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All iPhoned out

I'm writing this the day after the iPhone 4 launched in SA and to be honest I'm all iPhoned out. They hype surrounding the phone, the concurrent launch parties held by Vodacom and MTN yesterday and the subsequent deluge of Tweets and posting about the handset today, have gotten a bit too much. And to think that we'll have to go through this again when the iPad eventually makes its long awaited debut on our shores.

None the less it's an awesome device (check out p13) and it's amazing to think that Apple, who up until the first iPhone's release in 2007 had no history in cellphones, is now setting the bar for the market. I hope this, our 85th issue, also sets a new standard. Not just because, as you may have noticed, we've introduced a shiny new cover, but also because our design team worked hard to make TechSmart as reader-friendly as possible. Your feedback is important so let me know if the changes improved your reading experience. Enjoy the issue,
Mike <michael@techsmart.co.za>

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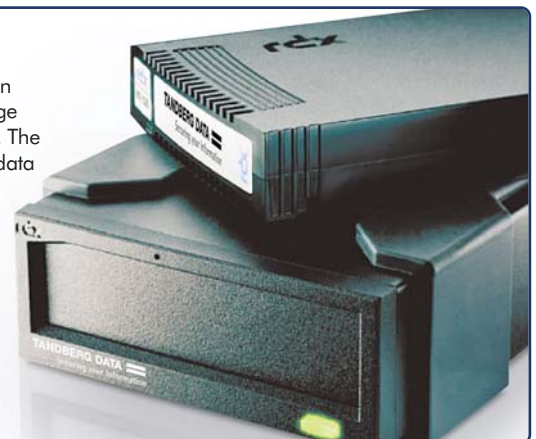
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TOP TECH TITBITS

Google goes Instant ...



Google has sped up its search engine results by implementing Google Instant, believed to be able to shave 2-5 seconds from search times. Google Instant predicts what you might be searching for and starts displaying results even before you've finished typing. While the few seconds may not sound like a lot of time, Google reckons Instant search will save their collective users 11 hours every second. While our Google.co.za doesn't support it yet, SA users with a Google account can access it via Google.com.

» Hot new products

DStv and eTV goes mobile



The Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA) last month awarded MultiChoice and eTV Mobile TV broadcast frequency licenses, bringing TV to the cellphone. Both will utilise Digital Video Broadcast-Handheld (DVB-H) technology to broadcast signal.

This technology offers viewers robust digital sound and picture quality.

ICASA initially received applications from four media houses but in the end licenses were awarded only to eTV and MultiChoice.

Annual rAge pilgrimage



From the 1st to the 3rd of October this year, thousands of South African gamers and technology enthusiasts will once again descend on the Coca-Cola Dome in Johannesburg for the annual rAge expo.

From sneak peaks at the most anticipated upcoming games to live events to the huge LAN and of course the myriad of stalls, rAge should cover all your gaming needs.

For the avid gamer this is the event of the year and a not-miss with intising booth-babes to boot. Just watch out – your pocket might take a serious knock.



1 Samsung Galaxy Tab tablet

Samsung's Galaxy Tab is the first proper answer to Apple's hallowed iPad. Significantly, the Android based tablet, which measures in at 7", incorporates a number of features which Apple chose to omit on the iPad; most notably Flash and MicroSD support and dual cameras for video calling and image capture. Only time will tell how much of an impact the Galaxy Tab will have to Apple's bottom line but, based on what we've seen from the device, it's a serious contender.

2 HTC Desire HD smartphone

There's some hot new Android goodness coming from HTC. Their Desire HD ships with the latest Android (2.2 Froyo) straight out of the box, while a fast boot feature will see it powering up in approximately ten seconds. It's also capable of recording HD-ready video (720p) complete with Dolby Surround Sound.

Physical QWERTY keyboard lovers should keep eyes open for the upcoming HTC Desire Z with slider keyboard.

3 PlayStation Move

The shift towards motion-based gaming is almost complete with Sony PS3's Move joining Nintendo's Wii. The release has given Sony the early lead against Microsoft's controllerless Kinect which should see the light of day just before the Festive Season.

The Move is now available in SA with a RRP of **R699**. Read our review of the move here: <http://tiny.cc/TSmove>.

4 Microsoft Arc Touch Mouse

Radical mouse designs are few and far between, but the new Arc Touch Mouse from Microsoft is changing that with its ability to fold almost completely flat. This travel friendly device can morph from its curved to a flat shape in one simple movement and turns on automatically when unfolded. The Arc Touch Mouse will be available worldwide from January 2011.

5 Canon PowerShot SX30 IS digital camera

Amongst a slew of red hot new cameras (including the S95 you can read about on p9), Canon has come up with the PowerShot SX30 IS, a new compact super zoom camera with a massive 35x zoom. The lens can also go ultra-wide at a lovely 23 mm, while image stabilisation and 720p HD video capture with full stereo and optical zoom enables photographers to try out their amateur directing skills as well. ❖

1THREAD_2522_TEC



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IXUS 130



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COMPACT CAMERAS TO SHAKE UP YOUR SUMMER



Canon PowerShot S95

The S90 is one of the best compact cameras we've ever had the pleasure of testing, with Canon following it up with the very desirable S95. It continues to be very pocketable, while still incorporating the adjustable ring at the front. This 'ring of power' is a revelation, allowing you to assign different functionalities to it, for example using the ring to quickly change your ISO, zoom, exposure compensation or speed.

The S95 now incorporates High Dynamic Range for those shots that are difficult to manage on only one exposure; enhanced manual control and Hybrid IS technology to assist getting clear shots while taking macro pics. With 720p video recording with stereo sound at 24 frames per second now also on-board, we see no reason not to choose this as your new best photography friend.

■ **Quick Specs:** 10 megapixels, 3.8x zoom, 3" LCD screen.



Sony Cyber-shot DSC-TX9

They say dynamite comes in small packages, with this ringing true not only for Gio Aplon, but also for Sony's diminutive TX9. Its compact body hides an amazing array of features including Sony's powerful BIONZ processor and their back-illuminated 'Exmor R' CMOS sensor with enhanced light-sensitivity. It also sports a lovely 3.5" touch-screen and is the only camera on our list with full 1080i HD video recording capabilities. To top this the TX9 includes 3D Sweep Panorama, which displays your images in 3D glory on compatible 3D televisions.

■ **Quick Specs:** 12.2 megapixels, 4x zoom, 3.5" TruBlack LCD screen.



Samsung EX1

Samsung's EX1 is the flagship of the Korean manufacturer's compact camera range. Its stand-out feature? A 24 mm ultra-wide angle Schneider KREUZNACH lens, rated at an extremely speedy f/1.8. It's ideal for portraits where you want the face in-focus, but the background blurred – an effect very difficult to achieve with slower lenses commonly found on compacts. With RAW support and a robust body, the EX1 looks set to take on the likes of Canon's G11 and Panasonic's LX5.

■ **Quick Specs:** 10 megapixels, 3x zoom, 3" swivelling AMOLED screen.



Nikon Coolpix S5100

This 12.1 megapixel shooter from Nikon makes light work of shooting in low-light thanks to its ISO that can be pumped all the way up to 6400 – a feat many other compacts are unable to match. It can also record HD ready video at a decent 720p resolution, while recording sound in stereo.

With Nikon's Best Shot Selector you're ensured of at least one decent pic, since the S5100 shoots 10 sequential shots and selects the sharpest image – ideal for raucous parties and the likes. With a zoom lens extending up to a very nice 15x, the S5100 will also come in handy if you need just that little bit of extra zoom.

■ **Quick Specs:** 12.1 megapixels, 15x zoom, 3" LCD screen.



Olympus SP-800

If it's zoom you want the Olympus SP-800 provides it in bucket-loads, in fact Olympus claims the 30x wide angle optical zoom (a massive 28–840mm in the old standard) is a world best. Going to such extreme lengths of course leads to some serious shaking, so thank heavens for their 2-in-1 anti-blur solution. Sensor-Shift Image Stabilization teams up with Digital Image Stabilization to send shakes and shivers to the floor for the full-count.

■ **Quick Specs:** 14 megapixels, 30x zoom, 3" LCD screen.



Fujifilm FinePix REAL 3D W3

3D pictures? And movies? On a camera? Without the need for those stupid glasses? This is exactly what Fujifilm is promising with their REAL 3D W3 camera. The W3 is actually Fujifilm's second 3D cam, with the latest incarnation also promising 3D movie capabilities.

Its 3" screen contains a Lenticular sheet that splits the image slightly differently for each eye, resulting in a 3D image. Resulting prints will of course nullify the effect (unless printed on Fujifilm lenticular paper), but the effect can be carried over to 3D tellies. Now to find enough blue paint for that home-made Avatar fan film...

■ **Quick Specs:** 10 megapixels, 3x zoom, 3.5" LCD screen. ❖



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TOP 5 UPCOMING GAMES FOR SUMMER 2010

As we give winter the cold shoulder and warm up to spring, you might be tempted to once again venture outside in order to partake in that traditional South African ritual known as the braai. But what is a braai these days without the Xbox or PS3 ready for action in the background? Check out our top 5 coolest upcoming titles for summer 2010.



Gran Turismo 5

How long do we still have to wait for one of the most anticipated racing titles ever? Gran Turismo 5 looks set to finally bring the ultra-realistic racing series to the PlayStation 3 and will feature no less than 1 000 different cars, 200 of which have received extra attention from the development team. Damage modelling for one is dependent on a variety of physical factors, with for example trees and concrete barriers treating cars differently.

The game also sports over 70 painstakingly detailed racetracks as well as the option to play it in 3D.

For the latter gamers will require the correct peripherals, including a 3DTV and glasses and the 3D-enabling PS3 firmware.

■ **Why buy?** Gran Turismo in HD with race damage... enough said.



PES 2011

For many sports game fans, choosing between PES and FIFA is an either or affair just as in supporting either Pirates or Chiefs. Both franchises have their loyal followers that believe their version is best.

Pro Evolution Soccer 2011 brings some improved gameplay additions and control options to the range which include an enhancement of the 360-degree passing ratio, allowing gamers to pass, head or shoot the ball with

complete freedom, as well as more accuracy and realism. Players will also have more control over the goal keepers, enabling them to perform quick roll-outs, instinctive saves and obtaining Beckham-style accuracy when performing goal kicks.

■ **Why buy?** PES is arguably the most realistic representation of the beautiful game, depending on whom you listen to of course.



Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor franchise sports some of the most iconic first person shooter games in the industry, and while the series has traditionally been set in World War 2, in 2010 it's at long last moving into the modern battlefield, joining Call of Duty and Battlefield who have been there and done that already. Medal of Honor sees you take on the identity of a Tier 1 operator in Afghanistan, a secretive group of soldiers fighting the battles which normal Special Forces soldiers just can't handle. Although it will be good to see the return of the Medal of Honor series, it is the online multiplayer aspect we're really looking forward too.

■ **Why buy?** With a multiplayer component developed by Battlefield developers DICE, Medal of Honour is set to feature fast paced, online tactical combat.



Dead Rising 2

And you thought the zombie fad had died

down. Not true, if Capcom's upcoming Dead Rising 2 has anything to say about it. In the sequel to the gore filled Dead Rising, players wave goodbye to Frank West and say hello to Chuck Greene, former Motocross champion and someone who's seriously annoyed with zombies.

The second game takes players from the quiet of Colorado to the lights and sounds of Fortune City, the games' equivalent of Las Vegas. Prepare for some supreme zombie carnage as Chuck uses anything he can find to put the undead to rest including chainsaws, motorcycles, and chainsaws stuck to motorcycles, to name but a few.

■ **Why buy?** Pitting yourself against an arena full of zombies is sure to provide at least a few memorable moments, making Dead Rising 2 a must-buy for any self-professed zombie maniac.



Civilization V

Sid Meier's Civilizations games are among the best known and highly acclaimed strategy games out there. And in 2010 the series is expanding with its fifth instalment offering gamers more of the addictive "just one more turn" gameplay they've come to love. In the game you will strive to conquer the globe by leading your civilization from the dawn of time to the space age, using war, diplomacy and technology to triumph above the rest. Some of the changes in Civ V include a new hexagonal grid, more realistic city expansion, a strategic view that lets you zoom out and view huge parts of the map and city-states, AI controlled factions that rise up independently to challenge the player throughout the game.

■ **Why buy?** Civilization V will feature beautiful updated graphics along with 18 unique civilizations with which to impose a new world order. It's bound to keep players clicking for months. 🦘



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GRANDVIEW



HD Ready Home Cinema Projector

This HD Ready 3LCD home cinema projector has been designed for use in brightly lit environments, so you don't need to dim the lights for a home cinema experience. The BW7 incorporates BrightEra™ technology invented by Sony which minimises degradation of colours over time, achieves higher brightness and sharper images in even well-lit rooms – and delivers exceptional reliability and longevity.



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APPLE IPHONE 4

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The long awaited iPhone 4 has finally hit South African shores, and this time around, both MTN and Vodacom are offering the Apple devices on their respective networks. With so much hype surrounding the release, we give you the low-down on this superb device.

Features

Apple's iPhone 4 offers a number of refreshed features when compared to earlier models. In terms of design the iPhone 4 is 24% thinner than its predecessor the iPhone 3Gs and adopts a more box like structure, which is similar to that seen in the Gizmodo leak (see below). Very little has changed regarding external features apart from the fact that the volume buttons are now split.

Apple has refreshingly opted to fill the iPhone 4's insides with the same mysterious A4 on chip processor found in the iPad. This reportedly conserves energy while running at a stock frequency of roughly 1 GHz, which puts it in line to take on Qualcomm's not so secret weapon – the Snapdragon processor. In addition, the iPhone 4 also features a 3-axis gyro and 512 MB of eDRAM.

New display

The iPhone 4 also brings with it a brand new display. Referred to as 'Retina Display' it measures 3.5", supports multi-touch and will offer a resolution of 960 x 640 which supports HD content at 720p.

Apple's arguably poor camera decisions in previous iPhone models have also been addressed in the iPhone 4. The new device features a 5 megapixel sensor with an LED flash, as well as five times digital zoom and tap to focus options. It also has a front facing option which will enable video calling through an application dubbed FaceTime. At this stage it only works via Wi-Fi. In addition to this Apple has also opted for a larger battery which, when combined with the effectiveness of the A4 processor, should offer up to 7 hours of talk time on 3G networks.



iOS 4

Among the most significant announcements was that, what Apple fans expected to be called the iPhone OS 4.0, has been officially named iOS4 and now applies to all touch devices manufactured by Apple including the iPad and the iPod touch.

Antennagate

The iPhone hasn't been without controversy since its launched earlier this year. Early users reported a sudden loss of signal when they covered the left bottom corner of the device with their hands. This prompted Apple boss Steve Jobs to reveal that these users were simply holding the handset in the wrong way, adding that numerous smartphone vendors including BlackBerry demonstrated similar problems. This sparked an outcry among the technology community and iPhone 4 users alike.

Later, Apple admitted that "upon investigation, we were stunned to find that the formula we use to calculate how many bars of signal strength to display is totally wrong. Our formula, in many instances, mistakenly displays 2 more bars than it should for a given signal strength. For example, we sometimes display 4 bars when we should be displaying as few as 2 bars". In response, the company offered free 'bumper' covers to all affected users, which rectified the problem. In September however, Apple announced that it would no longer offer free cases to iPhone 4 owners.

Pricing

The iPhone 4 16 GB model with 300 MB data is available from MTN for **R429**, while it's on Vodacom's Talk 500 package (500 minutes talk, 100 SMSs, 250 MB data) for **R925**. Check out www.techsmart.co.za for our full review. [TM] ❖

Gizmodo Controversy

Let us not forget that initial information about the handset came from technology website Gizmodo. The website's editor, Jason Cheng, made the decision to purchase an iPhone 4 prototype for \$5000 (R37 000) after it was left in a German bar by Apple Engineer Gray Powell. After publishing information about the device, Cheng's house was raided by California's Rapid Enforcement Allied Computer Team (REACT).

BLACKBERRY FOR EVERYONE!

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE CURVE 3G AND PEARL 3G

Last month saw BlackBerry slapping a much needed 3G turbo-boost on two of their classic models – the Curve and the Pearl. Now you are stuck for choice between these two, what to do? TechSmart helps you out with our guide to the Pearl 3G and Curve 3G.

BlackBerry Curve 3G

Screen

The 2.46" screen with 320 x 240 resolution isn't exactly top class (the Bold 9700 has 480 x 360 pixels), but still makes for a decent viewing experience.

Keyboard

The modern QWERTY keyboard makes typing a breeze, but does not light up at night.

Dimensions

Its size (109 x 60 x 13.9 mm) and weight (104 g) won't drag you down.

Compared to older version

3G connectivity should broaden the Curve's appeal, but the current price-point of the 3G-less version is still very appealing.

Cost

R4500

What we said online

While the inclusion of 3G and GPS are welcome additions to the Curve 3G, it is the ability to update to the new BlackBerry 6 operating system which excites us the most. The Curve 3G is an upgrade we would definitely make, necessitating the few bucks extra per month to do so.

Full review

<http://tiny.cc/3gcurve>



■ Shared features

Memory

- 256 MB flash memory/256 MB SDRAM.
- Hot Swappable MicroSD.

Connectivity

- Wi-Fi 802.11 b/g/n enabled, allowing you to connect a wireless home or business network.
- 3G connectivity ensures high speed web surfing.
- Upgradeable to the new BlackBerry 6 operating system (see below).

BlackBerry Pearl 3G

Screen

The 2.6" screen with its 360 x 400 pixel display makes for a much clearer viewing experience, but its vertical dimensions make web browsing a pain.

Camera

Decent 3.2 MP camera with auto-focus, flash and a 2.5X digital zoom.

Keyboard

The alpha numeric multi-tap keyboard is for old-school cellphone users who can tap their way through a SMS without having to look at the screen.

Dimensions

A very pocket (or is that handbag?) friendly 108 x 50 x 13.3 mm makes it ideal and at 94 g you won't even know it's there.

Cost

R4000

What we said online

There are still many mobile users out there who are accustomed to the multi-touch input method, for them QWERTY keyboards are still foreign and difficult to understand. The Pearl 3G addresses this market perfectly.

Full review

<http://tiny.cc/pearl3g>

BlackBerry 6 Operating System »

Both these phones are upgradeable to the new BlackBerry 6 operating system (OS). The new OS promises a much smoother ride in regards to general operation, providing BlackBerry with a long overdue

revamp of their out-dated interface.

6 OS promises to include tabbed browsing, the integration of social and RSS feeds in one place, new multiple view home screens and a Universal Search tool amongst others. It is one of

the most anticipated recent developments for BlackBerry, bringing the company with its roots firmly in business to a more consumer driven platform. The OS is due at the beginning of this month. 📱

G Whizz, what a choice!



BlackBerry® Pearl™ 3G 9105 smartphone in white from Vodacom



BlackBerry® Pearl™ 3G 9105 smartphone in black/red gradient from MTN



BlackBerry® Curve™ 3G 9300 smartphone

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Acer Aspire 5741G » Power in your lap

The Acer Aspire 5741G is taking on the notebook world with its impressive mid-range specs sheet alongside an attractive design philosophy.

In the past we have given some flack to Acer for being a bit lacklustre on the design side, but luckily they have departed a bit from their boring ways with the 5741G. A contoured silver design covers the lid while a brushed metal design borders the palmrest, lending a refined feel to the device. Fingerprint resistive surfaces added a nice touch and were a welcome departure from today's popular glossy surfaces.

Core i3-350M CPU @ 2.26 GHz, an impressive 4 GB of DDR3 SDRAM, a decent ATI Mobility Radeon HD 5470 GPU with 512 MB RAM, a 500 GB hard drive and a DVD-Super Multi drive for optical disc support. Most of the important ports are covered including three USB ports and an HDMI port.



“Apart from its limited battery capacity it’s an all-round impressive machine”

Battery

Unfortunately the 5741G's 6-cell Li-ion battery was disappointing. During surfing tests with WLAN activated and a browser running, the battery lasted only 2 hours and 35 minutes, and left to its own devices (on without any browsing or Wi-Fi) this went up to a very average 3 hours and 30 minutes.

Features

The 5741G comes in with some impressive mid-range specs. Our test model was equipped with the solid Intel

Keyboard

The keyboard features Acer's now almost standard keyboard layout with its raised keys, making for a generally impressive typing experience while a numpad with large, distinct keys aids in some quick number crunching. The multi-touch enabled touchpad allowed quick and accurate control of the mouse pointer and is attractively melded into the rest of the palmrest.

Conclusion

The Acer Aspire 5741G offers a sleek,

comprehensive package to users looking for a notebook that can fulfil everyday tasks and pursue more resource intensive ones at the same time. Apart from its limited battery capacity it's an all-round impressive machine. The 5741G is available for a RRP of **R8999**. [JK] 🌟

» Quick specs

- Mid-range notebook
- 15.6" 1366 x 768 Display
- Intel Core i3-350M @ 2.26 GHz
- 4 GB DDR3 RAM
- ATI Radeon HD 5470 GPU

General Dynamics 6000 vehicle rugged notebook » As tough as you are

Notebooks aren't the best when it comes to bumps and bruises. The tough General Dynamics (GD) 6000, a semi-rugged notebook designed for the mobile workforce, begs to differ.

If you're looking for a sleek and stylish notebook, the GD6000 isn't likely to be your first choice. Resembling a blast from the past, the GD6000 is big and bulky – but with reason. General Dynamics describes it as 'vehicle rugged' meaning it can withstand a large amount of vibration and shock. For example the notebook should be able to handle being dropped from a height of about 1 m on each face, so the occasional knock should not bother it. And with a spill-resistant keyboard and touchpad along with sealed ports to prevent dust from accumulating, the GD6000 can deal with being sentenced to hard-labour out on the road.

enough the 13.3" display doubles as a touch-screen and comes with an included stylus.

Specs

What the GD6000 lacks in good looks it makes up for with some very decent performance. Equipped with an Intel Core 2 Duo T9400 2.5 GHz CPU, 4 GB of DDR3 RAM and an Intel 4 series 256 MB GPU, the GD6000 is definitely no slouch. An easily removable 160 GB Hitachi hard drive with shock support along with a DVD reader/writer combo ensures adequate space for data and optical disc support.

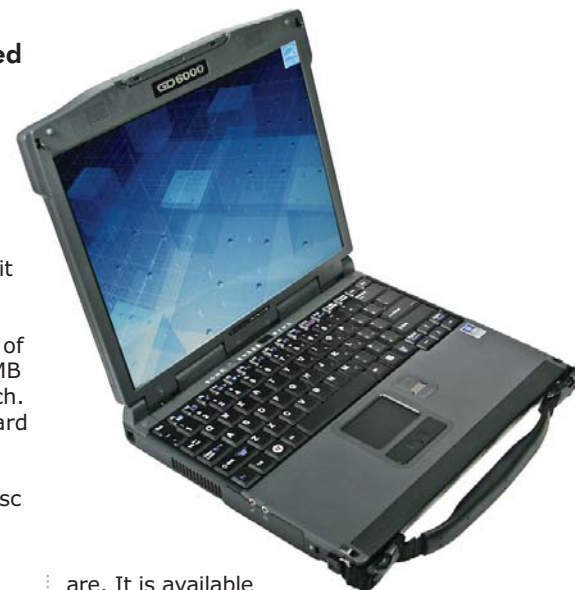
“The GD6000 can deal with being sentenced to hard-labour out on the road”

DynaVue display

Itronix' DynaVue display technology makes it possible to use the GD6000 in any kind of light by combining a number of optical properties to minimize reflection while preserving contrast. Even in direct South African sunlight the display was clearly visible. Surprisingly

Conclusion

The GD 6000 is a good blend of rough-and-tumble bundu-basher with high performance workhorse. With its shock-proof internal mountings, spill-resistant keyboard and generally sturdy build, the GD6000 is sure to appeal to those who require a notebook just as tough as they



are. It is available from Zollhaus International on 012-364-2489 starting from **R30 000**. [JK] 🌟

» Quick specs

- Vehicle rugged notebook
- 13.3" touch-screen
- Intel Core 2 Duo @ 2.5 GHz
- 4 GB DDR3 RAM
- 160 GB HDD



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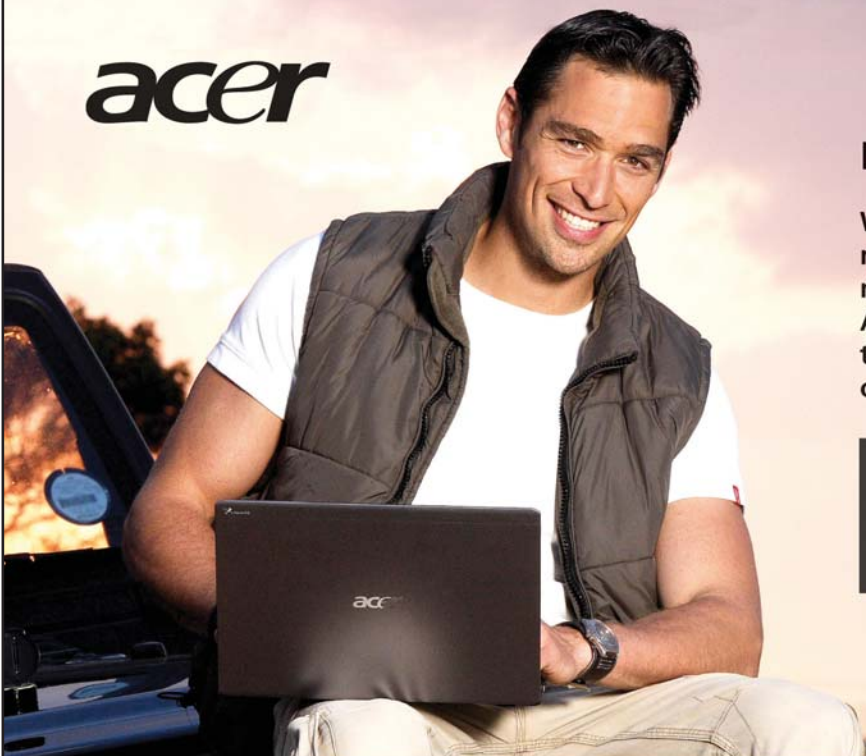


Wacom Bamboo Pen & Touch

With the new Bamboo, Wacom is introducing the first tablet combining multi-touch functionality and pen tablet technology in a single device. The result: a totally new, simple and inspiring way to work with computers, for example, a simple tap of the finger will select an icon or open a menu. With two fingers you can easily flip through a presentation or scroll and zoom through a blog, websites or photos.

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Runner-up. Android will become the world's no. 2 mobile OS in 2014, finishing behind Symbian.

HP EliteBook 2540p » Business powerful

With their EliteBook 2540p HP has delivered an uncompromising small-and-light business notebook that is in the running for the top notebook of the year.

From the moment you start typing on the 2540p you can tell it's a class device. The spill-proof keyboard had just the right amount of tactile feedback while the keys are not squeezed in despite the notebook's size.

EliteBook is the inclusion of a DVD-drive, while there is also a slot for a SIM card that connects you to 3G networks – a very handy addition if you don't want to walk around with a modem.

“The 2540p is one of the best notebooks we have seen so far this year”

Processing

HP certainly doesn't leave you high and dry on the processing side, since it includes Intel's power efficient Core i7 640LM processor running at 2.13 GHz. It's less powerful than Intel's normal i7 mobile processors but ups the battery life thanks to its low voltage.

The fact that only 2.92 GB of the available 4 GB or DDR3 RAM is available is a tick in the “cons” column. We also expected a bit more from the battery side, providing between three and five hours worth of life depending on how much you are pushing the machine.

One of the biggest benefits of the

Design

The machine feels really sturdy with minimal bend on the body and slight bend on the screen. It has achieved military standards grading so it should provide decent protection against elements on the road. While the notebook generally runs quietly, the air-vent on the right hand side of the device does blow hot, making working from your lap uncomfortable.

Conclusion

HP's EliteBook 2540p slim-and-light notebook provides really good performance in a solid compact body, while offering that little bit extra in the form of a DVD drive. Couple this with a 160 GB solid state drive



plus 3G connectivity and you have yourself one of the best notebooks of the year so far. It retails for about R20 000 depending on configuration. R17 900 from Laptop City on 012-663-1155 (excluding solid state configuration). [MJ] 🌟

» Quick specs

- Ultra portable
- 12.1" LED screen
- Intel Core i7 640LM @ 2.13 GHz
- 4 GB RAM
- 160 GB solid state drive

Asus O!Play Media Player » O!Play just right for movie buffs

With more and more digital video content finding its way onto portable hard disks, dedicated media players allow for an easy way to watch this directly on a television. Asus' O!Play is a media player for HD content but with a twist.

The O!Play ships with the prerequisite media player features, incorporating High Definition video support, an optical S/PDIF audio port plus analogue video and audio connections. These days an HDMI out is essential for those users who wish to use the unit to view High Definition content, with Asus making sure one is included.

proof the unit.

Also interesting is that it includes a multi card reader to view movies directly off, amongst others, SD-cards. This renders the O!Play

“The multi card reader renders the O!Play more of a multi-purpose data centre than a dedicated media player, which is an aspect we appreciated”

Features

Although the O!Play does not feature a dedicated hard drive, it does have supporting external input slots for USB 2.0. So if your movies are all stored on a portable hard drive, all you need to do is connect the two to watch your movies on your TV. Surprisingly enough the device also supports an eSATA port. Yes, that's right, the O!Play has an eSATA interface for high speed data transfer, definitely serving to future

more of a multi-purpose data centre than a dedicated media player, which is an aspect we appreciated.

The O!Play's also features Wi-Fi 802.11n wireless capabilities; which is essential for streaming High Definition content. This allows users to stream HD video via a wireless network, straight onto their televisions after a simple set-up process, an extremely useful feature. It also includes a RJ-45 LAN port which can be plugged into a home

network, for users without a wireless router. Additionally included are a compact remote and a set of RCA cables but you would have to buy the high-end HDMI cable yourself.

Conclusion

Overall, the O!Play is a strong offering in the media player market and won't disappoint users with its array of features. For more information phone Jack Chen on 083-393-6788. [TM] 🌟



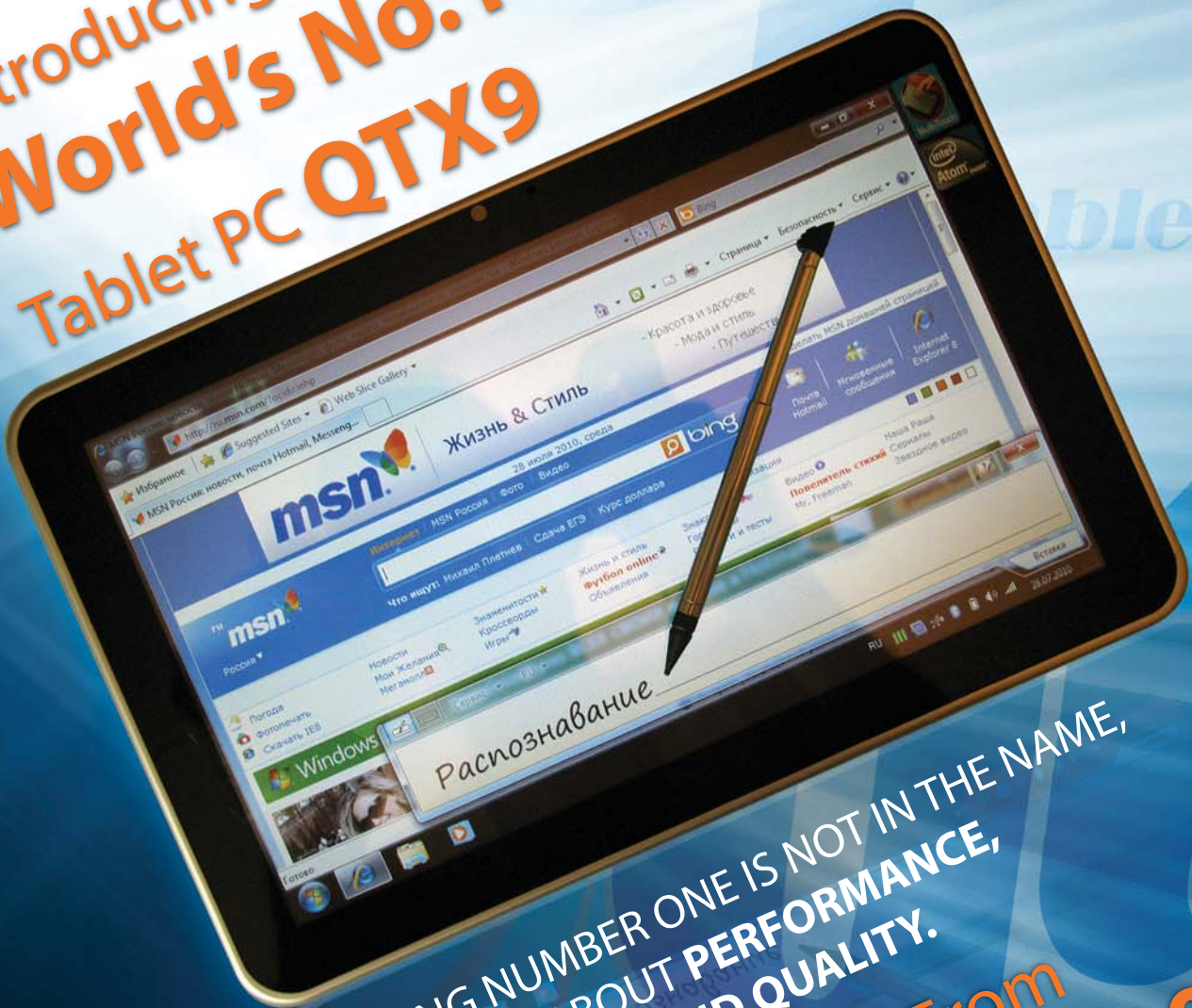


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- OS: Windows 7 Premium Home
- Weight: 1 Kg (including battery)
- I/O: Three USB 2.0 interfaces
- 4-in-1 Card Reader (SD/MS/MMC/ms-pro)
- One external monitor interface; One network(RJ-45) jack;
- One DC-in jack; One Micro-phone jack; One Earphone jack.
- Video Card: Intel 3rd Integrated Graphics Engine, 200MHz render clock.

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Gadgets & Goodies

Noctua NH-D14 cooling fan



High level gaming machines demand CPUs cooler than Johnny Depp in Antarctica. The Noctua NH-D14 takes the cooling cake thanks to its combination of a massive six heatpipe dual radiator design with a high level NF-P14/NF-P12 dual fan configuration. In this case coolness can be bought for **R899** from Evetech on 012-653-0033 or visit www.evetech.co.za.

Seagate GoFlex HD media player



Looking for a media player solution for your HD television? The Seagate GoFlex HD media player does not feature a hard disk of its own, but includes two USB ports. Apart from including an HDMI 1.3 port and support for a myriad of video formats including MPEG-4, Xvid and DivX, it also supports video resolutions up to 1080p and incorporates Wi-Fi 802.11n wireless support, which is ideal for streaming high definition content on the go.

It goes for **R1200** from PC Pro Shop on 012-348-4000.

Logitech G9x gaming mouse



A mouse is a mouse is a mouse? Then you clearly haven't taken a look at Logitech's G9x laser mouse. It features interchangeable grips, a weight-tuning system as well as an on-the-fly adjustment of the laser sensitivity, enabling you to customise the device to suit your needs. **R950**. Read our review here: <http://tiny.cc/logitechg9x>.

The Nature observing and recording play back dish



If you prefer your bird watching James Bond style, then this is for you. The Nature observing and recording play back dish primarily functions as a listening device for bird watchers using a parabolic sound catcher and plug-in headphones. It can also capture up to 12 seconds of audio.

Available from Cameratron on 011-622-0556 for **R390**.

Clocky Alarm Clock on Wheels



Clocky the alarm clock on wheels is fit for two different types of people – those who really can't get out of bed in the morning, and masochists. Once the Clocky's alarm goes off it speeds off through the room – forcing you out of bed like a hyper-active drill sergeant. At the G.A.D.G.E.T. Shop for **R499** 012-346-2726.

Cork Pops Legacy bottle opener



Forget screwtops, there is nothing like uncorking a good bottle of wine. For doing this hassle-free you need the Cork Pops Legacy, or as the company likes to call it "the ultimate wine opener". Insert the Legacy into the bottle and a low-pressure cartridge does the rest.

R399 from the G.A.D.G.E.T. Shop on www.thegadgetshop.co.za.

Do you realise that the printer that is located in a forgotten space in the office could save you money! **Yes a printer COULD SAVE YOU MONEY!**



Advertorial

When purchasing new IT equipment, not only must the price be considered, but also hidden costs for supplies and energy consumption, which can lead to high overall operating costs. HP shows how modern inkjet technology helps to reduce costs in the office or home office, while at the same time preserving the environment.

Buying a printer that pays for itself

With the HP Officejet Pro models HP introduced a high performance printer series with an extremely good cost-efficiency to the market. Due to innovative energy saving functions, the devices reduce energy consumption and lower the price per page by 50 per cent compared to laser printers in the price category up to 600 Euros. The price per page for a colour print-out amounts to only 4.1 cents and only 1.4 cents for black and white texts.

The all-in-one device HP Officejet Pro 8500 combines printing, scanning,

copying and faxing functions. Automatic duplex printing and the integrated fax function to digitally send and receive faxes, reduce the paper consumption and make the HP model the ideal work partner. The HP smart web printing function also convinces – with print-outs from the internet it prints only the relevant section without unnecessary parts such as advertising or irrelevant text passages. Users thus save time, ink and paper. The wireless version of the multifunctional device offers unlimited freedom without cable clutter at the work place.

Lower printing costs due to new ink formula

The most important aspects of ink cartridges are above all the reach and the quality of the printouts. The HP 940XL cartridges print up to 2200 pages in monochrome and up to 1400 pages in colour. Therefore, they produce 34 per cent more pages on average than competitive products.

Beyond that, HP invests continuously into the improvement of quality. A result

of this work is pigmented ink that is smear-resistant and dries fast. These ink cartridges are also used by the HP Officejet Pro series and are ideal for users, who would like to use their printouts immediately and at the same time need high-quality documents. For people who print high volumes, HP offers XL cartridges with an increased reach and thus a better price / performance-ratio. Further savings potential lies in the use of single ink cartridges, as only the empty cartridge has to be exchanged. Used cartridges can be returned to the dealer and will be recycled by HP. The new HP Officejet Pro models not only offer best printing results, but also helps protect the environment.

For more information on the HP Officejet Pro printer series, visit www.hp.com/za/mybusiness or email ida.ibbetson@hp.com.



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*Cost-per-page (CPP) claims are based on the majority of colour laser all-in-ones less than €400 excluding VAT (RAND 4500) and the majority of colour laser printers less than €200 excluding VAT (RAND 2250), as of March 2010 based on market share as reported by IDC as of Q4 2009. Currency conversion based on standard internal exchange rates. CPP comparisons for laser supplies are based on published specifications of the manufacturers' highest capacity cartridges available, as reported by Context Information Services. HP Officejet Pro CPP based on HP 940XL Officejet Ink Cartridges, estimated street price, published yield for colour prints and continuous printing. For details, see www.hp.com/go/learnaboutequipment. Results may vary.

Edimax HP-2002AV access point

» Access with a twist

The HP2002-AV PowerLine ethernet adapter from Edimax enables users to turn their home or office into a high-speed network without having to go through the hassles of installing new cables.

It does this by utilising existing electrical cables to transmit data like an Ethernet network, enabling users to create a cost-effective network easily.

The device complies with HomePlug AV and IEEE 802.3 / 802.3u standards and also supports IGMP managed multicast sessions. With HomePlug AV technology the device is capable of providing a high speed 200 Mbps data rate with coverage of up to 300 metres. IGMP technology can be used for online streaming and gaming, allowing for a much more efficient use of resources.

The HP-2002AV also



supports 128-bit AES link encryption ensuring the network remains as secure as possible. Easy to use 'group' and 'reset' buttons are present on the device which can be used to easily set up network passwords or reset to the default factory settings. Available for **R635** ex VAT, contact Miro distribution on 086-123-6476 for more info.

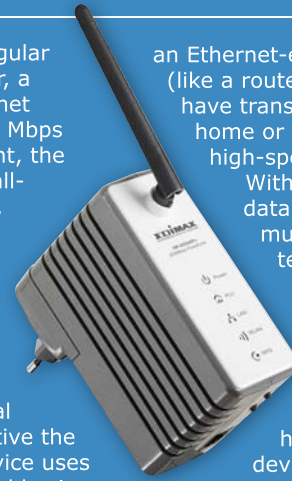
Edimax HP-2002APn Wireless access point

» Networking out of thin air

The HP-2002APn is closely related to the HP-2002AV but differs in one crucial aspect – wireless access.

Integrating the regular Powerline adapter, a 10/100 Mbps Ethernet port and also a 150 Mbps wireless access point, the device sports true all-in-one functionality.

You can use the device to connect to an existing network (wired or wireless), while using the Powerline network through an electrical circuit. Like its relative the HP-2002AV, the device uses existing electrical cables in your home or office and turns them into a high-speed network. Once the HP-2002APn is plugged into a power socket, connect it to



an Ethernet-equipped device (like a router), and you'll have transformed your home or office into a high-speed network.

With up to 200 Mbps data rates and IGMP multicast technology, online streaming and VoIP applications can be run without hassles. The device supports 128-bit AES encryption helping to prevent unwanted access into your network. Available for **R901** ex VAT, contact Miro distribution on 086-123-6476 for more info.



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Ubiquiti NanoStation Loco M5

» Wireless control wherever you are

The Ubiquiti NanoStation M5 is set to take on the bar that the original NanoStation set as the world's first low-cost outdoor broadband CPE (Customer-premises equipment).

At around half the size of the original, the unit is able to produce wireless speeds of up to 150 Mbps and, thanks to its AirOS interface, it comes preloaded with functionalities such as a built-in spectrum analyser and a basic firewall system.

The NanoStation Loco operates in the 5.4 GHz ISM band and features a built-in flat panel antenna with a 13 dBi gain.



It's been designed with perfect short to medium distance wireless transfer in mind, and thanks to a beam-width of 45 degrees for both horizontal and vertical reception it's very easy to align.

The device can be mounted on a pole (standard) or users can purchase additional wall and window suction mounts to keep the NanoStation Loco secure.

Available for **R845** ex VAT, contact Miro distribution on 086-123-6476 for more info.

Ubiquiti AirWire Wireless Ethernet Extender

» Not the weakest link

The Ubiquiti AirWire is a versatile plug and play wireless solution that requires no additional drivers or software to work, simply connect one end to an internet router and the other to any wired Ethernet device.

With its quick and easy installation and high performance capacity the AirWire is perfect for high bandwidth devices such as gaming consoles, media computers, HDTVs or your laptop. The AirWire allows two wired Ethernet devices to connect wirelessly without the need for cables or software installations.

The device features an improved Mimo smart antenna design capable of long range operation. In an open environment the AirWire can supply devices up to 100 metres apart with a stable 300 Mbps+ connection. The AirWire is perfect for the



home as it provides a fast and reliable link through the many walls and other obstacles usually encountered. Available for **R1493** ex VAT, contact Miro distribution on 086-123-6476 for more info.

12 years. Jail sentence of a Nigerian 419 scammer for his part in 'advance fee' frauds, banking him over \$1.3 million.

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Kaviza VDI-in-a-box, a desktop virtualisation solution that has been designed to eliminate the cost and complexity associated with VDI implementations and migrations of data, and enrich the user experience by delivering a PC-like interface.



Aqua Connect is the first company to offer terminal services on the Mac platform and to create an enterprise grade Mac server. Aqua Connect allows you to run and manage all of your Apple software / documents off a centralized server.



10Zig is the fastest, small form factor Thin Client offering users improved workflow, increased security, and lower maintenance costs, providing high performance, wireless, dual monitor, energy efficient, lightweight, durable, long-lasting, reliable, maintenance-free performance.



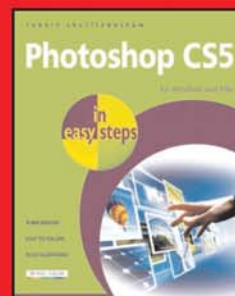
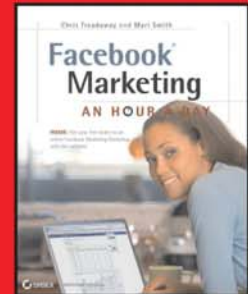
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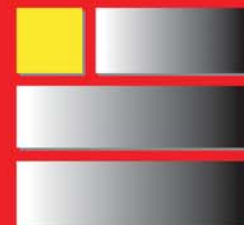


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\$3.59 million. Amount BP Corporation spent on Google Adwords in June 2010 during the height of the oil spill crises.

Advertorial NCSolutions

» Virtualisation – the new future

Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) is the next evolution of desktop computing, as it offers a host of benefits – from improved security to reduced cost per head for equipment, lower power consumption, decreased troubleshooting and management costs and centralised, simplified deployment and updating.



As leaders in virtualisation technology, NCSolutions were the first to bring Virtual Desktop Technology to South Africa back in 2006. To keep ahead of the pack the company is now evolving their product offering with their recently acquired distribution rights for Liquidware Labs; Kaviza; 10Zig and Aqua Connect.

Liquidware Labs

Liquidware Labs offers the perfect first step for any organisation moving towards VDI with its unique assessment tool that covers desktop assessment, infrastructure analysis and recommended design.

Kaviza

To complement this offering, NC Solutions also offers Kaviza VDI-in-a-box, a desktop virtualisation solution that has been designed to eliminate the cost and complexity associated with VDI implementations and migrations of data, while enriching the user experience by delivering a PC-like interface.

10Zig

10Zig is the fastest, small form factor Thin Client available offering users improved workflow, increased

security, and lower maintenance costs. 10Zig Thin Clients provide high performance, wireless, dual monitor, energy efficient, lightweight, durable, long-lasting, reliable, maintenance-free performance. There is a wide range of thin client hardware options available, optimised for every virtual desktop environment.

Aqua Connect

Aqua Connect is the first company to offer terminal services on the Mac platform and also first to create an enterprise grade Mac server. Aqua Connect allows you to run and manage all of your Apple software / documents off a centralised server. You can even use re-purposed PCs or terminals and connect to a Mac Snow Leopard 10.6 or Mac Leopard 10.5 server.

NCSolutions can help organisations to assess infrastructure, design and deploy VDI, as well as migrate existing services and manage the virtualised infrastructure. As such the company has become a true end-to-end supplier of virtualised desktop solutions.

Feel free to contact NCSolutions on 011-513-4048 or email info@ncs.co.za for further inquiries. ☘

Advertorial Blank Media

» Disc printing, fast and easy

Established five years ago, Blank Media specialises in disc printing and packaging, serving everyone from established musical artists to promotional establishments and advertising houses, or in a nutshell, anyone requiring the branding of discs. The company's printing services caters to both small and large quantity orders and offers data burning at no additional cost.

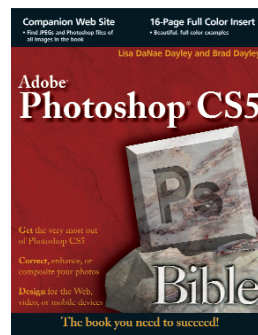


Situated at Eden Meadows Shopping Centre and spread over 800 square metres, the company's headquarters combines sales, warehousing and printing facilities under one roof, giving customers a convenient and hassle free shopping experience. Customers can even enjoy a coffee at a nearby restaurant while they wait for their orders to finish, they are just

that fast. From printing to data reproduction to packaging, all orders are executed in record time and without the need for any middle man commission. Blank Media also sports an interactive website where customers can place orders online, making the process even easier. They can be contacted on 011-452-7966 or you can visit their site at www.blankmedia.co.za. ☘

Books from Intersoft

Photoshop CS5 Bible John Wiley and Sons Ltd



Photoshop has become the gold standard when it comes to image-editing and is used by professionals and hobbyists alike. If you've gone to the effort to buy CS5 it is worthwhile to invest in the *Photoshop CS5 Bible*. More than 300 000 copies of this book have been sold in previous editions; with the latest addition fully updated to cover Photoshop CS5's newest features. **R410** from www.intersoft.co.za.

Smashing Photoshop CS5 – 100 Professional techniques John Wiley and Sons Ltd



Suitable for web designers and developers, this title takes readers beyond the basic and provides a variety of professional techniques and tutorials. Rather than detailing every button, option and tool, *Smashing Photoshop* delivers professional techniques web designers can put to use right away. **R350** from www.intersoft.co.za. ☘

Both these books available from Intersoft on 08600-26657 or 08600-BOOKS.

\$501 million and \$1.4 billion. Amounts spent by Apple and Microsoft to market their respective products in 2009.

Tocky Alarm Clock



This clock is designed to roll off your nightstand and make you get up and chase it in the morning. Sadistic! But this version is spherical, has an outer touch-sensitive dial, records messages and MP3s.

Startmonkey 200



The startmonkey 200 is the smallest jump start system that can restart a standard 12 volt car battery between 15 and 20 times on a full charge thanks to its High Energy Dynamic Polymer Battery. It's packed with high-tech features to give you total peace of mind.

Laserpod



Transform any dark room into a lighting experience and be captivated by the alluring ambience of lasers and light. Project the experience onto ceilings and walls or add the accessories and wave the lava lamp goodbye!

Night Vision

Yukon is evident in the Ranger's revolutionary digital night vision capabilities: the Ranger has the highest magnification available, and the clearest image, that you just can't get with traditional night vision.



Cork Pops

The CorkPops Legacy must be the simplest, fastest and easiest way to open a bottle of wine. The Legacy has a hollow needle, through which the CorkPops cartridge passes a puff of carbon dioxide – the cork just pushes itself out of the bottle!



T4 Pro Balance

Bioenergetic Holographic Disc Technology™ prevalent within all PRO BALANCE bracelets, reacts with the human body upon contact, realigning bio energy and bringing the body into balance. Users report – increased balance, strength, flexibility.



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Want to win Lexmark's excellent INTERACT 3-in-1 printer?

How? Join our Facebook page (<http://tiny.cc/tsfb>) and comment on any of our daily postings. The best comment wins the Lexmark!

This month's winner is Spuku Elias who commented on our Halo: Reach hands-on preview post: "Halo showed that it was unique and fresh in every aspect. It is truly an enjoyable game that continues to impress every time."

The Lexmark INTERACT is a 3-in-1 printer, scanner and copier with touch-screen. It includes paper saving Eco Mode and a three year guarantee with lifetime phone support.

Lexmark Green Fact
Did you know? 1 in 6 pages printed in the workplace are never used! Let's protect the planet together. Let's stop printing waste!

9 Reduce the amount of pages in a document by using a smaller font and single line spacing

Courtesy of: **LEXMARK**

Tips from Lexmark for those of us looking to improve our printing practices, for the benefit of the environment.

Competition runs from 1 – 31 October 2010

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Competition runs from 1 – 31 October 2010

On www.techsmart.co.za this month

As per usual there is a lot more to find over at www.techsmart.co.za, SA's top tech site.

We spend some quality time with Sony's new Move motion-based gaming system.
<http://tiny.cc/vntsq>



... and of course with Sports Champions, the must-have game for the Move.
<http://tiny.cc/7xdag>



We went running on the road with Garmin's FR60 Sport Watch.
<http://tiny.cc/pxvrd>



... and out driving with Navigon's exciting Navigon 40 Premium.
<http://tiny.cc/j2ncb>



We take LG's T380 notebook through its paces.
<http://tiny.cc/syucq>

Plus, read our full review of the Apple's ultra-cool iPhone 4 which has just arrived in South Africa.

What is compact but not a compact? Olympus' PEN E-PL1 digital camera. It features micro four-thirds technology that allows a sensor, the same size as a regular DSLR camera's, to be housed in a compact body – with interchangeable lenses to boot. It gets reviewed here:
<http://tiny.cc/5t7ll>



We loved Dell's 1558 and now their even more powerful Studio 1749 is here. We took it through its paces and came back very impressed indeed. Read our review here:
<http://tiny.cc/31cop>



Garmin's new nüvi 1410, with live traffic updates via RDS as well as Bluetooth, gets taken for a spin. Read all about it here:
<http://tiny.cc/6iak2>

Want a portable hard disk that does not take forever to copy movies and series over? We check out Iomega's eGo USB 3.0 500 GB storage solution. It's an awesome device as long as your computer can support it. Our findings here:
<http://tiny.cc/vxsid>



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50%. Amount by which Best Buy CEO, Brian Dun said the iPad is cannibalising notebook sales.

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260 000, 200 000, 80 000. Number of Nokia-, Android- and Apple smartphones sold every day.

How To » Make an Iron Man pulse weapon



Seeing that *Iron Man 2* was one of the blockbuster movies of the year, our DIY Dude shows you how to build your very own palm pulse weapon – just in time for Halloween. And you don't have to have Tony Stark's budget to make it.

With Halloween coming up the eager among us are starting to pick out costumes. As The Joker was last year's most common costume I suspect this year will be Iron Man, so let's run with it. To create a semi functional pulse weapon you'll need the following:

- An old disposable camera.
- A bottle cap, CD case and arm strap
- Two push buttons some wire and an AA battery holder
- An enclosure for your project, a soldering iron and some glue

First a word of safety, Xenon bulbs need a fairly high voltage to operate, in our case around 300 volts and an even higher voltage to trigger, 4000 volts in our case (for reference the plugs in your house are 220 volts). As dangerous as this sounds a camera circuit can only provide a little power at a time so they are pretty safe but getting zapped by one of these guys stings like hell and will figuratively give you a heart attack. In short, always remove the batteries and trigger the flash before working on the unit.

Let's get started then. First, open your camera and remove all the electronics, taking note of what buttons were connected where. Most disposable cameras have two, a charge button and a trigger button. The charge button will most likely be connected to the circuit board directly, while the trigger button is usually connected to two metallic plates. Solder in your push buttons to these locations so you can use both functions as usual.

Next remove the Xenon bulb and metallic casing from the circuit board. Note the big round component on the circuit, this is our storage capacitor – connect a wire to each leg of this component and connect one to each end of the Xenon bulb. Finally wrap some un-insulated wire around the bulb and connect this to the connection on the circuit board where the metallic shield around the bulb was attached. Make sure that none of the above mentioned wires touch. You can attach the battery holder and place this unit inside the enclosure with the bulb hanging out on one end.

Sand down your bottle cap and cut a big hole in the top, glue in a small disc cut from



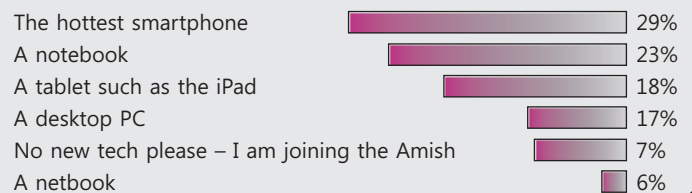
your CD case and sand it down so it's not transparent. Insert the bulb into the cap and glue it in, the more glue you use the safer it is, so fill up the cap if you can. At this point no contacts should be even remotely exposed, if there are any put a generous amount of glue around them for isolation.

Finally attach the arm

strap to the bottle cap and another around the enclosure, put the bulb on your palm and the enclosure around your wrist and you're ready to go. Simply press the charge button and let it charge up for a couple of seconds and then press the flash button to have it release a blinding flash of light from your palm. [MS] 🌟

TechSmart.co.za online poll results

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Chips and cracks

It seems our early ancestors sometimes bit off more than they could chew. Scientists write in a recent issue of the journal *Biology Letters* that analysis of chip patterns on hominin, gorilla and chimpanzee teeth, can be used to determine the bite force exerted by a tooth. Of these analysed fossils, bigger teeth generally had more chips, which mean they exerted more bite force. This in turn suggests that more chips and cracks in the enamel tell of a diet that regularly included hard foods like nuts, seeds or bones. Existing methods to determine what our ancestors ate usually require a complete skull to work out the jaw mechanics, but with the new method it seems a tooth may bring scientists just as close to the truth.



Early birds

A little birdie told us that being an early chirper may not always be a good thing. According to a study published in a recent issue of the journal *Cell Biology*, urban night lighting may affect breeding behaviour of forest-breeding songbirds. Researchers analysed several species of songbirds' dawn chirps and found that males in areas near street lights started singing much earlier than their buddies from deeper within the wood. Apparently female birds often preferentially seek out early risers as "high-quality" mates to improve the quality of their offspring. But if urban lighting upsets this natural cue, female birds may not necessarily get what they bargained for and future bird populations may be the poorer for it. Bottom line? If you wake up early, keep it down for while.



The big hole

Watching your step on the moon is much easier these days it seems. According to a recent issue of the journal *Science*, researchers have mapped and counted close to 5200 moon craters with diameters of 20 km or more using tools aboard the NASA Lunar Orbiter. Counting in itself was a feat, but their analysis also shows that the oldest regions of the moon, lying along a north-south axis, were pummelled by large projectiles until about 3.8 billion years ago. Younger areas though, were hit by much smaller objects. This makes scientists think that conditions in the asteroid belt must have changed around that time. Exactly what changed is not certain yet, but the findings may help astronomers to understand our planetary system a little better. One giant leap? [LP] 🌱

» Other cool reads

What's eating the stars out of our galaxy's heart?
<http://tiny.cc/blackholesun>

The part of the brain that leads to introspection:
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\$8.5 million. Amount spent by Google to settle a privacy lawsuit filed over Google Buzz.

30

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Web Time Wasters » October



1 deviantART Muro <http://muro.deviantart.com>

Need a medium for some artistic expression but don't have a canvas or easel at hand? deviantART Muro, an extension of the popular art sharing website, now allows artists from all over the world to join in and create beautiful works of art online. The deviantART Muro

application supports a set of 21 unique brushes alongside full layering capabilities and HTML5 and Apple iPad support. If you're looking for some more online art creation sites, check out our five best tools for online art creation here: <http://tiny.cc/techart>

2 Orbiter 2010 <http://tiny.cc/orb2010>

For some the blackness of space represents something they'd like to experience, a vague dream of floating in weightlessness. While this experience has not been recreated online yet we do have the next best thing, Orbiter 2010, a free, realistic

space flight simulation for the PC. Using the Orbiter you can launch the space shuttle, rendezvous with the International Space Station, recreate historic spaceflights and tour the solar system. All without having to deal with HAL 9000.

3 FutureTimeline.net www.futuretimeline.net

Part fact and part fiction, Futuretimeline.net gives users access to an extended future timeline based on analysis of current trends, technologies, projected long-term environmental changes

and aspects such as Moore's Law. So will we see mainstream mind-uploading in 2120, or anti-matter fuelled star-ships in 2230? A rewarding read for anyone interested in technology.

4 Gametrailers.com www.gametrailers.com

Gametrailers.com is an online portal for gaming news, reviews, trailers and funny game related videos. Just like YouTube, the site can keep gamers busy for hours as they scan through its vast library of content. The site hosts a number of ongoing gaming shows such as

screwattack, a humorous look back at old school games; retrospectives, chronicling the rise of great gaming franchises and the new Science of Games, a show where renowned physicist, Dr Michio Kaku uncovers some of the secrets behind your favourite gaming tech. 🎮

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Some say that he gave Steve Jobs the “i” for the iPhone and put the last “w” in www. All we know is he is called the PC Medic and he is here to answer your tech related questions.

Q Hi PC Medic. Do you know any easy to use and quick sites or software where you can design and build your own website? Tasha Pillay.

A PC Medic (PCM): Hey Tasha. There are truly a number to choose from, with a lot of them offering not only free website building but also hosting. The top choices are probably **www.webs.com** and **www.webnode.com**, as they contain a lot of design templates and a simple WYSIWYG editor. It is really as easy as signing up, designing your page and publishing it. No mess, no fuss and no HTML to master.

Q Hey PCM. I’ve heard that there are some hidden wallpapers within Windows 7. How can I access these? Roxanne Kaylene Davids.

A PCM: Hi Roxanne. Windows 7 contains some hidden background wallpapers for certain English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada and the UK) that a user is able to unlock. Go to the Start menu, go to Run and

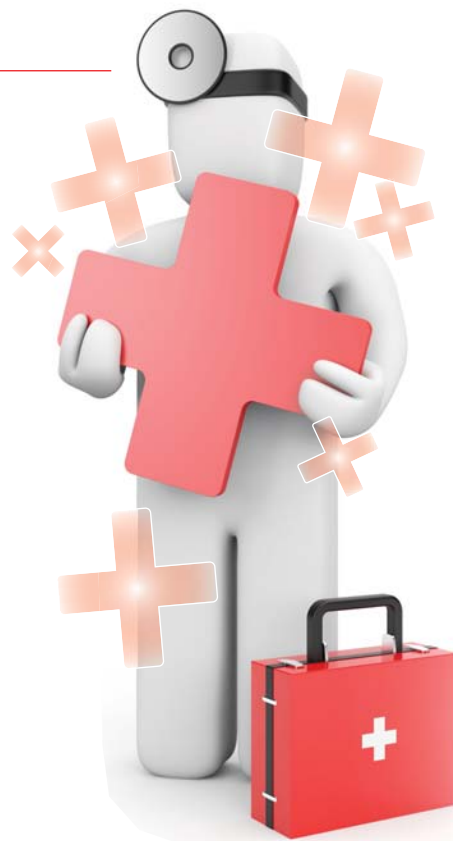
type `'C:\Windows\Globalization\MCT'`. This will provide you with a list of folders containing subfolders with the wallpapers for each specific country (named for each country). This will only work if you have Windows installed on your C-drive, if Windows is installed on a different HDD replace “C” with that drive’s name.

Q Hi PC Medic. Is there a way for me to disable the annoying autorun/autoplay feature in Windows 7?

A PCM: Go to the Control Panel, click on Hardware and Sound and then on AutoPlay. Make sure that you uncheck the “Use Autoplay” for all devices box at the top and click Save.

Q Hallo PCM: Is there a way for me to run a program as a different user without having to log out and back into Windows 7 using a different user account with higher privileges? Johnny W

A PCM: Yes Johnny, all you have to do is to hold down Shift when you



right-click any program shortcut and you’ll see an option to run the program as a different user. Simple, but quite handy. ❖

Jargon Busters » Fighting tech jargon so you don’t have to

Tech Jargon – we hate it because it might just mess up your next tech purchase. Here’s this month’s Jargon Busters.



GPU
GPU stands for graphics processing unit and it is the component in your PC that takes care of visual effects (graphics). Also known as display cards, video cards or graphics cards, the GPU has grown in importance over the years as we’ve grown more fond of shiny colours and good looking graphics, especially in games.

A GPU is a specialised microprocessor that offloads and accelerates 3D or 2D graphics rendering from the microprocessor (CPU). A GPU can be found either on a video card or integrated into the motherboard, with modern notebooks preferring the

integrated version due to space saving issues. The two major players are ATI (owned by AMD) and Nvidia.

USB 3.0

The new USB 3.0 standard increases the data transfer rate to up to 4.8 Gbps, up from USB 2.0’s 480 Mbps. Other improvements include increased maximum bus power and increased device current draw to accommodate power-hungry devices. The only thing standing in the way of USB 3.0’s general adoption is our current motherboards, the majority of which doesn’t support the technology.

HTML5

HTML stands for hyper text mark-up language and it’s the technology that’s responsible for presenting us with the pretty, interactive websites that have become such a huge part of our lives. HTML in a nutshell is a standard for structuring and presenting content on the internet.

HTML5, which is currently in development, will incorporate new features such as video playback directly

into websites. Previously additional browser plug-ins such as Adobe Flash Player or Microsoft Silverlight were needed to display video content. Drag-and-drop support (like that found on your desktop) may also be implemented. Most of HTML5’s new features deals with the more complex workings of the language, but users can rest assured that it’s going to improve the way websites look and function



Multi-touch touchpads

Most of today’s higher class notebooks are released with multi-touch touchpads. These give users the ability to simultaneously register two or more input points on the touchpad, enabling users to use two finger gestures, like pinching, to do things like zooming in and out of pictures. Enhanced two/three finger scrolling and other custom features (like rotating pics) is sometimes also supported. ❖

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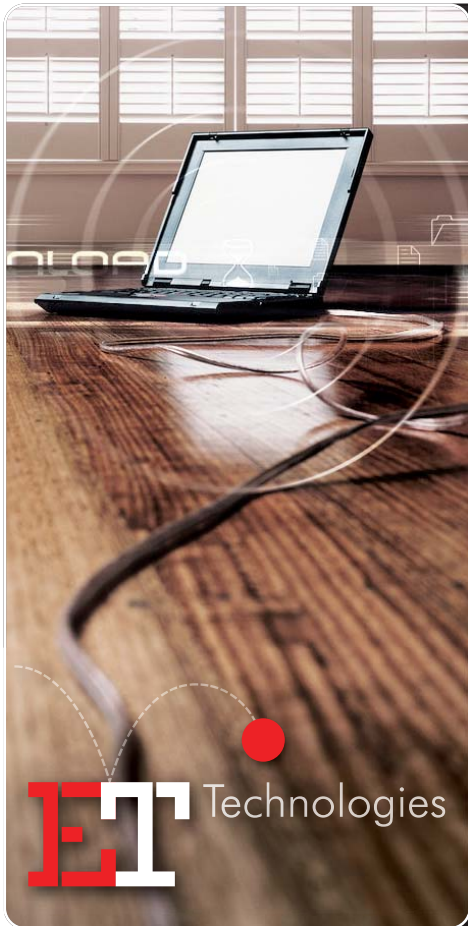
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\$849 million. Expected global revenue for the mobile gaming market in 2010.

Tetris Party Deluxe » Refreshing Tetris 26 years later

Tetris is one of the oldest and most recognisable titles in gaming history, rivalling Mario himself in fame. The game was created back in 1984 at the Soviet Academy of Science by Alexey Pajitnov, and has since spread across the entire world like a puzzle epidemic.



So how would a modern game studio go about successfully reviving the old series? The answer comes in the form of Tetris Party Deluxe for the Nintendo Wii.

Look and feel

While the game is unarguably Tetris at its core, it adds a slew of new features on top of the original experience. With

vibrant colours and lively music, the title feels much more alive than the originals monotonous Tetris tones.

Game modes

While the standard Tetris play option is available the game also introduces new game modes, and these are what really add something special to the tried-and-tested formula.

Field Climber mode requires players to place Tetris blocks to allow a virtual climber to ascend to the top of the screen while Shadow Tetris is a turn-based mode that tasks players with completing a Tetris puzzle based on a background 'shadow' image. In Bombliss mode volatile blocks of Tetriminoes (the official name for the iconic blocks), falls down to destroy neighbouring pieces when a row is cleared. Master Mode caters to those with years of block stacking experience, requiring super-fast reflexes to keep ahead.



Multiplayer and balance board

The game also offers support for the Wii balance board where players can lean left or right to move their tetriminos around the screen and execute a quick squat to rotate blocks.

Each gameplay mode can be played with up to three local human or AI opponents. The multiplayer aspect also brings some devious fun into the mix, allowing players to use power-up items to sabotage your opponent's carefully laid out stack.

Conclusion

Tetris Party Deluxe successfully brings the classic game into the modern arena while simultaneously updating and increasing the fun factor. If you're looking for some good, clean family fun, Tetris Party Deluxe is definitely a winner. [JK]



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Halo: Reach » The road to ruin

“Remember Reach, remember where it all began.” These words have been haunting us the past few months as we’ve prepared to do battle in the final chapter in the Halo saga, Halo: Reach.

Halo: Reach is a direct prequel to the previous Halo games and is the swansong of developers Bungie’s revolutionary series. Set on the Planet Reach, players are tasked with protecting the planet from the ever advancing Covenant forces.

The story of Reach is unique since, due to its prequel nature, we already know that Reach gets overrun by the Covenant. While some might scoff at the idea of playing a game you already know the outcome of, we feel that this adds extra depth to the storyline – the struggle against truly overwhelming odds.

Campaign

Halo: Reach’s campaign is one of the series’ best and this time around players are treated to a mixture of lone-wolf and team based missions. From daring late night sniper raids, full frontal attacks to a highly enjoyable space mission, the campaign in Reach kept us on our toes. Bungie has also added some nasty AI to the game, making playing even on normal difficulty quite challenging, not

even mentioning the Heroic and Legendary settings.

Multiplayer

As with previous Halo games, the title truly shines in its multiplayer aspects. The addictive Firefight mode returns in which up to four players are tasked with taking on increasingly difficult waves of Covenant enemies. Forge mode is also present where players can edit maps to suit their needs, allowing for a truly custom Halo experience. The classic Red vs. Blue multiplayer mode remains the cream of the crop though, adding new maps, weapons, vehicles and armour abilities to an already overflowing multiplayer options list.

Conclusion

Halo: Reach is a fitting end to an amazing part of gaming history that has served as the vanguard of Xbox gaming dominance. It’s sad to see an end to the epic saga, but we can’t wait to see what Bungie is working on next. [JK] 🍀



- » **The Good**
Awesome storyline and addictive multiplayer
- » **The Bad**
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3rd Place – Philips CD-i



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Philips’ Compact Disk-Interactive or CD-i was released on 3 December 1991. It had some multimedia functionality in that it could play audio disks as well as video disks, although the latter required the optional Digital Video Card add-on for MPEG-1 decoding. As a result Philips chose to market it as a multimedia device, rebranding it as a game console in 1994 after slow sales.

This decision came too late however after the Sega Saturn and Sony’s mighty PlayStation were released in 1995. The CD-i was discontinued in 1996 after selling 570 000 units.

2nd Place – Atari Jaguar

Launched on 18 November 1993 the Jaguar was marketed by the once powerful Atari as a 64-bit gaming system, but in effect only had two 32-bit processors working in parallel, further blundered by an overly complex controller that housed over 15 buttons.

Atari assured the public that the console would be well supported by over 20 third party game developers that would provide an assortment of titles. This didn’t turn out to be the case as it was difficult to program titles for the Jaguar without adequate development tools, which Atari failed to provide. The system was discontinued in 1996 after less than a measly 250 000 units sold.



Photo: The Old School Game Vault

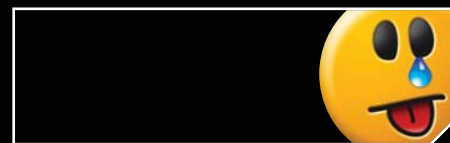
1st Place – Apple Pippin



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Apple might be one of the hottest tech companies in the world right now, but it did drop a gaming console stinker back in the day. Released in 1995 in Japan and in 1996 in the US, the Pippin came up against more powerful and established console competition in the form of the Sega Saturn, Sony PlayStation and the Nintendo 64, but cost nearly twice as much at \$599 on launch. As a result not even half (42 000) of the initial 100 000 that was manufactured were sold. [HD] 🍀

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\$200 million (R1.3 billion). Amount Halo: Reach brought in on its 1st day of availability.

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