how to 'do' Goldfish, BUT when you persevere at it, and it starts to take off, you now have this thing that no one else has. And that has been the power of Goldfish I suppose.

### With your international success, would you follow in a number of other South Africans' footsteps and move overseas?

I don't think so. South Africa will always be our home and Cape Town is the best place on earth.

### Do you have any advice for budding musicians?

You create your own luck.

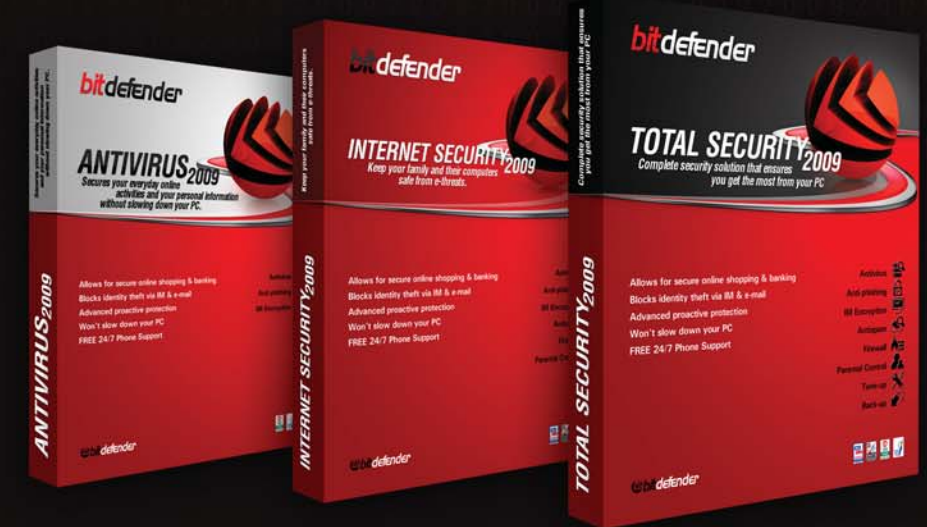
The full interview is available on [techsmart.co.za](http://techsmart.co.za) and you can check out [www.goldfishlive.com](http://www.goldfishlive.com) for more information on Goldfish and where they will be performing. [KM]

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10 million: The amount of computers that the Conficker virus has infected to date. <http://tinyurl.com/dm46mp>

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### Podcars: From Virtual to Reality

Personal Rapid Transit systems allow vehicles, usually seating 4 to 6, to travel on a network of sensors (as opposed to rail), and they have long been a possible solution to the world's congested highways and byways. But possible to probable to implemented solution, is far easier said than done and many of these projects have found themselves stillborn.

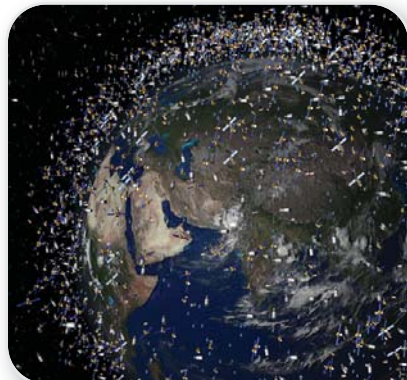
However, it now looks like two developments, one in the United Arab Emirates and the other near Heathrow in London, could prove that with the right investment, technology and applications these systems could provide a viable alternative to other forms of mass transport systems.



### 10 000 Years of Space Junk

Recently a derelict Russian military satellite and an operational US Iridium commercial satellite collided in the busiest part of near-Earth-space, sending millions of particles of debris into orbit around the earth.

This space junk can cause serious damage to any space craft in the area, which is bad news for many of our satellites that are in orbit in this region, about 800 km above Earth. Even though the space shrapnel are tiny, most pieces smaller than 1 cm, they move at extremely high speeds, with the ability to devastate anything that they collide with.



### Online news round up

Recommended news on [www.techsmart.co.za](http://www.techsmart.co.za):  
The most recent Google Maps Updates for South Africa <http://tinyurl.com/cv77ub>. The new range of Intel Atom processors <http://tinyurl.com/d8wmmmy>. The first solar charged cellphone <http://tinyurl.com/dbvfry>.

- Most read last month on our site:
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[techsmart.co.za](http://techsmart.co.za) | March 09

### Battle of the boneheads

It makes a lot of sense to use your head when fighting. And when it comes to Triceratops it seems the beasts took the advice literally. Palaeontologists have often speculated about the reason for some dinosaurs' weird-looking headgear. Now a group of scientists report in the open-access journal *PLoS ONE*, that Triceratops may have used its three-horned head during battle. They surveyed hundreds of Triceratops skulls and compared bones on the frill to those of Centrosauruses, a closely related horned creature. Triceratops skulls had 10 times more injuries on the frill bones than Centrosaurus skulls. These injuries, they believe, were most likely caused by head-butts from other Triceratops, much like when modern antelope and deer lock horns. However, different horn shapes probably point to different uses during combat. The scientists think that the horns were probably not used exclusively for fighting, but rather as an extra card to play if the going got tough.



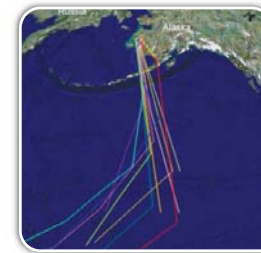
### Getting it ripe

Why is it that when there's one bad apple in the pack, there's bound to be another? Blame the over-zealous activity of ethylene. Scientists have long known that ethylene is a gaseous plant hormone that promotes fruit ripening. And according to research recently published in the journal *Genes and Development*, it seems they now know what gives it the go-ahead. The researchers found that ethylene activity is held in check by an intricate network of molecular gatekeepers. The protein EIN2 is pivotal – it determines whether the ethylene-induced ripening process goes or stops. As soon as ethylene binds to receptors EIN2 becomes active and gives the go-ahead for ripening. Ethylene also releases the grip of two other proteins, which usually muffle EIN2's activity when the time is not quite ripe yet. With both these brakes released, ripening proceeds uninterrupted. The scientists hope that understanding the process better will lead to commercial applications that either promote or delay ripening.



### Flight Plan

A little birdie told us that Nature will probably never cease to amaze us. Especially when it comes to little birdies. According to a study recently published in the journal *Science*, migrating songbirds can fly much further per day than previously thought. Scientists fitted a bunch of small songbirds with tiny geolocators shortly before they departed from their northern hemisphere summer homes. Once back north, a year later, they retrieved the information from the tracking devices to reconstruct the birds' flight plans and stop-over details. Astoundingly, the birds flew more than 500 km per day during their southbound migration – more than triple previously thought possible. The birds also made long stop-overs in the tropics during the southbound journey. However, when flying back north, they made it back home in almost a third of the time it took to reach the southern destinations. The findings may give scientists a better understanding of the possible impact of environmental changes on songbird migration patterns. [LP]



58%: The percentage that Lonsatellite is harder than Diamonds. <http://tinyurl.com/ck6gbb>

589 385: Number of blog posts published on 25 Feb 09. <http://tinyurl.com/aee769>

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# Time to Tighten those Motherboards

TechSmart spoke to Arthur Goldstuck who heads up the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) research group, World Wide Worx. He is one of South Africa's foremost commentators on the ICT sector, and we decided to get his take on how the world-wide economic crisis has impacted what we buy and how much we pay for it.



They say when America sneezes the world catches a cold. So should South Africans start sniffing or coughing? According to Goldstuck we must all keep in mind that South Africa suffered its own credit crunch not so long ago, just after the steep rise in the interest rate and implementation of the new Credit Act. So, in effect, we have had to

deal with our belts being tightened by regulations locally, as well as whatever impact we'd feel from beyond our shores. South Africa has not felt the full weight of the crisis as we were somewhat sheltered. Our banks were prevented, by our own banking authorities, from doing what so many banks abroad did. That is, buying into a whole heap of risky investment instruments, brought about by American banks providing unrealistic sub-prime loans to people who just couldn't afford to pay them back. But just because we've been protected in the banking industry doesn't mean that we're in the clear for everything else. We will still

very much feel the effects of the crisis, with the price of certain goods going up and the demand for South African exports, like flashy cars, going down as people tend to prioritise food ahead of luxury German engineering.

## Not in the Clear

But what about the price of consumer electronics? Will you have to be content with your old TV for awhile and not the new LCD one you've been eyeing? No, according to Goldstuck, who says that the largest growth in the purchase of electronics has been online buying. When it comes to buying a new car, you will probably have to pay more or less the same price for the same model, across the country, even if, like many people, you have done all the reading on the Internet first. The difference in the electronics game is that once you, as the consumer, have done all your research online, you can then also make the decision to buy online. This gives companies the incentive to give you the best price.

## Good Sectors

Overall, in the retail sector, there are selected areas that are doing very well. The gaming industry is one of these. With gamers being a dedicated bunch; developers can rely on them to keep buying their titles, provided they keep producing decent content. You might find though, that in certain instances, prices have gone up somewhat in the gaming market. One of these is the steep rise in the price of the Xbox 360 console. According to Goldstuck, manufacturers should think twice when increasing margins on their most popular products as it could have the unwanted effect of driving demand for the product down.

Products that people want the most will also allow the market to grow. This means demand for LCD and plasma TVs will continue to increase and manufacturers will be able to deliver better products as the price point has dropped and continues to drop. This doesn't mean that all flat-panel TVs are going to be the right thing to buy, Goldstuck warns. Apparently older-generation flat-panel TVs are being dumped on South Africa. These are not nearly as good as the newer models and the picture quality is pretty shocking. So if the new 40" TV you've just bought has a refresh rate of 50 MHz and you can see the picture smearing all over the place, you know you've been had.

## Exchange Rate Blues

Where you're most likely to feel the impact of the financial mess the bankers have left us in, is in the exchange rate. Your money just isn't worth as much as it once was. But technology will continue to improve and as it improves the cost will continue to decrease. Goldstuck uses the example of flash drives. The largest capacity flash drive you can probably find at a shop will be a 32GB drive, and that could cost up to R900 (depending where you look), but only six years ago that money would have got you a 32MB drive. So within six years you're getting a drive that can store a thousand times as much data and you're actually paying somewhat less for it, as the Rand has depreciated since then. [AG]

## Opinions Online

<http://tinyurl.com/dbh72a> A rather optimistic column from Michael S Malone on ABC News predicting a tech boom. <http://tinyurl.com/cc86vn> Is Silicon Valley recession proof? India's *The Economic Times* tends to think so. <http://tinyurl.com/4eeglw> The other side of the coin from *The Wall Street Journal* saying that both venture capitalists and established companies are feeling the pinch.

80 plastic guitars: broken by 14-year old Danny Johnson in setting the *Guitar Hero* record of 973,954 points. <http://tinyurl.com/d5eg7t>

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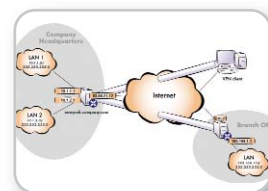
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# Business Tools of the Trade

Running a business is much like fighting a war, well sort of. You have to keep your troops in line and working; you have to prepare for all eventualities (like massive global recessions) and prevent mutiny at all costs. But you will also need the right tools to carry out the job, so here they are: the business "war-machine's" Tools of the Trade.



## XDSL VPN

The first tool in your arsenal, allowing you and your employees to conduct business wherever you are, should be a Virtual Private Network (VPN). A VPN allows employees to access the business

private network, wherever they are in the world, over the Internet. XDSL offers a VPN solution tailored to your business needs, with monthly remote support and monitoring, ensuring that your VPN remains in working order to keep business flowing. To make sure that intruders and nasties can't get into your system, XDSL also provides a custom embedded firewall, installed at each branch of the network. This firewall is specifically designed for the South African ADSL market and what makes this solution cost effective is that it is fully outsourced, meaning that you won't have to employ your own dedicated IT support staff. Their VPN over ADSL offer is **R285** (incl VAT) monthly. Call XDSL on 086-100-9375.

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## 3M Vikuiti Privacy Filter

You don't want every passer-by to be able to see exactly what it is that you're doing on your PC, especially if it involves Facebook or Solitaire at work.

Prevent the prying eyes with Vikuiti Privacy Filters from 3M. These easy-to-install filters use screen darkening privacy technology, rather than the more common blurring or distorting of screen data, to prevent casual onlookers from viewing your screen. They also block out glare, making the screen much easier on the eyes. You can find the filters in most screen sizes including widescreen format. **www.webantics.co.za**

## ChocChip Couture Notebook Bags

In pursuing technological couture SA entrepreneurs Jacqui Salmon and Roxy Guppy established ChocChip, a notebook bag design house. ChocChip allows you to customise your own notebook bag – from choosing your desired fabric, colour, style, the number and type of pockets you would like and even insignia – proving that business is not always about blending in. The best bit is that you can order your bag online via **www.chocchip.co.za**. **R399-R499** (incl VAT) or call them on 082-349-7266.

## Sitecom Printer Server

So if you don't have a wireless printer (see p20) a good way to connect your multifunction printer to the network would be with Sitecom's printer server. Connect the printer server between your printer (or scanner or external hard disk) and the router or switch and soon everyone on the network will be able to use it without any hassle. **R1099** (incl VAT) from Computer Corporation on 08616-08616.

## MSI Wind Netbook

Netbooks are hot stuff right now, and MSI has entered the market with their hippy titled Wind. It boasts a 10" display, a decent sized keyboard, a 160GB SATA HDD and comes with Windows XP. It boasts all the features you would want in a tiny package such as Wi-Fi, webcam, three USB ports, all at a reasonable price. **R4999** (incl VAT) from Computer Corporation on 08616-08616.

## Adapt ADP-13200 Notebook Charger

Need a backup solution for a constantly flat notebook, phone, digital camera or MP3 player battery? Adapt's ADP-13200 will do the trick. You simply charge the ADP-13200 via a USB AC adapter, which takes about three hours, and then leave the device in your notebook bag or car to be of use in times of need. The device also proves handy at the office or at home during a power outage. It is slim and weighs only 430 g which means you hardly notice it if you carry it around with you. **R1200** (incl VAT) from the PDAShop on 012-362-8133 or visit **www.pdashop.co.za**.



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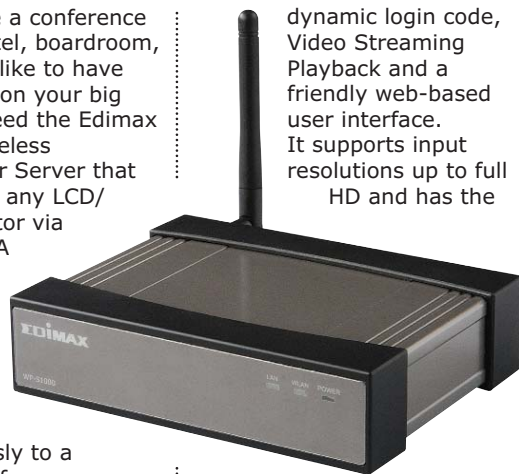
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## Advertorial Edimax WP-S1000 Projector Server Cable- and Hassle-free Video

Do you have a conference centre, hotel, boardroom, or do you just like to have wireless video on your big screen? You need the Edimax WP-S1000 Wireless Video/Projector Server that can connect to any LCD/plasma/projector via a standard VGA interface. The WP-S1000 allows multiple users one-click access wirelessly to a display device for hassle-free, cable-free multimedia video or presentations.

Your notebook or desktop PC can easily connect wirelessly to the display with this compact little device. No more swapping of cables and loss of image quality due to long cables. Additionally the WP-S1000 provides many powerful functions, such as: Plug and Show (PnS) installation software,

dynamic login code, Video Streaming Playback and a friendly web-based user interface. It supports input resolutions up to full HD and has the



ability to deliver real time video and audio with XGA and WXGA resolutions in 32-bit colour. It also supports a playback function for popular video streaming format in MPEG1, MPEG2 and MPEG4.

Available from Electronic Merchandise Distributors on 011-975-8367 or visit [www.emdsa.co.za](http://www.emdsa.co.za) for more products.

## Isonic 2.5" IS-MP405 Hard Drive Player Storage and Video

If you are in the market for an external hard drive why not go for something that can double as a multimedia player? This is exactly what you can do if you combine a 2.5" SATA Hard Disk Drive (HDD), with the Isonic IS-MP405 multimedia hard drive player.

Once you've mounted the HDD inside the Isonic casing you can copy movies, photos and music on it to view on TV/ notebook/ PC. Of course you can also simply just use it as an external hard disk.

The formats supported are MPEG-1, MPEG-2 or MPEG-4 (DivX, Xvid), with the ability to also play MP3 and WMA music files and JPEG photos.

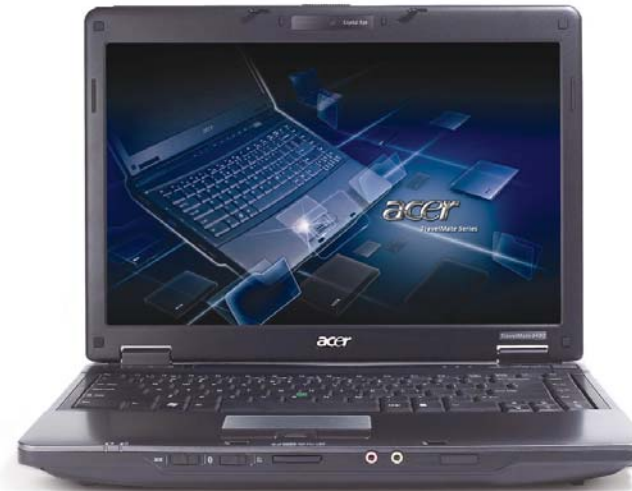
What we liked about the Isonic is the slot for SD cards



which you can use to either quickly view photos you've just taken on TV, or as expandable memory if you need more storage space. We are also more than grateful for the inclusion of a handy, if not a tad small, remote control.

The Isonic is **R550** (incl VAT) and a 160GB HDD costs around **R950**. From PC Pro Shop on 012-348-4000.

## Acer Travelmate 6493 Notebook All about the Business



Being all about the business the Acer Travelmate is in no way a flashy PC. It is a bit like John over in accounts – he might not be as sleek and loud as the sales guys, but he is dependable, gets the job done, and frankly without him the company takes a dive.

Onboard you'll find an Intel Core 2 Duo P8600 processor (2.4 GHz, 1066 MHz FSB, 3MB L2 cache), and, much to our liking, 4GB of DDR3 RAM (although it can access only 3-3.5GB according to Acer). With this amount of memory available you'll be able to pretty much have all your Office applications open, while surfing the Net, while checking your mail, while reading a PDF, while... well you get the point. Storage space is also not a problem thanks to a massive 320GB of hard disk space and as expected the 6493 comes loaded with *Windows Vista Business*.

Connectivity is the name of the game with this Travelmate. You'll be able to connect via Wi-Fi, or make use of Bluetooth or Infrared. But the real clincher is the built-in 3G. Simply slip your SIM card into the slot next to the battery, install the *Globetrotter* software and you're off. We connected via the MTN network and received a good 1669 kbps download speed with 963 kbps upload. One downside was that *Globetrotter* does not provide any data management info, so it's difficult to tell when you've reached your data limit.

Security measures include a biometric fingerprint reader, while your hard drive is protected with Acer's Disk Anti-Shock Protection System (DASP). But we missed the anti-theft alarm found on some other Acer notebooks. Video conferencing is catered for via their Crystal Eye webcam that is specifically optimised for low-light conditions. We also like the inclusion of a 5-in-1 memory card reader – it makes transferring photos just so much easier. Although this is not a multimedia notebook the sound quality when playing movies was good, while no fault can be found with the 14.1" LCD screen. In the age of netbooks any notebook bigger than a paperback novel looks, and feels, gigantic. The same is true for the 6493, but there is no way that you can match the performance with something smaller. Well not yet anyways.

So there you go. The Acer Travelmate 6493 takes care of business thanks to massive storage space, enough memory to take on the most complex multi-tasking, and connectivity options galore. It might not have the looks, but taking care of business it surely does.

The series starts from **R18 499**. Call Acer Africa on 0861-223-772 for more info. [MJ]

11 years: The last time Microsoft shares dropped under \$16.36 until Feb 09. <http://tinyurl.com/crf82s>



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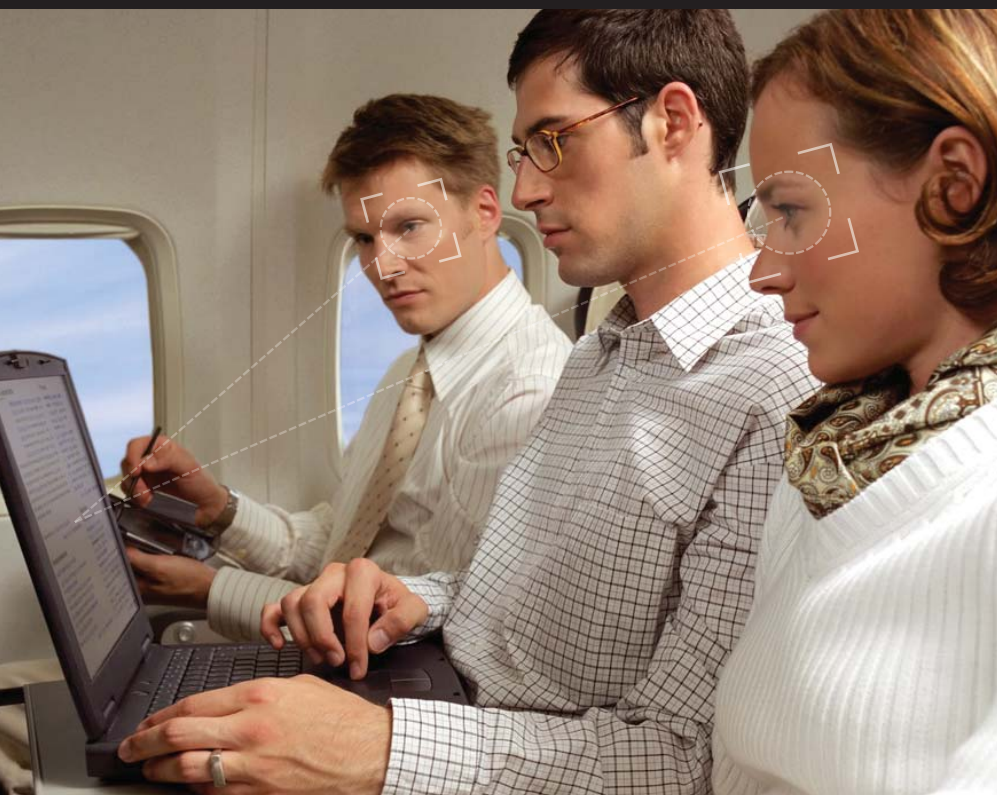
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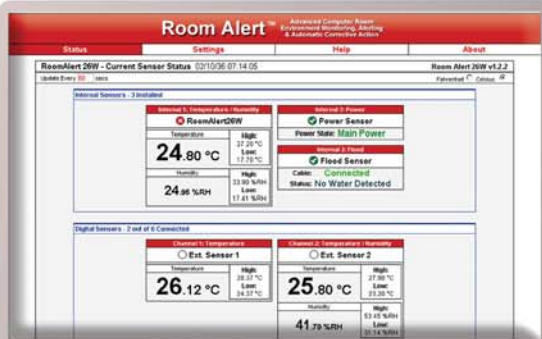
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## Lenovo Thinkpad SL300 Thinking 'bout your Budget

The Thinkpad SL300 is the new budget business notebook from Lenovo that aims to offer many of the features of the T/X/R-series notebooks, but at a lower price. The 13.3" notebook sports a 2.4 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo P8600 processor, 2GB of RAM, a WXGA LED-Backlit Glossy VibrantView screen, 250GB hard drive, and a DVD multi-drive.

The SL300 has quite a nice look about it, with a shiny black exterior, as opposed to the matte black paint of the more expensive Thinkpads. The keyboard is a bit fiddly, and the key arrangement is not optimal. For instance the @ sign is not where you would expect it, keeping you on your toes, if you're used to it being on the same button as the 2.

Overall system performance is very good, as the 2.4 GHz processor and NVIDIA 9300M graphics combine to give you a fast boot time, programs that open with minimal lag and good graphics performance. You won't be getting the same experience as with some of the more expensive gaming rigs, as 3D performance won't be quite as good, but overall you're getting good value for your money. **R10 999** (excl VAT) from Computer Corporation on 08161-08616. [AG]



## Microsoft Arc Mouse Not Cramping your Style



Notebook mice are great for portability and a good idea up until your hand starts cramping after maneuvering your petite rodent for a couple of hours. Microsoft's innovative Arc Mouse takes care of this little problem thanks to a hinge on the back of this almost full size mouse. The hinge allows it to curl up into a neat little package, 60% of its original size, to slip easily into your notebook bag.

The wireless transceiver, used to connect the mouse to your PC, is stored at the bottom of the mouse, so you don't have to worry about losing it. Microsoft provided two AAA batteries, but they are not rechargeable, so include new batteries on future shopping lists.

Apart from its portability and impressive design, the Arc is left with little else to offer. If you're looking for lots of programmable buttons and other functionality rather go elsewhere. At **R690** (incl VAT) it is also quite pricey. Get it from Computer Corporation on 08616-08616.

[techsmart.co.za](http://techsmart.co.za) | March 09

## Billion BiGuard S20 Security Gateway Monster Router

Billion has made quite a name for themselves by developing some competitive products in the SSL VPN market. In 2006 Billion claimed that they had produced the first affordable small business gateway solution to incorporate a firewall, the S10.



The S20 is the next step up for a business looking for a VPN solution. The S20 can handle up to 20 simultaneous SSL VPN tunnels and also offers dual WAN ports, supporting failover and load balancing.

At the back of the S20 you'll find eight Ethernet ports and a Gigabit uplink port. There are also two WAN ports that can provide either load balancing or failover. We liked that the S20 has no fan, so operation is silent, if only all PCs were too. On the software side, the S20 is set up via a simple web interface, but be warned the instruction book is not a two page leaflet, it's over 300 pages long, luckily with lots of pictures.

The Billion BiGuard S20 has an RRP of **R7694**. Call Nology on 012-657-1317 for more info.

## Samsung ML-2851ND Monochrome Laser Printer Super-Speedy Samsung

Tired of paying extra for colour that you simply just don't want? Samsung's ML-2851ND monochrome laser printer is a good solution for any office where colour has become a costly burden.

When Samsung said that this printer was fast they sure weren't lying – it has a lightning quick print speed of 20 pages per minute, with excellent print quality to boot.

One of the features of the ML-2851 that we appreciated was the TonerSave mode which can extend cartridge life by up to 40%, hardly affecting the quality output. Another thing that impressed us was its better than usual paper handling, with built-in duplexing capabilities – meaning double sided printing without you having to lift a finger changing paper, and a standard input of 250 sheets.

The ML-2851ND is easy to set up, either via USB or connected to the server and accessed across a wired network (sorry, no Wi-Fi). The Samsung ML-2581ND is available from Computer Corporation at **R1959** on 08616-08616.

[techsmart.co.za](http://techsmart.co.za) | March 09



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Or contact Nology on (012) 657 1317 for your nearest reseller

5.76: SA's score on the Connectivity Scorecard. Ranking below Chile, above Mexico. <http://tinyurl.com/awgsdp>

2.25 million Tweets: The amount of messages posted per day on twitter.com. <http://tinyurl.com/camzsz>

# Lexmark X7675 Professional Wireless 4-in-1 Wires Be Gone

It is actually surprising how long it took manufactures to start making their printers Wi-Fi capable. Lexmark was one of the first and with the X7675 they once again show how wireless isn't just convenient, but also hassle free to set-up.

Apart from the usual copying, printing and scanning, Lexmark also included faxing, making the X7675 Pro a good choice for SMEs.

The inclusion of a 2.4" LCD display, PictBridge and memory card reader enhances the X7675's photo printing features, plus you're also able to print from and scan to USB flash disks.

Compared to similar offerings the X7675 wasn't as quick on the draw when it came to printing speed, and we have seen better quality when copying. Its small capacity paper input tray will also need refilling quite often.

Recently Lexmark did a lot to improve on their design, and it shows on this one. The X7675 will be a welcome addition to any small office. A liberal five year guarantee rounds the X7675 off nicely. Available for **R2299** (incl VAT) from Computer Corporation on 08616-08616.



**WIN A LEXMARK X7675 PROFESSIONAL WIRELESS 4-IN-1 (DEMO UNIT)**

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**Competition runs from 1 – 31 March 2009**

# Chronos CVM Series of Video Duplicators Daisy-chaining Monitors made Easy

We found the perfect device for anyone who needs to display video feed on more than one monitor simultaneously. It's the Chronos range of video duplicators.

There are four different video duplicators to choose from each offering one video input and either two, four, eight or twelve video outputs depending on your needs.

The CVM range supports SVGA, VGA, XGA, QXGA and multi-sync compliant monitors, and can handle video resolution of 2048 x 1536. These video splitters also provide one of the market's highest bandwidth support at 450 MHz, allowing for distances of up to 55 m. The video duplicators come with 2/4/8/12 standard HD15 female ports to connect the monitors and an additional HD15 female port to connect the splitter to your CPU.

A video duplicator is a



must-have tool for classrooms, conference rooms, point of sale presentations, trading room floors, security systems, airports, restaurants, and many other applications where you need to share information or video presentations with multiple users.

The Chronos video duplicators are easy to set up, simple to use and are compatible with a wide range of operating systems such as *Windows 98/SE/ME, Windows 2000/XP/Vista and Mac OS 8.6/OS 9/OS X*. The best part is that you can get the CVM-810S (eight ports) for only **R700** from PC Pro Shop on 012-348-4000.

# Adapt Pocket Projector Is that a Projector in your Pocket?

The invention of the modest pocket is likely the most overlooked of all the great inventions. The pocket is what we like to refer to as a gateway invention. It led to the invention of the pocket watch, the pocketknife, the wallet and bunch of other insanely cool gadgets over the centuries.

In 2009 the great "pocketable" gadget to own is a pocket projector. Adapt, a Netherlands based company dealing with all things mobile, have developed the Mini Projector to fulfill this insatiable need to fill pockets. The Mini Projector makes use of 3M's LCoS optical technology allowing it to project an image in size of between 15 and 127 cm.

It offers a 4:3 aspect, 640 x 480 (VGA) resolution, a memory slot (SD/MMC/MS Pro) and comes standard with 1GB of internal storage. With a footprint of only 125 x 55 x 23 mm it really is quite neat. The device also comes

standard with a remote, media converter software and a Li-Ion rechargeable battery supporting about an hour of operation.

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# Home Theatre right at your fingertips

## What is an HTPC:



A Home Theatre PC (HTPC) or media PC is a convergence device that combines the functions of a personal computer and a digital video recorder. It is connected to a television or a television-sized computer display and is often used as a digital photo, music, video player, receiver and digital video recorder.

## Available functionality:

- Watch TV • Pause live TV • The HTPC can be fully integrated with your current DSTV decoder
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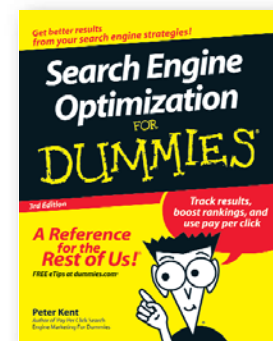
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**Competition runs from 1 – 31 March 2009**

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## Advertorial Distance Education

### Brainline Distance School on Computer

In this day and age, where demands placed on schooling by industry and life itself are challenging to say the least, an alternative form of schooling, based on the latest technology, offers a refreshing new choice to the learner of the digital age.

#### Brainline: Who are they?

The concept of Brainline as an educational system on computer, with assessment delivery via the Internet, started in 1987. From 1994 – 1996 it developed into an institution providing distance education on computer, at school level, with examinations in all grades. In 1999 the first matriculants wrote the SA grade 12 examination and Brainline was also accepted as a centre for Cambridge International Examinations.

Brainline is of the opinion that the education of learners is an exciting journey that includes the entire family, and most importantly, the learning environment should be made what it was supposed to have been all along: supportive, calm, exciting and adaptable to the needs of the learner.

Taking control of one's education places the responsibility in the hands of both parents and learners alike. High quality, standardised, bite-sized learning units – complete with assessment projects and memoranda attached – enables learners and their parents, guardians or tutors, to meet the minimum requirements of the national curriculum as set by the National Department of Education of South Africa.

#### How does Brainline work?

Brainline is a complete school curriculum on compact disc, a unique schooling system with the personal computer as its delivery vehicle. But they are much more than that: they are a learning community – a large group of people learning together, discussing concerns in the learning environment, making friends and solving problems. The compact disc contains a full year's content in most of the subjects and learning areas at school level, from grade 1 to 12, in both English and Afrikaans.

#### Study Material

All the study material required by the learner to complete his/her learning for the academic year, is provided on the compact disc. If it is not available on the CD, Brainline will provide the books (grade 10 – 12) and an accompanying work schedule. Should you wish to peruse the lesson material, you are most welcome to download demonstration lessons from the Brainline website. Alternatively, you can order a demonstration CD, which will provide you with an example of a course material CD. Simply SMS the words "Demo CD", accompanied by your complete postal details, to the number 082-882-4446.

#### Accreditation

All certificates for school leavers are quality controlled by Umalusi (Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training) as set out in [www.umalusi.org.za](http://www.umalusi.org.za). Brainline meets the minimum requirements set by Umalusi and has been provisionally accredited, with reference number SCH00223PA. Brainline has been nominated as an "Accreditation Candidate".

#### For more information

Please visit their website at [www.brainline.com](http://www.brainline.com) or phone the Customer Care Centre on 012-543-5000. Feel free to email them at [info@brainline.com](mailto:info@brainline.com).

March 09 | [techsmart.co.za](http://techsmart.co.za)



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RIM BlackBerry Storm

## Working up a Storm

The Storm, released last November in the US, is now here in all its touch-screen splendour for the SA public, exclusively on the Vodacom network. TechSmart touched.

### Click with SurePress

What differentiates the Storm's touch-screen is SurePress, which basically provides tactile feedback when pressing the screen, almost like clicking. We liked it; at least it feels like you're pressing something and not just the screen. At the same time having to actually press down meant that accuracy sometimes suffered - you end up pressing the key next to your desired key because your thumb is all too often spaced incorrectly. This problem only increased when trying to follow links while browsing.

### Email some more

The main thing about BlackBerrys is of course their powerful push email capabilities. The same applies for the Storm. You're able to run up to eight accounts on the device, and for our test we had a POP3 address plus a Gmail account running. We were surprised at how easy it is to set-up email addresses. Basically we needed nothing more than the addresses plus passwords to be up and running.

### GPS and Data

The Storm has a built-in GPS, and the mapping software used is Vodafone's *Sat Nav* that downloads maps as you need them. We found it more than sufficient in most circumstances, and the fact that you do not need to buy the navigation software or pay for the maps makes *Sat Nav* much better than what competitors are offering. One feature that is missing from the Storm's spec sheet is Wi-Fi. But you might not need it that much if you're on Vodacom's R59 per month BlackBerry Add-on data package. We will definitely recommend this as it allows as much browsing and email data usage as you want, on the device itself.

### Applications

Applications for cellphones are the next big thing, and you'll find apps for Facebook, MySpace and Flickr preinstalled on the Storm. Extra offerings online are scarce but rumours of an online BlackBerry apps store due for launching ups the stakes considerably.

### Conclusion

Although the BlackBerry Storm looks beautiful and on the email side performed exceptionally well, we were frustrated by the fact that you could only use your fingers to operate the phone. The accuracy issue that goes along with this led to a frustrating web browsing experience, plus we must confess we never felt quite comfortable using the QWERTY keyboard. You will get the job done with the Storm, we just feel that adding little things, like being able to operate via stylus, could have made it easier to use. [MJ]



175 million: The amount of active Facebook members, up by 25 million in just two months. <http://tinyurl.com/356y66>

## Samsung SGH-i200 My Very First Smartphone Almost a Real Smartphone?

It appears that Samsung has "borrowed" an old slogan, first used by Sony in the 80's and 90's. They have named the i200 "My Very First Smartphone", a very similar name to all those "My First Sony" products. But what is Samsung really trying to say to us, the buying public?

The answer is probably something along the lines of: "This is a smartphone, but it's also a phone for you, the man in the street". So it would appear that Samsung really wants us all to want a smartphone. And why not? The i200 is a very attractive phone and comes packed with all the features even the typical power-user would want.

Importantly the i200



comes with *Windows Mobile 6.1*, so now you get threaded SMS support, allowing all messages to be saved as "conversations", rather than just disconnected odds and ends. The i200 also includes the latest version of *Office Mobile*, including *OneNote*, and the ability to edit existing *Office* documents.

The i200 has just about every feature you'd want in a smartphone, but "just about" means that you don't get Wi-Fi and the camera is not as good as it should be, at two megapixels. But then again the BlackBerry Storm does not include Wi-Fi either. So for an entry into the world of smartphones the Samsung is not a bad stepping stone.

[AG]

## HTC Touch HD Some Serious Real Estate

A 3.8" LCD touch screen is more than just a smartphone spec. It is a statement.

With this kind of real estate on the Touch HD, HTC's custom *Windows Mobile (WM)* interface, TouchFLO 3D, finally has the necessary room to be fully appreciated with the tab icons, your primary means of navigation, finger-sized.

Like most *WM* devices the Touch HD makes use of a non-capacitive touch display which makes it possible to use both a finger and a stylus to operate it. This kind of resistive screen allows for great accuracy. But our biggest complaint is that TouchFLO 3D just doesn't go deep enough; the incredibly fiddly *WM 6.1* interface



lurks just below the surface.

Applications that really benefit from the 3.8" display are navigation apps and web browsing. The Touch HD utilises *Opera Mobile 9.5* which features tab functionality, something new to mobile browsing. The

trouble with *Opera*, however, is that it doesn't support *Flash*, severely hindering its appeal.

Some of the Touch HD's more impressive features include HSDPA, Wi-Fi, a 3.5 mm audio jack, a five megapixel camera and motion sensor technology via its G-Sensor. In all we can confidently say that this is HTC's best device yet, but *WM 7* can't come soon enough. [TM]

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# How To: Make your own TIM

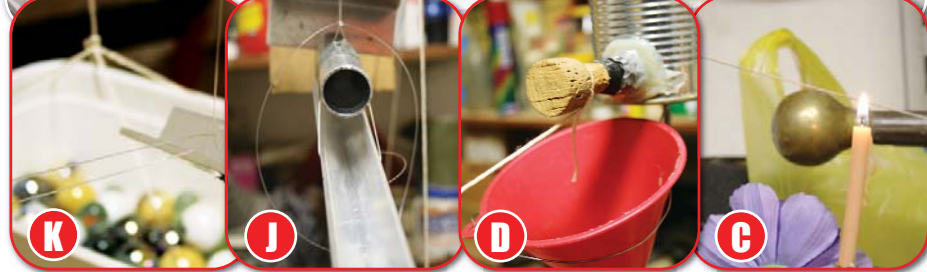
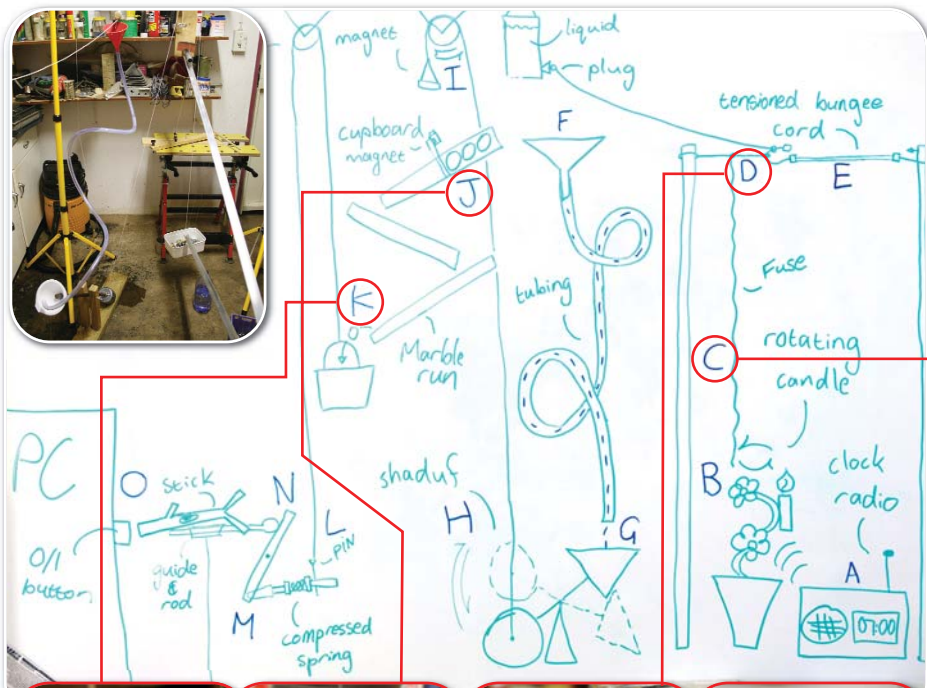


This DIY Dude is partly inspired by the computer game *The Incredible Machine* and partly by a man called Rube Goldberg. Rube was a famous cartoonist best known for his series of cartoons depicting Rube Goldberg machines, complex devices that perform simple tasks in indirect, convoluted ways.

The Incredible machine was a game where you had to solve Rube Goldberg style puzzles in order to complete everyday tasks. In honour of the great man, I thought it appropriate to build one of my very own. So let me explain my brilliant design for a device that automatically turns your PC on when you wake up in the morning.

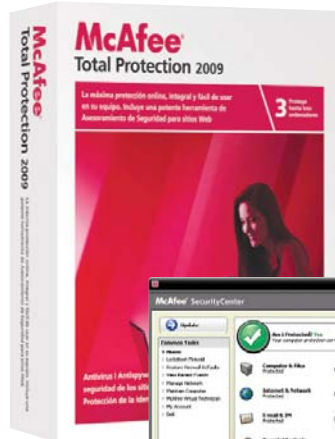
The night before: You set your clock-radio, as usual. Then you light the long-burning candle, which is attached to the sound-activated, rotating potplant. The clock-radio goes off (A) and plays your favourite radio station, causing the potplant to rotate (B), which sets the fuse alight (C). The fuse then burns through the string (D) holding the bungee cord under tension, which causes the bungee cord to pull the plug out of the container (E). The released water then pours into the funnel (F) and travels down the tubing where it is released into the shaduf (invented in Ancient Egypt) (G). The bucket pushes down on the lever of the shaduf causing an upswing in the counter-weight. The bucket falls and releases its contents. The counter-weight then acts on the, now empty, bucket causing the string to be pulled down again (H). The magnet (I) descends and affixes itself to the metal gate, which is pulled out by the counter-action of the shaduf. The marbles (J) are released down the marble run and fall into the bucket (K). The bucket pulls on the string, causing the pin (L) to be pulled out, releasing the compressed spring (M), which pulls the pinion (N), which pushes the twig (O) against the ON/OFF button of the PC. Simple.

A full video of this is up on [www.techsmart.co.za](http://www.techsmart.co.za).



999: The amount of Perana Z-ones, an exclusive SA sports car, to be manufactured per year. <http://tinyurl.com/aglyko>

## McAfee Total Protection 2009 – 3 user To Protect and Serve



McAfee has been at the virus protection game for a long time now, with *Total Protection 2009* being the most comprehensive set of security tools and utilities McAfee has to offer to help you keep the invaders from getting to your PC. The first thing you'll notice after installing (and

registering) the software is the comforting green tick, situated near the top of the screen, letting you know all is well on the virus front. Most of the features can be found in a list along the side panel, including Internet, Network, Email, Instant Messaging and Parental Controls. Once you actually get into one of these sections there really seems to be too many options to choose from, which can make things disheartening for the average user.

*McAfee Total Protection* also offers you some backup and restoration software, incase the unthinkable, such as a hard disk failure, happens. There are also some much required junk removal utilities that let you clean up your computer and system registry. **R442** from [www.take2.co.za](http://www.take2.co.za).



## Tumblr.com, <http://techsmart.tumblr.com/> TechSmart starts Tumbling

Logging is so old school, especially if you can now publish a tumblelog. Wikipedia describes a tumblelog as "a variation of a blog that favors [sic] short-form, mixed-media posts over the longer editorial posts frequently associated with blogging".

One of the more impressive tumblelog creation tools we've come across is Tumblr ([www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)). Tumblr allows you to create your own free tumblelog page, on which you can quickly and easily publish and share text, links, images, videos, audio clips and quotes you like during your daily trawling of the Web.

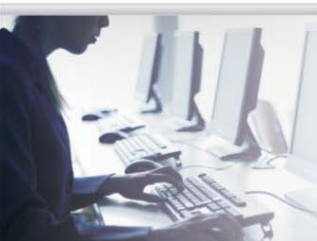
Go to the *TechSmart Magazine Tumble* (<http://techsmart.tumblr.com/>) to get an idea of what this is all about. We have taken to linking tech articles that are of particular interest to us or bear some relevance to articles we are working on



ourselves. Also send us the links to your own Tumblr pages, we would love to have a look and promote them.

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# March Web Time Wasters

## Expert Village

If you have a question on a subject that you're seriously interested in, or keen on learning a musical instrument, or how to put a PC together, you might want to consult an expert. Expertvillage.com offers a choice of professionally produced and researched videos, to answer your everyday questions.

There are over 120 000 videos at [www.expertvillage.com](http://www.expertvillage.com) that provide free, well researched and practical information on all sorts of things. The videos are usually short and to the point, without being padded full of the extraneous rubbish you'd find from your average "YouTuber".



## Let me Google that for you (LMGTFY)

Who among us has never been asked a stupid question on Facebook, a chatroom or forum? The chances are very high that you have in fact answered this question by thinking to yourself: "You know what, I'm asked stupid questions all the time." Stupid questions come in two varieties: those that are ridiculously obvious and those that you could not possibly try to answer.

The next time someone asks you: "So what is this 'Standard Theory of Relativity' anyway?" you simply go to [www.lmgtfy.com](http://www.lmgtfy.com) and type in the question. You then hit "Google Search" and a hyperlink to a page, showing the question-asker how to type his question into Google, comes up.



## Daily Writing Tips

Conducting business via email can get very stressful, especially as you're often faced with decisions like: how to start a letter, what to make the email subject and when to use "Your Faithfully" or "Your Sincerely". In fact, once you've left school, you'll be doing a whole lot more writing than when you were in it.

It can be difficult to keep up with writing trends and norms in a world full of email, blogs, forums and instant messaging. To solve this problem go to [www.dailywritingtips.com](http://www.dailywritingtips.com), a blog where you will find simple yet effective tips to improve your writing.



# Stop Drowning in Email

Written by Lance Turner, a 12-year Internet industry veteran and Chief Executive of Branded Internet - listed as one of SA's Top 50 ICTe Companies 2005/6 + 2006/7.



Depending on one's concept of progress, email can be a blessing or a curse. Nobody needed email until it arrived, and rapidly it became the most widely-used means of communication for both personal and business use. In fact business email is now as indispensable as the telephone for conducting business and basically replaced regular mail and faxing as the primary means of sending documents.

Supposedly email can help you manage your time better, and in that regard being an efficient email user is now becoming an essential professional skill. Now, a great many people access their email on their cellphones and in so doing "carry" their email around pretty much 24/7. A lifetime ago I signed up for a bulletin board service (the pre-cursors to the Internet) and got my first exposure to electronic messaging. My reaction: Awesome! This is really cool! Now I don't have to phone people! Zapping information back and forth at the speed of light will be a big productivity boost. Since then email has become the Internet's first killer app, and with it clogged up inboxes everywhere.

It's not email itself that is the problem, it's the volume of email, the clutter, which has become the problem. As email grew, its strengths became its weaknesses. The ease with which you can dispatch pretty much anything at all, whether

the recipient wants it or not, means that inboxes just get more and more full. Quite simply, there are just too many messages.

So what now? Getting on top of your email has become critical. So, I went out looking for the most useful tools I could find to accomplish this task. I was extremely pleased with what I came across:

- Xobni** - <http://www.xobni.com>  
Xobni (Inbox backwards) rocks! Outlook is surprisingly bad when you have lots of content and Xobni, an Outlook plugin, can help you organise a flooded inbox. Some of its features include threading conversations and lightning fast email search. Even Bill Gates raved about it.
- Taglocity** - <http://www.taglocity.com>  
Taglocity aims to improve Outlook by including more Gmail-like features. It turns messages, contacts, calendar entries etc. into taggable items or virtual folders, much like Gmail does. These tags are then used to create an intuitive, non-rigid interface which is easy to organise.
- Clear Context** - <http://www.clearcontext.com>  
Another Outlook tool, Clear Context aims to "make your inbox useful again" by filing and organising email, grouping information by project and turning emails into appointments and tasks. These tasks are done automatically, saving you a lot of time.
- Five.sentenc.es** - <http://five.sentenc.es>  
From their website: "five.sentenc.es is a personal policy that all email responses regardless of recipient or subject will be five sentences or less. It's that simple." Also consider four, three or two sentences.

If you have any questions or queries drop me a mail, lance@brandedinternet.co.za.

30 times: Apple claims that Safari 4 is that much faster than IE 7. <http://tinyurl.com/bmtq4w>

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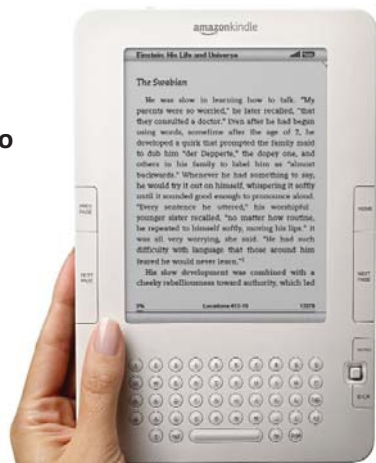
When it comes to new tech SA always seems to lag a bit behind. Our editorial team selected some newly released items that we can't wait to see in SA.

**Mike:** Amazon's Kindle 2 ebook reader looks interesting. It's about as thick as a pencil, comes with 3G Wi-Fi and can store 1500 books. At \$359 though I would rather make my way to the second-hand bookstore.

**Thomas:** I can't wait for the HP TouchSmart IQ 506 to arrive on our shores. A touch screen smartphone is one thing but a 22" touch screen monitor combined with a high performance machine is just insane.

**Andrew:** The Palm Pre was the star of CES this year. I want one for it's brilliant design, array of features, Palm user-friendliness, but most of all because it is not an iPhone.

**Kirsty:** As I spend a lot of time surfing the web from my cellphone I'm looking forward to the Acer F900 smartphone as it is optimised for web browsing with IE Mobile 6, HSDPA and Wi-Fi.



50 million: The amount of PSPs shipped worldwide. Compared to the 96 million of Nintendo's portable DS console. <http://tinyurl.com/ajzxb>



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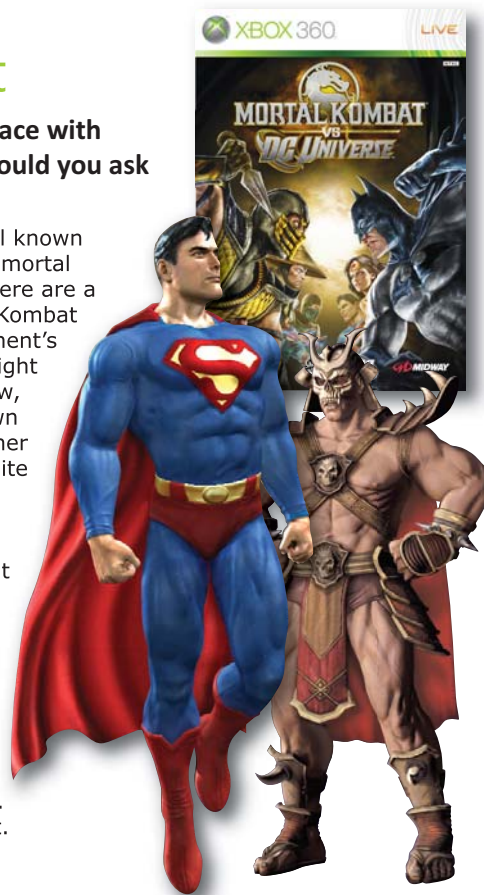
## XBOX 360 GAMES Fighting

### Mortal Kombat vs DC Universe Krossover Kombat

Scorpion and Sub-Zero going face to face with Batman and The Joker – what more could you ask for in a fighting game?

**M**K vs DCU matches 22 of the most well known characters in each franchise, in, well, mortal combat. Apart from straight up fighting there are a few nice additions. The inclusion of Klose Kombat where the player has to mirror their opponent's moves and Freefall Kombat in which you fight while plummeting toward the ground below, give it an interesting variance. On the down side, the Fatalities that we loved in the other *Mortal Kombats* have been toned down quite a bit this time around and each character has two options.

*Mortal Kombat* fans might be a bit disappointed, but DC fans are in for a treat and this game is being hailed as the best DC fighting game since Blizzard's *Justice League Task Force*. We found it a rather enjoyable even though it was lacking in the features department. This isn't exactly the type of game that will have you playing week after week for months, consumed with the need to finish. It simply lacks the depth of its predecessors. Distributed by Ster-Kinekor Entertainment.



## Killzone 2 The PS3 benchmark FPS



Tipped as a PS3 console sales driver and a platform competitor to *Halo 3*, much rests on the success of Guerrilla's *Killzone 2*. Does it measure up to the hype?

You assume the role of Sev, an elite soldier fighting for the ISA. Two years after surviving the Helghast attack on your home world you are tasked with invading theirs and capturing their leader, now doesn't that sound like fun?

*Killzone 2* is ultimately a

tightly scripted game, which does get a bit frustrating at times. Its AI is greatly improved, by comparison to its predecessor, and is truly a challenge on more advanced difficulty levels.

Ingame graphics are excellent with highly detailed, destructible environments. The game's standout features are its outstanding 7.1 surround sound support and the use of the Sixaxis' motion sensitivity capabilities for things like opening valves. One thing that did irritate though was the ingame loads which occur as a result of the game running directly from the disc.

Whether or not *Killzone 2* will live up to the hype remains to be seen, there can be little doubt however that it will set a much needed FPS benchmark for a PS3 exclusive.

Developed by Guerrilla, published by SCEE and is distributed by Ster-Kinekor Entertainment. [TM]



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**Competition runs from 1 – 31 March 2009**



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- » Control panel
- » Virus scanning
- » Spam filtering (SpamAssassin)
- » Webstats (AWStats or Webalizer)
- » Webmail
- » Custom error documents
- » 50 Group mails
- » 2 Sub domains
- » Ruby On Rails Support **(New!)**

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- » SSI
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- » 5 Databases (MySQL or Postgres)
- » Control panel
- » Virus scanning
- » Spam filtering (SpamAssassin)
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