

NEW! PRODUCT SHOWCASE
FOR DIY PC BUILDERS

A TERRIFIC dSLR FOR
FIRST-TIME BUYERS



COMPUTER SHOPPER[®]

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY | computershopper.com

**WE RATE
THE TOP
ONLINE
TECH STORES**



BUY the BEST PC

Personalize a Desktop
With Components
That Match All
Your Needs

CPU
Why You
Need
Dual-Core

**DVD
BURNER**
Is One
Enough?

RAM
Get a Gig
(at Least)

**VIDEO
CARD**
What You
Need for
Vista

PLUS

**Quad-Core
Desktops:**

Do You Really Need
That Much Speed?

Printer Face-Off
Inkjets vs. Lasers



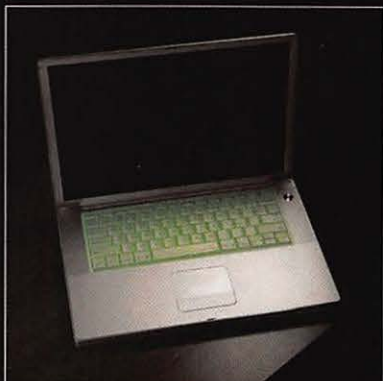
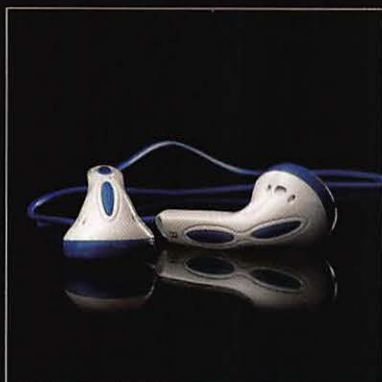
39

LCD Monitors
As low as \$170

#BXBKLT *****CAR-RT LOT**R-021
#V6S0222R094 9#660892 JUN 07
NV4 COSH5 JAN07 0015 #388 #98434
ME1 ISSA VESSELL
222 RUNNYMEDE LA
SUMMERVILLE SC 29485-8553



Slip one on.



iSkin®
iSkin.com

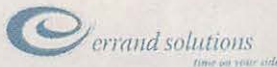
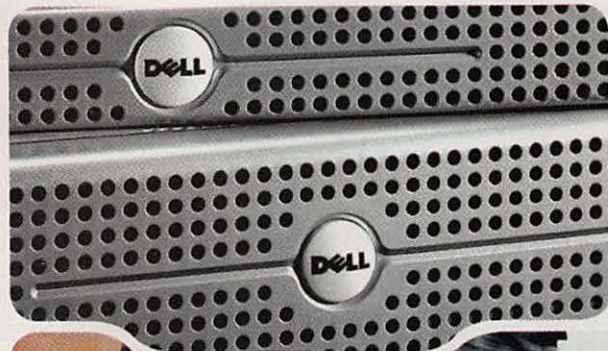
iSkin® by iSkin Inc., All Rights Reserved 2006. Apple logo is a trademark of Apple Computer Inc.



iSkin for iPod® nano (2G)

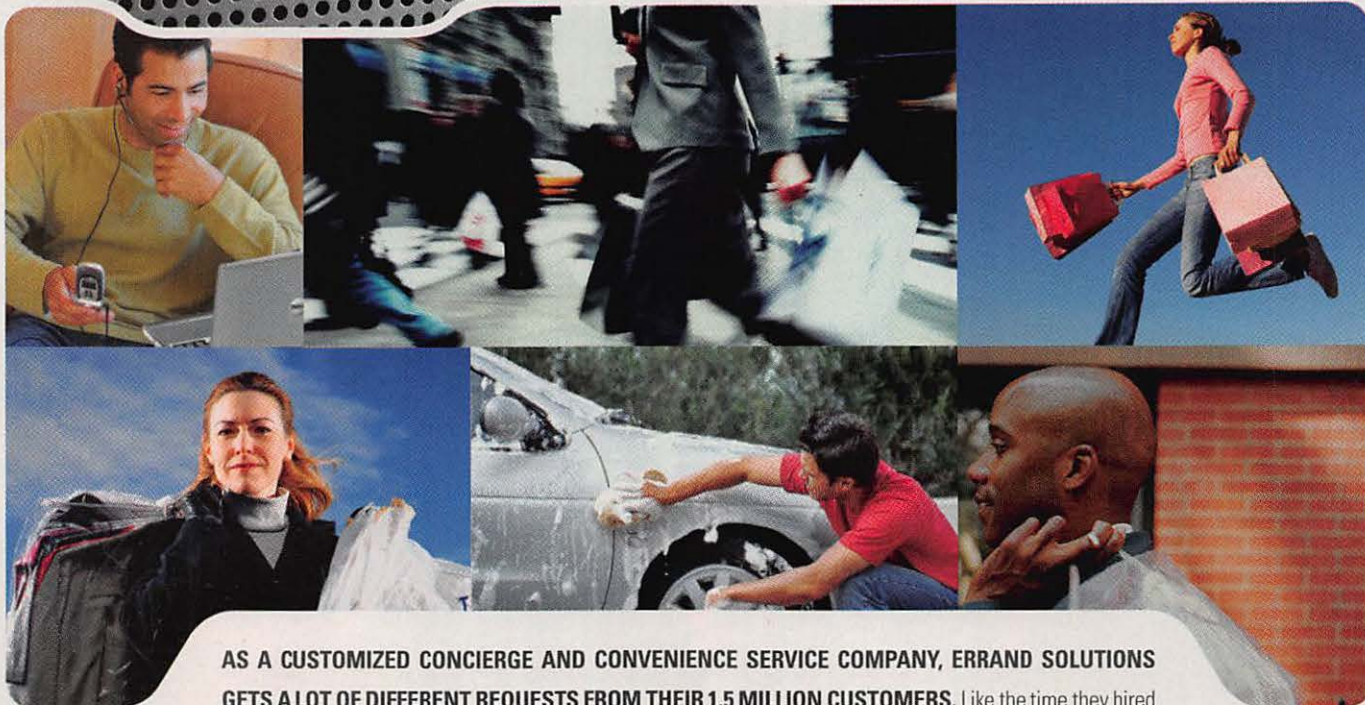
Available in three combo packs

Capturing the true essence of the iPod nano, the iSkin delivers a dual-layer design with stunning style in a single comprehensive protective solution. Its premium silicone layer encapsulates the iPod nano protecting it against shock and surface damage, while its impact resistant VISOR™ (Visually Intact Solid Optical Resin) screen and face protector does the rest. Combined, they seamlessly blend to create a barrier against dust, dirt and damage that's truly beyond the ordinary.



Powered by Dell Small Business

AT ERRAND SOLUTIONS, MANAGING 1.5 MILLION CUSTOMER DATA FILES ON DELL SERVERS IS EASY. IT'S RUNNING MILLIONS OF ERRANDS THAT'S HARD.



AS A CUSTOMIZED CONCIERGE AND CONVENIENCE SERVICE COMPANY, ERRAND SOLUTIONS GETS A LOT OF DIFFERENT REQUESTS FROM THEIR 1.5 MILLION CUSTOMERS. Like the time they hired Hula dancers for a Hawaiian-themed party. Or nursed a sick iguana back to health. Or personalized a bunch of fortune cookies for a Chinese-themed baby shower. They've even been known to pick up the dry cleaning now and again. And to manage all the errands they run, Errand Solutions counts on dependable Dell PowerEdge™ Servers and PowerVault™ storage solutions. Running a proprietary web-based software, they can keep detailed profiles of every customer, including their birthdays, favorite foods, and most common requests. Which means they can keep track of all the little details that make them so popular with their customers. After all, like every Errand Solutions' customer, every business is unique. And that's why every Dell solution is purely you.

POWEREDGE™ 2950 RACK SERVER*

\$1699 Lease as low as **\$45/mo.** (48 prmts.)*
E-VALUE Code: 09116-pe2950-min

Rack-Dense, Flexible 2U Server

- Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5050 (3GHz, 667MHz FSB, 2x2MB Cache)
- Upgradable to Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5160 (3GHz, 1333MHz FSB, 4MB Cache)
- 1GB ECC DDR2 SDRAM (Up to 32GB)
- 80GB* (7200 RPM) SATA 3.5-inch Hard Drive (Up to 1.8TB*)
- Dual Embedded Broadcom NetXtreme II-5708 Gigabit* NICs
- 3-Yr Basic Enterprise Support (Next Business Day On-Site Service* M-F 8am-6pm, Hardware Warranty Support)

NEW POWEREDGE™ 1430 RACK SERVER*

\$1049 Lease as low as **\$28/mo.** (48 prmts.)*
E-VALUE Code: 09116-sc1430-min

Value-Priced Dual-Processor Tower Server

- Intel® Xeon® Processor 5050 (3GHz, 2x2MB Cache, 800MHz FSB)
- Upgradable to Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® 5160 Processor (3GHz, 800MHz FSB, 2x2MB L2 Cache)
- 1GB ECC FBD SDRAM (Up to 8GB)
- 80GB* (7200 RPM) SATA Hard Drive (Up to 2TB*)
- Embedded Broadcom Gigabit* NIC
- 3-Yr Basic Enterprise Support (Next Business Day On-Site Service* M-F 8am-6pm, Hardware Warranty Support)

NEW POWEREDGE™ 840 TOWER SERVER*

\$749 Lease as low as **\$20/mo.** (48 prmts.)*
E-VALUE Code: 09116-pe840-min

High-Speed Small Business Server

- Intel® Celeron® Processor 336 (2.80GHz, 512KB L2 Cache, 533MHz FSB)
- Upgradable to Intel® Dual Core Xeon® Processor 3070 (2.67GHz, 2x2MB L2 Cache, 1066MHz)
- 512MB ECC DDR2 SDRAM (Up to 8GB)
- 80GB* (7200 RPM) SATA Hard Drive (Up to 2TB*)
- RAID 1 and RAID 5 Optional
- 3-Yr Basic Enterprise Support (Next Business Day On-Site Service*, Hardware Warranty Support)

*These devices have not been approved by the Federal Communications Commission for use in a residential environment. These devices are not, and may not be, offered for sale or lease, or sold or leased for use in a residential environment until the approval of the FCC has been obtained.

INTRODUCING THE NEXT GENERATION OF DELL ENTERPRISE SERVERS.

Designed to help reduce complexity and management costs, they're effortless to install, access, manage, and service. They're Dell's new industry-standard servers, featuring Dell's latest customer-driven features:

- Programmable LCD server front for quick customized issue diagnosis
- Color-coding, tool-less chassis, and cable management for easy set-up and maintenance
- New dual-core processors for up to 152% increased processor performance* over the previous generation
- Small hard drives and cables help reduce power consumption
- Common design layouts and system management for fast configuration
- 100% customization – your server can be built to order
- Maximize your uptime with Dell's extensive service offerings
- For more information on the 9th Generation of PowerEdge servers, go to dell.com/nextgen



Xeon[®]
inside™

Dual-core.
Do more.



NEW DELL™ POWERVAULT™ RD1000 REMOVABLE DISK DRIVE

The revolutionary new PowerVault RD1000 is designed with the needs of small businesses in mind. The reliable and removable hard disk drive cartridge allows you to quickly and easily back up files and take them with you and it comes standard with back-up software.

\$399



NEW DELL™ POWERCONNECT™ 6224 AND 6248*

The 6200 series offers 24 and 48 Gigabit Ethernet port switches providing higher density, resilient stacking, and 10 Gigabit uplink capabilities.

\$1799

Lease as low as
\$48/mo. (48 pmts.†)

*Based on the SPECintb2000 benchmark test performed by Dell Labs in December 2005 and April–May 2006 on a PE1950 with two dual core Intel® Xeon® Processors 5160 (3.0GHz Woodcrest), 8GB 667MHz FBD memory, 1x SATA 80GB/7.2K rpm HDD, and Windows® Server 2003 Enterprise x64 Edition OS as compared to a PE2850 with two dual core Intel® Xeon® Processors (2.80GHz Paxville), 8GB 400MHz DDR2 memory, 1x SCSI 36GB/15K rpm HDD, and Windows Server 2003 Standard Edition, SP1 OS. Actual performance will vary based on configuration, usage and manufacturing variability.

DELL
ON CALL
HERE TO HELP

CREATE A CUSTOMIZED I.T. INFRASTRUCTURE WITH DELL'S CUSTOM NETWORK ASSESSMENT FOR INSTALLATION & IMPLEMENTATION.

Dell-certified I.T. Professionals can assess and evaluate your current network infrastructure and business requirements and help develop a comprehensive optimization plan for your exact needs. So whether you're upgrading an existing network or installing a new one, Dell can recommend and deploy the optimal mix of hardware, software and services you're looking for. Call and find out what Dell can do for your business. Chances are, it's a lot more than you think.

Elevate your business at **dell.com/shopper12**

call 877.657.DELL
toll free



Purely You

Call: M-F 7a-8p Sat 8a-5p, CT *Pricing/Availability: Pricing, specifications, availability, and terms of offer may change without notice. Taxes, fees, shipping, handling and any applicable restocking charges, other than free shipping offer, if applicable, are extra and vary. Offers may be combined with other select offers or discounts. U.S. Dell Small Business new purchases only. Items leased will be subject to applicable end-of-lease options or requirements. Dell cannot be responsible for pricing or other errors, and reserves the right to cancel orders arising from such errors. On-Site Service: Service may be provided by third-party. Technician will be dispatched, if necessary, following phone-based troubleshooting. Subject to parts availability, geographical restrictions and terms of service contract. Service timing dependent upon time of day call placed to Dell. U.S. only. Leasing: Monthly payment based on 48-month QuickLease with Fair Market Value ("FMV") end of lease purchase option, does not include taxes, fees, shipping and handling charges and may vary based on creditworthiness. QuickLease arranged by Dell Financial Services L.P. ("DFS"), an independent entity, to qualified Small Business customers. Minimum transaction size of \$500 required. All terms subject to credit approval and availability, and can change without notice. Hard Drive: For hard drives, GB means 1 billion bytes and TB equals 1 trillion bytes; actual capacity varies with preloaded material and operating environment and will be less. This device has not been approved by the Federal Communications Commission for use in a residential environment. Gigabit Ethernet: This term does not connote actual operating speed of 1GB/sec. For high-speed transmission, connection to a Gigabit Ethernet server and network infrastructure is required. Trademarks/Copyright Notices: Dell, the stylized E logo, E-Value, Dimension, Inspiron, Latitude, OptiPlex, PowerEdge, Dell Precision, PowerConnect, PowerVault, CompleteCare, ExpressCharge, Tri-Metal and UltraSharp are trademarks of Dell Inc. Intel, Intel logo, Intel Inside logo, Intel Inside logo, Celeron, Celeron Inside, Xeon and Xeon Inside are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. ©2007 Dell Inc. All rights reserved.

Business runs faster these days. So does your PC.

Built for business, the Intel® vPro™ Technology inside your VPX6000 series system delivers the performance you need to beat today's tough challenges. Advanced business intelligence? On-the-fly customer service? Virus checks in the background? With Intel® vPro™ Technology inside, you can do it all.



ZT recommends Windows® XP Professional



ZT Reliant System VPX6004

Intel® vPro™ Technology

Intel® Core™ 2 Duo Processor E6300
(2MB Shared L2 Cache, 1.86GHz, 1066MHz)

genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional Edition
(Microsoft® Windows® Vista Capable)

- Intel® Q965 Express Chipset
- 1GB DDR2 533MHz Memory
- Seagate® 160GB SATA2 16MB Cache Hard Drive
- 7 In 1 Media Card Reader
- Intel® GMA 3000 Onboard Graphics
- 16x DVD and CD Burner
- Intel® 6-channel (5.1) Audio Subsystem
- Intel® 82566DM Gigabit Ethernet Controller
- 10x USB 2.0, 2x IEEE1394a
- Logitech Internet Keyboard & Optical Mouse
- 1 Year Limited Warranty

\$899

Shown with optional keyboard, mouse, & monitor

Go to
Call

ztgroup.com/go/computershopper

866- ZTGROUP (866-984-7687)

promote code: cs0107

Purchaser is responsible for all freight costs on all returns of merchandise. Full credit will not be given for incomplete or damaged returns. Absolutely no refunds for merchandise returned after 30 days. All prices and configurations are subject to change without notice and obligation. Opened software is non-refundable. All returns have to be accompanied with an RMA number and must be in re-sellable condition including all original packaging. System's picture may include some equipments and/or accessories, which are not standard features. Not responsible for errors in typography and/or photography. All rights reserved. All brands and product names, trademarks or registered trademarks are property of their respective companies. Intel, Intel logo, Intel Inside, Intel Inside logo, Intel Celeron, Celeron Inside, Centrino, Centrino Logo, Core Inside, Intel, Intel Logo, Intel Core, Intel Inside, Intel Inside Logo, Intel Viiv, Intel vPro, Itanium, Itanium Inside, Pentium, Pentium Inside, Xeon, and Xeon Inside are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries.



CONTENTS

JANUARY 2007 VOLUME 27 NUMBER 1 ISSUE 322

**103 New Products for
Do-It-Yourself PC Builders**

REVIEWS

QUAD-CORE DESKTOPS

- 25** Cyberpower Gamer Infinity 1950
 - 26** Gateway FX530XT
 - 28** Vigor Force Recon QXN
- ### DESKTOPS
- 30** Dell Dimension C521
 - 30** HP Slimline Pavilion s7600e

NOTEBOOKS

- 32** Toshiba Qosmio G35-AV660
- 32** Gateway NX860XL
- 34** PC Club Enpower ENP680
- 34** Asus S6F

COMPONENTS

- 24** Intel Core 2 Extreme QX6700
- 36** ATI Radeon X1650 Pro
- 36** nVidia GeForce 7950 GT

PERIPHERALS

- 38** Western Digital Passport Portable Hard Drive
- 38** Logitech Cordless Desktop MX3200 Laser

HOME NETWORKING

- 42** HP Media Vault MV2020
- 42** Trendnet 300Mbps Wireless N-Draft Firewall Router (TEW-631BRP)

DIGITAL CAMERAS

- 44** Canon EOS Rebel XTi
- 44** Fujifilm FinePix S6000fd

CONSUMER TECH

- 46** HP iPaq RX5900 Travel Companion
- 46** T-Mobile Dash

SOFTWARE

- 48** Corel Snapfire Plus
- 48** Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0
- 50** Microsoft Encarta Premium 2007
- 50** Norton AntiVirus 2007
- 51** Microsoft Streets & Trips 2007 with GPS Locator
- 51** QuickBooks Premier 2007

THIS MONTH'S TOP PRODUCTS

- 55** Alternative-Brand Desktops
- 56** Thin-and-Light Laptops
- 58** Wi-Fi Routers
- 62** Smartphones
- 63** Downloads

COVER STORY

69 The Real Guide To PC Shopping

Windows Vista, multicore CPUs, high-definition DVD—your desktop-PC want list keeps growing, even if your budget doesn't. Component by component, find out how to configure a new PC that should deliver years of steady service. All at a price that works for you.

FEATURES

81 The Great Debate: Inkjet or Laser?

The two major technologies of mainstream printer—inkjet and laser—have very different strengths and weaknesses. How to match what you print with what you need? Simple: Check in for savvy buying advice and our top-pick printers. Plus, a look at three versatile multifunction models.

88 Rating the E-Tailers

Wondering where to buy your tech online? Our editors go cyber-sleuthing at six popular online shops to find out which ones offer the most help to shoppers—and which offer the best deals.

NEW PRODUCTS



GEAR

- 18** • Asus WL-500g Premium
- Belkin Notebook Expansion Dock
- Logitech X-540
- Lowrance iWay 600C
- Palm Treo 680
- U.S. Modular Monitor Drive



PCs

- 21** • ABS Ultimate X8 Ultra
- Acer TravelMate 6460
- Alienware DHS A Series
- Fujitsu LifeBook N6420
- Gateway DX420 Series
- Sony VAIO C Series



DIY

- 103** • Antec Nine Hundred
- Icy Dock MB559
- MSI mPC 51PV
- PC Power & Cooling Silencer 750
- Sapphire Toxic X1950XTX
- Thermaltake Big Typhoon VX



Page 103

Page 69



Page 44

Page 88

Page 24

Page 81

Page 116

Page 100



***Your Competition
Won't Stand a Chance.***



**GeForce®
8800 GTX**



***The Next Level of High Performance
Graphics Cards and Memory from PNY Technologies®***

XLR8™

- ***The Latest Performance NVIDIA®-based GPUs***
- ***Blazing Fast, Low-Latency Memory***
- ***Exceptional Quality Components***

Visit www.pny.com/XLR8

HELP & HOW-TO

COMPUTER CURES

97 Our tech expert discusses ways to irrevocably destroy your data, transfer files off an old notebook, and block program installs. Also: a tip for resolving random reboots.

WEEKEND PROJECT

100 Replace Your Laptop Screen

The bad news: You've broken your notebook's display. The good news, relatively speaking: Fixing it yourself could be easier and cheaper than you think. Our guide shows you how to buy and install a replacement.

BUYING BASICS

128 How to Buy the Right Desktop-Replacement Notebook

TECHMARKET

COMPLETE PRODUCT MARKETPLACE GUIDE

- 107** Midrange Desktops
- 112** Budget Notebooks
- 116** Mainstream Flat-Panel Displays
- 118** Ultracompact Digital Cameras

WEB BUYER

THE BEST SITES FOR ONLINE SHOPPING

- 121** Tech Products
- 121** Printers
- 122** Direct PC Vendors
- 123** Mac Hardware and Software
- 123** Software
- 124** Utilities

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

TRENDS

15 Microsoft relents on license-transfer limits in Windows Vista. Also, new "hybrid"-design Hitachi hard drives might conserve mobile battery life, and TV and movie downloads hit Microsoft's Xbox.

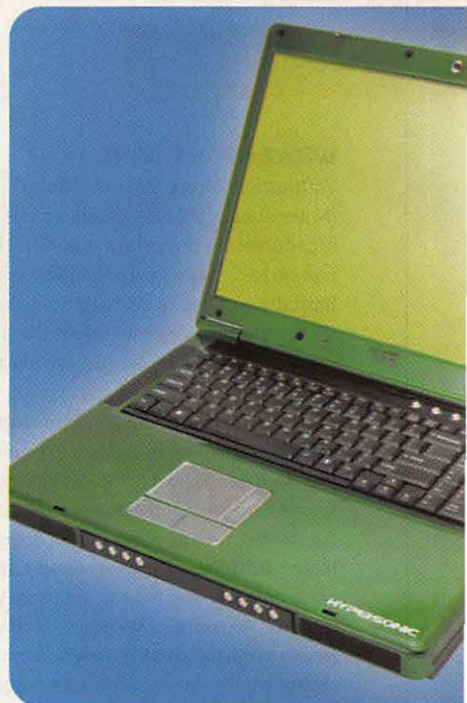
DEPARTMENTS

- 8** Editor's Note
- 8** Letters
- 125** Spotlight
- 127** Ad Index

16



119



128



JANUARY 2007 VOLUME 27 NUMBER 1 ISSUE 322 Computer Shopper (ISSN 0886-0556) is published monthly, for \$24.97 per year in the U.S. and \$54.97 per year outside the U.S., by SX2 Media Labs, LLC, 460 Park Ave. S., New York, NY 10016-7942. Periodicals Mail postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Publications Mail Agreement No. 40009221. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Computer Shopper, P.O. Box 52965, Boulder, CO 80322-2565. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to PO Box 503, RPO West Beaver Creek, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 4R6. Portions of Computer Shopper are published under license from CNET Networks, Inc., San Francisco, CA, USA. Editorial items appearing in Computer Shopper that were originally published on www.cnet.com, www.download.com, or www.news.com are the copyright property of CNET Networks, Inc., or its suppliers. Copyright © 2007 CNET Networks, Inc. All rights reserved. "CNET" is a trademark of CNET Networks, Inc. All other content Copyright © 2007 SX2 Media Labs, LLC. All rights reserved. Permission to use Computer Shopper content is granted on a case-by-case basis. SX2 Media Labs welcomes requests. Please direct inquiries to computershopper@reprintbuyer.com. You may also make phone requests by contacting Reprint Management Services at 717-399-1900. "Computer Shopper" is a trademark of SX2 Media Labs, LLC. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.



WITH MICROSOFT'S LONG-AWAITED Vista operating system finally hitting the market next month, and Apple's new Leopard OS following in the spring, PC buying in 2007 is about to get a lot more fun. Although the biggest advances to affect today's PC technology—

such as dual-core CPUs, dual-GPU graphics systems, high-definition/double-layer DVD drives and burners—first appeared more than a year ago, the arrival of new operating systems will make 2007 the year that they really start to matter to mainstream users.

It's a good year to be in the market for a new computer, and there's no better time than the present to get prepped. To make sure you're in the know before you buy, check out our "Real Guide to PC Shopping" on p. 69. We provide a rundown of all you need to know about buying a new PC, from choosing a processor to picking a monitor to examining the warranty information. Whether you're shopping for a budget system or a top-of-the-line rig, we'll spell out what you need.

Next to your PC setup, one of the most-important purchases for your home office is your printer. Choosing between an inkjet



and a laser used to be a no-brainer: Inkjets were for color and lasers were for fast text. But in today's market, the lines between the two technologies have blurred. Our feature

"The Great Debate: Inkjet or Laser?" on p. 81 presents the facts to help you decide which printer technology is right for you—and your budget. Taking into consideration cost of ownership, as well as feature set, we present the state of the desktop-printer market. And to help you decide on a particular model, we've also included good, better, and best-bet options for both inkjets and lasers.

Where you buy your tech products can be just as crucial as what you buy. For the past three years, we've rated the shopping experience at top brick-and-mortar tech stores in our annual "Rating the Retailers" story. (See the September 2006 issue.) But because so many of us buy tech products online these days, we decided it was time to put online retailers (a.k.a. e-tailers) through their paces. Turn to "Rating the E-Tailers" on p. 88 to find out which of six popular tech-shopping sites impressed our undercover shoppers most.

janice.chen@computershopper.com

LETTERS

WHAT ABOUT WINDOWS?

Your article "Store More in a Snap" (November, p. 90) was excellent, but it didn't address an important question that has caused me to postpone increasing my hard drive capacity. What's the solution for registering Windows when the primary (C:) drive is replaced? Lee Shelton

Microsoft doesn't require Windows reactivation if you make minor changes to your system, such as adding a CD-ROM drive or a second hard drive. If the changes are more substantial, such as swapping out your primary hard drive and adding memory at the same time, you may have to reactivate Windows XP. According to Microsoft's Web site (www.microsoft.com), if a major hardware change requires activating Windows again, you will be notified and have three days to

activate your copy of Windows. We've had to reactivate Windows XP because of hardware changes, and the process was smooth—we simply called the supplied phone number, explained the situation, and were able to reactivate Windows quickly. —Ed.

SUCCESSFUL BARGAIN BUILD

It took several months to complete, but I recently finished building the PC featured in the June issue ("Build a Bargain," p. 64). It turned out great. I really enjoy your magazine and the "how-to" articles. Keep up the good work! Charles Brack

MORE PDAs PLEASE!

I look forward to getting Computer Shopper every month and enjoy reading it from cover to cover. One thing I haven't seen

A ViewSonic VX2025wm 20-Inch Flat-Panel Display
Go to computershopper.com/survey. See sweepstakes rules on p. 127.

lately is a side-by-side comparison of PDAs. My wife's old iPaq died, and I'm in the market for a new handheld. I'm hoping that you plan a PDA roundup in the near future. Chad Walcker

CORRECTION

In the November issue, we incorrectly stated the weight of the Fujitsu Q2010 notebook in "The Best in Tech 2006" (p. 61) and on the Top 25 page (p. 56). The correct weight is 2.2 pounds.

We want to hear from you.

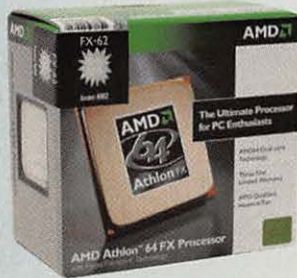
WRITE: Letters, Computer Shopper
460 Park Ave. South, 9th Fl.
New York, NY 10016
E-MAIL: feedback@computershopper.com
Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published in any medium.

For subscription service questions, address changes, or to order: Please contact us at www.service.cshopper.com (customer service) or www.subscribe.cshopper.com (to order); Phone: US and Canada (800) 274-6384, elsewhere (902) 563-4752; Mail: Computer Shopper, P.O. Box 52565, Boulder, CO 80322-2565 (please include mailing label, as it contains information that will expedite processing); Fax: (303) 504-0518; E-mail (please include your full name and the address at which you subscribe; do not send attachments): cshopper@inedata.com. **Subscriptions:** The one-year (12-issue) rate is \$24.97. Outside the US add \$30 per year for surface mail, US funds only. Please allow 3-6 weeks to receive your first issue as well as for any changes to take place on an existing subscription. **Back issues:** \$8 each in the US, \$12 each elsewhere (subject to availability). Prepayment is required. Make checks payable to Computer Shopper. Mail requests to: Back Issues, Computer Shopper, P.O. Box 52565, Boulder, CO 80322-2565. **Mailing list:** We sometimes make our customer lists available to third parties that may interest you. If you do not wish to receive their mailings, please write us at: Computer Shopper, P.O. Box 52565, Boulder, CO 80322-2565.



BEST PLACE TO BUY ONLINE, PERIPHERALS, SOFTWARE & CORE COMPONENTS

[Enter Promo Code COS21206 for a **FREE T-SHIRT** with these items]



AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 Windsor 2.8GHz 2 X 1MB L2 Cache Socket AM2 Dual Core Processor

Dual-core technology is like having two processors, and two working together is better and faster than one working alone. Do more in less time.

FREE SHIPPING

\$899.99



FREE SHIPPING

\$269.99

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+
Windsor 2.2GHz 2 x 512KB L2 Cache
Socket AM2 Dual Core Processor



FREE SHIPPING

\$349.99

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+
Windsor 2.4GHz 2 x 512KB L2 Cache Socket
AM2 Dual Core Processor

Computer Shoppers, Welcome Home.

Newegg.com, where can you find the biggest selection of computer gear on the net at the most competitive prices. With unsurpassed customer service, it's your final destination for technology, well after you're done reading this magazine of course.

• 98% of orders ship within 1 business day • 500,000 product reviews from customers • "A" rating on ALL merchant ranking sites • Over 50,000 customer testimonials



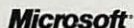
\$419.99

HP Business EN322UA
Pentium4 519 (3.06GHz) 512MB DDR2 80GB
ATI Radeon Xpress Integrated Win XP Pro



\$489.99

HP Compaq EN286UT
Pentium4 524 (3.06GHz) 512MB DDR2 80GB
ATI Radeon Integrated Graphics Win XP Pro



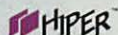
\$31.99

Microsoft Intellimouse
Explorer 3.0 Black 5 Buttons 1x Wheel
USB + PS/2 Optical Mouse



\$279.99

Just PC HT-1100
Black ATX Media Center Home Theater PC
Case w/VFD Includes Remote



\$89.99

HiPER HPU-4K580-MS
ATX 12V 580W Power Supply 100-120V
NVIDIA SLI Certified 47-63Hz



\$129.99

Creative I-TRIGUE L3800
48 Watts 2.1 Speaker w/Bi-Amplification
Includes Wireless Remote



\$799.99

HP Compaq RB545UT
AMD Turion 64 X2 1.6GHz 15" XGA 512MB
60GB DVD/CD-RW Combo Notebook



\$1,149.99

HP Compaq EN190UT
AMD Turion 64 X2 1.8GHz 15" SXGA+ 1GB 80
GB DVD+_R/RW ATI Radeon Xpress Notebook

©2006 Newegg Inc. All rights reserved. Pricing and Availability: Prices good from 12/12/06 to 02/12/07 or while supplies last. Prices, availability and terms of offers may change without notice. Taxes and shipping charges, if applicable, are not shown. Newegg is not responsible for pricing or other errors and reserves the right to cancel orders arising from such errors. All items sold as retail unless otherwise noted. OEM products may be sold without packaging, documentation or other articles. Free shipping does not apply to Television orders. Television stands are not included they must be purchased separately.



NO PAYMENTS FOR 6 MONTHS
with your Newegg.com Preferred Account
See web site for more information. Promotion ends 02/28/07

Introducing desktop theater.

Bring music, games and movies to life with sound that seems to surround you. Unique Bose® technologies deliver the performance you'd expect from a five-speaker system. With no rear speakers and wires. No sound card upgrade. No adapters. Just one USB connection and you're immersed in theater-like sound.

Bose® Companion® 5 Multimedia Speaker System



For more information or to purchase, call
1-800-324-3089, ext. RA130
or visit www.bose.com/c5

©2006 Bose Corporation. Patent rights issued and/or pending.
Companion is a registered trademark of Bose Corporation.

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

COMPUTER SHOPPER

EDITOR IN CHIEF Janice J. Chen

EDITOR	Rik Fairlie
MANAGING EDITOR	Wendy Sheehan
ART DIRECTOR	Chris Phillips
SENIOR EDITOR, ONLINE	Sean Portnoy
ASSOCIATE EDITOR	Matthew Murray
STAFF EDITOR	Les L. Shu
ASSISTANT EDITOR	Erin Kandel
COPY CHIEF/ASST. MANAGING EDITOR	John A. Burek
COPY EDITOR	Jasmin Malik Chua
ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR	Todd Betterley
PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHER	Chris Gould

CNET REVIEWS

EXECUTIVE EDITORS	Scott Ard, David Carnoy, John Morris, Mike Ricciuti, Lindsey Turrentine
SECTION EDITOR	Matthew Elliott
SENIOR EDITORS	Wayne Cunningham, John P. Falcone, Kent German, Lori Grunin, David Katzmaier, James Kim, Phil Ryan, Robert Vamosi
SENIOR ASSOCIATE EDITORS	Dan Ackerman, Rich Brown, Bonnie Cha, Michelle Thatcher
ASSOCIATE EDITORS	Jasmine France, Nicole Lee, Kevin Massy, Elsa Wenzel, Felisa Yang
ASSISTANT EDITOR	Will Greenwald
LABS MANAGER	Daniel A. Begun
ASSISTANT LABS MANAGER	Eric Franklin
TESTING ANALYST	Dong Ngo
ASSOCIATE TESTING ANALYST	Matthew Fitzgerald
LAB TECHNICIANS	Michael Degnan, Matthew Wood
INVENTORY COORDINATOR	Pedro Burgos
PRODUCER	Neal Okin
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT	Dino Salee

PUBLISHER Colleen Daly

ADVERTISING SALES

EAST COAST SALES MANAGER	Steven Goodman
NORTHEAST	IL, IN, MA, ME, MI, MN, MO, OH, NH, RI, VT, WI, Canada
REGIONAL SALES MANAGER	Neil Hochman (917) 326-5844
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE	Nancy Roscoe (917) 326-8720
SOUTHEAST	AL, AR, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, NJ, NY, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV
REGIONAL SALES MANAGER	Justin Schiller (917) 326-8704
NORTHWEST	CA ZIP codes 94000-94356, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY, Canada
REGIONAL SALES MANAGER	Gabriel Rogol (650) 270-4961
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE	Aida Rodriguez (708) 836-1231
SOUTHWEST	CA ZIP codes 90000-93599, AZ, CO, IA, KS, ND, NE, NM, OK, SD
REGIONAL SALES MANAGER	Eric Farmer (310) 376-5878
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE	Aida Rodriguez (708) 836-1231
ACCOUNT COORDINATOR (EAST COAST)	Anne L. Hurst (917) 326-8726
ACCOUNT COORDINATOR (WEST COAST)	Shawn Calo (917) 326-8722

VP, MARKETING GM, ONLINE PUBLISHING Josh London

MARKETING

SENIOR MARKETING MANAGER	Elizabeth Hill
TECHNICAL PRODUCER	Richard Grech
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR	Shawne Burke Pecar
DIRECTOR, SINGLE-COPY SALES	Mark Peterson

VP, BUSINESS OPERATIONS Martha Sybert

PRODUCTION

SENIOR PRODUCTION MANAGER	Jane M. Hazel
LAYOUT ADMINISTRATOR	Randall McCall
ELECTRONIC PREPRESS SPECIALIST	Deborah Jarski
ACCOUNTANT/FINANCIAL ANALYST	Francina Wilson
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	Adriana Melendez

SX2 MEDIA LABS

PRESIDENT AND CEO	David Sills
CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER	Elizabeth Roberts
CHAIRMAN	Barry Schwimmer



Computer Shopper, 460 Park Ave. South, 9th Fl., New York, NY 10016
Sales Info: 800-999-7467, Editorial: 917-326-8700, Fax: 212-481-0920
Customer Service: 877-214-7390, Subscription Inquiries: 800-274-6384

And more.

More detail. More drama. From just two visible speakers and a hideaway Acoustimass® module. All the simplicity you'd expect from Bose, including a control pod that puts functions at your fingertips. Hear one for yourself, and discover why Bose is the most respected name in sound.

Bose® Companion® 5 Multimedia Speaker System



For more information or to purchase, call
1-800-324-3089, ext. RA130
or visit www.bose.com/c5

©2006 Bose Corporation. Patent rights issued and/or pending.
Companion is a registered trademark of Bose Corporation.

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

Shop PC Mall for the widest selection of computers



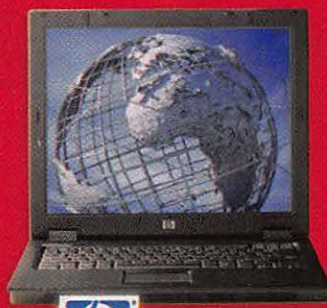
hp nx6310 Notebook
Intel® Celeron® M Processor 410 (1.46GHz),
256MB DDR2 533 SDRAM, 40GB SATA Hard
Drive, DVD/CD-RW, 15" XGA, 56K Modem
10/100 Ethernet NIC, Windows® XP Home



only **\$449⁹⁹**

#7073710

Price reflects \$100 mfr. mail-in rebate. Price before rebate is \$549.99.
Offer ends 1/31/07. Limit 5 per customer. Download coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.



hp nx6310 Notebook
Intel® Celeron® M Processor 410,
(1.46GHz), 512MB DDR2 533 SDRAM,
40GB SATA Hard Drive, DVD/CD-RW,
15" XGA, 10/100 Ethernet NIC,
Windows® XP Home



only **\$499**

#7074004

Price reflects \$100 mfr. and \$40 PC Mail-in rebates. Price before rebates is \$639.
Offer ends 1/31/07. Limit 5 per customer. Download coupons at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

Laptop Deals

hp nx6325 Notebook

AMD Sempron Mobile 3200+
(1.60GHz), 512MB SDRAM,
40GB HD, DVD/CD-RW, 15" XGA,
802.11b/g, Gigabit NIC, Win XP Pro



only **\$599***

#7117578

hp nx7400 Notebook

Intel® Core Solo T1300
(1.66GHz), 512MB RAM, 60GB
HD, DVD/CD-RW, 15.4" WXGA,
802.11a/b/g, Win XP Pro SP2



only **\$699^{99**}**

#7116430

hp nx9420 Notebook

Intel® Core 2 Duo T7200 (2GHz),
1GB SDRAM, 100GB Hard Drive,
DVD±RW DL, 17" WSXGA+,
802.11a/b/g, Gigabit NIC, Win XP Pro



only **\$1,739⁹⁹**

#7117594

hp tc4400 Notebook

Intel® Core 2 Duo Processor T5600
(1.83GHz), 1GB SDRAM, 80GB HD,
12.1" XGA, 802.11a/b/g Wireless,
Gigabit NIC, Windows® XP Tablet



only **\$1,779⁹⁹**

#7117610

13.3" MacBook w/Boot Camp and Win XP Pro Pre-Installed

Intel Core Duo 2GHz, 1GB DDR2,
120GB HD, DVD±RW/CD-RW,
13.3" TFT, 802.11b/g, Gigabit
NIC, Mac OS + Win XP Pro



only **\$1,593**

#7150017

15.4" MacBook Pro w/Boot Camp and Win XP Pro Pre-Installed

Intel Core 2 Duo 2.33GHz,
2GB SDRAM, 120GB Hard Drive,
DVD±RW, 15.4" XGA, 802.11g,
Gigabit NIC, Mac OS + Win XP Pro



only **\$2,693⁹⁸**

#7133535

3000 C200 Notebook

Intel® Celeron® M 420 (1.60GHz),
512MB RAM, 80GB Hard Drive,
DVD/CD-RW, 15" XGA Display,
802.11b/g WLAN, 56K Modem,
10/100 LAN, Windows® XP Pro



only **\$749**

#7130945

ThinkPad® Z60t Notebook

Intel® Centrino® Technology, Intel®
Pentium® M (1.73GHz), 512MB
RAM, 40GB HD, DVD/CD-RW,
14" WXGA, 802.11a/b/g, Gigabit
Ethernet, Windows® XP Pro



only **\$787⁷⁷**

#623078

ThinkPad® T60 Notebook

Intel® Core Duo T2300e
(1.66GHz), 512MB RAM,
60GB Hard Drive, DVD/CD-RW,
14.1" XGA, 802.11a/b/g Wireless,
Gigabit Ethernet, Windows® XP Pro



only **\$1,099**

#7088552

Satellite M115-S1071

Intel® Celeron® M 420 (1.60GHz),
512MB RAM, 80GB Hard Drive,
DVD SuperMulti, 14.1" WXGA,
802.11b/g WLAN, 56K Modem,
10/100 LAN, Windows® XP Home



only **\$668⁹⁹**

#7119368

VAIO BX660PS2 Notebook

Intel® Core 2 Duo T5600
(1.83GHz), 1GB RAM, 80GB HD,
DVD±RW DL, 15.4" WXGA
Display, 802.11a/b/g WLAN,
Gigabit Ethernet, Windows® XP Pro



only **\$1,329⁹⁹**

#7116349

VAIO UX280P Notebook

Intel® Core Solo U1400 ULV
(1.20GHz), 1GB RAM, 40GB HD,
4.5" WSVGA Touch-Screen LCD,
2 Cameras, 802.11a/b/g WLAN,
Bluetooth, Windows® XP Pro



only **\$1,989⁹⁹**

#7116434

Download rebate coupons at www.pcmall.com/rebates. *Price reflects \$100 mfr. mail-in rebate. Price before rebate is \$699. Offer expires 1/31/07. **Price reflects \$100 mfr. mail-in rebate. Price before rebate is \$799.99. Offer expires 1/31/07.

Display Deals

hp L1706 17" Flat-Panel LCD
1280 x 1024 Resolution,
500:1 Contrast Ratio



\$164
\$124 #608656
After \$40 mfr. mail-in rebate. Price before
rebate is \$164. Ends 1/31/07. Download
coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

hp L1906 19" Flat-Panel LCD
1280 x 1024 Resolution,
500:1 Contrast Ratio



\$209
\$169 #608658
After \$40 mfr. mail-in rebate. Price before
rebate is \$209. Ends 1/31/07. Download
coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

GM-171B 17" Flat-Panel LCD
1280 x 1024 Resolution,
500:1 Contrast Ratio



\$198⁹⁹
\$89⁹⁹ #608658
After \$109 mfr. mail-in rebate. Price before
rebate is \$198.99. Ends 12/31/06. Download
coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

Digital Imaging Deals

HV10 High-Def Camcorder
10X Optical and 200X Digital
Zooms, DIGIC DV II, RGB Color
Filter, Optical Image Stabilization
FREE HD Video Editing Software
via Mail-In Coupon. Ends 1/31/07.



only **\$1,299⁹⁹**

#7115459

Graphire4 White 6x8 Tablet, Pen and Mouse

The fastest, most comfortable way
to work on a computer. With both
a Wacom pen and mouse you'll
have the right tool for any task.



only **\$159⁹⁹**

#607896

Intuos3 4x6 Widescreen Pen Tablet

Intuos3 Pen Tablets set the
standard for digital artistry by
turning on the full power of
Photoshop, Painter and more!



only **\$209⁹⁹**

#7118292

LCD-TV Deals

LC-52D62U 52"
AQUOS LCD-TV
1920 x 1080 Resolution,
2000:1 Contrast Ratio



only **\$3,499⁹⁹**

#7118620

LC-42D62U 42"
AQUOS LCD-TV
1920 x 1080 Resolution,
1200:1 Contrast Ratio



only **\$1,869⁹⁹**

#7118619

LC-26SH20U 26"
HDTV-Ready AQUOS LCD-TV
1366 x 768 Resolution



\$699⁹⁹
\$599⁹⁹ #7017244
After \$100 mfr. mail-in rebate. Price before
rebate is \$699.99. Ends 12/12/06. Download
coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

LC-46D62U 46"
AQUOS LCD-TV
1920 x 1080 Resolution,
2000:1 Contrast Ratio



only **\$2,599⁹⁹**

#7118807

Olevia 337H 37"
HDTV-Ready LCD-TV
1366 x 768 Resolution,
1600:1 Contrast Ratio



only **\$899⁹⁹**

#7053132

Olevia 342i 42"
HDTV-Ready LCD-TV
1366 x 768 Resolution,
1600:1 Contrast Ratio



only **\$1,149⁹⁹**

#7053134

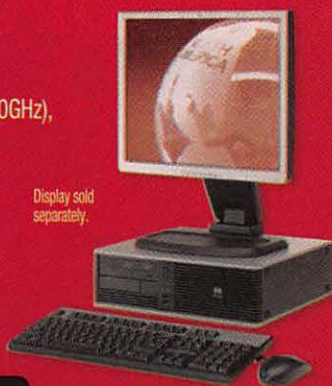
and electronics at the lowest prices!

hp Compaq dc5700 Small Form Factor

Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 541 (3.20GHz), 1GB RAM, 80GB Hard Disk Drive, DVD/CD-RW, Windows® XP Pro



Display sold separately.



only
\$687⁹⁹

#7149951

Desktop Deals

hp dx2200 Minitor

Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 524 with HT Technology (3.06GHz), 512MB SDRAM, 80GB HD, DVD-ROM, 10/100 NIC, Windows® XP Pro



only
\$475⁹⁹

#7081589

hp dc5100 Minitor

Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 651 with HT Technology (3.40GHz), 512MB SDRAM, 80GB HD, DVD-ROM, Intel GMA 900, Gigabit Ethernet, Windows® XP Pro



only
\$762⁹⁹

#7081614

hp dc7600 Convertible Minitor

Intel® Pentium® D 945 (3.40GHz), 1GB PC2-4200 DDR2, 80GB HD, DVD/CD-RW, Gigabit NIC, Windows® XP Pro



only
\$859⁷⁷

#7081653

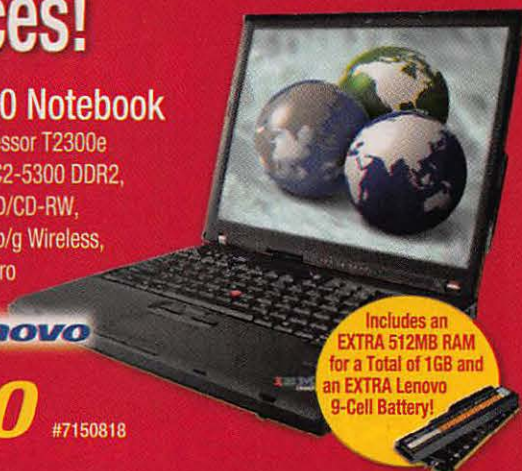
ThinkPad T60 Notebook

Intel® Core Duo Processor T2300e (1.66GHz), 512MB PC2-5300 DDR2, 60GB Hard Drive, DVD/CD-RW, 14.1" XGA, 802.11a/b/g Wireless, Gigabit NIC, Win XP Pro



only
\$1,260

#7150818



Includes an EXTRA 512MB RAM for a Total of 1GB and an EXTRA Lenovo 9-Cell Battery!

Printer Deals

X6170 All-in-One Office Center with USB Cable

4800dpi Max. Res., Up to 15ppm Color and Up to 19ppm Black (print speeds will vary with use)

LEXMARK



only
\$64⁹⁹

#173230

HP Photosmart 8050 Printer

6-Ink Printing System, Up to 24ppm Color and Up to 30ppm Black (print speeds will vary with use)



only
\$69⁹⁹

#604811

HP Color LaserJet 1600 Printer

600dpi Maximum Resolution, Up to 8ppm Color or Black (print speeds will vary with use)



only
\$299⁹⁹

#7048272

MFC-3360C Multifunction

6000 x 1200dpi Max. Res., Up to 20ppm Color and Up to 25ppm Black (print speeds will vary with use)



only
\$99⁹⁹

#7122398

FREE 2-year additional warranty. Registration required through 12/30/06.

MFC-5460CN Multifunction with Built-In Networking

6000 x 1200dpi Max. Res., 100-Sheet Input, Up to 25ppm Color and Up to 25ppm Black (print speeds will vary with use)



only
\$149

#7122400

FREE 2-year additional warranty. Registration required through 12/30/06.

MFC-5860CN Multifunction with Built-In Networking

6000 x 1200dpi Max. Res., 350-Sheet Input, Up to 25ppm Color and Up to 25ppm Black (print speeds will vary with use)



only
\$179⁹⁹

#7122401

FREE 2-year additional warranty. Registration required through 12/30/06.

Storage and Networking Deals

750GB Monsoon FireWire and USB 2.0 Hard Drive

Speedy 8.9ms Access Time, Horizontal or Vertical Positioning, Preformatted for Mac OS X



only
\$429⁹⁹

#7075737

After \$15 mfr. & \$15 PC Mail mail-in rebates. Price before rebates is \$459.99. Ends 12/31/06. Download coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

1TB G-Force MegaDisk

Sturdy Aluminum Enclosure, Hot-Pluggable USB 2.0 Interface, Windows and Mac Compatible



only
\$399⁹⁹

#7010437

After \$40 mfr. & \$40 PC Mail mail-in rebates. Price before rebates is \$479.99. Ends 12/31/06. Download coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

120GB Titanium II USB 2.0 External Hard Disk Drive

Blazing 8.5ms Access Time, Aluminum Enclosure



only
\$39⁹⁹

#7106643

After \$15 mfr. & \$15 PC Mail mail-in rebates. Price before rebates is \$69.99. Ends 12/31/06. Download coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

250GB Porsche Design USB 2.0 External Hard Drive

Features a slim design for easy portability that's lightweight, durable and stackable!



only
\$99⁹⁹

#382411

500GB My Book Pro Edition Triple Interface External HD

Features USB 2.0, FireWire 800 and FireWire 400 connectivity and includes EMC Retrospect Express software!



only
\$264⁹⁹

#7071806

DWL-922 Wireless G Network Starter Kit

Includes the DI-524 High-Speed 2.4GHz Wireless Router and the DWL-G122 High-Speed 2.4GHz Wireless USB Adapter



only
\$29⁹⁹

#624835

After \$35 mfr. mail-in rebate. Price before rebate is \$64.99. Ends 12/31/06. Download coupon at www.pcmall.com/rebates.

Memory Deals

1GB Secure Digital Card

Dependable portable storage for compatible PDAs, digital cameras, MP3 players, digital camcorders and other devices!



only
\$16⁹⁹

#182034

Kingston

1GB DataTraveler USB 2.0 Flash Drive

The perfect solution for anyone on the move who wants to quickly store and transfer files—even between Macs and PCs!



only
\$19⁹⁹

#604074

Kingston

Sansa e250 2GB MP3 Player with FM Tuner

Holds Up to 480 MP3s or Up to 960 WMA Songs, Built-in Mic, Video Playback, 1.8" Color LCD



only
\$109⁹⁹

#7017238

SanDisk

X-EGG Digital Audio Player

This portable MP3 boom box is only about the size of a baseball! But it pumps out big sound from USB drives, SD memory, iPods and MP3 Players!



only
\$79⁹⁹

#7152195

PC Mall

1-800-681-3282
Visit us at pcmall.com
Source Code: SHOPPER

4 MEANS MORE!

Massive Storage with Maximum Safety and Speed.

Available in: 1.0 TB (HD-Q1.0TSUIR5)
2.0 TB (HD-Q2.0TSUIR5)

DriveStation QUATTRO™

- DriveStation to the Power of 4.

MORE Storage -

Four High-Speed Hard Drives in 1, up to 2TB

MORE Speed -

Ultra Fast 100MB/s Transfer Speed

MORE Reliability -

Supports RAID 0, 1, 5

MORE Flexibility -

Plug and Play eSATA and USB 2.0 connections



www.buffalotech.com/laptop-quattro

Buy.com



PC Connection



BUFFALO™

[STORAGE] WIRELESS MULTIMEDIA MEMORY

Despite Price Cuts, Americans Are Spending More on Televisions

ALTHOUGH manufacturers are slashing prices on digital televisions, Americans are spending about the same, or more, on them as they did in the past.

From early August to mid-September, the average amount spent in North America on a digital set—including liquid-crystal-display (LCD) and plasma models—rose from \$909 to \$975, according to Stephen Baker, an analyst at NPD Techworld. From September 2005 to September 2006, the average amount spent on an LCD set increased from \$965 to \$1,020.

By contrast, Riddhi Patel, an analyst at iSuppli, found a small decline in the average amount spent on digital sets. According to iSuppli's data, which covers LCD and plasma

models, the average went from \$1,319 in the third quarter of 2005 to \$1,309 in the same period in 2006—a decline of less than 1 percent.

The buoyancy in TV sales is the result of increasing screen sizes and consumer demand.




Manufacturers such as Panasonic, Samsung, and Sharp have invested heavily in factories that can produce big-screen sets at lower prices.

As a result, according to Patel's numbers, digital televisions from 30 to 34 inches sold for \$1,639 (on average) in the third quarter of 2005, while the

same-size sets sold for \$1,278 in the same period in 2006—a 22 percent decline. Sets with screens from 40 to 44 inches dropped even further—38 percent, from \$3,935 to \$2,438.

When Americans shop at electronics superstores, it appears they aren't hunting for bargains—instead, they are maximizing how much screen they can get for their money. Consumers recall seeing 42-inch screens at \$4,000 a few years ago; now, when they see the same set for \$2,000, they can't resist. Patel points out that 551,000 models with screens 30 inches and larger sold in the third quarter of 2005. In the same period of 2006, nearly three times as many—1.6 million—flew off the shelves. —Michael Kanellos

 News.com

• TRENDSPOTTING

A cell for your cell phone? That might happen sooner than you think.

PolyFuel, a company specializing in engineered membranes for fuel cells, announced in November that it has developed an ultra-thin hydrocarbon membrane that can deliver far greater power density than any perfluorinated-polymer membrane now on the market.

While it's still too early to judge the impact of this discovery, the hydrocarbon membrane could be a significant step toward a fuel cell for portable devices. And that could translate to longer battery run-time in a smaller—and cheaper—package. —Matthew Murray

Microsoft Backtracks on Vista Transfer Limits

Reversing a licensing change announced in mid-October, Microsoft has said that it will not limit the number of times that retail customers can transfer a Windows Vista license to a different computer.

In October, Microsoft issued its user license for Vista, including terms that would have limited the ability of those who buy a boxed copy of the operating system to transfer that license. Under the proposed terms, users could have made such a switch only one time. (The one-time-transfer limit does not apply to the license that comes on a new,

Vista-equipped PC; typically, copies of Windows purchased on a new PC cannot legally be transferred to another PC.)


The transfer restriction prompted an outcry among hardware enthusiasts and others. The new licensing terms mirror the terms for Windows XP: Users can transfer a license to a new PC an unlimited number of times, provided they stop using the OS on (and uninstall it from) the prior machine.

"We're trying to be really clear about



our intention to prevent piracy," says Mike Burk, a Microsoft product manager. "At the same time, after listening to the feedback that came in, (we) felt that we needed to make this change."

By reversing course, Burk says, Microsoft hoped to assuage users' concerns, particularly those of hobbyists who frequently upgrade the components of their PCs. In some cases, doing so with XP triggers Windows to consider the machine a new PC. —Ina Fried

 News.com

Hitachi to Boost Size, Speed of Notebook Drives

IN 2007, Hitachi Global Storage Technologies will debut hybrid hard drives that the company claims will cut battery consumption for notebooks. The drives are also expected to include a function that encrypts data automatically.

Capacity on notebook drives will increase, as well. In the first half of 2007, Hitachi will release a 2.5-inch-diameter 200GB drive that spins at 7,200rpm. In the second half of the year, it will launch a same-form-factor notebook drive that will spin at 5,400rpm and hold about 250GB of data. Hitachi's current biggest-capacity 7,200rpm notebook drive holds 100GB, while its biggest 5,400rpm model tops out at 160GB.

The push into encryption follows several well-publicized incidents of laptop theft that have compromised the privacy of consumers. Encryption and decryption will occur automatically as data is written


notebook.

The hybrid drives will also feature built-in flash memory, which should reduce battery consumption. In a hybrid, data gets written first to the flash memory, and the drive wakes up and spins

only when the flash chips fill up. Hybrid drives should also let Windows Vista PCs come out of a hibernation state relatively rapidly.

"A hybrid only works in a system with Vista," says Larry Swezey, Hitachi's director of

mobile hard drive product strategy and marketing. "For people running XP, there is no value in hybrid drives." —Michael Kanellos

 News.com



and retrieved. The feature will be included on all 2.5-inch drives; whether you can use the feature, however, will depend on your specific settings and how the manufacturer configures the

Lost? Try Asking Your Cell Phone

WHEN IT COMES to cell phones, U.S. consumers might as well be working with stone knives and bearskins.

The picture, though, is slowly beginning to change, says John Ellenby, CEO of GeoVector. The company, which has created software that serves up 3D maps and walking directions on phones, already sells that software to wireless carriers in Japan, and it is now negotiating with U.S. carriers. The service may launch soon in the United States.

The software is fairly self-

explanatory. Point the phone at a building, and the device will check the Internet and bring back information on that building. Punch in "Chinese restaurant," and the phone will list nearby ones and give you walking directions.


Phones that have the software installed also include GPS chips and compasses. The software has

been tested in New Zealand, as well as in Japan. The mapping isn't as good in the United States as

it is in Japan—pedestrian-friendly pathways, such as elevated walkways for crossing multilane roads, sometimes don't show up on U.S. electronic maps. The biggest problem, however, has been to overcome the reluctance of cell-phone carriers.

U.S. carriers expect to keep most of the revenue culled from users of the new service, Ellenby says. In Japan, carriers let the application vendors take a larger portion of the revenue. (Revenue can be generated by packet use or by ads.)

"They are very sophisticated carriers that share the wealth," Ellenby says. "I can't emphasize that enough." —M.K.

 News.com



Xbox Live Cues Up TV, Movie Downloads


Microsoft was set to launch in late November a new Xbox Live service that enables users to download selected TV shows and movies, according to Scott Henson, Microsoft's director of platform strategy.

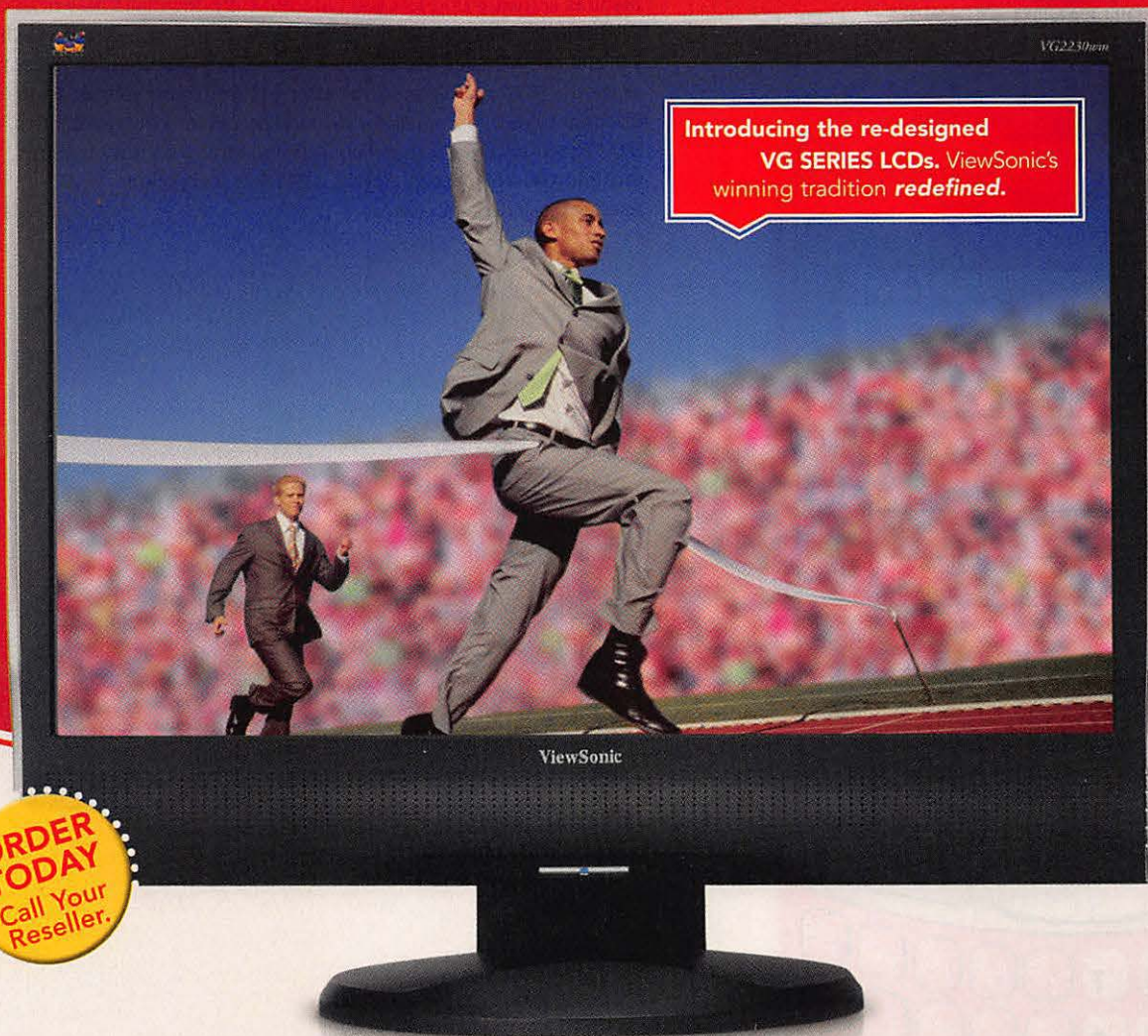
The idea is to expand content beyond Xbox Live games, to movies such as *Patriot Games*, *The Matrix*, and *V for Vendetta*, as well as TV shows such as *Friends*, *South Park*, and *Survivor*. Some of the content will be available in high-definition (HD) format, while the rest will be in standard-definition (SD).

Pricing for the new content had not been finalized at press time, but the downloads via Xbox Live are expected to be "competitive" in the marketplace. HD content will cost somewhat more than that in SD.

Users will be able to keep TV shows they purchase, while movies downloaded through Xbox Live will be made available in a rental model for two weeks, Henson says.

—Daniel Terdiman

 News.com

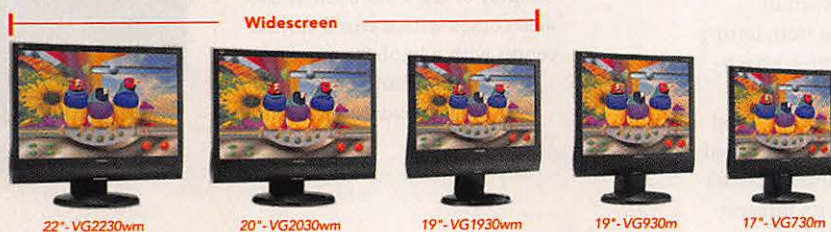


**ORDER
TODAY**
Call Your
Reseller.

VG SERIES | LCD's BUILT FOR PERFORMANCE, PRODUCTIVITY AND COMFORT.

Get reacquainted with ViewSonic's VG line of displays. These revolutionary LCDs feature an incredible 360° swivel, 3.2" height adjustment and tilt. Performance enhancements include ClearMotiv® video response as fast as 5ms, OptiSync® digital/analog connectivity and integrated speakers. Also available in widescreen, the VG Series displays offer high-performance features without the high-performance price tag. Enhance productivity. Work comfortably.

VISIT VIEWSONIC.COM/GRAPHICSERIES FOR PRODUCT DETAILS. CALL YOUR RESELLER TO ORDER.



VG series available in a variety of sizes and options.

ViewSonic 
the choice of professionals

NEW PRODUCTS GEAR

BY ERIN KANDEL



Snazzy smartphone

Palm's newest smartphone features a smart new look. The **Treo 680** has a slimmer case than previous Treo devices, and it comes in four bold colors: graphite, crimson, arctic white, and copper (pictured). Aside from letting you e-mail, browse the Web, and open attachments on the go, the quad-band, GSM-based phone has built-in dial-up networking capabilities, Bluetooth 1.2, and support for high-speed Enhanced Data rates for GSM Evolution (EDGE) service. Fun lovers will appreciate its integrated VGA camera and MP3 player. Pricing and carrier information were not available at press time. *Palm, www.palm.com*

PC-free downloads

Smarter than your average router, the \$109.99 **Asus WL-500g Premium** features software that lets you automatically download files from the Web sans PC. Simply hook it up to an external storage device via USB 2.0, and the WL-500g will download files you select from BitTorrent, or via the FTP or HTTP protocol, after you switch off your desktop or disconnect your laptop. As for its wireless networking capabilities, the 802.11g router offers a signal booster and strong security features, including Wi-Fi Protected Access 2 (WPA 2) encryption. *Asustek Computer, usa.asus.com*



In-depth audio

With its \$99.99 **X-540** speakers, Logitech proves that quality surround sound doesn't have to cost a lot. The six-piece set features 70 watts of total RMS power, as well Frequency Directed Dual Driver technology, which Logitech says helps the speakers produce a more even sound. The five gloss-black satellites are wall-mountable, and the center-channel speaker has a clip to hook onto a flat-panel display or television. The X-540 also comes with a wired control center with a knob for adjusting volume and bass levels. *Logitech, www.logitech.com*



Portable jack pack

Exponentially increase your laptop's connectivity with Belkin's \$199.99 **Notebook Expansion Dock**. This low-profile device, which looks like a small router, has VGA and DVI video ports, five USB ports, a 10/100Mbps Ethernet jack, and an optical audio output and four 3.5mm jacks for six-channel surround sound. The silver dock connects via your notebook's ExpressCard slot and is compatible with both Windows XP and the upcoming Windows Vista operating system. Belkin, www.belkin.com



By land or by sea

An essential tool for travel by boat or car, the \$799 **Lowrance iWay 600C** GPS navigation device enables marine mapping and navigation—plus, it can overlay satellite imagery on road maps saved on its 30GB hard drive. You can view maps in 2D mode or an Elevated 3D mode on the device's 5-inch, 640x480 screen. You also get a built-in FM transmitter, support for Macs and PCs, automatic course rerouting, and the option of a 3D bird's-eye view when traveling on land. Lowrance Electronics, www.lowrance.com



Highly portable hard drive

As pocket-friendly as any flash-based thumb drive, U.S. Modular's \$129 **Monster Drive** packs a tiny 12GB hard drive into a compact, stainless-steel body with a built-in USB port. The half-ounce device requires no external power and is both Mac- and PC-compatible. Plus, the tiny 4,200rpm drive inside is shock-resistant, so your data files are protected on the go. U.S. Modular, www.usmodular.com

Wanna guess who wins?



Introducing Antec's **NINE** HUNDRED advanced gaming case. With all of its high performance features, like a massive 200mm cooling fan and nine ventilated drive bays, you'll have an unfair advantage over your competition (just the way it ought to be). For more information about the Antec's Nine Hundred visit www.antec.com.

Antec
The Power of You



COMPUSA



MICRO CENTER

STAPLES

Fry's Outpost.com

amazon.com

buy.com

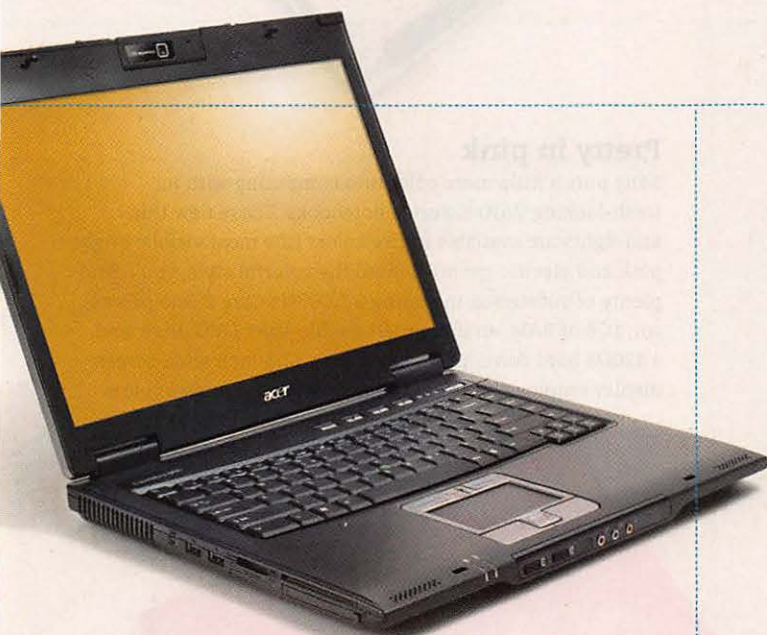


NEW PRODUCTS PCs

BY ERIN KANDEL AND LOUIS RAMIREZ

One great entertainer

Outfitted in a sleek A/V-rack-style chassis, Alienware's **DHS A Series** brings high-performance computing to your living room. Starting at \$999, the stylish Media Center PC comes with a powerful Athlon 64 X2 dual-core CPU (chips from the 3800+ to the 5000+ are available) and AMD Live technology for enhanced multimedia functionality. Plus, a 160GB hard drive will store your digital media collection. (The system can be configured with up to 1.5 terabytes of storage.) Also onboard: dual TV tuners, a High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) output for displaying high-definition video, and a built-in D2Audio amplifier, which can pump out 1,000 watts of sound to six-channel speakers. Alienware, www.alienware.com



Travel light with might

At just 6.4 pounds, the **Acer TravelMate 6460** and its 15.4-inch screen just might convince you to finally dispatch your desktop PC to the recyclers. The TravelMate packs a powerful 2GHz Core 2 Duo processor coupled with an ATI Mobility Radeon X1300 graphics card. The hard drive is protected by antishock technology that detects abrupt motion in case of a drop, automatically parking the drive heads to prevent accidental data wipeout. Pricing had not been set at press time. Acer America, us.acer.com

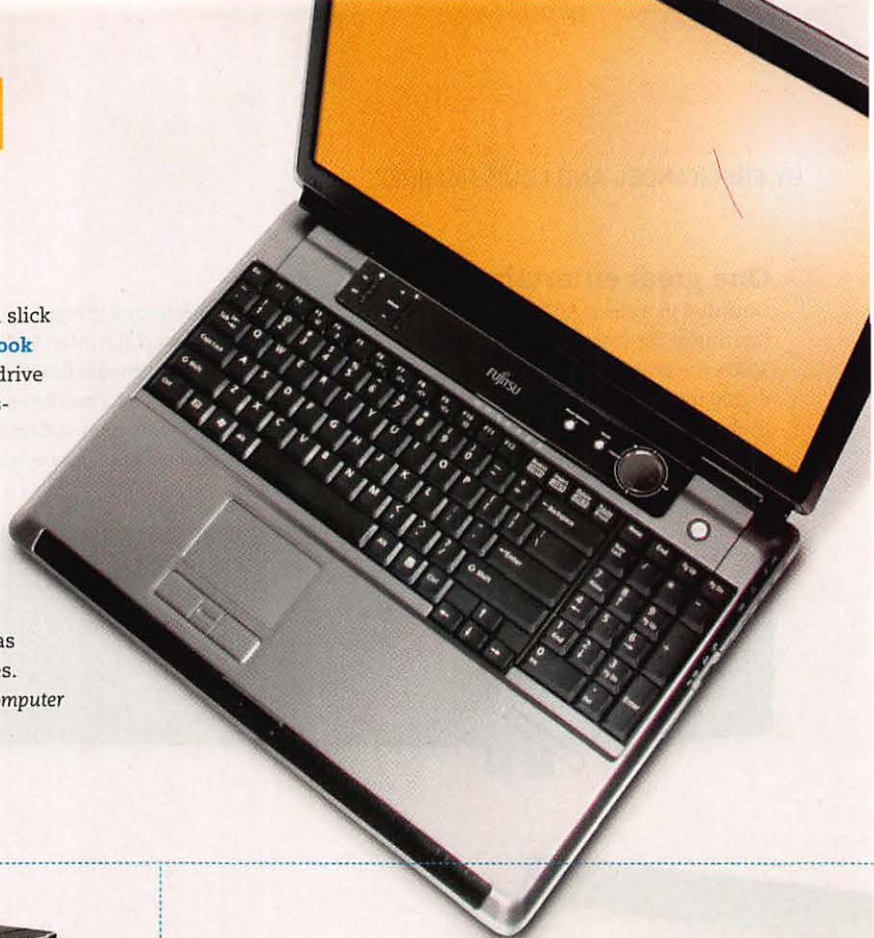
Dirt-cheap duos

Think Core 2 Duo processors don't come in budget boxes? Take a look at Gateway's **DX420 Series** PCs, which start at \$599.99. Powered by the 1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300 processor, they come with the Windows XP Media Center Edition OS, a flash-memory-card reader, and two PCI Express (PCIe) card slots (one PCIe x16, one PCIe x4). All three PCs in the series include nVidia's GeForce 7300 LE graphics card and can be outfitted with a 10,000rpm Western Digital Raptor hard drive. The \$799.99 DX420S comes with a 19-inch LCD, while the \$999.99 DX420X includes a full gigabyte of RAM and a 19-inch LCD. Gateway, www.gateway.com



The book for high-def DVD

If you're looking for high-definition DVD in a slick package, set your sights on the **Fujitsu LifeBook N6420**. Fujitsu pairs an HD DVD (read-only) drive with a 17-inch display and an image-processing subsystem that the company says boosts sharpness and delivers genuine colors. The 10.6-pound laptop includes a 512MB ATI Mobility Radeon X1600 graphics card, plus stereo speakers with a built-in subwoofer. An Intel Core 2 Duo processor is at the heart of the unit, and you can outfit the laptop with as much as 400GB of storage space using dual hard drives. Base configurations start at \$1,499. Fujitsu Computer Systems, www.fujitsu.com/us



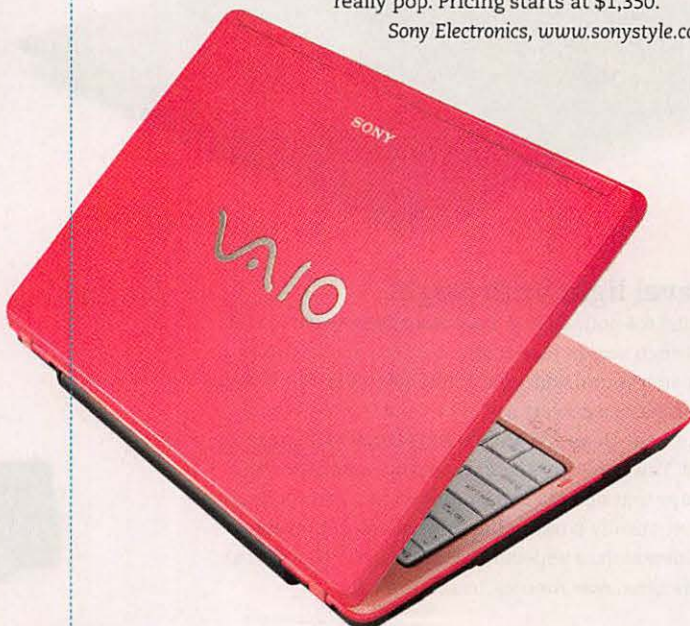
Gee-whiz graphics

PC gamers are drooling over nVidia's sizzling GeForce 8800 GTX graphics card, and the \$3,999 **ABS Ultimate X8 Ultra** is one of the first rigs to offer it. Based on the G80, nVidia's next-generation GPU, the 768MB 8800 GTX card should deliver stutter-free, immersive gaming even at high resolutions with all of a game's eye candy turned on. ABS also equips the X8 Ultra with a quad-core 2.66GHz Core 2 Extreme QX6700 processor, 2GB of 1,066MHz DDR2 SDRAM, two 150GB Western Digital Raptor 10,000rpm hard drives, and an 18x DVD±RW drive. ABS Computer Technologies, www.abs.com

Pretty in pink

Sony puts a little more color into computing with its fresh-looking **VAIO C Series** notebooks. These new thin-and-lights are available in five colors (the most visible: bright pink and electric green). Behind the colorful style, you'll find plenty of substance, including a 1.66GHz Core 2 Duo processor, 1GB of RAM, an integrated double-layer DVD drive, and a 120GB hard drive. This 5-pounder's 13.3-inch wide-screen display employs Xbrite-ECO technology that makes colors really pop. Pricing starts at \$1,350.

Sony Electronics, www.sonymstyle.com

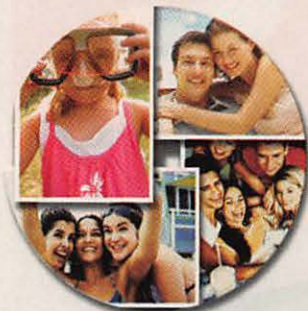


Pictures

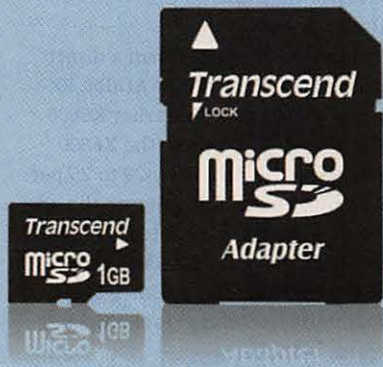
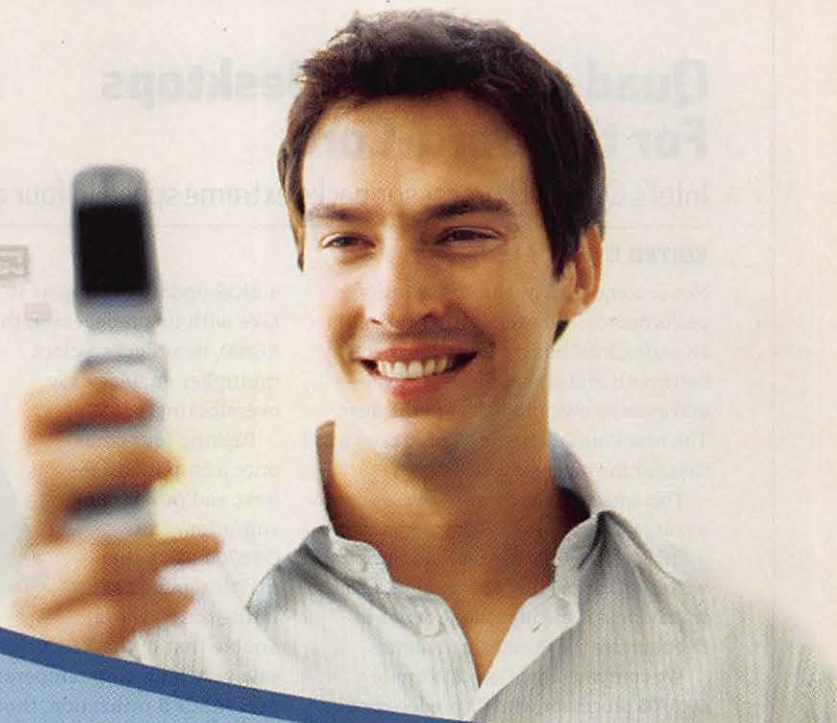
Music

Transcend

Exceeding Your Expectations



Data



microSD™ Card



Transcend's microSD™ card is the perfect choice to get the most out of your mobile devices. Give your mobile phone or PDA the extra memory that will allow you to store music, videos, and pictures – all in the convenience of a memory card about the size of a fingernail. 1GB: about 1000 pictures or 240 MP3 songs.

Hi-Speed™ with UHS (Flash Interface)	Normal-Speed™ with UHS (Flash Interface)
512MB, 256MB	1GB, 512MB, 256MB, 128MB

SD™



miniSD™



MMCmobile™ Card



www.transcendusa.com

Buy.com
The Internet Superstore™

eCOST.com

newegg.com

Fry's Outpost.com

mwave.com
"Buy Smart, Buy Now!"

TigerDirect.com

BuyMemory.com

Transcend Information, Inc.

Order Line 1-800-886-5590

© Transcend 2006. All rights reserved. Transcend and Transcend logo are registered trademarks of Transcend. Transcend reserves the right to change, without notice, product offerings or specifications. All other products, brand names, company names and logo are trademarks of their respective owners. For lifetime warranty policy, please see Warranty Card for details and limitations.

REVIEWS

THE LATEST HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE PRODUCTS

Quad-Core CPU, Desktops For the Hard-Core

Intel's QX6700 processor packs extreme speed in four cores

EDITED BY RIK FAIRLIE

Not content to enjoy the Core 2 Duo's performance lead over AMD's Athlon 64 FX series, Intel has created a quad-core behemoth that aims to leave its rival—and even its own products—in the dust. The new Core 2 Extreme QX6700 does just that, for the most part.

This quad-core processor is essentially a pair of Core 2 Duo X6700s packed into a single chip. While the top-end sample we tested carries the "Extreme" moniker, watch for slower chips in the series to debut under the Core 2 Quad name.

We compared the Core 2 Extreme QX6700 processor with its predecessor, Intel's Core 2 Extreme X6800, as well as against AMD's Athlon 64 FX. We also rounded up three high-end desktops that use the new quad-core processor. They're available today and represent class-leading performance—for now, anyway. At press time, AMD planned to launch a four-core platform, codenamed 4x4, sometime in late 2006. Stay tuned for details.

INTEL CORE 2 EXTREME QX6700 CPU

The Core 2 Extreme QX6700, priced at \$999, is the season's must-have upgrade for video-editing enthusiasts.

The QX6700 (code-named Kentsfield) is a pair of Core 2 Duo X6700 processors, clocked at 2.66GHz and packed into a single chip. The four processor cores share a pair of 4MB L2 caches. The CPU fits in a standard LGA775 socket, although most existing motherboards will need

a BIOS update to support it. Like with its predecessor, the X6800, its unlocked clock multiplier enables easy overclocking.

Packing four cores onto a chip increases heat and power consumption. The QX6700 has a thermal design power rating of 130 watts, double that of the X6800. We saw very high chip temperatures at 100 percent CPU utilization, though the chip cools down quickly during more-typical operations. The QX6700's new Digital Thermal Sensor can regulate fan speeds, which enables it to keep your system quiet when it's idle but cranks up the fans (and noise) during heavy work periods.

In our tests, the QX6700 blew away the X6800 on multithreaded applications that can take advantage of multiple cores. Rendering DVD video using multiple filters in Sony Vegas 7.0 took 2 minutes and 56 seconds, compared with 4 minutes and 59 seconds for the X6800. Many Photoshop CS2 tasks, such as converting images

to RGB or CMYK format, were nearly twice as fast on the QX6700. And results on Futuremark's 3DMark06 CPU tests



were 60 percent faster than with the dual-core X6800.

Though we didn't perform a direct comparison with the AMD Athlon FX-62, tests comparing the earlier X6800 chip with the FX-62 show the X6800 chip leading the Athlon by 20 to 25 percent in most tests. Considering the additional performance offered by the QX6700, it's evident that AMD won't have competitive performance available until its upcoming dual-chip 4x4 platform launches.

Whether the processor is Intel or AMD, few of today's applications are

EDITORS' RATING 8.5
0 BETTER >> 10

PROS The fastest desktop CPU available; unlocked clock multiplier enables overclocking; thermal sensor allows quiet cooling when idle

CONS Few current programs can tap the processor's full potential

EDITORS' TAKE The fastest CPU on the market—an over-clockable quad-core processor that will appeal especially to video editors

Core 2 Extreme QX6700 Versus Core 2 Extreme X6800

	Core 2 Extreme QX6700 (Quad-Core)	Core 2 Extreme X6800 (Dual-Core)
Sony Vegas 7.0 (MPEG-2) (Minutes:Seconds)	2:56	4:59
Sony Vegas 7.0 (iPod Video) (Minutes:Seconds)	1:54*	1:52*
Nero Recode (iPod AVC) (Minutes:Seconds)	1:04	1:05
FEAR (Average Score)	104fps	109fps
Quake 4	75fps**	82fps**
Futuremark 3DMark06	5,133	4,902
Futuremark 3DMark06 CPU Test	3,864	2,444

* = AVC codec supports only two cores; only used 50 percent of CPU power on quad-core PC

** = With multithreading disabled, QX6700 scored 63fps; X6800 scored 68fps

multithreaded, and only a small percentage of those that are can take advantage of more than two cores. Using Nero Recode to encode a movie for the video iPod, for instance, we saw nearly identical results on our QX6700 and X6800 machines, since Nero Recode was able to use only 50 percent of the available computing power on the quad-core chip. Quake 4 and single-threaded Photoshop filters were actually slightly slower on the QX6700, owing to its slower clock speed (2.66GHz on the QX6700, compared with 2.93GHz for the X6800.) Dual-core chips deliver noticeable acceleration when multitasking, but further benefits are less obvious with quad-core; additional multitasking speedups are most evident when running multiple multithreaded applications.

That said, many programs are in the works to take better advantage of quad-core chips. Remedy's upcoming Alan Wake game, for instance, can employ all four cores: While one core runs the main game code, another is devoted to game physics, and the remaining cores stream data and manipulate graphics output.

The QX6700 is a video editor's dream chip, offering dramatic benefits now for programs like Sony Vegas 7.0 and Adobe Premiere. For others, it's a speedy chip that's likely to have much of its potential untapped until more multithreaded software is available.

CYBERPOWER GAMER INFINITY 1950



The aluminum case of Cyberpower's \$3,599 Gamer Infinity 1950 features an eye-catching, glossy red-and-black paint job that screams for attention. What's really noteworthy, however, is its blistering performance: The Gamer Infinity was the fastest quad-core rig in this roundup.



Cyberpower
Gamer Infinity
1950

Inside the box you'll find a 2.66GHz Intel Core 2 Extreme QX6700 processor, overclocked to 3.46GHz and capped with a Cooler Master watercooling kit for temperature control. It sits atop an Intel D975XBX motherboard (code-named Bad Axe), complemented by 2GB of Corsair XMS2 memory and a brace of ATI Radeon X1950 XTX CrossFire graphics cards. For storage, Cyberpower equips the Gamer Infinity with two 150GB 10,000rpm Western Digital Raptor hard drives in a RAID 0 array, plus a 300GB 7,200rpm drive for data.

This all adds up to class-leading performance. The Gamer Infinity performed better than its competitors in this first wave of quad-core systems. It rendered our test video in Sony Vegas

in 3 minutes and 55 seconds, faster than the Gateway and Vigor PCs did. Also, it scored an impressive 202 frames per second (fps) in our Half-Life 2: Lost Coast graphics test, though the Gamer Infinity's 1,440x900

wide-screen

resolution is lower than the 1,600x1,200 used by the others.

Still, the Gamer Infinity is at the top of the heap—you can't buy better.

This caliber of power generates a fair amount of heat, but the watercooling system is efficient and unobtrusive, thanks in part to the case's eight 120mm cooling fans. Cyberpower has

worked the radiator into the inside of the case, leaving only the depth of a fan protruding from the back. The system also includes a front-mounted fan-control module to help you limit noise. In fact, if you listen carefully, the "blipping"

EDITORS' RATING 8.2

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Comparatively inexpensive; class-leading performance; efficient watercooling; ample USB, FireWire ports; excellent monitor

CONS Light on software; only one open PCI slot

EDITORS' TAKE Blazingly fast and generously configured, the fastest desktop in the pack

in this section

24 QUAD-CORE DESKTOPS

Cyberpower Gamer Infinity 1950
Gateway FX530XT
Vigor Force Recon QXN
Intel Core 2 Extreme QX6700



30 DESKTOPS

Dell Dimension C521
HP Slimline Pavilion s7600e



32 NOTEBOOKS

Toshiba Qosmio G35-AV660
Gateway NX860XL
PC Club Enpower ENP680
Asus S6F



36 COMPONENTS

ATI Radeon X1650 Pro
nVidia GeForce 7950 GT



38 PERIPHERALS

Western Digital Passport
Portable Hard Drive
Logitech Cordless Desktop
MX3200 Laser



42 HOME NETWORKING

HP Media Vault MV2020
Trendnet 300Mbps Wireless
N-Draft Firewall Router
(TEW-631BRP)



44 DIGITAL CAMERAS

Canon EOS Rebel XTi
Fujifilm FinePix S6000fd



46 CONSUMER TECH

HP iPaq RX5900 Travel
Companion
T-Mobile Dash



48 SOFTWARE

Corel Snapfire Plus
Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0
Microsoft Encarta Premium 2007
Norton AntiVirus 2007
Microsoft Streets & Trips 2007
with GPS Locator
QuickBooks Premier 2007



THIS MONTH'S TOP PRODUCTS

55 Alternative-Brand Desktops
56 Thin-and-Light Laptops
58 Wi-Fi Routers
62 Smartphones
63 Downloads



For details on how we test the hardware we review, visit computershopper.com/HowWeTest.

head movements of the two 10,000rpm Raptor hard drives are often the only noticeable sounds from the computer.

The Gamer Infinity also includes a double-layer DVD±RW burner and a DVD-ROM drive, along with an internal 12-format card reader. You won't find a floppy drive, however, although Cyberpower does leave an open front-accessible 3.5-inch bay if you need one.

Three additional 3.5-inch bays are vacant on the inside. Also available are two additional front-accessible 5.25-inch bays. You have only one usable PCI slot, but the four USB ports on the rear panel, plus two on the front left side (as well as a FireWire port in each of those same spots), make external connectivity a viable option.

You could spend hours looking at the ViewSonic VA1912WB 19-inch wide-screen LCD—and love every minute of it. Video is crystal-clear and graphics, especially in games, are smooth enough to often pass for video. Toss in the Creative Inspire P7800 speakers, and even at “just” 90 watts, you'll be surrounded by eight-channel sound whether watching a DVD or blowing up a tank. (Also, the P7800 has an auxiliary port for your iPod.)

Cyberpower isn't as generous with software—besides Windows XP Professional, the only app that the company ships with the Gamer Infinity is InterVideo's WinDVD 7. The warranty is another story—you get a three-year limited plan on parts and lifetime coverage for labor. It also includes lifetime 24/7 toll-free tech support.

Cyberpower's comfortable pricing for this level of computer, coupled with its three-year warranty, makes it an obvious pick for the serious video editor or hard-core gamer.

GATEWAY FX530XT

When Gateway starts offering overclocked computers, you know the practice of running processors at higher-than-rated speeds has gone mainstream. You can order Gateway's \$4,049 FX530XT with its Core 2 Extreme QX6700 proces-

sor bumped from the stock 2.66GHz up to 3.2GHz. This machine,

from a staid manufacturer of home computers, is now in direct competition with PCs from gaming specialists. Gateway's PC didn't yield performance scores quite as high as

those of the Cyber-

power and Vigor offerings, however. The FX530XT rendered our test video in Sony Vegas in 4 minutes and

18 seconds, a significant boost from the 9 minutes and 20 seconds taken by a dual-core X6800 PC, but slightly slower than the 4 minutes and 1 second clocked by the Vigor Force Recon QXN and the 3 minutes and 55 seconds of the Cyberpower Gamer Infinity 1950.

While it's not the fastest PC out there, the FX530XT's numbers are more

EDITORS' RATING

7.9

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Quiet; tool-less case design; excellent monitor

CONS Little room for expansion; lacks a third hard drive

EDITORS' TAKE A great Media Center PC that also excels at gaming and video editing



Gateway
FX530XT

Oddly, despite offering an overclocked processor, Gateway equips the FX530XT with 2GB of 667MHz DDR SDRAM, even though the motherboard supports faster 800MHz memory.

Otherwise, the FX530XT is well-equipped, with a 512MB ATI Radeon X1950 XT video card paired with a matching CrossFire card, a pair of 150GB 10,000rpm Western Digital Raptor hard drives in a RAID 0 array, a DVD±RW drive and a DVD-ROM/CD-RW combo drive, a Creative Sound Blaster X-Fi audio card, and a nine-format flash-memory-card reader. We'd like to have seen a third, larger drive for data storage—you'll definitely want to add one if you spring for the optional TV-tuner card to complement the Windows XP Media Center Edition OS.

The FX530XT's BTX case is cramped—our configuration left room for only one additional 3.5-inch drive and one PCI card—but it's extremely well-designed. The door and drives all require no tools to work with, and the twin 120mm fans slow to a dull purr during normal operation, cranking up the noise only when the processor is heavily taxed.

The wireless keyboard and mouse were both comfortable. Soundwise, although the bundled Logitech X-530 six-piece speaker set delivered crisp, clear audio, the sub-woofer is somewhat wimpy for gaming and home theater use.

Most impressive was Gateway's new FPD2485W LCD monitor, a 24-inch wide-screen beauty that provides a supercrisp, bright image, as well as DVI and component-video inputs, Faroudja video processing, and support for video secured by High-Bandwidth Digital Content

Desktop Benchmarks

	Cyberpower Gamer Infinity 1950	Gateway FX530XT	Vigor Force Recon QXN
CPU Clock Speed (After Overclocking)	3.46GHz	3.2GHz	3.46GHz
Graphics Cards	Two ATI Radeon X1950 XT (512MB, CrossFire)	Two ATI Radeon X1950 XT (512MB, CrossFire)	Two nVidia GeForce 7900 GTX (512MB, SLI)
TEST RESULTS			
Half-Life 2: Lost Coast*	202fps**	176fps	192fps
Sony Vegas 7.0b MPEG-2 Rendering (Minutes:Seconds)	3:55	4:18	4:01
Sony Vegas 7.0b iPod AVC rendering (Minutes:Seconds)	4:04	4:20	4:15
OSMark CPU Test*	5,109	4,797	5,304
Futuremark 3DMark06*	11,862	11,995	12,204
Futuremark 3DMark06 CPU Score*	5,201	4,792	5,086

* = Higher is better

** = Tested at a resolution of 1,440x900; not directly comparable to the other two systems, which were tested at 1,600x1,200.

True multi-tasking: Run all your applications at the same time with increased performance. Also the perfect choice to power Media Center PCs the hub of your digital home.



FREE

Keyboard, Mouse, Speaker
(sku. A7204)
2GB Sandisk Mini Pen Drive
(sku. A7205)

Why ZT's Systems ?

- Rock Solid Stability
- Lifetime Tech Support
- Great Value Solutions with Better Performance

ZT recommends Windows® XP Media Center Edition

ZT Multi-tasking MCE System A7205

Dual-Core AMD® Athlon™ 64 X2 Processor 3800+
genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP
Media Center Edition 2005 (software)
(Microsoft® Windows® Vista Capable)

- 2GB DDR2 667MHz Dual Channel Memory
- Seagate® 320GB SATA (3Gb/s) 16MB Cache Hard Drive
- 7 In 1 Media Card Reader
- 16x DVD and CD Burner
- 16x DVD-ROM
- 6-channel Audio Subsystem
- Built-in 10/100 LAN, 8 x USB2.0
- Logitech® Wireless Internet Keyboard & Optical Mouse
- 1-Year Limited Warranty
- FREE 2GB Sandisk Mini Pen Drive (Before 01/15/07)

\$849

ZT Value MCE System A7204

AMD® Athlon™ 64 Processor 3800+
genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP
Media Center Edition 2005 (software)
(Microsoft® Windows® Vista Capable)

- 1GB DDR Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB SATA (3Gb/s) Hard Drive
- 7 In 1 Media Card Reader
- 16x DVD and CD Burner
- 6-channel Audio Subsystem
- Built-in 10/100 LAN, IEEE 1394
- 1-Year Limited Warranty
- FREE Internet Keyboard, Optical Mouse and Speakers (Before 01/15/06)

\$599

Shown with optional keyboard, mouse, speaker, & monitor

Microsoft
Windows^{XP}
Media Center Edition

**Go to
Call**

ztgroup.com/go/computershopper
866-ZTGROUP (866-984-7687)

promote code : cs0107



Purchaser is responsible for all freight costs on all return of merchandise. Full credit will not be given for incomplete or damaged returns. Absolutely no refunds for merchandise returned after 30 days. All prices and configurations are subjected to change without notice and obligation. Opened software is non-refundable. All returns have to be accompanied with an RMA number and must be in re-sellable condition including all original packaging. System's picture may include some equipment and/or accessories, which are not standard features. Not responsible for errors in typography and/or photography. All rights reserved. All brands and product names, trademarks or registered trademarks are property of their respective companies. AMD, the AMD Arrow logo, AMD Athlon, Cool'n'Quiet and combinations thereof, are trademarks of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other jurisdictions. Hyper Transport is a licensed trademark of the HyperTransport Technology Consortium. Other Product and company names used in this publication are for identification purposes only and may be trademarks of their respective companies.

REVIEWS QUAD-CORE DESKTOPS

Protection (HDCP). (Gateway offers an HD DVD player on its higher-end FX530XL model.)

Software includes the Media Center Edition OS, Microsoft Works 8.5, Adobe Photoshop Elements and Premiere Elements, and a 90-day trial of the McAfee security suite. Better still is what it doesn't include: You can order the FX530XT with an "optimized system image" at no extra cost to eliminate unnecessary bundled software and trial versions that can slow your system down. A one-year warranty with 24/7 tech support is included; longer options are available at extra cost.

Though it's not as fast as the quad-core PCs from Cyberpower and Vigor, the FX530XT is quiet, reliable, and bundled with a fantastic monitor, and it comes from a well-established manufacturer.

VIGOR FORCE RECON QXN

With even mainstream manufacturers like Gateway jumping on the over-clocked-quad-core bandwagon, Vigor Gaming Computer's \$3,999 Force Recon QXN distinguishes itself by offering complete customizability and cutting-edge performance.

The Core 2 Extreme QX6700 processor can run extremely hot when all four cores are working at full capacity, but it's in no danger of overheating in



Vigor Force Recon QXN

Vigor's sleek black-and-silver Force case, which features three neon-lit 120mm fans, as well as a gigantic 180mm unit mounted on the side. While this keeps things

cool, it also makes the QXN fairly noisy, even when the processor is idling.

The solidly built, tool-less case is huge, leaving plenty of room for additional drives. It also offers ample bling appeal, thanks to its neon fans, internal lighting, large side window, and

front-mounted LCD temperature readout. Assembly quality is first-rate, with all the cables neatly routed and tied into place.

Our QXN was equipped with a 2.66GHz QX6700 processor overclocked to 3.54GHz, as well as 2GB of 800MHz DDR2 SDRAM overclocked to 900MHz. Despite the overclocking, the system was rock-stable during extended testing, with Vigor's thermoelectric cooler keeping the processor temperature down without the hassles of watercooling.

Storage is courtesy of a pair of 150GB 10,000rpm Western Digital Raptor drives in a RAID 0 configuration, as well as an additional 500GB 7,200rpm drive and a 16x DVD writer. Despite including a pair of 512MB nVidia GeForce 7900 GTX graphics cards (each of which blocks two slots), two additional PCIe slots and a PCI slot remain open for expansion. Audiophiles may want to drop a sound card into the PCI slot, as our unit used the motherboard's built-in HD sound.

Rounding out our test machine were Logitech's G15 gaming keyboard and G5 laser mouse. Keep in mind that nearly every component in the QXN's configuration is customizable, from the hard drive to the video card to the mouse.

Performance was stellar, with the system rendering our Sony Vegas video project in just 4 minutes and 1 second, edging out the Gateway FX530XT but slightly trailing the Cyberpower Gamer Infinity 1950. The fast CPU and a pair of GeForce 7900 GTX cards in a Scalable Link Interface (SLI) configuration make for excellent gaming performance, delivering 192fps at 1,600x1,200 in Half-Life 2: Lost Coast. (Even better 3D performance should be possible now,

as next-generation graphics cards from nVidia will be available in this PC by the time you read this.)

Warranty support is good. Vigor offers three years of parts coverage and lifetime labor, with onsite service available for an additional fee. Also, Vigor provides a 30-day money-back guarantee. Though toll-free phone support is available for the life of the system, hours are limited to 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. (ET) on weekdays only.

Reviews by Denny Atkin and Bill O'Brien

EDITORS' RATING 8.0

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Excellent performance; high-quality assembly; tool-less case; room for expansion; lots of bling appeal

CONS Somewhat noisy; no monitor or speakers included

EDITORS' TAKE A quad-core desktop that combines blazing performance with maximum tweakability

Feature Comparison

	Cyberpower Gamer Infinity 1950	Gateway FX530XT	Vigor Force Recon QXN
EDITORS' RATING	8.2 ✓	7.9	8.0
Processor	2.66GHz Intel Core 2 Extreme QX6700 (overclocked to 3.46GHz)	2.66GHz Intel Core 2 Extreme QX6700 (overclocked to 3.2GHz)	2.66GHz Intel Core 2 Extreme QX6700 (overclocked to 3.54GHz)
Memory	2GB DDR2 (800MHz)	2GB DDR2 (667MHz)	2GB DDR2 (800MHz, overclocked to 900MHz)
Hard Drives	Two 150GB (10,000rpm); one 300GB (7,200rpm)	Two 150GB (10,000rpm)	Two 150GB (10,000rpm); one 500GB (7,200rpm)
Optical Drives	Double-layer DVD±RW; DVD-ROM	Double-layer DVD±RW; DVD-ROM/CD-RW combo	Double-layer DVD±RW/DVD-RAM
Graphics Cards	Two ATI Radeon X1950 XTX (512MB, CrossFire)	Two ATI Radeon X1950 XT (512MB, CrossFire)	Two nVidia GeForce 7900 GTX (512MB, SLI)
LCD Monitor	19-inch ViewSonic VA1912WB	24-inch Gateway FPD2485W	None
Speakers	Creative Inspire P7800	Logitech X-530	None
Operating System	Windows XP Professional	Windows XP MCE 2005	Windows XP Professional
COMPANY	Cyberpower 800-707-0393 www.cyberpowerpc.com	Gateway 888-888-2075 www.gateway.com	Vigor Gaming Computer 866-907-3536 www.vigorgaming.com
DIRECT PRICE	\$3,599	\$4,049	\$3,999

» Performance » Value » Support

» **Twister Series**
Starting at \$826



PLATINUM & GOLD AWARDS!
ResellerRatings.com 9.17 Rating

  **Customer Satisfaction**
Real Customer Ratings

» Digital Storm  9.17

» Alienware  6.01

» Dell  4.28

**100% CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION**



Digital Storm extreme gaming systems deliver unbeatable performance and reliability. The obsession of silky-smooth frame rates and benchmark crushing power fuels our desire to build the industry's best systems. Every system is covered with a 2 year platinum warranty and lifetime toll-free technical support.

» **Up to \$400 Instant Savings**
» **FREE* Vista Upgrade Coupons**



DIGITALSTORM
CUSTOMIZED SYSTEMS

» **digitalstormonline.com** » **1-866-81-STORM**

*Price, specifications, availability may change without notice. © 2006 Digital Storm, San Jose, CA. Digital Storm is a trademark of Digital Storm. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. *Shipping costs may apply from Microsoft. Windows XP Home includes free coupon for Windows Vista Basic with a \$50 payable fee to Microsoft. Microsoft Windows XP Professional includes free coupon for Windows Vista Business.

REVIEWS DESKTOPS



Dell Dimension C521

AMD makes respectable Dimension debut

AS ONE OF THE FIRST Dell computers to feature an AMD processor, the Dimension C521 is exactly what Dell does best: a strong-performing, mainstream desktop. It's not flashy or particularly design-conscious, but what it lacks in style it makes up for in affordability and performance. The configuration we tested, which includes a 19-inch LCD and a three-channel speaker set, is downright cheap at \$1,194.

The dual-core AMD CPU offers an excellent price-to-performance ratio. The component combination proved respectable for everyday PC tasks in our application tests. Plus, you get a TV tuner to take full advantage of the Media Center OS. Still, while our test machine's discrete graphics card is superior to an integrated solution, don't expect to play 3D games at high resolutions.

We also noted some hardware issues that might deter buyers. First, the case size is a bit awkward—not quite a midtower, not quite a small-form-factor. It can stand vertically, though we preferred it oriented horizontally on our desk with the monitor on top.

Meanwhile, our config didn't allow for expansion, but we don't see buyers of the C521 tinkering much, if at all, after purchase. Last, Dell doesn't provide any options for adding wireless networking to this model. We'd settle for an 802.11g USB dongle-style adapter at purchase, but Dell doesn't offer even that.

Still, Dell's included one-year warranty is nice, and its support package features its DellConnect service, which lets a tech remotely take over your computer to troubleshoot problems you may be experiencing. —Joshua Goldman

EDITORS' RATING 7.5

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Excellent price/component combination; cost includes speakers, 19-inch LCD; good everyday performance; solid warranty

CONS Awkward case size; no Wi-Fi options; little to no expansion

SPECS 2.4GHz Athlon 64 X2 4600+; 1GB DDR2; 320GB hard drive; double-layer DVD±RW; 19-inch Dell LCD; ATI Radeon X1300 Pro graphics (256MB); Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005

Dell, 800-915-3355
www.dell.com

Direct Price \$1,194

HP Slimline Pavilion s7600e

Near-perfect balance of size, features, and value



HP'S NEWEST Slimline Pavilion, the s7600e, has a major advantage over previous incarnations: a dual-core CPU. Thanks to AMD's energy-efficient Athlon 64 X2 chips, HP can compete better with its main competition, Apple's Mac Mini, as a powerful, feature-rich

tiny PC. The Mac Mini has an advantage in size and aesthetics, but what this Slimline sacrifices in space savings and good looks, it gains in functionality and performance. It's also less expensive: Although our review config cost \$974.99, you'd have to pay about \$100 more for a comparably equipped 1.83GHz Core Duo Mac Mini.

The HP has the edge in features, due in part to its design—when you go bigger on the case, you can do more. For exam-

ple, the Slimline has the space to host a nine-format flash-memory-card reader for easy digital-media transfers from cameras and other devices, and an internal PCI-card slot allows you to add hardware (such as the TV tuner included in our test unit). The case size has a downside, however: more fan noise.

To test performance, we compared the s7600e to the 1.83GHz Core Duo Mac Mini on as many tests as possible.

While the Mini cleaned up on our music-encoding tests, it fell behind on photo and video work. In general, though, both systems delivered solid performance for their respective prices and configs.

HP's support package is competitive, as well. You get a full year of 24/7 phone help, as well as HP's Instant Care program, which, like Dell's DellConnect, lets you give a support rep direct control of your PC for remote troubleshooting. —Rich Brown

EDITORS' RATING 8.2

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Best combination of small-scale design, features, value in its class; one available PCI slot; good support

CONS No-frills design; noisy cooling fans

SPECS 2GHz Athlon 64 X2 3800+; 1GB DDR2; 250GB hard drive; double-layer DVD±RW; no monitor; nVidia integrated graphics; Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005

Hewlett-Packard, 888-999-4747
www.hp.com

Direct Price \$974.99



cnet CNET.com

PCPitstop.com/Shopper

Try our Latest Recommended

FREE OPTIMIZE SCAN



**Special
Offer**

Promo Code:
SHOPPERJAN

Speed Up Your Computer

- *Enhanced Internet optimization*
- *More performance registry tweaks*
- *Stops unneeded programs from running*

Application benefits:

Energize Internet Speeds! Improve your internet connection up to 200% by adjusting your Windows Internet settings based on your connection type.

Recoup System Resources! Eliminate unnecessary background processes and get back memory and processor cycles stolen by rogue applications.

Maximize Hard Drive Space! Quick and easy way to find and remove unnecessary files, making your drive run even faster.

Eliminate Registry Errors! Remove erroneous and leftover registry entries created by viruses, spyware, and incorrect program removal.

Revitalize System Performance! Increase your system performance by tweaking Windows settings.

PCPitstop.com/Shopper

More
PC Pitstop
Applications:

Try free scans
now at
PCPitstop.com/Shopper



EXTERMINATE

There is a wide variety of software whose intent is to sneak onto your PC without your knowledge. This software considerably slows down your PC or worse yet opens a security hole so others can use your PC for illegal activities or spy on you and your family.

- Try our Free Spyware Scan Now.



ERASE

Many people are astounded about the amount of personal information Windows stores as you surf the web and work on your PC. Protect yourself from snoopers by clearing out this information on a regular basis.

- Try our free privacy scan to see what secrets Windows may reveal about you.

Toshiba Qosmio G35-AV660

HD DVD laptop is a multimedia powerhouse

THE TOSHIBA QOSMIO, which comes with an HD DVD drive, delivers the most-complete media-intensive experience available in a laptop, but other Media Center notebooks offer similar features at a much lower price.

Weighing 10.3 pounds, the Qosmio is bulky and heavy, even for a desktop replacement. Our pricey \$2,999 G35-AV660 review unit was packed with high-end components, including a 2GHz Core 2 Duo processor, a dedicated nVidia GeForce Go 7600 graphics card, a pair of 120GB hard drives, the HD DVD drive, and an integrated TV tuner.

EDITORS' RATING

7.7

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Crisp display; complete set of ports, connections, A/V controls; HD DVD drive

CONS Expensive; bulky, heavy; cramped keyboard; no number pad

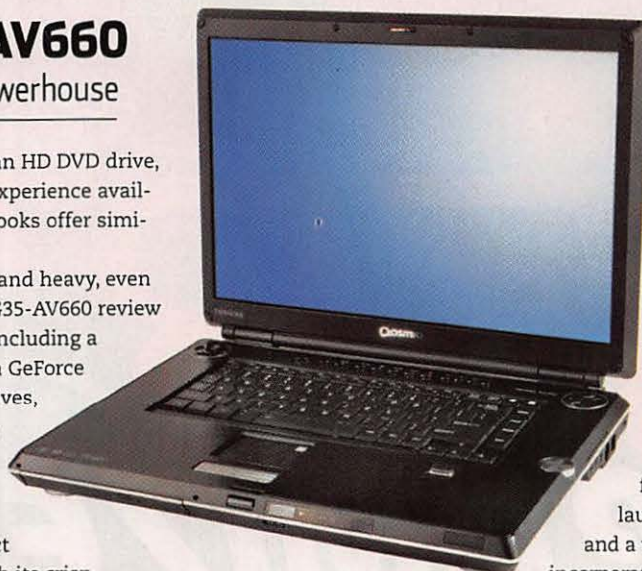
SPECS 2GHz Core 2 Duo T7200; 2GB DDR2; two 120GB hard drives; double-layer DVD±RW (HD DVD read); 17-inch TFT; Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005

Toshiba America, 800-316-0920
www.toshibadirect.com

Direct Price \$2,999

The notebook's 17-inch wide-aspect screen, with its crisp 1,920x1,200 resolution, displays high-definition content beautifully.

Despite the PC's wide case, its keyboard is cramped and lacks a dedicated number pad. Above the keyboard is a pair of rich-sounding Harman Kardon speakers, as well as a complete set of system and A/V controls, such as



buttons for adjusting display brightness and the Dolby Home Theater-enhanced sound. Also, the notebook's small touch pad has configurable quick-launch buttons and a volume control incorporated into it.

Like its predecessors, this Qosmio model offers a comprehensive selection of multimedia ports, including a High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) output, S-Video in and out ports, a monitor output, and a coaxial input for connecting to a TV-signal cable. Networking connections include Ethernet, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and a modem. You also get an ExpressCard slot and a flash-card reader.

While it couldn't keep up with Dell's top-of-the-line XPS M1710 gaming system, this Qosmio performed well in our tests. Image rendering was fluid in our anecdotal Quake 4 gameplay, though the notebook's display looked somewhat dim. —Michelle Thatcher

cnet CNET.com

Gateway NX860XL

A wide-screen notebook for gamers on the go

THE GATEWAY NX860XL is a massive multimedia laptop with a desk-hogging footprint, but the benefits of its grand scale are a giant wide-screen display and specs rivaling those of a decent gaming desktop.

At 8.5 pounds, our \$2,184 test unit was bulky, but its wide body afforded plenty of room for a full-size keyboard, a dedicated 10-key numeric keypad, and stereo speakers. The 17-inch LCD, with its sharp 1,680x1,050 native resolution, is very movie-friendly, though we wish the notebook had external media-control buttons, as well.

In addition to the standard ports and connections, the NX860XL includes VGA and S-Video outputs, a PC Card slot, a DVD burner, and a flash-memory-card reader.

Networking options include Gigabit

Ethernet, modem jacks, and 802.11a/b/g wireless. While this selection should satisfy home users, serious media hounds should check out the pricier Toshiba Qosmio G35-AV660 (reviewed above), which has high-end niceties like an HD DVD drive and an integrated TV tuner.

Powered by a 2.16GHz Core 2 Duo T7400 CPU and dedicated nVidia GeForce Go 7900 GS graphics, our review unit was a middle-of-the-road performer in our application tests,

trailing two systems equipped with the faster Core 2 Duo T7600 CPU but outperforming PCs with the slower Core 2 Duo T7200. Game performance was very good—an impressive 93.9 frames per second in our Quake 4 test—and battery life was surprisingly good for a desktop-replacement model, peaking at 3 hours and 6 minutes. —Dan Ackerman

EDITORS' RATING

7.7

0 BETTER >> 10

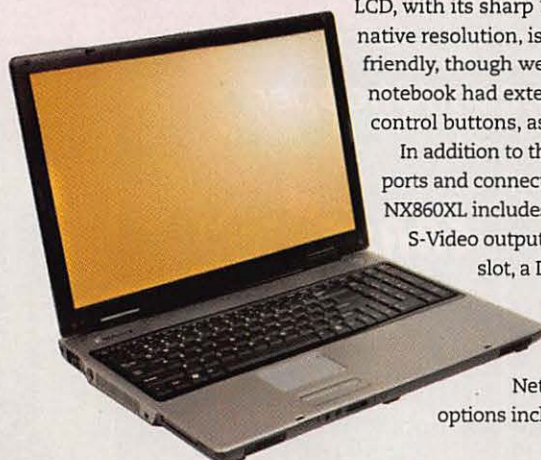
PROS Long battery life for a desktop replacement; solid gaming performance; movie-friendly 17-inch wide-screen LCD

CONS Big; heavy; no media-control buttons; no integrated TV tuner

SPECS 2.16GHz Core 2 Duo T7400; 2GB DDR2; 100GB hard drive; double-layer DVD±RW; 17-inch TFT; Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005

Gateway, 800-369-1409
www.gateway.com

Direct Price \$2,184

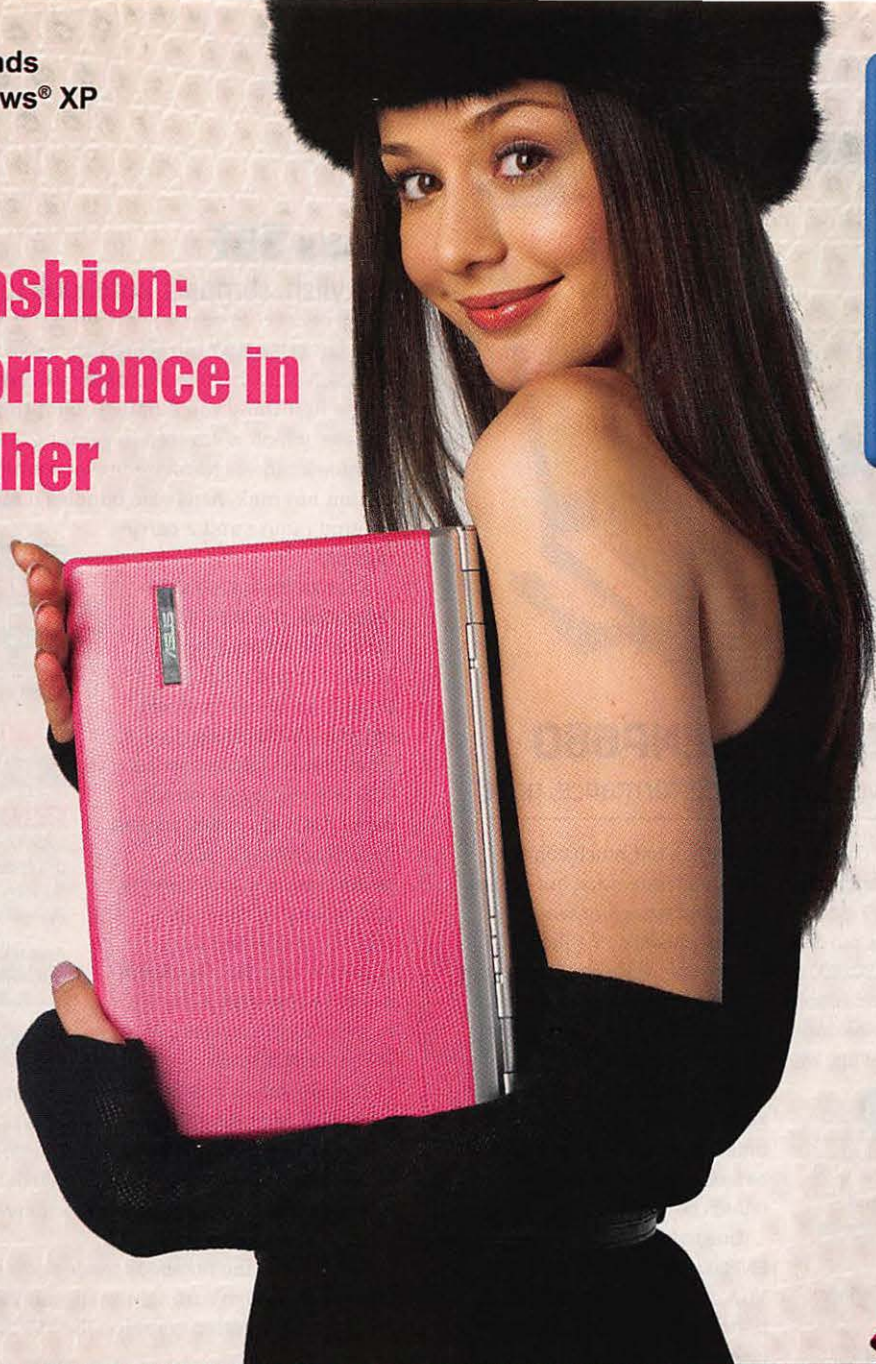


cnet CNET.com

ASUS Recommends
Microsoft® Windows® XP



Digital Fashion: Hot Performance in Pink Leather



ASUS S6F Limited Pink Edition

Finally, a notebook that would be right at home in fashion districts from New York to Milan. The S6F with Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology starts with lavish power to run several demanding applications simultaneously – letting you do more and enjoy more. ASUS captures that power in a thin and light masterpiece of design, bound in luxurious genuine leather. The result is the accessory you've always dreamed of – personal, powerful, and naturally beautiful. Indulge yourself this Christmas.

ASUS Pink S6F powered by Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology featuring Intel® Core™ Duo processor L2400, richly detailed 11.1" 1366 X 768 WXGA widescreen display with Splendid Video Enhancement Technology, 1GB DDR2 533 main memory, a generous 120 GB hard drive (5400 RPM), built-in DVD-RW Super-Multi, built-in 10/100/1000 LAN, and Bluetooth 2.0 + EDR. Each S6F weighs a mere 3.37 lbs. and comes with a matching leather mouse and a stylish carrying bag. MSRP: USD: \$2,499 CAD: \$2,849

Please visit <http://usa.asus.com/shopper> for more information

* Pricing and specifications subject to change without notice. © Copyright 2006 ASUS Computer International. All Rights Reserved. ASUS is a registered trademark of ASUSTek Computer International. Intel, the Intel logo, the Centrino logo, and Centrino, are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries.



ASUS®
Rock Solid · Heart Touching



PC Club Enpower ENP680

Poor design overshadows performance, price

THE PC CLUB ENPOWER ENP680 offers top-notch components and strong performance for a moderate price, but design missteps make this 7-pound laptop hard to recommend.

For starters, while our \$1,699 review model's 15.4-inch LCD features a sharp 1,280x800 resolution, the overly glossy screen is prone to glare and reflections. The keyboard, though full size, makes too much noise during typing, and it also flexes under even light pressure. Plus, we wish the notebook's touch pad

EDITORS' RATING 5.8

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Low price; high-end components; great performance; decent battery life

CONS Screen is too reflective; flimsy, noisy keyboard

SPECS 2GHz Core 2 Duo T7200; 2GB DDR2; 100GB hard drive; double-layer DVD±RW; 15.4-inch TFT; Windows XP Home Edition

PC Club
www.pcclub.com

Direct Price \$1,699

wasn't positioned so close to the keyboard. On the plus side, our unit featured a fingerprint reader, as well as media and quick-launch buttons.

Due to its large case, the ENP680 has room for FireWire, VGA, S-Video, and three USB 2.0 ports, as well as a microphone jack and a headphone jack that supports S/PDIF output. The laptop includes both a PC Card slot and an ExpressCard slot, in addition to a four-format flash-memory-card reader. Networking options include Ethernet, a modem, and 802.11a/b/g Wi-Fi.

Our test unit offered competitive specs for the price, including a 2GHz Core 2 Duo processor, 2GB of DDR2 RAM, a dedicated nVidia GeForce Go 7600 graphics card, and a speedy 7,200rpm 80GB hard drive. (Note that at press time, this hard drive was no longer being offered as a configuration option. PC Club has replaced it with a same-speed 100GB hard drive, which we used in our pricing.) The ENP680's performance was equally impressive; it bested several competing Core 2 Duo-based notebooks on our application benchmarks. Also, battery life was decent, lasting an above-average 3 hours and 54 minutes. —Michelle Thatcher

cnet CNET.com

Asus S6F

A stylish, compact notebook for road warriors

ONE OF THE BEST ultraportables we've seen, the \$2,699 Asus S6F delivers style and performance—but at a high price.

The first thing you'll notice about this 3.3-pounder is its case, which is covered in genuine leather and available in three shades: chocolate brown, camel, and a limited-edition hot pink. Asus also bundles a matching leather-covered mouse and a carrying bag.

Thanks to its 1,366x768 resolution, the S6F's 11.1-inch wide-screen display looks nice and crisp, although we found its glossy coating a bit too reflective. A small button just below the LCD lets you toggle among seven different power modes, including ones for high performance, movie viewing, and battery conservation. Like those of many ultraportables, the S6F's keyboard is a little cramped. Also, the buttons on the mouse pad are somewhat stiff.

The S6F offers a generous set of connections for a small notebook, including three USB 2.0 ports, a four-pin FireWire port, a VGA out, an ExpressCard slot, and a flash-card reader. Networking options include Ethernet, 802.11b/g wireless, and Bluetooth. You also get a convenient on/off switch for the Wi-Fi radio.

In our tests, the notebook made short work of everyday tasks such as Web surfing, e-mail, and video streaming. And, despite its integrated graphics, the S6F didn't so much as hic-

cup when we played back video files while running other programs. Battery life was well over three hours, enough for a full-length DVD movie.

—Louis Ramirez

EDITORS' RATING 8.0

0 BETTER >> 10

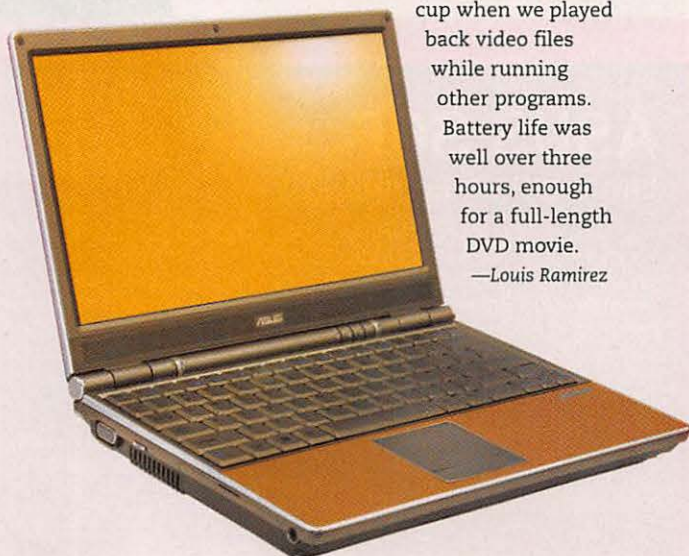
PROS Excellent design; compact; generous connectivity options; long battery life

CONS Expensive; cramped keyboard; stiff mouse-pad buttons; too-reflective screen

SPECS 1.66GHz Core Duo L2300; 1GB DDR2; 80GB hard drive; double-layer DVD±RW; 11.1-inch TFT; Windows XP Professional

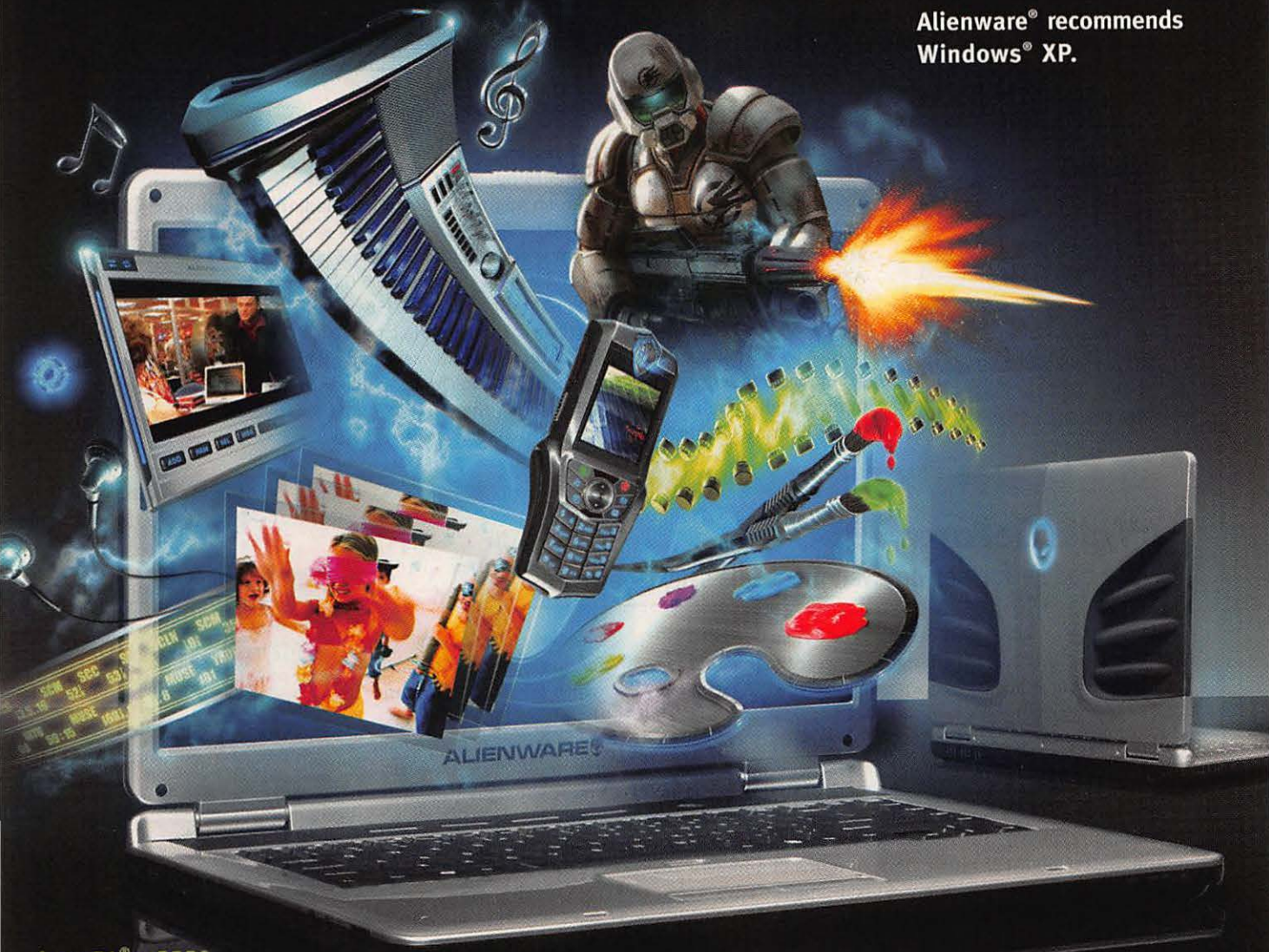
Asustek Computer
888-678-3688
usa.asus.com

Mfr. Est. Price \$2,699



COME & Play

Alienware® recommends
Windows® XP.



Area-51® m5550
Power and Mobility.

ALIENWARE

HIGH PERFORMANCE SYSTEMS

WWW.ALIENWARE.COM/FAST • 1.800.ALIENWARE

Alienware, Alien head logo and Area-51 are trademarks, and/or registered trademarks of Alienware Corporation. Alienware can not be held responsible for errors in photography or typography. Availability may change without notice. Intel, the Intel logo, Intel Core and Core Inside are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. Gaming screenshot from Battlefield 2142. © 2006 Digital Illusions CE AB. All rights reserved. Be Cool © 2005 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures Inc. All other registered trademarks and trademarks are property of their respective owners.



REVIEWS COMPONENTS

ATI Radeon X1650 Pro

Budget-friendly graphics card is Vista-ready

IF YOU CAN FIND one for close to ATI's \$100 estimated price, 256MB cards based on ATI's Radeon X1650 Pro graphics processor should prove to be great 3D-graphics upgrades that will turn any 3D-deficient desktop into a respectable gaming box. (We tested a 256MB reference board from ATI; the cards will be sold only by ATI's partner manufacturers.) It will also aid your Windows Vista upgrade plans if you'd like to run Vista's transparent Aero effects. Be aware, though, that we found wildly varying prices for these cards—some as high as \$150. Also, competing cards that start around \$150 offer clearly superior performance.

The X1650 Pro is ATI's best current low-cost offering.

The core clock runs at 600MHz, alongside 700MHz memory. The GPU features 12 pixel pipelines and five vertex pipelines. ATI is known for its image-rendering quality, and the X1650 Pro holds true to that with its uncompromising shader performance, high-dynamic-range lighting effects, and

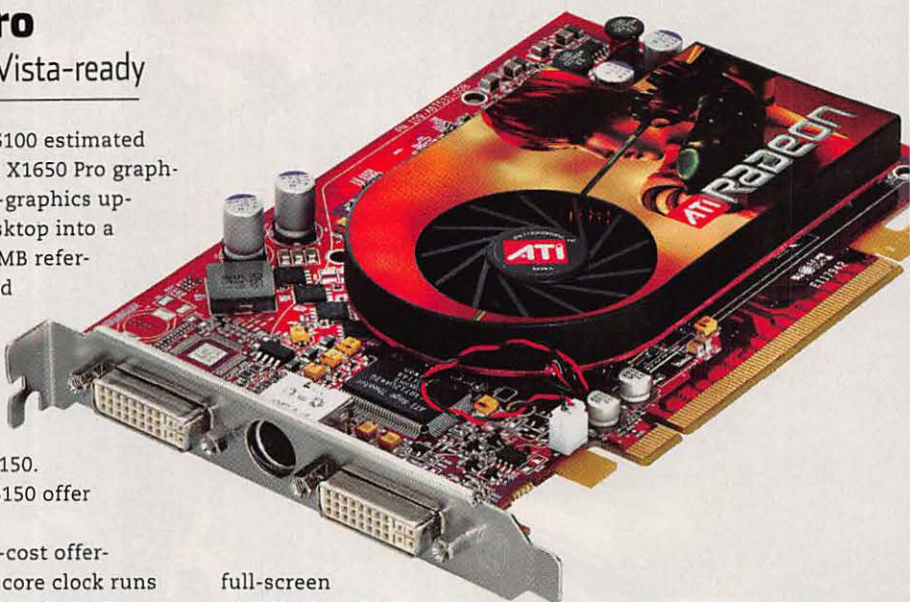
full-screen

antialiasing. If you

plan on upgrading down the road, the card supports ATI's CrossFire feature for adding a second X1650 Pro to your PC.

On every test, the Radeon X1650 outpaced the similarly priced nVidia GeForce 7600 GS, but by varying margins. The ATI entry scored 2,358 on Futuremark's 3DMark06 test, versus the nVidia card's 2,244. On our Half-Life 2: Lost Coast test, the two essentially tied, at around 25 frames per second (fps). On Quake 4, however, the X1650 card scored 48fps, while the GeForce 7600 GS delivered only 25fps. —Rich Brown

 CNET.com



EDITORS' RATING 6.3

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Strongest 3D card for around \$100

CONS Real-world pricing fluctuates greatly

ATI Technologies, 888-974-6728
www.ati.com

Mfr. Est. Price **\$100**

nVidia GeForce 7950 GT

Not a bad performer, but wait for nVidia's next-gen cards

AT ROUGHLY \$300, cards based on the nVidia GeForce 7950 GT graphics processor are designed to wear the price-for-performance crown. Compared with the similar ATI Radeon X1900 XT, however, the nVidia card can't keep up. And with the debut of nVidia's next-generation G80 GPU, the 7950 GT will have a limited lifespan.

The 512MB 7950 GT has all the modern GPU features, including DirectX 9.0 Shader Model support and high-dynamic-range rendering, along with the ability to play HD DVD and Blu-ray high-definition discs. In terms of numbers, the 7950 GT appears strong. It has a pixel-pipeline advantage over the ATI-based competition, for instance, dedicating 24 pipes to rendering dots on the screen, compared with the 512MB Radeon X1900 XT's 16. But the 7950 GT's clock speeds come in at only 550MHz for the chip and 1.4GHz for the DDR3 memory. (The X1900 XT has a faster core—625MHz—and a slight advantage in memory speed, running at 1.44GHz.) The 7950 GT does,

however, score points for its single-slot design, which takes up less room than the X1900 XT's double-wide setup. It also has a more-efficient 400-watt power-supply requirement, compared with the ATI's recommended 450 watts.

Still, ATI wins in terms of overall performance.

On Futuremark's 3DMark06 benchmark test, the X1900 XT scored 5,799, versus the nVidia card's 5,431. On our Quake 4 test, the 7950 GT delivered 38 frames per second (fps), while the X1900 XT achieved 46fps. The 7950 GT did fare better on our Half-Life 2: Lost Coast test, however, which indicates that pairing two GeForce 7950 GT cards using nVidia's Scalable Link Interface (SLI) technology could elicit better performance at higher resolutions than with ATI's competing CrossFire dual-card technology. —R.B.

EDITORS' RATING 6.7

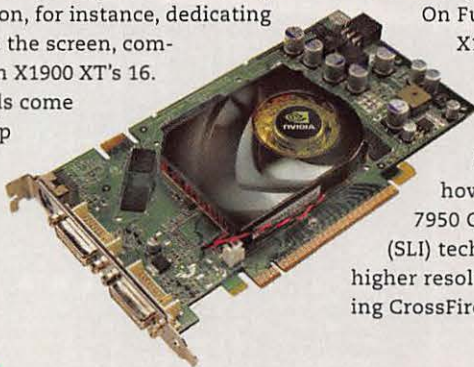
0 BETTER >> 10


PROS Takes up less space, is more power-efficient than competing Radeon X1900 XT

CONS Not as fast as its ATI competition; next-gen cards could make it redundant

nVidia, 408-486-2000
www.nvidia.com

Mfr. Est. Price **\$300** (from third-party card makers)



 CNET.com

Make it Perfect. Make it ProStar.



PR 5724E PR 5714C PR 6624C

- 17.0" WUXGA GlassView Display featuring Super-Wide Viewing Angles
- Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology
 - Intel® Core™ 2 Duo Processor T7200 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.0GHz, 677MHz FSB)
 - Intel® PRO/Wireless 3945ABG LAN 802.11a/b/g
- 512MB DDR3 NVIDIA® GeForce™ Go 7950 GTX PCI-Express™ Graphics
- 512MB Dual Channel DDR2 SDRAM at 667MHz
- 80GB 5400RPM Serial ATA150 Hard Drive¹
- 8X¹ DVD±R/RW Dual Layer Drive
- Modular Optical Device Bay design allows for customization – choose from a CD/DVD-ROM or an optional 2nd Hard Drive
- Front Panel Audio DJ with Separate Power Switch
- Built-In 1.3M Digital Video Camera
- Built-In 4-in-1 Card Reader
- Built-In 56K V.90 Modem³ and 10/100/1000 Ethernet
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition

- 17.0" WXGA GlassView Display
- Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology
 - Intel® Core™ 2 Duo Processor T5500 (2MB L2 Cache, 1.66GHz, 677MHz FSB)
 - Intel® PRO/Wireless 3945ABG LAN 802.11a/b/g
- 128MB DDR ATI MOBILITY™ RADEON™ X1600 PCI-Express™ Graphics (Up to 512MB Hypermemory™)
- 512MB Dual Channel DDR2 SDRAM at 667MHz
- 40GB 5400RPM Serial ATA150 Hard Drive¹
- 24X¹ CD-RW/8X¹ DVD Combo Drive
- Modular Optical Device Bay design allows for customization – choose from a CD/DVD-ROM or an optional 2nd Hard Drive
- Front Panel Audio DJ with Separate Power Switch
- Built-In 1.3M Digital Video Camera
- Built-In 4-in-1 Card Reader
- Built-In 56K V.90 Modem³ and 10/100/1000 Ethernet
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition

- 15.4" WXGA GlassView Display featuring Super-Wide Viewing Angles
- Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology
 - Intel® Core™ 2 Duo Processor T5500 (2MB L2 Cache, 1.66GHz, 667MHz FSB)
 - Intel® PRO/Wireless 3945ABG LAN 802.11a/b/g
- Share Memory Architecture up to 128MB
- Integrated Intel® Graphics Media Accelerator 950
- 512MB DDR2 SDRAM at 667MHz
- 40GB 5400RPM Serial ATA150 Hard Drive¹
- 24X¹ CD-RW/8X¹ DVD Combo Drive
- Built-in 1.3M Digital Video Camera
- Built-in 4-in-1 Card Reader
- 3 USB 2.0 Ports
- Virtual 8 Channel External Speaker Output
- 3D Surround Sound (S/PDIF output for DVD)
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition

\$2349

\$1369

\$1049

Your perfect notebook awaits!

Since 1993, ProStar has been bringing you notebook computers on the leading edge of technology. Now ProStar is offering the NVIDIA® GeForce™ Go 7950 GTX PCI-Express™ Graphics enabled making your graphics more life-like than ever before!

ProStar Computer, Inc.
1128 Colner Court, City of Industry, CA 91748
Tel 626.839.6472 Fax 626.854.3438
Tech Support 888.576.4742
Toll Free 800.243.5654
Online www.shopprostar.com
Hours Mon-Fri, 7:30am-6:00pm, PST
GSA Contract # GS-35F-5084H
American Express, Discover, VISA and MasterCard Credit Cards Accepted – No Surcharge

¹TX/2X Minimum ²10X Minimum ³Download speeds limited to 53Kbps. Upload speeds are less. Actual data speeds will vary depending on line conditions. Total HD accessible capacity may vary depending on operating environment. The warranty period for Batteries and AC Adapters is limited to one (1) year. ©2007 by ProStar Computers, Inc. All rights reserved. Intel, the Intel logo, Centrino and the Centrino logo, Intel Core and Core Inside, are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. All other companies and product names are trademarks of their respective companies. Dealer price is not subject to 30 days money back guarantee program. Opened software and shipping charges are non-refundable. 30 day money back guarantee does not include return freight or shipping and handling charge. Not responsible for photo or typographical errors. Price and terms subject to change without notice. Depending on the options you choose, your notebook may or may not resemble systems shown above.

CALL TOLL-FREE AT
800.243.5654

OR SHOP ONLINE AT
SHOPPROSTAR.COM

PROSTAR



Western Digital Passport Portable Hard Drive

External drive is compact and fast

THE WESTERN DIGITAL Passport Portable Hard Drive lives up to its name: It has about the same footprint as a passport, and it's less than an inch thick. The 10-ounce unit, comes in capacities ranging from 60GB (\$119.99) to 160GB (\$199.99). We tested the \$179.99 120GB model.

Setting up the Passport was easy. All we had to do was plug the drive into our PC, and we were up and running. The drive comes with a standard mini-USB cable for both data and power, so there's no extra power brick to tote along. The bundle also includes a convenient hard-shell carrying case. Western Digital preloads some software on the drive, including Google search apps, the WD Sync

synchronization-and-encryption utility (for Windows 2000 and XP only), and an electronic version of the included quick-start guide.

The Passport's performance didn't disappoint us. It took about 20 minutes to write our 10GB test folder, and it needed less than 9 minutes to copy the 10GB folder back to our test ma-

EDITORS' RATING **7.0**

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Compact; bus-powered; quick at reading, writing; includes sync, encryption software; hard, zippered carrying case

CONS Sync software works with only Windows XP, 2000; phone support can become costly

Western Digital, 949-672-7000
www.westerndigital.com

Direct Price \$179.99

chine. This is about as good as it gets for a USB 2.0 external hard drive.

The only downside is the potential cost of tech support. The drive comes with a one-year warranty, with free phone support for 30 days from the first call. After that, calls cost \$14.95 per incident. On the plus side, Western Digital's Web site has a knowledge base and a free e-mail support form. —Dong Van Ngo

cnet CNET.com

Logitech Cordless Desktop MX3200 Laser

Kills germs while you type and click

IT'S NOT NEWS that your mouse and keyboard can get pretty dirty over time—and become a bustling micropolis of bacteria. Logitech has a solution: the Cordless Desktop MX3200 Laser, a wireless-keyboard and laser-mouse set. This premium-price (\$99.99) combo comes coated with an antimicrobial compound ("AgION") that is supposed to stop bacteria, mold, and mildew from growing, making the set ideal for multiuser PCs.

Installation is easy: Attach the USB wireless receiver to your PC, install the software, and you're set.

The easy-to-use Logitech software lets you adjust the button assignments, as well as the mouse's sensitivity. The keyboard works quietly and incorporates Logitech's Zero-Degree Tilt design, which means that it sits flat on your desk and doesn't require you to bend your wrists. We adjusted quickly to the flat design, and our wrists really did feel less tired after a day in the office. (The keyboard has feet in the back, so you can angle it up if you'd like.)

Along with the standard media-control and application hotkeys, Logitech incorporates a touch-sensitive zoom bar that lets you move in and out of an image or reduce or enlarge your font size. Logitech has also added Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) hotkeys for opening your VoIP Net-phone application of choice, as well as for answering and ending calls.

As for the mouse, it's comfortable and offers a host of controls: two main buttons, a tilting scroll wheel (for navigating sideways in a document, as well as up and down), forward and back thumb buttons, a rocker switch for easy zooming, and a search-engine hot button

cnet CNET.com

EDITORS' RATING **8.3**

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Disinfectant coating; flat, ergonomic design; feature-filled keyboard, mouse; sleek look

CONS Pricey

Logitech, 800-231-7717
www.logitech.com

Direct Price \$99.99





From the leading
Multimedia Company
(*see website)



Camcorder &
Computer Video
MAGAZINE
A MILLER MAGAZINES, INC. PUBLICATION

Camcorder & Computer Video, June 2005
"Top Pick", "Incredibly powerful", "sophisticated features", "Professional capabilities", "amazing program"
Refers to the previous version MAGIX Movie Edit Pro 10.

Director's Cut!

MAGIX Movie Edit Pro 11 is your all-around video solution: As winner of 34 awards*, it offers amazing cuts, special effects, 3D transitions, and brilliant surround sound. It's never been easier to turn your video recordings into movie classics. Experience your movies in top quality on your TV with HD support and animated menus, or share them on the Internet in your free MAGIX Online Album.

MAGIX transforms every PC into a complete film studio.
All you have to do is find the stars.

US\$49.99 | C\$59.99 (suggested retail prices)

Exclusive to MAGIX with

iPACE® Online Services

-  **MAGIX Online Album**
Your photos, videos & music online
-  **MAGIX Online Content Library**
Contents & templates to download
-  **MAGIX Community**
The multimedia meeting place
-  **MAGIX Website Service**
Your own personal Flash® websites





HP 8000 DREAM

- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- **GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2**
- Corsair 512MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- NVIDIA® GeForce® 7300 LE 256MB DDR3 16X PCI Express w/ TV-Out
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive
- Intel® High Definition 7.1 Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer Speaker System
- Internet Multimedia Keyboard
- Internet Mouse
- Raidmax Sagitta Midtower Case w/ MOD See Through Windows
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic VA902B Xtreme 8ms Gaming LCD Display \$229

- Intel® Core™2 Extreme Processor X6800 (4MB Cache, 2.93Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB) \$ 1645
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700 (4MB Cache, 2.67Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB) \$ 1149
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600 (4MB Cache, 2.40Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB) \$ 915
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400 (4MB Cache, 2.13Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB) \$ 809
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300 (4MB Cache, 1.86Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB) \$ 765

\$ 765



GAMER XPLORER HS-5800

- Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor
- Intel® PRO Wireless 3945A/B/G Networking
- Intel® 945GM Chipset
- **GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2**
- 512MB PC5300 DDR2 667 Memory
- 60GB SATA150 Hard Drive
- Mobile ATI® X1600 Pro 256MB Video
- 8X DVD+-RW Drive
- 15.4" WXGA TFT Display 1280x800 Pixels
- 10/100/1000 Network Card & 56K V.92 Modem
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- 1 Firewire IEEE 1394 & 3 USB 2.0 Ports
- 6 Hours Battery Life
- Weight only 6.39 Lbs; Free Carrying Case
- 5 Custom Colors to Choose From
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7600 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.33Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1519
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7400 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.16Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1289
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7200 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.0Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1145
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5600 (4MB L2 Cache, 1.83Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1085
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5500 (4MB L2 Cache, 1.66Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1039

\$ 1039



GAMER XPLORER U3-3000

- Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor
- Intel® PRO Wireless 3945A/B/G Networking
- Intel® 945GM Chipset
- **GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2**
- 1024MB PC4200 DDR2 533 Memory
- 80GB SATA150 Hard Drive
- Intel® Graphics Media Accelerator
- 8X DVD+-RW Drive
- 12.1" WXGA TFT Display 1080x800 Pixels
- 10/100 Network Card & 56K V.92 Modem
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- 1 Firewire IEEE 1394 & 2 USB 2.0 Ports
- 4 Hours Battery Life
- Super Light Weight only 3 Lbs
- Free Carrying Case
- 5 Custom Colors to Choose From
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7600 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.33Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1685
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7400 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.16Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1459
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7200 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.0Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1315
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5600 (4MB L2 Cache, 1.83Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1255
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5500 (4MB L2 Cache, 1.66Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1215

\$ 1215



GAMER XPLORER HS-6800

- Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor
- Intel® PRO Wireless 3945A/B/G Networking
- Intel® 945GM Chipset
- **GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2**
- 1024MB PC5300 DDR2 667 Memory
- 100GB SATA150 Hard Drive
- Mobile ATI® X1600 Pro 256MB Video
- 8X DVD+-RW Drive
- 15.4" WXGA TFT Display 1280x800 Pixels
- 10/100/1000 Network Card & 56K V.92 Modem
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- 1 Firewire IEEE 1394 & 3 USB 2.0 Ports
- 6 Hours Battery Life
- Weight only 6.39 Lbs; Free Carrying Case
- 5 Custom Colors to Choose From
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7600 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.33Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1769
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7400 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.16Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1529
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7200 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.0Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1389
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5600 (4MB L2 Cache, 1.83Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1329
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5500 (4MB L2 Cache, 1.66Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1279

\$ 1279



GAMER XPLORER HS-7000

- Intel® Centrino® Duo Mobile Technology
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor
- Intel® PRO Wireless 3945A/B/G Networking
- Intel® 945GM Chipset
- **GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2**
- 1024MB PC5300 DDR2 667 Memory
- 80GB SATA150 Hard Drive
- Mobile ATI® X1600 Pro 256MB Video
- 8X DVD+-RW Drive
- 17" WXGA TFT Display 1440x900 Pixels
- 10/100 Network Card & 56K V.92 Modem
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- 1 Firewire IEEE 1394 & 3 USB 2.0 Ports
- 3 Hours Battery Life
- Weight only 8.5 Lbs; Free Carrying Case
- 5 Custom Colors to Choose From
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7600 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.33Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1859
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7400 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.16Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1635
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7200 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.0Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1489
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5600 (4MB L2 Cache, 1.83Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1429
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5500 (4MB L2 Cache, 1.66Ghz, 667Mhz FSB) \$ 1385

\$ 1385



GAMER INFINITY SLI ULTRA

- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 2048MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 320GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 16MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7950 GT 256MB DDR3, 16X PCI Express
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive & 16X DVD-ROM
- Intel® High Definition 7.1 Surround Sound
- Creative Cambridge Inspire P7800 7.1 Surround Sound System
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard
- Microsoft® USB Optical IntelliMouse
- Aluminum Nzxt Zero 420Watt Full Tower Case
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic VA902B Xtreme 8ms Gaming LCD Display \$229

\$ 1719

GAMER INFINITY SLI GT

- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 1024MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7600 GS 256MB DDR, 16X PCI Express
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive & 16X DVD-ROM
- Intel® High Definition 7.1 Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer Speaker System
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard
- Microsoft® USB Optical IntelliMouse
- Turbo X-Cruiser Case 420Watt w/ See Through Windows
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

\$ 999

GAMER INFINITY SLI BASIC

- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 512MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7300 LE 256MB DDR, 16X PCI Express
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive
- Intel® High Definition 7.1 Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer Speaker System
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard
- Microsoft® USB Optical IntelliMouse
- Turbo X-Discover Case 420Watt w/ See Through Windows
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

\$ 819

Intel® Core™2 Extreme Processor X6800 (4MB Cache, 2.93Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 2599
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700 (4MB Cache, 2.67Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 2105
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600 (4MB Cache, 2.40Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1865
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400 (4MB Cache, 2.13Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1759
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300 (4MB Cache, 1.86Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1719

Intel® Core™2 Extreme Processor X6800 (4MB Cache, 2.93Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1885
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700 (4MB Cache, 2.67Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1399
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600 (4MB Cache, 2.40Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1149
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400 (4MB Cache, 2.13Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1045
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300 (4MB Cache, 1.86Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 999

Intel® Core™2 Extreme Processor X6800 (4MB Cache, 2.93Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1699
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700 (4MB Cache, 2.67Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 1199
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600 (4MB Cache, 2.40Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 969
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400 (4MB Cache, 2.13Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 865
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300 (4MB Cache, 1.86Ghz, 1066Mhz FSB)	\$ 819

CYBERPOWER RECOMMENDS WINDOWS® XP MEDIA CENTER EDITION



TOLL FREE 800.707.0393 OR WWW.CYBERPOWERPC.COM

REVIEWS HOME NETWORKING



HP Media Vault MV2020

Streaming and storage for home networks

THE HP MEDIA VAULT is a network-attached-storage (NAS) drive with media-streaming capabilities. It's available in two capacities: the 300GB MV2010 (\$379.99), and the 500GB MV2020 (\$549.99) we tested. Both models have an empty bay for an additional Serial ATA (SATA) drive if you need to increase capacity or establish a RAID 1 array.

Installing the Media Vault is simple, though software firewalls may interfere. (The Media Vault utility couldn't detect the drive while our PC-cillin firewall was on.) To start, connect the drive via Ethernet to one of your router's LAN ports. Power it up, then install the backup/restore software and the Media Vault utility.

You can access the Media Vault in a couple of ways. If you map the drives, you'll find them under Network Drives in My Computer. Alternately, you can launch the Media Vault utility and browse the device's four preset folders: Backup, FileShare, MediaShare, and

CinemaNow. Backup is where file/folder and disk backups are stored, while FileShare, predictably, is intended for files to share across your network. MediaShare is a repository for audio, video, and image files. CinemaNow is where movies downloaded from that service (or any on-line movie service) will reside.

The Media Vault can stream media files to other home PCs, or to any digital media adapter (DMA) that supports the Universal Plug and Play (UPnP) spec. The device

is quick with data transfers, making it excellent for networked home users with lots of digital data and the desire to share it. A bonus: The built-in print server lets you network printers using the three USB ports. (The ports also support external hard drives.) —Felisa Yang

EDITORS' RATING 7.8

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Speedy data transfers; inexpensive; empty bay for a second SATA drive; streams to UPnP-compliant DMAs; backup/restore software; built-in print server; USB ports for printers, additional hard drives

CONS Software firewalls may interfere with installation; RAID support only up to Level 1

Hewlett-Packard, 888-999-4747
www.hp.com

Direct Price \$549.99

CNET.com

Trendnet 300Mbps Wireless N-Draft Firewall Router (TEW-631BRP)

Draft N device is better than most

THE \$100 TRENDNET 300Mbps Wireless N-Draft Firewall Router (TEW-631BRP) is based on the Draft N version of the yet-to-be-ratified 802.11n Wi-Fi standard. Its performance was impressive compared with that of other Draft N routers we've tested.

Like them, though, it falls short of the throughput promised by the 802.11n specification.

Setting up the router is simple—Trendnet eliminated the installation-via-CD routine. Instead, the installation guide walks you through connecting the hardware, then instructs you to enter the router's default IP address

into an Internet browser window to access the configuration utility. Once you're in there, you have a wide range of options. For security, you can choose among None (not recommended), Wired Equivalent Privacy (WEP), Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA), and WPA2 password protection. The TEW-631BRP supports Media Access Control (MAC) address filtering, stateful-packet-inspection (SPI) and network-address-translation (NAT) firewalls, and a demilitarized-zone (DMZ) host.

For gaming, the router's StreamEngine feature prioritizes gaming packets for a smooth gaming experience. If you're concerned about what your family is viewing on the Internet, an Access Control option lets you limit browsing to only approved sites, curtail Web access by day and time, and block access for certain types of applications, such as P2P programs and games.

In our tests, the TEW-631BRP did well compared with its competition, posting a data rate of 83.3Mbps in our short-range maximum-throughput test and 54.1Mbps in our long-range test at 200 feet.

Trendnet provides a generous three-year warranty, including 24/7 toll-free phone support. —F.Y.

CNET.com

EDITORS' RATING 7.1

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Fast throughput speeds; lots of security, configuration options; generous warranty, support options

CONS Based on nonfinal wireless specification; pricey

Trendnet, 888-326-6061
www.trendnet.com

List Price \$100



The fastest way to learn a language. Guaranteed.™

Finally, a different approach that has millions of people talking. Using the award-winning Dynamic Immersion™ method, our interactive software teaches without translation, memorization or grammar drills. Combining thousands of real-life images and the voices of native speakers in a step-by-step immersion process, our programs successfully replicate the experience of learning your first language. Guaranteed to teach faster and easier than any other language product or your money back. No questions asked.

French	Italian	Japanese	Farsi	Greek	Danish	Dutch
German	Tagalog	Vietnamese	Thai	Arabic	Swahili	Latin
Chinese	Russian	Indonesian	Korean	Hebrew	Polish	Pashto
English (US or UK)	Spanish (Latin America or Spain)	Portuguese	Hindi	Turkish	Welsh	Swedish

Award-winning software successfully used by U.S. State Department diplomats, Fortune 500® executives and millions of people worldwide.

Step-by-step immersion instruction in all key language skills:



Listening - Rosetta Stone uses native speakers and everyday language to develop your understanding of the spoken language naturally and easily.



Reading - Text exercises develop your reading skills by linking written language to real-life objects, actions and ideas.



Speaking - Speech-recognition feature records, diagrams and compares your voice to the native speaker's, grading your pronunciation.



Writing - Practice writing the language you are learning with the program to guide you. Simply write what you hear, then the program carefully checks your work and lets you correct any mistakes.

"...your program is the absolute best, bar none. I am shocked at how quickly I learn."
- Michael Murphy
Texas, USA

"Stupendous... the juxtaposition of text, sound and picture was masterful. The quality of both sound and graphics was first rate."
- The Boston Globe

Each fully interactive course includes:

- CD-ROM curriculum with 20 activities in each of 92 lessons
- Previews, comprehensive exercises and testing for each lesson
- Automated tutorials that "learn" where you need extra help
- Curriculum Text and 45-page User's Guide



**SAVE
10%**

Level 1 Program
Regularly \$195.00



Your Price
\$175.50

Level 2 Program
Regularly \$225.00



Your Price
\$202.50

Level 1 & 2
Regularly \$329.00



Your Price
\$296.10

BEST VALUE!

Personal Edition. Solutions for organizations also available.

Call today or buy online for a 10% discount.

RosettaStone.com/css017

1-800-399-6162

Use promotional code css017 when ordering.

RosettaStone®
Language Learning Success



Canon EOS Rebel XTi

A well-designed, fast dSLR

CANON'S EOS Rebel XTi is a great first digital single-lens-reflex (dSLR) camera, even if it falls short of the original EOS Rebel XT. You can purchase the camera as a body alone (\$799) or in a kit with an 18mm-to-55mm EF-S lens (\$899).

The 10.1-megapixel XTi retains much of its predecessor's intelligent design, but Canon made some changes, including bumping up the LCD size from 1.8 inches to 2.5 inches and eliminating the XT's second status LCD. While it's easy to monitor your settings on the main LCD, the screen's paper-white background and automatic sensor are distracting.



PROS Compact, lightweight; intelligently designed; very good image quality; fast continuous shooting

CONS No second status LCD; slow kit lens; no spot metering; poor exposure of backlit subjects; slower shooting speed than Nikon D80

Canon U.S.A., 800-652-2666
usa.canon.com

Mfr. Est. Price \$799 (body only); \$899 (kit, with lens)

Amateurs will find all the essentials in the XTi, including a handful of manual, semi-manual, and automatic exposure modes, along with user-selectable autofocus settings and simultaneous raw-plus-JPEG capture. The XTi lacks a spot meter, however, which resulted in poor exposure of backlit subjects. Another downside is the kit version's lens. It has a 35mm-film-equivalent range of 28.8mm to 88mm and a maximum aperture of f3.5



to f5.6; we found it a bit too slow for frequent indoor shooting.

The XTi was generally fast and responsive, but at times it captured our shots just a hair too late. In fact, the camera's measured speed fell short of that of its main competitor, Nikon's D80. Continuous-shooting performance was a bright spot, however—the XTi can shoot as many as 27 frames of JPEG or 10 raw-format frames before slowing.

As for image quality, the XTi takes some very nice photos, with good color rendition and accurate automatic white balance. Shots taken at ISO 100 and 200 were very clean, but beyond that, the photos couldn't take much retouching without perceptible noise. —Lori Grunin

cnet CNET.com

Fujifilm FinePix S6000fd

Solid superzoom camera has a capable wide lens

ALTHOUGH it lacks true image stabilization, the \$499.95 Fujifilm FinePix S6000fd is a solid shooter that captures high-quality images with its wide 10.7x optical zoom lens.

You'll find superzoom cameras out there with bigger lenses and higher pixel counts, but the 6.3-megapixel S6000fd offers a unique feature its competition lacks: face detection. Using a dedicated processing chip, the S6000fd can quickly meter off and focus on up to 10 faces in a scene, automatically selecting the one nearest to the center of the image.

Another standout feature is the camera's 28mm-to-300mm, f2.8-to-f4.5 zoom lens. Unlike so many long-reach zoom lenses, the S6000fd lens can achieve a true wide angle of 28mm on its wide end, instead of having to start at 35mm. In our tests, the lens showed almost no distortion at 300mm, and while we saw a little barrel distortion at 28mm, it was

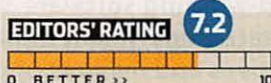


minimal for a non-single-lens-reflex (SLR) camera.

The S6000fd includes full manual controls and 14 scene modes, including a picture-stabilization setting. The stabilization mode doesn't counteract shaky hands as well as the optical or mechanical image-stabilization

systems found in other cameras, however.

Performance was fairly fast for a superzoom model, except for sluggish continuous shooting. Our test shots looked good, with well-saturated, accurate colors and lots of shadow and highlight detail. And although the camera's automatic white balance yielded very warm images under our lab's tungsten lights, its tungsten preset was closer to neutral. The S6000fd offers sensitivity settings up to ISO 3200, though images become overwhelmingly noisy by that point. —Philip Ryan



PROS Wide-angle, 10.7x optical zoom lens; face detection; sensitivity up to ISO 3200

CONS No optical image stabilization; poor automatic white balance under artificial light; noisy high-ISO images

Fujifilm U.S.A., 800-659-3854
www.fujifilmusa.com

Mfr. Est. Price \$499.95

cnet CNET.com

Screaming Performance.



Matrix Crosshair SLI
\$2,756.00

Matrix 8000 SLI
\$1,971.00

Prive 918a
\$580.00

Matrix 2000 SLI
\$685.00

- AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor 2.0GHz (AM2)
- NVIDIA nForce® 590 SLI MCP MB
- PhysX P1 Gaming Accelerator
- 2GB PC2-5400 DDR2-675 HyperX Performance Memory
- (2x) 250GB SATA 3.0Gb/s 7200RPM 8MB Cache Hard Drive RAID 0 for Improved Performance
- 16X DVD-ROM & DVR+RW
- (2x) NVIDIA GeForce 7950GX2 PCIe x16 1GB DDR3 VGA
- 11-in-1 Card Reader
- Microsoft Windows XP Professional w/ SP2b (w/ Vista Upgrade Coupon)

- AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor 2.0GHz (AM2)
- NVIDIA nForce 590 SLI MCP MB
- PhysX P1 Gaming Accelerator
- 2GB PC2-5400 DDR2-675 HyperX Performance Memory
- (2x) 250GB SATA 3.0Gb/s 7200RPM 8MB Cache Hard Drive RAID 0 for Improved Performance
- 16X DVD-ROM & DVR+RW
- (2x) NVIDIA GeForce 7950GT PCIe x16 512MB DDR VGA
- 11-in-1 Card Reader
- Microsoft Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005 w/ SP2b (w/ Vista Upgrade Coupon)

- AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor 2.0GHz (AM2)
- C51GM-M w/ GeForce 6100 & nForce 410 chipset motherboard
- 512MB DDR2-667 Memory
- 160GB SATA 3Gb/s 7200RPM 8MB cache HDD
- DVD-ROM & DVD+/-RW / CD-RW Drives
- Integrated GeForce6100 VGA w/ up to 128MB
- Microsoft Windows XP Home SP2b (w/ Vista Upgrade Coupon)
- 1 Year Parts & Labor Warranty & Lifetime Technical Support

- AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor Socket AM2
- M2N4-SLI w/ nForce4 SLI chipset motherboard
- 512MB DDR2-667 Memory
- 160GB SATA 3Gb/s 7200RPM 8MB cache HDD
- DVD-ROM & DVD+/-RW / CD-RW Drives
- (x2) NVIDIA GeForce 7100GS PCIe x16 128MB DDR2 VGA
- 11-in-1 Card Reader
- Microsoft Windows XP Home SP2b (w/ Vista Upgrade Coupon)
- 1 Year Parts & Labor Warranty & Lifetime Technical Support

All AMD processors include:

- HyperTransport(TM) technology
- Enhanced Virus Protection
- Cool'n'Quiet(TM) technology
- Leading-edge 64-bit technology

FREE GIFT

1GB USB Drive
(w/ purchase of any Ajump System)



* Picture for display purpose only. Promotion ends 1/31/07.

www.AJUMP.com

Order Online or Call Us Toll Free **1-877-692-5867**

Fully Customizable ★ Name Brand Components ★ 3-Year Warranty Available

Your configuration may not reflect the image above. *1 Enhanced Virus Protection (EVP) is only enabled by certain operating systems including the current versions of Microsoft® Windows®, Linux®, Solaris and BSD Unix. After properly installing the appropriate operating system release, users must enable the protection of their applications and associated files from buffer overrun attacks. Consult your OS documentation for information on enabling EVP. Contact your application software vendor for information regarding use of the application in conjunction with EVP. AMD strongly recommend that users continue to use third party anti-virus software as part of their security strategy. AMD®, the AMD ® arrow logo, AMD® Athlon™, and the combinations thereof are trademarks of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. ©2006 Ajump.com Inc. All rights reserved.



HP iPaq RX5900 Travel Companion

All-in-one device marred by short battery life

MOBILE PROFESSIONALS will appreciate the \$599 HP iPaq RX5900 Travel Companion, which combines navigation, productivity, and entertainment in one sleek device. We wish it had better battery life, however.

At 4.7x3x0.6 inches and 5.9 ounces, the travel-friendly RX5900 is ideal for use in the car or on foot. Thanks to its sharp 3.5-inch, 320x240-pixel (QVGA) touch screen and a smart set of external controls, we found the handheld easy to navigate. We didn't like the awkward placement of the stylus on the rear left side of the device, however.

The RX5900 has a GPS receiver built in and comes loaded with maps of North America, the TomTom Navigator 6 software, and a trip-planning program. The device also supports text- and voice-guided driving directions, automatic route recalculation, and a points-of-interest database. In terms of entertainment, you get Windows Media Player 10 Mobile, along with HP's Photosmart Mobile for viewing and sharing images.

Equipped with 64MB of SDRAM and a whopping 2GB of flash ROM, the RX5900 runs Windows Mobile 5.0 Pocket PC Edition, which includes handheld versions of Word, Excel, Internet Explorer, and Outlook, as well as a PowerPoint viewer. Wireless-connectivity options include integrated Bluetooth 2.0 and 802.11b/g Wi-Fi.

Performance was a mixed bag. The RX5900 took its time acquiring an initial GPS satellite fix, but it did a good job of tracking our position and providing accurate directions. Plus, it breezed through PDA and entertainment functions. Battery life was a letdown, however—in our tests, the device stayed powered for just 4 hours of constant use. —Bonnie Cha

EDITORS' RATING 7.0

PROS Portable design; integrated GPS receiver; TomTom Navigator software; runs Windows Mobile OS; built-in Bluetooth, Wi-Fi

CONS Subpar battery life; slow to acquire initial satellite fix; awkwardly placed stylus

Hewlett-Packard, 888-999-4747
www.hp.com

Direct Price \$599

T-Mobile Dash

Feature-loaded smartphone is a Moto Q killer

WITH A sleek design, great performance, and powerful connectivity options, the T-Mobile Dash is a top-notch smartphone that trumps Motorola's popular Q. It's available from T-Mobile for \$199 with a two-year contract, or \$249.99 with a one-year contract.

Measuring 4.4x2.5x0.5 inches and weighing 4.2 ounces, the Dash has a slim, contoured shape and a rubbery surface that together feel good in the hand. Below the phone's 2.4-inch, 320x240-pixel TFT screen are navigation controls and a spacious QWERTY keyboard. An unusual touch strip to the right of the display lets you control the volume of the device; we found it wasn't always responsive, however.

Running the Windows Mobile 5.0 Smartphone Edition OS, the Dash is powered by a 200MHz OMAP processor and 64MB of SDRAM. The phone comes with a number of productivity apps, including Westtek's ClearVue Suite for viewing and editing documents. For e-mail, the Dash has direct-push capabilities, which allow you to receive messages in real time through Outlook Mobile, as well as from POP3 or IMAP4 accounts.

T-Mobile built in superior wireless options, including Wi-Fi and Bluetooth 2.0 connectivity, as well as support for Enhanced Data rates for GSM Evolution (EDGE) service. The phone also has a speakerphone function.

For entertainment, the Dash features Windows Media Player 10 Mobile for audio and video playback. You also get a 1.3-megapixel camera with video-recording capabilities, though we weren't impressed with its confusing interface and subpar picture quality.

In our tests, the Dash offered excellent call quality and swift performance. Battery life was another bright spot—we eked out an extraordinary 11 hours of talk time on one charge. T-Mobile rates the phone's standby time at nine days. —B.C.

EDITORS' RATING 8.0

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Slick design; integrated Bluetooth 2.0, Wi-Fi; support for push e-mail; built-in multimedia functions; camera; clear call quality; extra-long talk-time battery life

CONS Volume touch strip isn't always responsive; confusing camera interface; subpar camera-image quality

T-Mobile U.S.A., 800-866-2453
www.t-mobile.com

Direct Price \$199 (with two-year contract); **\$249.99** (with one-year contract)



CNET CNET.com

CNET CNET.com

A Whole New Way to Buy Media Center Systems, Components & Software.

ALCHEMY SERIES MEDIA CENTER SYSTEMS FROM PC ALCHEMY

With nearly 100 years system building experience and extensive knowledge of Media Center and HTPC components, PC Alchemy is able to offer the most advanced and reliable Media Center systems available.

All Alchemy Series Media Center Systems are built with the highest quality components, providing not only a reliable and high performance Media Center, but one that is so quiet you will hardly notice it in the room.

We stand behind every system we sell and include a 1-Year Limited Warranty. Extended warranties are also available. All systems are pre-built enabling us to ship your system within 2 business days from the time of your order.



The most complete Microsoft® Windows® experience designed for the home, with features not available anywhere else.

- Discover, watch, pause, rewind and record live TV – all with no service fees.
- Burn and back up music, photos, recorded TV and home movies onto CD or DVD.
- Easily transfer, touch up and share photo slide shows with music.



The innovative Intel Core 2 Duo processor delivers revolutionary dual-core performance and breakthrough processor energy efficiency.

Pricing and Availability: Prices good from 12/12/2006 to 1/15/2007 or while supplies last. Prices, availability and terms of any offer may change without notice or obligation. Shipping charges and taxes, if applicable are not shown. Pcalchemy.com is not responsible for price, typographical, photographic or other errors and reserves the right to cancel any order resulting from such errors. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks with Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. © 2006 Pcalchemy, Inc. All rights reserved.

Alchemy XE Media Center

\$2899

- Beautiful Aluminum Media Center Case with Vacuum Fluorescent Display
- Genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 w/Free Vista Upgrade
- High Performance Intel E6700 Core 2 Duo Processor
- GeForce 7600GT 256MB HDCP HDMI DVI HDTV Out
- 1TB SATAII Dedicated Media Storage
- 80GB SATAII Dedicated OS Drive
- Dual Standard Definition TV Tuners
- Dual ATSC OTA HDTV Tuners
- 2GB Dual Channel DDR2 Memory
- 16x Dual Layer DVD±R/RW Drive
- 17-in-1 Media Card Reader
- Microsoft® Remote Control for MCE
- Wireless 2.4GHz Multimedia Keyboard with Integrated Trackball



Alchemy RE Media Center

\$1499

- Beautiful Low Profile Aluminum Media Center Case - Only 2.7" tall
- Genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 w/Free Vista Upgrade
- High Performance Intel T5600 Core 2 Duo Processor
- DVI, S-Video, and HDTV Out
- 320GB SATA Hard Drive Storage
- Dual Standard Definition TV Tuners
- Optional Terrestrial HDTV Tuners
- 1GB Dual Channel DDR2 Memory
- 8x DL DVD±R/RW Slot Load Drive
- Microsoft® Remote Control for MCE
- Wireless 2.4GHz Multimedia Keyboard with Integrated Trackball



MiniMCE MIB Media Center

\$1199

- Genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005
- High Performance Intel T5600 Core 2 Duo Processor
- DVI, S-Video, and HDTV Out
- 100GB SATA Hard Drive Storage
- One Standard Definition TV Tuner
- Optional Terrestrial HDTV Tuner
- 1GB DDR2 667MHz Memory
- 8x DL DVD±R/RW Slot Load Drive
- Philips Remote Control for MCE
- Wireless 2.4GHz Multimedia Keyboard with Integrated Trackball



For up-to-date pricing and to order online, 24 hours a day:

www.pcalchemy.com

Call us toll-free at:

800.686.1393

PCALCHEMY
THE MEDIA
CENTER STORE

REVIEWS SOFTWARE

Corel Snapfire Plus

Inexpensive photo organizer needs work

COREL'S SNAPFIRE PLUS is a low-cost photo organizer aimed at novices and casual users. Compared with its pared-down basic version, Snapfire, which is offered as a free download at Corel's Web site, the \$39.99 Snapfire Plus has a richer feature set that includes picture frames, basic image- and video-editing functions, and slide-show assembly. (The last worked quite well.) Its features are adequate for the price, but our novice tester had trouble with the interface and organizational tools.

Most of the features are placed up-front, with big buttons for Home, Enhance, Show, and Create. After you edit a photo or create a project, however, the program doesn't present an obvious way to save changes.

Snapfire Plus "finds" photos on your computer when you click on a folder. A beginner wouldn't have a clue what to do next, though. To get a list of options, such as for printing or making backups, you have to click on the Home button. And, if you want to view another folder, you must click Organize, se-

lect the folder, and then go back to Home—a tedious and confusing process. Worse, you cannot add or edit tags on your photos—you can search for tags, but only among photos that already have them.

On the positive side, Snapfire Plus skillfully examines your photos and displays an icon if the picture could benefit from an automatic fix. We were equally impressed with the cool Makeover tools for whitening teeth and removing blemishes. You also get other entry-level editing tools, along with simple projects you can make, such as cards, calendars, and album pages. —Susan Glinert



EDITORS' RATING 6.0

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Intelligent automatic photo adjustment; good sharing, project-creation tools; able slide-show creator

CONS Confusing interface; cannot add or edit photo tags; poor photo-organization features

Corel, 800-772-6735
www.corel.com

Direct Price \$39.99

Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0

A must-have toolbox for photo junkies

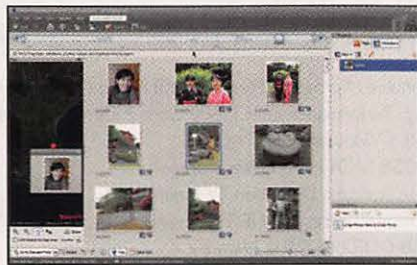


ADOBE PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 5.0 is simply the best consumer-level photo organizer/editor on the market. The program offers a dazzling feature set and a brilliant interface, making it appropriate for users of all skill levels. Because of its extensive toolbox, however, new users will benefit from reading the manual or working through the online tutorials.

The version of Elements we reviewed was a late beta, but its performance was flawless. From the start, the program emphasizes convenience. The opening screen has big buttons for major tasks, such as Organize and Edit.

If you plug in a camera, Elements pops up a dialog box with actions, such as automatic red-eye repair, that can execute while you download the images.

The organizer is fabulous, supporting hierarchical tags and collections. You can "stack" several shots of the same image to save space in the organizer, as well as compare photos side-by-side—



especially useful features for those who take multiple shots of the same scene. Also, the organizer can automatically find photos that contain faces, making it easier for you to apply tags to images with people in them.

If you need to polish a photo, you can choose between a

Quick Fix mode, full editing, or porting the picture to an external image editor. Elements, however, offers a spectacular set of editing tools on its own.

Version 5.0 adds many clever, creative features, such as the ability to pin a photo to an interactive map to show where it was taken. Options for sharing and storing images, including to online backup, are improved, and Adobe has also enhanced the support for camera raw files. Among other notable additions are better sharpening tools, a color-curve-adjustment function, a configurable feature for converting images to black-and-white, and lens-distortion correction. —S.G.

EDITORS' RATING 8.5

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Excellent organization, editing tools; sleek interface; useful photo-sharing, backup features

CONS New users will need to review tutorials, manual

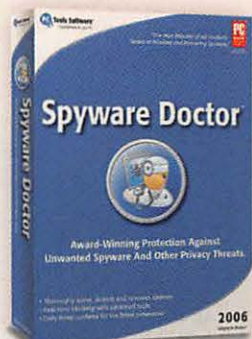
Adobe Systems, 800-833-6687
www.adobe.com

Direct Price \$99.99 (boxed);
\$89.99 (download)

Do you have the right protection?



When it comes to your protection against spyware, choose the solution that has as much bite as it has bark!



The Consistent Editors' Choice Award Winner!

PC Magazine

July 2006

PC Answers

April 2006

PC Magazine

February 2006

PC Advisor

December 2005

PC Magazine

June 2005

Free scan using multi award-winning Spyware Doctor at www.pctools.com



Microsoft Encarta Premium 2007

Explore history, the arts, science, and geography

MICROSOFT ENCARTA PREMIUM 2007 is a well-designed reference tool everyone from adults to grade-school children will find entertaining and informative.

Encarta's bright interface features a home page with a list of subjects, such as Arts & Literature, and a search field. The function icons are judiciously placed, reducing clutter. As with a Web browser, you navigate via back- and forward-arrow buttons and your keyboard. You can backtrack to recently viewed pages by clicking a tiny drop-down arrow beneath the back arrow. Compared with *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on DVD, however, pulling up full articles requires a number of mouse clicks.

The Explore feature will lead you to hundreds of videos, including some from the Discovery Channel, along with timelines, virtual tours of landmarks, natural wonders, and

more. Videos range from encyclopedic staples, such as the first moon landing, to quirky tidbits like "machine-shaped Kaiser rolls." Plus, Encarta's 2,500 audio files encompass music from around the world. Other goodies include the World Atlas, with political, physical, and statistical maps, plus satellite imagery of your planet by night and day.

For older children and adults, the advanced tools within Encarta still emphasize text search and images, with no alphabetical index of subjects to refer to. The search field may eerily anticipate your query—by the time we typed "I H," Encarta knew we were looking up the "I Have a Dream" speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Installing the program via DVD took about 15 minutes. (You also get five CDs, in case you don't have a DVD drive.) One caveat: Encarta works with Windows XP only. —Elsa Wenzel

EDITORS' RATING 7.3

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Rich multimedia content; sleek interface

CONS Requires Windows XP; navigation to view full articles requires several mouse clicks

Microsoft, 866-452-4755
www.microsoft.com

Direct Price \$49.95

Norton AntiVirus 2007

New build puts Norton back at the top of its game

WITH MUCH of its code rewritten since last year's edition, Symantec's Norton AntiVirus (NAV) 2007 gets our vote for most-improved antivirus product.

Installation was fast but not without incident. After skipping the virus prescan, we installed and activated the app within 10 minutes. During installation, however, we had to create a Norton user account, without which we couldn't continue.

NAV 2007 occupies 180MB of drive space but runs only a handful of processes when active, reducing the performance hit when the app is running in the background. We also liked the redesigned, simplified interface, which includes your PC's green/yellow/red security status in a sidebar.

The rewritten code enables some new functionality, such as the ability to perform antivirus and spyware-detection scans simultaneously. Also, the program absorbs much of Symantec's discontinued Personal Firewall product, as well as the company's Veritas VxMS enterprise technology for defending your PC against rootkit threats. (We only wish Symantec included antiphishing protection, too.)

In our tests, the app turned in mixed results. On our iTunes test, NAV 2007 lost ground to NAV 2006, but on our Sorensen Squeeze test, it showed improvement. (These two tests measure the impact of a deep scan on performing common tasks with these apps.) The newer app lagged behind on our boot-speed test (which measures the effect loading the app has on boot time), taking 4 seconds longer than NAV 2006 did. Where NAV 2007 showed the most improvement was on our individual-file-scan test, which scans a 1.57GB folder of mixed file types; it took only 117 seconds, compared with

NAV 2006's 320. —Robert Vamasi

EDITORS' RATING 7.0

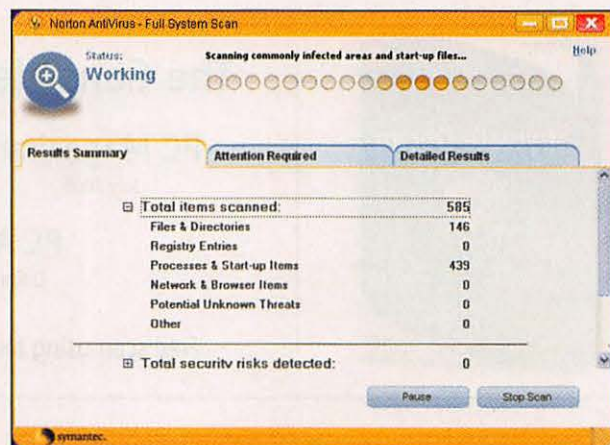
0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Lighter on system resources; faster than previous versions; includes firewall-like protection, anti-rootkit technology

CONS Lacks antiphishing protection; mixed performance results

Symantec, 877-200-2307
www.symantec.com

Direct Price \$39.99 (boxed or download)



Microsoft Streets & Trips 2007 with GPS Locator

GPS navigator is a so-so driving companion

MICROSOFT STREETS & TRIPS 2007 with GPS Locator is a bargain alternative to pricey, PDA-size GPS navigators. The 2007 version has some helpful improvements over earlier editions.

Compatible with any Windows PC (ideally, a laptop), the package bundles the Streets & Trips software with a compact GPS receiver. The receiver plugs into your PC's USB port, or you can use it with a separate Bluetooth module. The GPS device is now smaller—just 1.25 inches square—and is more sensitive detecting satellite signals. Our test receiver, for instance, worked fine when placed on our car's passenger seat. With previous versions, we had to place the receiver on the dashboard or window to get a signal.

Also, this version now integrates Windows Live Search, Microsoft's answer to Google. By clicking on the Windows

EDITORS' RATING **6.3**

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Compact, sensitive GPS receiver; integrates with Windows Live Search

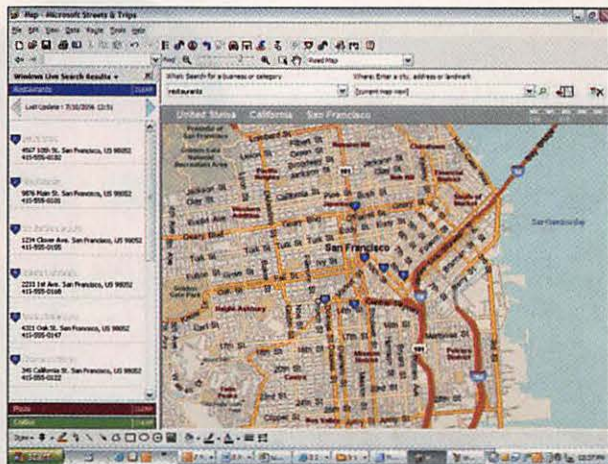
CONS Voice directions don't announce street names

Microsoft, 866-452-4755
www.microsoft.com

Direct Price \$129.99

Live icon on the Standard toolbar, you can search for specific businesses in your area, such as shoe-repair shops. This feature is pretty slick, but, naturally, it requires an Internet connection.

We have one big nitpick with the program's navigation functionality: The software gives voice direc-



tions along the lines of "Turn left in 0.3 miles," but, unlike the best GPS navigators, it doesn't announce street names (as in "Turn left at Doubletree Lane"). That's crucial when driving in any densely packed urban area. On the plus side, the program's full-screen navigation mode now displays four commonly used buttons (Turn Voice On/Off, Repeat Spoken Instruction, Re-route, and Night Mode) at the top of the screen, making them easier to access.

Streets & Trips 2007 is a great vacation planner, but we caution against using it in traffic unless you have a human navigator directing you with the software.

—Jeff Bertolucci

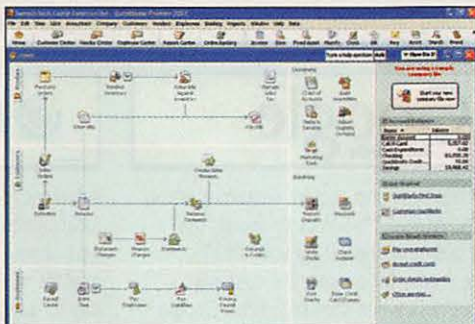
CNET CNET.com

QuickBooks Premier 2007

Terrific small-business accounting package

QUICKBOOKS PREMIER 2007 is a minor upgrade of last year's groundbreaking 2006 version, which overhauled Intuit's best-selling small-business accounting program with an easier-to-navigate home page and a faster SQL database. This year's bookkeeping-related changes are none too exciting, mostly user-requested tweaks such as improved forms, charts, and payroll management. The big news, in fact, concerns marketing rather than accounting. QuickBooks 2007's partnership with Google allows small businesses to boost their Internet presence by listing their names and addresses on Google Maps, creating ad campaigns with Google AdWords, and promoting their wares online via Google Base.

Another update: The QuickBooks forms designer now has a preview window that displays changes as you make



them. Let's say you're designing a packing slip to include the new company logo. When you check the Bill To box in the Print

column, the Bill To box appears in the preview window to the right. In previous versions, you

had to print the form to see if your design changes worked. Helpful? Yes. Earthshaking? No. You'll find similar touch-ups elsewhere in the program. For example, the number of expense options has been slashed to 30—way down from 130—and includes only those that are most commonly used.

Should you upgrade to QuickBooks 2007? Yes, if you're a user of QuickBooks 2005 (or an earlier version) who hasn't already made the jump to QuickBooks 2006. But for those already using QuickBooks 2006, purchase the 2007 version only if you're interested in checking out the Google-related features. —J.B.

EDITORS' RATING **8.0**

0 BETTER >> 10

PROS Minor improvements to an already top-notch interface; new Google-specific marketing tools

CONS Few new features for upgraders from QuickBooks 2006

Intuit, 888-729-1996
www.intuit.com

Direct Price \$399.95

CNET CNET.com

The Best Web Host Just Go



NEW

1&1 MARKETING CENTER

Advertise your business and acquire customers

Microsoft® adCenter Google AdWords

Citysearch

Simple Submission

Drive traffic to your website with 1&1!

We now offer user-friendly technology to increase traffic to your website and help you get listed on the major search engines. Improve visibility with search advertising offers and search engine tools, advertise locally with the leading local search service, and gain valuable knowledge from an informative online success manual. It's all included with the purchase of any 1&1 shared hosting package.

Microsoft® adCenter

Reach potential customers by advertising with Microsoft® adCenter. Your 1&1 vouchers* for search advertising help you target your ads to the times, places, and customers you want. Use built-in tools to get keywords ideas, audience information, and detailed reports.

*Offer is valid for a limited time for advertisers opening a new U.S. Microsoft® adCenter account. Minimum \$5 sign-up fee required and other terms and conditions apply. See www.1and1.com. Microsoft is either a registered trademark or trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

Google AdWords

Promote your business and acquire customers easily with Google AdWords**. Select keywords that relate to your business and set up your ad in minutes. Make it easy for prospective customers to find your business when they search on Google for the products or services that you offer.

**Offer valid for new Google AdWords customers with self-managed sign-up accounts. Other terms and conditions apply. See www.1and1.com. Google and AdWords are trademarks of Google Inc. and are registered in the US and other countries.

Citysearch

Advertise locally with Citysearch, the leading local search service, by signing up for any 1&1 shared hosting package. You'll get 12 months of listing free as well as a \$50*** pay for performance voucher.

***Up to \$100 depending on your web-hosting plan.



call **1.877.go1and1**

Better

1&1

1&1, the world's #1 web host now offers traffic boosting tools

Yahoo!

Go Daddy

	BUSINESS	STANDARD	PREMIUM
Included Domains	3	1	\$1.99/year with purchase
Web Space	200 GB	10 GB	200 GB
Monthly Transfer Volume	2,000 GB	400 GB	2,000 GB
E-mail Accounts	2,000 IMAP or POP3	500 POP3	2,000 POP3
Mailbox Size	2 GB	2 GB	10 MB
Search Engine Submission	✓	✓	Extra charge applies
Website Builder	18 Pages	✓	Freeware
Flash Site Builder	18 Pages	—	—
Photo Gallery	✓	✓	✓
RSS Feed Creator	✓	—	\$4.99/month
Blog	✓	✓	\$2.99/mo. For ad-free blogs
Map & Driving Directions	✓	✓	—
Dynamic Web Content	✓	✓	—
Web Statistics	✓	✓	✓
E-mail Newsletter Tool	✓	\$10/month	\$3.99/month
In2site Live Dialogue	✓	—	—
Chat Channels	✓	—	✓
Form Builder	✓	✓	—
Premium Software Suite	✓	—	—
90-Day Money Back Guarantee	✓	—	—
Support	24/7 Toll-free Phone, E-mail	24/7 Toll-free Phone, E-mail	24/7 Phone, E-mail
Price Per Month	\$9⁹⁹	\$19⁹⁵	\$14⁹⁹

Microsoft® adCenter*

Vouchers included

\$100 value

Google AdWords**

\$50 value

Citysearch

\$50 value

© 2006 1&1 Internet, Inc. All rights reserved. Prices based on a comparison of regular Linux prices, effective 10/26/2006. Product and program specifications, availability, and pricing subject to change without notice. One marketing voucher per customer per vendor. Some limitations apply to the Money Back Guarantee. Visit 1and1.com for details. Go Daddy is a registered trademark of Go Daddy Software, Inc., Yahoo! is a registered trademark of Yahoo! Inc.

Register your site with top search engines

1&1's Simple Submission automatically submits 2 URLs to major search engines on a monthly basis. Try our upgraded version for a free 90 day trial to analyze your keywords, monitor your site's ranking, compare your site to the competition and so much more. Take your site to the next level.

Facilitate discovery of your website

Create a sitemap for free with Google Webmaster Tools via your 1&1 Control Panel. Sitemaps is a web developer tool that provides Google with up to date information to crawl your website faster and more efficiently. Enable easy discovery of information on your site and improve the search experience of your visitors.

Gain valuable knowledge for online success

Online Success for Non-Techies teaches you how to quickly and easily develop a successful website for your business, hobby or profession that ranks highly on the major search engines. This informative book by successful Internet entrepreneur James Martell is included with your 1&1 shared hosting package.

1&1

or visit us now **1and1.com**

skyp·ing (v.)

1. the act of making a free telephone call over the Internet using Skype™. (e.g. Skyping with TRENDnet's Conference Phone Kit makes long distance collaboration with partners and co-workers simple and affordable.)

ClearSky™ Bluetooth® VoIP Conference Phone Kit
(for Skype™)
TVP-SP4BK



The distinctively designed Skype™ conference phone kit is the first product to enable hands-free voice conferencing for small businesses anywhere in the office using a wireless Bluetooth® connection. Bundled with Vapp's® free High Speed Conferencing™ service, small businesses can now create conference calls for free with up to 500 users using Skype™ or regular landline phones. TRENDnet's complete line of Skype™ specific products make expensive long distance phone bills a thing of the past.



ClearSky™ Bluetooth® VoIP Phone Kit (for Skype™)
TVP-SP1BK



ClearLink™ VoIP USB Speakerphone (for Skype™)
TVP-SP2



ClearLink™ VoIP USB Phone (for Skype™)
TVP-SP3



ClearLink™ VoIP USB Phone Adapter (for Skype™)
TVP-SP5G



For Pre-Sales advice, please call 1-888-326-6061.

Buy.com

TigerDirect.com



TRENDnet®

© 2006 TRENDnet. All rights reserved.

WIRELESS

VOIP

FIBER

GIGABIT

ROUTERS

PRINT SERVERS

KVM

MEDIANET

TOP 5 ALTERNATIVE-BRAND DESKTOPS

Five lesser-known PCs that deliver powerful options.

1



VELOCITY MICRO VECTOR GX CAMPUS EDITION*

www.velocitymicro.com

\$999 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

8.0

SPECS

- 1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300
- 1GB DDR2
- 250GB hard drive
- Double-layer DVD±RW
- DVD-ROM
- 17-inch LCD
- nVidia GeForce 7600 GS graphics (256MB)
- One-year warranty

BOTTOM LINE

At \$999 for a setup complete with a 17-inch LCD and a two-piece speaker set, the Vector GX offers strong performance for an amazing price. Driven by Intel's Core 2 Duo processor, this configuration can handle schoolwork, Web browsing, light gaming, and digital-media tasks at the same speed as or faster than some costlier PCs.

WINBOOK JIV MINI

www.winbook.com

\$999.99 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

8.0

SPECS

- 1.6GHz Core Duo T2300
- 1GB DDR2
- 100GB hard drive
- DVD±RW
- Integrated graphics
- One-year warranty

BOTTOM LINE

The WinBook Jiv Mini manages to pack more components into a smaller package than any other small-form-factor (SFF) system we've seen. Not much bigger than a standard router, this mini-PC features an impressive array of features, including a DVD burner, S-Video and DVI outputs, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity, and a built-in TV tuner.



2

3

MAINGEAR X-CUBE

www.maingear.com

\$2,873 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

7.9



SPECS

- 2.2GHz Athlon 64 X2 4400+
- 2GB DDR2
- 500GB hard drive
- Double-layer DVD±RW
- nVidia GeForce 7950 GX2 graphics (1GB)
- Three-year warranty

BOTTOM LINE

If you want a gaming desktop for on-the-road fragging, look no further than the X-Cube. Maingear's bright-yellow, totable PC is currently the most advanced in its class—it's the only SFF system to offer both the Socket AM2 chipset and nVidia's dual-chip GeForce 7950 GX2 graphics card. Plus, it comes with a three-year warranty.

VELOCITY MICRO RAPTOR DCX*

www.velocitymicro.com

\$5,165 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

7.9

SPECS

- 2.93GHz Core 2 Duo X6800
- 2GB DDR2
- Two 150GB hard drives
- 500GB hard drive
- Double-layer DVD±RW
- DVD-ROM/CD-RW combo
- ATI Radeon X1950 XTX and X1950 CrossFire Edition graphics (512MB)
- Three-year warranty

BOTTOM LINE

Thanks to an aggressively overclocked Core 2 Duo Extreme CPU, plus ATI CrossFire dual-card graphics, Velocity Micro's Raptor DCX delivered the fastest performance we've seen. This gaming rig doesn't come cheap, however—our \$5,165 test configuration is a lot pricier than other Core 2 Duo PCs out there.



4

5



FALCON NORTHWEST MACH V*

www.falcon-nw.com

\$4,332 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

7.6

SPECS

- 3.14GHz Core 2 Duo E6700
- 2GB DDR2
- 150GB hard drive
- Double-layer DVD±RW
- DVD-ROM
- nVidia GeForce 7950 GX2 graphics (1GB)
- Three-year warranty

BOTTOM LINE

Though the Mach V delivered fast gaming numbers, its overclocked Core 2 Duo CPU didn't offer as much of a boost as we'd like. In our tests, the desktop was slower on application tasks than PCs with Intel's Core 2 Extreme X6800 processor were. Still, the Mach V is a top-notch PC that demonstrates Falcon Northwest's strong craftsmanship.

* = Configuration changed from original review

TOP 5 THIN-AND-LIGHT LAPTOPS

These portables let you take performance on the road.

1



LENOVO THINKPAD T60*

www.lenovo.com

\$2,189 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

7.8

SPECS

- 2.33GHz Core Duo T2700
- 1GB DDR2
- 100GB hard drive
- Double-layer DVD±RW
- 15-inch TFT
- ATI Mobility Radeon X1400 graphics (128MB)
- 5.5 pounds
- One-year warranty

BOTTOM LINE

The premium you'll pay for this laptop is worth it. The T60 delivers top-shelf performance and long battery life, thanks to prime components such as an Intel Core Duo processor. This model features a sturdy design, strong security features, a complete range of network connectivity, and enough ports for the typical business user.

DELL XPS M1210*

www.dell.com

\$2,072 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

7.3

SPECS

- 2.16GHz Core 2 Duo T7400
- 1GB DDR2
- 80GB hard drive
- Double-layer DVD±RW
- 12.1-inch TFT
- nVidia GeForce Go 7400 graphics (256MB)
- 4.4 pounds
- One-year warranty

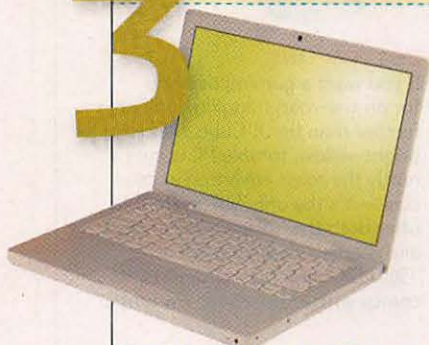
BOTTOM LINE

Though its higher-end configurations are expensive, the XPS M1210 should appeal to everyday users who want a relatively light—but still full-featured—Media Center laptop. Our \$2,072 test unit earned very high performance scores, making it exceptionally well-suited for multitasking and even working with graphics-intensive apps on the go.



2

3



APPLE MACBOOK

www.apple.com

\$1,299 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

7.2

- 2GHz Core Duo T2500
- 512MB DDR2
- 60GB hard drive
- Double-layer DVD±RW
- 13.3-inch TFT
- Integrated graphics
- 5.2 pounds
- One-year warranty

BOTTOM LINE

Apple's MacBook offers a great compromise between size and portability for a reasonable price. (The baseline white model rings up at an even lower \$1,099.) While its performance doesn't match that of higher-end notebooks, this the MacBook's combination of aesthetics, features, and software narrows the value gap between Apple and its PC competition.

HP COMPAQ NC6400

www.hp.com

\$1,525 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

7.0

SPECS

- 1.83GHz Core Duo T2400
- 512MB DDR2
- 60GB hard drive
- DVD-ROM/CD-RW combo drive
- 14.1-inch TFT
- Integrated graphics
- 4.6 pounds
- Three-year warranty

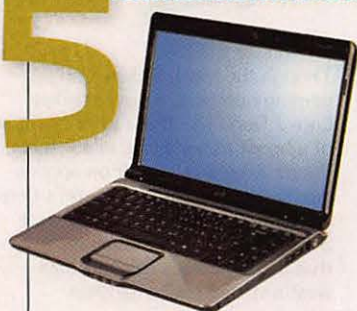
BOTTOM LINE

With prices starting at \$1,199, the NC6400 is a good choice for companies seeking reasonably priced portables with a solid combination of speed, battery life, features, and design perks. Although not the most powerful model we've tested, its respectable performance will more than suffice for typical corporate tasks.



4

5



HP PAVILION DV2000*

www.hp.com

\$1,337 (as tested)

EDITORS' RATING

6.9

SPECS

- 1.73GHz Core Duo T2250
- 512MB DDR2
- 120GB hard drive
- DVD-ROM/CD-RW combo drive
- 14.1-inch TFT
- Integrated graphics
- 5.3 pounds
- One-year warranty

BOTTOM LINE

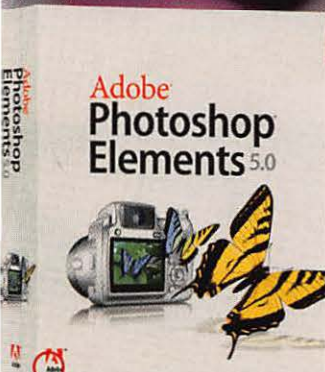
Starting at \$729.99, the DV2000t delivers an eye-catching case, solid performance, excellent battery life, and most of the features a home user will want—all for a competitive price. Our only caveats: a noisy keyboard, and the absence of Windows XP Media Center Edition as a configuration option.

* = Configuration changed from original review

A New Year means New Gear at PROVANTAGE®!

Start 2007 off right by upgrading your computer systems and electronics at PROVANTAGE! If you are planning on upgrading to Microsoft® Windows® Vista™, let us help you to plan your upgrade! Whether your company is enrolled in the Microsoft Open License Program or you simply need to upgrade your desktop, PROVANTAGE is your Microsoft Windows Vista headquarters!

PROVANTAGE®



Adobe
**Photoshop
Elements 5.0**

Digital Imaging Software

Bring out the best in your photos with powerful digital imaging software from the leading software companies in the category.

EMRL9PH
Photoshop Elements v5.0
for Windows **\$71.32**



Budget Desktops

Affordability doesn't mean less powerful. A wide selection of desktop computers at rock bottom prices are at PROVANTAGE!

ACED00L
Athlon64 3700+, 1GB RAM, 250GB-SATA HDD,
Dual Layer DVD+-RW/DVD, Windows XP Media
..... **\$563.37**



Desktop Replacement Notebooks

Replace your desktop with a powerful notebook that you can take anywhere!

HEWW0C3
HP Compaq NW9440
Desktop Replacement Notebook **\$2155.42**



Get your **Free
Buyer's Guide
Today!**



NETGEAR

Networking

Discover our huge selection of Wireless, VoIP, Broadband and Ethernet networking equipment to fill the needs of end-users to large corporations!

NETS129
NETGEAR GS748T ProSafe
48-Port Gigabit Smart Switch **\$679.56**

External Hard Drives

Gigabytes and terabytes for your external storage needs!

MXTE01P
MAXTOR OneTouch III 1TB
External Drive Turbo **\$459.57**

Maxtor



LCD TV'S

LCD's are finally becoming as affordable as plasma displays. Check out our selection at PROVANTAGE!

VITV014
N4251w 42in
Widescreen LCD HDTV **\$1445.17**

ViewSonic



VISIT US AT PROVANTAGE.COM/CS * 800-336-1166

Products, prices, terms, conditions, offers, or information may change at any time.

TOP 5 WI-FI ROUTERS

Build a dependable wireless network around these advanced Wi-Fi devices.

1



BELKIN WIRELESS PRE-N ROUTER

www.belkin.com

\$99.99

EDITORS' RATING

8.4

SPECS

- MIMO
- 108Mbps maximum throughput
- 802.11b/g
- Three external antennae
- Four wired Ethernet ports
- WEP, WPA security
- Hardware firewall

BOTTOM LINE

If you're shopping for a router that will give you fast throughput, the largest coverage area, and solid security features, look no further than Belkin's Wireless Pre-N Router. This multiple input, multiple output (MIMO) router is a speedier alternative to a router/repeater combo, and it costs less than most of the competition.

APPLE AIRPORT EXPRESS BASE STATION

www.apple.com

\$129

EDITORS' RATING

8.1

SPECS

- 54Mbps maximum throughput
- 802.11b/g
- One internal antenna
- One wired Ethernet port
- WEP, WPA security
- Hardware firewall

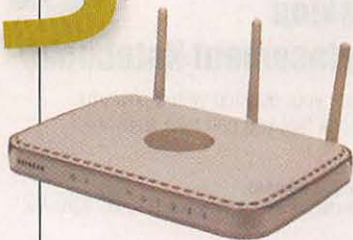
BOTTOM LINE

Apple's ultracompact AirPort Express works with Macs and PCs. It includes a 10/100Mbps Ethernet port, an integrated 802.11g access point, a USB print server, and a stereo mini-jack to connect a sound system, letting you stream iTunes tracks over your wireless network.



2

3



NETGEAR RANGE-MAX 240 WIRELESS ROUTER WPNT834

www.netgear.com

\$129.99

EDITORS' RATING

8.0

SPECS

- MIMO
- 240Mbps maximum throughput
- 802.11b/g
- Three external antennae
- Four wired Ethernet ports
- WEP, WPA, WPA2 security
- Hardware firewall

BOTTOM LINE

A solid MIMO option, the Netgear WPNT834 offers simple setup, a comprehensive user manual, ample security options, and support for VPN pass-through. This three-antenna router also provides phenomenal throughput at short range, though it still doesn't deliver on MIMO's promise of fantastic long-range performance.

BELKIN N1 WIRELESS ROUTER

www.belkin.com

\$149.99

EDITORS' RATING

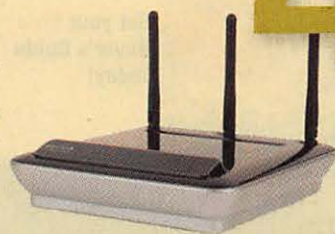
7.8

SPECS

- MIMO
- 300Mbps maximum throughput
- Draft 802.11n, 802.11b/g
- Three external antennae
- Four wired Ethernet ports
- WEP, WPA security
- Hardware firewall

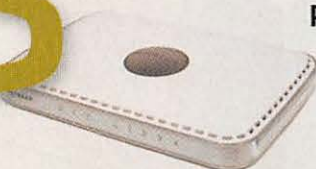
BOTTOM LINE

With its simple status icons, up-to-date security options, and stellar support, the N1 is on the path to 802.11n wireless-networking stardom, but like other Draft N devices, its performance fails to impress. Though it performed admirably considering it can operate only in mixed mode, the N1 still fell short of expectations.



4

5



NETGEAR RANGE-MAX WIRELESS ROUTER WPN824

www.netgear.com

\$109.99

EDITORS' RATING

7.8

SPECS

- MIMO
- 108Mbps maximum throughput
- 802.11b/g
- Seven internal antennae
- Four wired Ethernet ports
- WEP, WPA, WPA2 security
- Hardware firewall

BOTTOM LINE

More compact than its MIMO counterparts, the Netgear WPN824 features seven antennae to help combat interference from cordless phones and nearby networks. The router earned high marks on our long-range and maximum-throughput tests, but performance lagged when we used it with legacy 802.11b devices.

Upgrade Your Treo™, BlackBerry™, motorola Q™

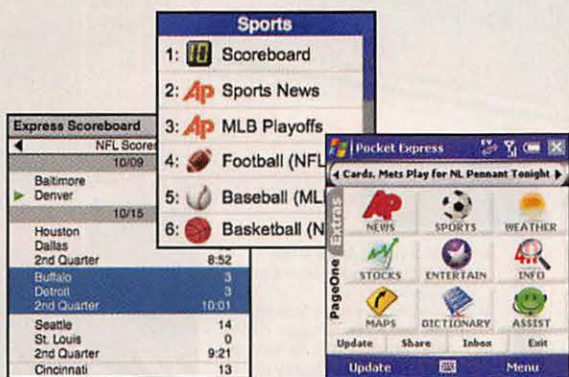
"The wireless portable Internet you've been waiting for." - CPU magazine, July 2006

The All News Upgrade For A Smarter Phone Experience!

Call to install, it's free.

877-796-3669

www.PocketExpress.com



H A N D M A R K®

POCKET  EXPRESS™

PC Magazine® Editors' Choice

Also compatible with most Windows Mobile™ and MOTO RAZR, PEBL, & SLVR handsets

© 2006 Handmark, Inc. Handmark is a registered trademark and Pocket Express, the Handmark logo, and associated trade dress are trademarks of Handmark, Inc. Treo is a trademark of Palm, Inc. Windows Mobile is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and other countries. The BlackBerry and RIM families of related marks, images and symbols are the exclusive properties and trademarks of Research In Motion Limited. RIM, Research In Motion and BlackBerry are registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and may be pending or registered in other countries. MOTOROLA and the Stylized M Logo are registered in the US Patent & Trademark Office. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. All rights reserved.

faster

better

free



**No guts. No glory.
We have the guts...**



NP

5960 V

- 20" Wide Viewing Angles WSXGA+ Active Matrix Display with Super Clear Glare Type Screen
- AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-60
- 512MB DDR3 NVIDIA® GeForce™ Go 7950 GTX PCI-Express™ Graphics
- Dual Graphics SLI™ Technology Capable
- 1GB DDR2 SDRAM at 667MHz
- 80.0GB 5400RPM Serial ATA 150 Hard Drive
- 8X DVD+-R/RW/4X +DL Super Multi Drive
- Full sized Keyboard with Numeric Keypad
- Integrated Wireless LAN 802.11 b/g
- Integrated Bluetooth Wireless
- Built-in 1.3M High-Resolution Video Camera
- SRS WOWTM 3D Sound Technology
- Built-in 4-in-1 Card Reader
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition

\$2999

NP

5760 V

- 17.0" Wide Viewing Angles WUXGA Active Matrix Display with Super Clear Glare Type Screen
- Intel® Centrino® Duo mobile technology
 - Intel® Core™ 2 Duo Processor T7200 (4MB L2 Cache, 2.0GHz, 667MHz FSB)
 - Intel® PRO/Wireless 3945ABG LAN 802.11a/b/g
- 512MB DDR3 NVIDIA® GeForce™ Go 7950 GTX PCI-Express™ Graphics
- 1GB Dual Channel DDR2 SDRAM at 667MHz
- 80.0GB 5400RPM Serial ATA 150 Hard Drive
- 8X DVD+-R/RW/4X +DL Super Multi Drive
- Modular Optical Device Bay design allow CD-ROM Device to be exchanged with optional 2nd Hard Drive
- Front Panel Audio DJ with Separate Power Switch
- Built-in 1.3M High-Resolution Video Camera
- Built-in 4-in-1 Card Reader (MS/MS Pro/SD/MMC)
- Microsoft® Windows XP Home Edition

\$2399

Sager notebooks are always loaded with cutting-edge components so you can access today's business and gaming software with ease. Call Sager today to order your custom gaming computer.

Call us toll-free at:

800.669.1624

For up-to-the-minute pricing and ordering information:

sagernotebook.com

TOP 5 SMARTPHONES

These brainy communicators do much more than your average cell phone.

1



RIM BLACKBERRY 7130C

www.rim.com

\$249.99

EDITORS' RATING

8.3



SPECS

- GSM network
- Carrier: Cingular
- Proprietary OS
- 64MB RAM
- 2.25-inch, 240x260-pixel display
- Keypad input
- 4.2 ounces

BOTTOM LINE

An excellent smartphone for mobile professionals and consumers alike, the 7130c offers many of the features found in its siblings, such as robust e-mail capabilities, a sharp color screen, and Bluetooth connectivity. It also has a lightweight, more-refined look that makes it the best-designed BlackBerry we've seen.

SONY ERICSSON P990I

www.sonyericsson.com

\$749

EDITORS' RATING

8.3

SPECS

- GSM network
- Symbian 9.1 OS
- 60MB RAM; 64MB Memory Stick
- 2.8-inch, 240x320-pixel display
- Keyboard, keypad, stylus input
- 5.3 ounces

BOTTOM LINE

The P990i is the crème de la crème of smartphones, with a sleek design that incorporates a QWERTY keyboard, coupled with the latest in mobile technology. Features include Wi-Fi connectivity, a 2-megapixel camera, support for video recording, and a business-card scanner. Most users will be deterred by the seriously steep price, however.



2

3



RIM BLACKBERRY 8700G

www.rim.com

\$399.99

EDITORS' RATING

8.0

SPECS

- GSM network
- Carrier: T-Mobile
- Proprietary OS
- 64MB RAM
- 2.5-inch, 320x240-pixel display
- Keyboard input
- 4.7 ounces

BOTTOM LINE

The 8700g offers T-Mobile-network customers a robust, user-friendly messaging device and cell phone with great performance. In addition to Bluetooth 2.0 connectivity and support for up to 10 corporate or personal e-mail accounts, the 8700g supports T-Mobile's Enhanced Data rates for GSM Evolution (EDGE) network for fast Web browsing.

T-MOBILE DASH

www.tmobile.com

\$299.99

EDITORS' RATING

8.0

SPECS

- GSM network
- Carrier: T-Mobile
- Windows Mobile 5.0 Smartphone Edition OS
- 64MB RAM
- 2.4-inch, 320x240-pixel display
- Keyboard input
- 4.2 ounces

BOTTOM LINE

Though its superslim design and volume touch strip won't appeal to everyone, the Dash is a top-notch all-in-one device. It includes integrated Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 2.0, and "push" e-mail capabilities right out of the box. The quadband smartphone also delivers on performance with excellent call quality and battery life. (See review on p. 46.)



4

5



T-MOBILE SDA

www.tmobile.com

\$299.99

EDITORS' RATING

8.0

SPECS

- GSM network
- Carrier: T-Mobile
- Windows Mobile 5.0 Smartphone Edition OS
- 64MB RAM
- 2.2-inch, 240x320-pixel display
- Keypad input
- 3.7 ounces

BOTTOM LINE

With its compact and sleek design, the SDA may look like any other candy-bar-style cell phone, but the slim handset runs Windows Mobile 5.0 Smartphone Edition, arming you with the tools to stay productive on the go. It's loaded with wireless connections (Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, and EDGE), as well as multimedia flair and a 1.3-megapixel camera.

✓ = Editors' Choice

TOP 5 DOWNLOADS

Get instant gratification with these best-in-class downloadable apps.

APPLE ITUNES 7.0.1

www.apple.com

Free



SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- 500MHz or faster CPU
- 256MB RAM
- Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later;
Windows 2000 or XP

BOTTOM LINE

iTunes has always been one of the best jukeboxes, but Apple improved upon a great thing with version 7.0.1, which adds enhanced video capabilities and new ways to view your media files. A cleaned-up left sidebar makes it easier to find your tracks, while the new Album and Cover-Flow view options let you peruse your library in style.

AVG ANTI-VIRUS PROFESSIONAL EDITION 7.5

www.grisoft.com

Free to try;
\$38.95 (full version)



SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Windows 95 or later

BOTTOM LINE

Though not as well-known as some of its competitors, AVG's antivirus app offers rock-solid protection. The Professional version includes a tool for scanning your hard drive and e-mail, as well as a real-time shield to prevent infections. Plus, the program doesn't tax your system when scanning or when running in the background.



OPENOFFICE.ORG 2.0.4

www.openoffice.org

Free



SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- 128MB RAM
- 200MB hard drive space
- Windows 98 or later

BOTTOM LINE

An increasingly credible rival to Microsoft Office, OpenOffice.org includes powerful applications for creating text documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and databases, as well as HTML and XML files. The latest version features a handful of improvements, making it a compelling option for anyone in search of a free office-productivity suite.

OPERA 9.02

www.opera.com

Free



SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Windows 95 or later

BOTTOM LINE

A full-featured Web browser, the latest iteration of Opera has all the basics covered, including tabbed browsing, a search bar with Google and several other popular portals, advanced bookmarking tools, and simple integration with your favorite e-mail and chat clients. Mouse-gesture support, keyboard shortcuts, and drag-and-drop further enhance your surfing.



WINPATROL 10.0.5

www.winpatrol.com

Free to try; \$29.95
(full version)



SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Windows 95 or later

BOTTOM LINE

WinPatrol uses a simple, yet effective, method of fighting all kinds of malicious programs. It inspects vulnerabilities in your Windows system that malware is most likely to exploit, including programs launched at startup, browser helper objects, scheduled tasks, services, and cookies. Best of all, this program doesn't slow down your PC.

CYBERPOWER RECOMMENDS WINDOWS® XP MEDIA CENTER EDITION



- AMD PowerNow!™ for longer battery life.
- True multi-tasking capability – get more done in less time.
- Get creative. Get mobile. Get going.

• Enjoy superb video playback, edit videos on the fly and deliver super-fast graphics performance – all while on the go.



GAMER ULTRA SLI PRO

- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 2048MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 320GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 16MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7950 GS 512MB DDR3, 16X PCI Express
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive & 16X DVD-ROM
- NVIDIA® nForce® 5 7.1 3-D Surround Sound

- Creative Cambridge Inspire P7800 7.1 Surround Sound System
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard
- Microsoft® Optical Intelli Explorer Mouse
- CoolerMaster Stacker 830 MidTower Case w/ Side-Panel Window
- CoolerMaster Aquagate Mini Liquid Cooling System
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic VA902B Xtreme Bms Gaming LCD Display \$229

- AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 Processor \$ 2469
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5200+ Processor \$ 1985
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor \$ 1885
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor \$ 1819
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor \$ 1765
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor \$ 1735

\$ 1735



GAMER ULTRA QUAD SLI

- Asus M2N32-SLI Deluxe nForce 590 SLI Chipset MB
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 2048MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- Dual Western Digital Raptor 74GB Hard Drive
- 320GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 16MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 8800 GTX w/ 768MB Video Memory
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive & 16X DVD-ROM

- NVIDIA® nForce® 5 7.1 3-D Surround Sound
- Creative Cambridge Inspire P7800 7.1 Surround Sound System
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard
- Microsoft® Optical Intelli Explorer Mouse
- CoolerMaster Stacker 830 MidTower Case w/ Side-Panel Window
- Apevia 600Watt Power Supply
- Xtreme Liquid Cooling System
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

- AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 Processor \$ 3479
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5200+ Processor \$ 2985
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor \$ 2885
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor \$ 2815
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor \$ 2759
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor \$ 2729

\$ 2729



GAMER EXPLORER-64 8700

- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology
- AMD PowerNow! Technology
- HyperTransport Technology
- Enhanced Virus Protection Technology
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- 512MB PC3200 DDR400 Memory
- 60GB Ultra ATA100 Hard Drive
- Mobile ATI® X700 16X PCI-Express 128MB Video
- 8X DVD+-RW Drive
- 15.4" WXGA Wide-Screen TFT Display 1280x800 Pixels

- 10/100 Network Card & 56K V.92 Modem
- Wireless 802.11G 54Mbps Networking
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- 1 Firewire IEEE 1394 & 4 USB 2.0 Ports
- Weight only 6.39 Lbs
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology ML-44 \$ 1135
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology ML-42 \$ 1089
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology MT-40 \$ 1059
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology MT-37 \$ 1029
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology MT-34 \$ 1019

\$ 1019



GAMER EXPLORER-64 SLI PRO

- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology
- AMD PowerNow! Technology
- HyperTransport Technology
- Enhanced Virus Protection Technology
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- 1024MB PC3200 DDR400 Memory
- 100GB SATA150 Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® Go 7900 GTX 256MB, DDR3, 16X PCI-Express in SLI Mode
- 8X DVD+-RW Drive

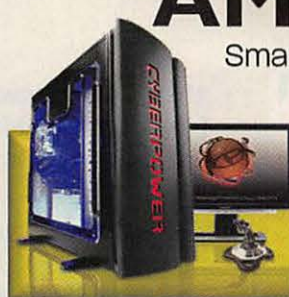
- 19" WSXGA Wide-Screen TFT Display 1680x1050 Pixels
- 10/100 Network Card & 56K V.92 Modem
- Wireless 802.11G 54Mbps Networking
- 7-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- 1 Firewire IEEE 1394 & 4 USB 2.0 Ports
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology ML-44 \$ 3169
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology ML-42 \$ 3125
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology MT-40 \$ 3095
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology MT-37 \$ 3065
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology MT-34 \$ 3055
- AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology MT-32 \$ 3045

\$ 3045

AMD

Smarter Choice



GAMER ULTRA

SLI GT

- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 1024MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7900 GS 256MB DDR3 16X PCI Express w/ TV-Out
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive & 16X DVD-ROM
- NVIDIA® nForce® 5.1 3-D Surround Sound
- Logitech X530 5.1 Subwoofer Speakers
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard
- Microsoft® Optical Intelli Explorer Mouse
- Aluminum CoolerMaster Mystique 632 Midtower Case 420Watt
- CoolerMaster Aquagate Mini Liquid Cooling System
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

\$ 1265

GAMER ULTRA

SLI ELITE

- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 1024MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7600 GS 256MB DDR3, 16X PCI Express
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive & 16X DVD-ROM
- NVIDIA® nForce® 5.1 3-D Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer Speakers
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard & Optical Wheel Mouse
- Turbo X-Cruiser Case 420Watt w/ See Through Windows
- CoolerMaster Aquagate Mini Liquid Cooling System
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic VA902B Xtreme 8ms Gaming LCD Display \$229

\$ 975

GAMER ULTRA

SLI BASIC

- NVIDIA® nForce® 4 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 512MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7300 GS 256MB DDR 16X PCI Express w/ TV-Out
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive
- NVIDIA® nForce® 4.1 3-D Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer Speakers
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard & Optical Wheel Mouse
- CyberPower X-Titan 8 Bay Super Tower Case 420Watt
- CoolerMaster Aquagate Mini Liquid Cooling System
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic Q9B LCD Display \$199

\$ 759

AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 Processor	\$ 1999
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5200+ Processor	\$ 1519
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor	\$ 1419
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor	\$ 1355
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 1295
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor	\$ 1265

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor	\$ 1185
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor	\$ 1117
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 1059
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor	\$ 1029
AMD Athlon™ 64 3800+ Processor	\$ 985
AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor	\$ 975

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor	\$ 965
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor	\$ 899
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 849
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor	\$ 819
AMD Athlon™ 64 3800+ Processor	\$ 775
AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor	\$ 759



CyberPower Inc.



- Ultimate smart dual-core power and performance.
- Run all your applications at the same time with increased performance.



- The smart choice for the ultimate extreme PC.
- Discover the true potential of your PC. Break the speed limit.

TOLL FREE 800.707.0393 OR WWW.CYBERPOWERPC.COM



- AMD PowerNow!™ for longer battery life.
- True multi-tasking capability – get more done in less time.
- Get creative. Get mobile. Get going.



• Enjoy superb video playback, edit videos on the fly and deliver super-fast graphics performance – all while on the go.



GAMER ULTRA 7500 SE

- NVIDIA® nForce® 4 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 1024MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- NVIDIA® GeForce® 7600 GS 256MB DDR3 16X PCI Express w/ TV-Out
- LG 18X DVD+/-RW Drive
- NVIDIA® nForce® 4 7.1 3-D Surround Sound
- Logitech X530 5.1 Subwoofer Speakers

- 6-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 19" Viewsonic Q9B LCD Display
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard
- Logitech Optical Wheel Mouse
- Turbo X-Cruiser Case 420Watt w/ See Through Windows
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 Processor	\$ 1775
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor	\$ 1199
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor	\$ 1145
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 1089
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor	\$ 1059
AMD Athlon™ 64 3800+ Processor	\$ 1019
AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor	\$ 999

\$ 999



GAMER ULTRA CROSSFIRE 9000

- ATI® Radeon™ Xpress3200 CrossFire Chipset Motherboard
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 1024MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) ATI® Radeon™ X1650 Pro 256MB 16X PCI-Express Video Card w/ TV-Out & DVI Powered by PowerColor Running in CrossFire Mode
- LG 18X DVD+/-RW Drive & 16X DVD-ROM

- 7.1 8 Channel Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer System
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard & Mouse
- Aluminum CoolerMaster Praetorian 730 Midtower Case 420Watt
- CoolerMaster Aquagate Mini Liquid Cooling System
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic VA902B Xtreme 8ms Gaming LCD Display \$229

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor	\$ 1325
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor	\$ 1259
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 1199
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor	\$ 1175

\$ 1175



GAMER EXPLORER-64 9520

- AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology
- AMD PowerNow! Technology
- HyperTransport Technology
- Enhanced Virus Protection Technology
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- 1024MB PC5300 DDR2 667 Memory
- 80GB SATA150 Hard Drive
- NVIDIA® GeForce® Go 7600 256MB Video
- 15.4" WXGA Wide-Screen TFT Display 1280x800 Pixels
- 8X DVD+/-RW Drive

- Gigabyte Network Card & 56K V.92 Modem
- Wireless 802.11G 54Mbps Networking
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- 1 Firewire IEEE 1394 & 4 USB 2.0 Ports
- 5 Custom Colors to Choose From
- Weight only 6.39 Lbs; Free Carrying Case
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-64	\$ 1469
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-60	\$ 1359
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-56	\$ 1309
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-52	\$ 1269
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-50	\$ 1239

\$ 1239



GAMER EXPLORER-64 9550

- AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology
- AMD PowerNow! Technology
- HyperTransport Technology
- Enhanced Virus Protection Technology
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- 2048MB PC5300 DDR2 667 Memory
- 100GB SATA150 Hard Drive
- NVIDIA® GeForce® Go 7600 256MB Video
- 8X DVD+/-RW Drive
- 15.4" WXGA Wide-Screen TFT Display 1280x800 Pixels

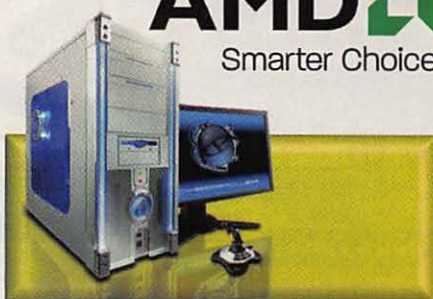
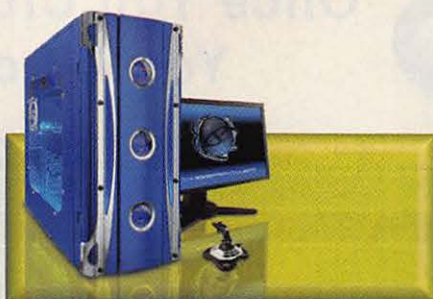
- Gigabyte Network Card & 56K V.92 Modem
- Wireless 802.11G 54Mbps Networking
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Reader
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- 1 Firewire IEEE 1394 & 4 USB 2.0 Ports
- 5 Custom Colors to Choose From
- Weight only 6.39 Lbs; Free Carrying Case
- 1 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport

AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-64	\$ 1569
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-60	\$ 1479
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-56	\$ 1435
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-52	\$ 1399
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-50	\$ 1369

\$ 1369

AMD

Smarter Choice



GAMER ULTRA 8000 DREAM

GAMER ULTRA 7000 ELITE

MEGA ULTRA 5000 LIGHTNING

- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 1024MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7600 GS 256MB DDR3, 16X PCI Express
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive & 16X DVD-ROM
- NVIDIA® nForce® 5.1 7.1 3-D Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer Speakers
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard & Optical Wheel Mouse
- Cyberpower X-Titan 8 Bay Super Tower Case 420Watt
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic VA902B Xtreme 8ms Gaming LCD Display \$229

- NVIDIA® nForce® 4 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Corsair 512MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- (2) NVIDIA® GeForce® 7300 LE 256MB DDR3 16X PCI Express w/ TV-Out
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive
- NVIDIA® nForce® 4.1 3-D Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer Speakers
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard & Optical Wheel Mouse
- Turbo X-Cruiser Case 420Watt w/ See Through Windows
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic VA902B Xtreme 8ms Gaming LCD Display \$229

- NVIDIA® nForce® 4 SLI Chipset MB with Dual 16X PCI Express
- Corsair 512MB PC6400 DDR2 800 Dual Channel Memory
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- NVIDIA® GeForce® 7100 GS Supporting 256MB Turbo Cache
- LG 18X DVD+-RW Drive
- NVIDIA® nForce® 4.1 3-D Surround Sound
- 600Watt Subwoofer Speakers
- Logitech Office 104 Keyboard & Optical Wheel Mouse
- X-Discovery Case 420Watt w/ See Through Windows
- Free 802.11G Wireless PCI Network Adaptor
- 3 Year Limited Warranty + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Add 19" Viewsonic VA902B Xtreme 8ms Gaming LCD Display \$229

\$ 898

\$ 699

\$ 529

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5200+ Processor	\$ 1149
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor	\$ 1049
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor	\$ 985
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 929
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor	\$ 898

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor	\$ 849
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor	\$ 785
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 729
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor	\$ 699

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor	\$ 739
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4600+ Processor	\$ 669
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 615
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor	\$ 585
AMD Athlon™ 64 3800+ Processor	\$ 539
AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor	\$ 529



CyberPower Inc.



- Ultimate smart dual-core power and performance.
- Run all your applications at the same time with increased performance.

- The smart choice for the ultimate extreme PC.
- Discover the true potential of your PC. Break the speed limit.



TOLL FREE 800.707.0393 OR WWW.CYBERPOWERPC.COM



Once You ClubIT,
You'll Love IT!

9.66

RESELLERRATINGS
.COM

SEARCH

IN All Categories

GO

MY ACCOUNT

CONTACT US

HELP

CART

SHOP BY CATEGORIES

SHOP BY BRAND

Quick Links

CASES

CD/DVD BURNERS

CPU/PROCESSORS

HARD DRIVES

LCD MONITORS

MOTHERBOARDS

NETWORKING

POWER SUPPLIES

SYSTEM MEMORY

VIDEO CARDS

ALL CATEGORIES

More Value

CLEARANCE ITEMS

ClubIT SPECIALS!

COMBO SPECIALS!

TOP 10 SELLERS

NEW ARRIVALS

5 STAR REVIEWS

WE CARRY ALL MAJOR BRANDS AND MORE

Sweepstakes
Winners

Next time it could be you!



Sweepstakes

WD Western Digital



Enter for your chance to Win a Western Digital 74GB Raptor Hard Drive

Visit
www.ClubIT.com/
sweepstakes.cfm

Sweepstakes ends 1/31/07



FREE SHIPPING

On Orders over \$250 Or More

Enter Code:
FREESHIPCS2
Offer ends 1/31/07

Microsoft Windows Vista

ClubIT Weekly Specials



Microsoft
Windows Vista

GET THE BEST TODAY & TOMORROW,
BE WINDOWS VISTA READY!



Windows Vista™ Premium Ready Recommended Selections



Microsoft

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$199.99
ClubIT: \$139.99

\$139.99

You Save 30%

Microsoft Windows XP Professional with Windows Vista Upgrade Coupon



COOLER MASTER

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$169.99
ClubIT: \$139.99

\$139.99

You Save 18%

Cooler Master Mystique Blue Lite ATX Case with Side Window



COOLER MASTER

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$269.99
ClubIT: \$249.99

\$249.99

You Save 7%

Cooler Master Real Power Pro 850W SLI Certified Power Supply

ADD TO CART

ADD TO CART

ADD TO CART



Western Digital

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$179.99
ClubIT: \$159.99*

\$159.99*

You Save 11%

Western Digital Scorpio 160GB Notebook Hard Drive

*After \$10 Mr. Mail-in Rebate, Valid from 12/31-1/13/07



intel

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$249.99
ClubIT: \$219.99

\$219.99

You Save 12%

Intel Core 2 Duo E6400 Processor 2.13GHz 2MB S775 Retail

Free Fedex 5-7 Days Shipping



intel

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$369.99
ClubIT: \$319.99

\$319.99

You Save 13%

Intel Core 2 Duo E6600 Processor 2.40GHz 4MB S775 Retail

Free Fedex 5-7 Days Shipping

ADD TO CART

ADD TO CART

ADD TO CART



EVGA

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$699.99
ClubIT: \$619.99

\$619.99

You Save 6%

EVGA e-GeForce 8800 GTX 768MB Video Card

Free Fedex 5-7 Days Shipping



Logitech

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$129.99
ClubIT: \$109.99

\$109.99

You Save 15%

Logitech EasyCall Cordless Desktop



LITEON

In Stock: Yes
Retail: \$699.99
ClubIT: \$549.99

\$549.99

You Save 8%

Liteon Blu-Ray and DVD Burner with SATA

Free Fedex 5-7 Days Shipping

ADD TO CART

ADD TO CART

ADD TO CART

The IT Place For Your Latest Technology Needs

Prices subject to change without notice. ClubIT.com will not be responsible for typographical errors. All promotions stated do not apply to prior purchase. All prices and offers listed good thru 1/31/07 unless otherwise stated. Email to customercare@clubit.com for any questions.

1-877- 6 ClubIT

www.ClubIT.com



The Real Guide to PC Shopping

A STEP-BY-STEP
STRATEGY FOR
BUYING A
DESKTOP THAT
MEETS YOUR
NEEDS—AND
YOUR BUDGET

■ BY TROY DREIER

Buying a new computer can be tricky.

Ads in the Sunday circulars trumpet low-cost deals that turn out to describe woefully underperforming PCs. Meanwhile, computer magazines drool over the fastest (and costliest) systems around, extolling tricked-out desktops that will impress your friends but also cost you thousands of dollars for horsepower you'll never use. So how do you determine the right balance of price and performance for your needs?

To help you find that sweet spot, we examine the components of a desktop computer and discuss what the average user should look for when buying a new PC. The goal is to configure a well-priced system that can handle the technical demands of the next three or four years. We'll also advise budget shoppers on what to look for in a value computer, and, for power users, spell out the components you need for a top-of-the-line rig.

1 Operating System: XP Now, Vista Later

Three varieties of Windows XP for desktop PCs are available: Windows XP Home Edition, Windows XP Professional, and Windows XP Media Center Edition. Home Edition is the starter version, meant for basic use. Professional targets corporate users and more-demanding home users. It offers the same experience Home Edition does, but adds privacy, security, networking, and remote-access features. Media Center Edition PCs typically come with a remote control and a large-icon graphical interface that makes it easy to enjoy your stored songs, videos, and photos from across the room.

When customizing your system, you'll want to go with at least Windows XP Professional. Besides making it easier to wirelessly network your computer, it also automatically downloads and installs critical patches and security updates from Microsoft in the background whenever you're online.

The decision to spring for Media Center Edition depends on where and how you'll be using the computer. If it's going in the rec room next to the television, then you'll like to be able to show off vacation photos to guests with the remote, or just kick back on the couch and scroll through your tunes from across the room. Media Center Edition can also receive and record TV programs, but only if your PC has a TV-tuner card and is connected to your antenna, cable box, or satellite box. Power users may want to shell out for a fully equipped system, but many people who have Media Center Edition never use the remote features.

This is a tricky time to buy a PC, because both Apple and Microsoft are set to release new operating systems. If you buy a Windows PC now, be sure to look for an "Express Upgrade to Windows Vista" option, which entitles you to a free or discounted upgrade when the new version is available in late January. (For more on upgrading, see the sidebar "Planning for Vista and Leopard.")



2 Processor: Do You Really Need the Speed?

For many people, buying a new computer often boils down to how fast the processor should be. And that's a decision that really makes shoppers anxious. You don't want a wimpy computer that freezes up every hour, but how do you predict performance?

You'll be happy to learn that processing power is much less an issue nowadays, and that midrange PCs can handle almost any task you throw at them. For best results, look for an Intel Core 2 Duo or AMD Athlon 64 X2 processor. These are dual-core processors that can multitask by handling two operations at the same time. (Currently, the sweet spot is between 1.8GHz and 2.2GHz.) If you plan to use the computer for general home use—the Internet, number-crunching, music, and photos—you don't need to pay for a more powerful processor.

Value shoppers can make do with Pentium 4 or AMD Athlon 64 processors running at around 2GHz. Power users—those who regularly run high-performance business software, video-editing suites, audio-mixing boards, and, of course, 3D-action games—should pay extra for performance chips such as the Core 2 Extreme or QX6700, or the Athlon 64 FX. Look for CPU speeds between 2.8GHz and 2.93GHz. Mac users don't have a choice between AMD and Intel; all Mac desktops now use Intel dual-core processors. The iMac has up to a 2.33GHz chip, while the ultimate Mac Pro has twin 3GHz dual-core Intel Xeon processors.



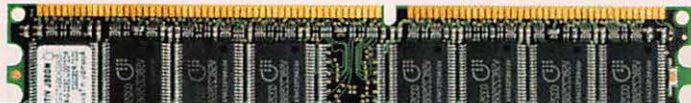
3 RAM: Why Memory Matters More

RAM is the memory that your computer employs to load, display, and manipulate applications and data, so getting an adequate amount can be more important than getting a fast processor. Most midrange Windows PCs now ship with 1GB of RAM, which is plenty for average use. If your computer work revolves around only Web browsers and Office apps, with occasional audio and video, you'll purr right along with 1GB of RAM. Budget shoppers can get by with just 512MB of RAM if they stick to simple tasks. Some extremely inexpensive PCs come standard with 256MB of RAM, but this is inadequate for today's basic applications.

Power users should start with 2GB of RAM, then add more as their needs and budget dictate. (Those with apps that tax multiple processors, for instance, will want to go for more.) A dream PC might have 4GB of RAM, which will let you blast bad guys or edit video without a second's hesitation.

RAM is always listed with a megahertz (MHz) rating that indicates how fast the computer can access that memory. 533MHz connections are fine for midrange computers, but power users will want 667MHz or 800MHz RAM.

Apple often under-equips its computers with RAM, so extra memory is the most important customization you can choose when ordering a Mac. After all, the outstanding iLife multimedia suite that comes bundled with Macs can consume a lot of system resources. Today's Mac Minis start with 512MB of RAM standard, while the Mac Pro comes with 1GB. Both amounts should be doubled when ordering. Many of the midrange iMac models come with 1GB of RAM, which is perfectly adequate for average household use.



Planning for Vista and Leopard

With new operating systems from both Apple and Microsoft on the horizon, you'll need to plan ahead to select a computer that won't quickly become outdated. Fortunately, you have some time to prepare. Vista should be available to consumers in January 30,

and Leopard will follow sometime in the spring.

Microsoft has attempted to mitigate the uncertainty that an OS upgrade causes by creating logos to help buyers identify Vista-capable machines. But, being Microsoft, the company couldn't help but

make the solution more confusing than it needed to be. Two logos are in use, dubbing a PC either "Vista Capable" or "Premium Ready." A machine that's Vista Capable can run most of the new OS, but not its graphically demanding 3D interface, Aero. Instead, the screen will look two-dimensional and static, much as it always has. With Aero, users will see elegant onscreen effects and subtle trans-



4 Storage: How to Size Up the Drive

If you haven't bought a new computer in a few years, you'll be surprised by how much hard drive sizes have increased. And once you get a new computer, you'll be amazed at how easy it is to fill the drive.

Digital music collections can take up a big chunk of your storage, but video is the real space hog. If you regularly download movies, film your own home movies, or record TV shows with a TV-tuner card, you'll need ample storage space. Midrange computers typically offer 250GB of storage; videophiles will want to bump that up to 500GB. Value shoppers can get away with 80GB or 160GB of storage, although at 80GB you'll need to be careful that your digital music collection doesn't consume too much space. Extreme power users should look for 750GB or 1,000GB (a terabyte, or TB) of storage.

Hard drives are measured by how fast they spin (in rpm, or revolutions per minute) and, hence, how quickly they can access information. 7,200rpm is standard for desktop PCs, although space-saving mini-computers often rely on notebook hard drives, which spin at a slower 5,400rpm. The highest-end desktops for gamers often ship with fast 10,000rpm drives. These drives are costly, however, and top out at a capacity of 300GB. Don't consider one unless you demand the ultimate in performance.

Mac users should plan to add more hard drive space, since Macs are typically configured a bit light on storage. Video requires the same amount of storage on Macs as on Windows PCs, so you can go by the guidelines above. Whether you're buying a Windows PC or a Mac, however, it's a good idea to spring for an external drive to back up your data. Your internal hard drive is still prone to failure, as any data-recovery expert (and many unfortunate users) will tell you.

parent panels. The interface will look sharper, richer, and a lot more Mac-like. To get the best performance out of Vista, you'll need a PC with a powerful graphics card and a speedy processor.

Apple hasn't released hardware requirements for its upcoming OS X 10.5 ("Leopard"), resulting in fierce speculation on Mac message boards. The last developer preview ran only on Macs using

Intel, G5, or G4 chips, so it's predicted that Apple will drop support for the older G3 Macs. Leopard will certainly run on any of today's Intel-based dual-core Macs.

We asked a few Windows-PC vendors whether buyers would qualify for a free upgrade if they bought a computer before the OS was released, and we got nothing but tight-lipped responses. Most vendors are listing an option for an "Express Up-

5 Graphics: Help Choosing The Card

Graphics cards, often called video cards, help your PC process still photos, videos, and game graphics. Current cards use the PCI Express (PCIe) peripheral-interconnect technology, which has replaced the AGP standard. For the best performance, ensure that your PC's motherboard has a PCIe x16 slot.

Graphics cards come in an array of memory configurations. While today's applications and games are increasingly demanding, the average user will do fine with a 256MB card, such as the nVidia GeForce 7300 LE TurboCache or the ATI Radeon X1300 Pro. Those who plan to upgrade to Vista should definitely go with a 256MB card. Also, look for new cards that support DirectX 10, which will debut in Vista. Hard-core gamers should configure their PC with a 512MB card, such as the nVidia GeForce 7900 GTX, which has two video processors.

Budget-price computers often integrate video chips onto the motherboard, which will be fine if your graphics needs aren't too demanding. These systems don't have the muscle to tackle most of today's 3D games, however, so if you play anything beyond Solitaire, be warned that even the most basic of discrete cards will be a step up from integrated solutions. To guard against obsolescence, look for a PC with an open PCIe slot, which will enable you to add a card later.

The graphics cards built into Macs typically have less on-card memory than their Windows-PC counterparts (the high-end iMac comes with a 128MB nVidia GeForce 7300 GT), which is unfortunate since Macs are known for their multimedia capabilities. If you plan to do movie editing on your Mac, choose one of the more robust graphics cards available.



grade to Windows Vista" on their configuration pages. The offer is in effect now and expires March 15; it's uncertain if the upgrade will be free, however.

Apple was similarly mum about updates, but historically it has offered a free upgrade disc to people who bought a computer after a new OS's release date has been announced, but before it's actually available.

"Upgrade your PC to Media Center / HTPC"

www.soundgraph.com

iMON & iMEDIAN

Most advanced remote control & Media Center Application for PC.

iMON Product Lineup



iMON Station



iMON Knob



iMON 2.4G LT



iMON Inside



iMON VFD



iMON 2.4G DT

Product	Signal	Receiver Type	Installation	Note
iMON Station	IR	External USB		Volume Control
iMON Knob *				Power On
iMON Inside		Internal USB	3.5" Drive Bay	Power On, VFD Display
iMON VFD *			5.25" Drive Bay	
iMON 2.4G LT	RF (2.4GHz)	External USB		
iMON 2.4G DT		Internal USB	PCI Slot	Power On

* Tom's hardware 'MUST HAVE' awarded 2005

iMON

Compatible with every media applications.
Turn On/Off by iMON remote controller.



iMON Remote Controller

iMON PAD Controller (IR, Mouse Control)
and iMON 2.4G Controller (RF).



iMON 2.4G Controller



iMON PAD Controller

iMEDIAN

User friendly Media Center Application,
Most of HTPC system choose iMEDIAN
as a default Media Center Application.
Internal A/V codec support for most
of A/V formats.



Full Screen View

Setting View

MonCaso832

Multimedia Home Theater PC CASE



iMON LCD Multimedia Control
Multimedia Home Theater PC CASE

MonCaso932

Multimedia Home Theater PC CASE



7 Inch Wide Touch LCD
Multimedia Home Theater PC CASE

MonCaso Wireless Keyboard



* Operating distance up to 50 feet (15 meters)

soundgraph

www.soundgraph.com

US Main Office
Tel. 949.458.1022



mwave.com

Free Windows Vista™ Upgrade

* Check availability at www.moneual.com

Moneual™ gives you entertaining room

State of the art design

Living room style case

Ultra quiet, low noise design

All aluminum



Moneual™ 802Ali

Processor:	Intel D940 3.2Ghz
Motherboard:	Intel 975X Express Chipset
RAM:	1 GB
Hard Disk Drive:	320 GB
Graphic Card:	7300GT
HDTV Tuner:	SIGMACOM HDTV5 X1
LCD Indicator:	Built-In
Power Supply:	Zalman powered
Optical Drive:	DVD +RW Drive
Utility S/W:	Phoenix Recover Pro™ 6 CA eTrust 1yr
Keyboard:	2.4GHz Wireless
O/S:	Microsoft Windows XP Media Center Edition2005

\$2,495

Price includes specs above.



Moneual™ 902Euni

Processor:	Intel Core 2 Duo E6600
Motherboard:	Intel 975X Express Chipset
RAM:	2 GB
Hard Disk Drive:	500 GB
Graphic Card:	7600GS
HDTV Tuner:	SIGMACOM HDTV5 X1
LCD Touch Screen:	7inch LCD Touch Screen
Power Supply:	Zalman powered
Optical Drive:	DVD +RW Drive
Utility S/W:	Phoenix Recover Pro™ 6 CA eTrust 1yr
Keyboard:	2.4GHz Wireless
O/S:	Microsoft Windows XP Media Center Edition2005

\$3,495

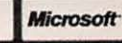
Price includes specs above.



To shop Call 1 866 399 0600 Go to www.moneual.com



Powered by



* Pricing and Availability: Prices, availability, and terms of any offer may change without notice or obligation. Taxes if applicable are not shown. Moneual is not responsible for price, typographical, photographic or other errors and reserves the right to cancel any order resulting from such errors. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks with Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. © 2006 Moneual. All rights reserved.

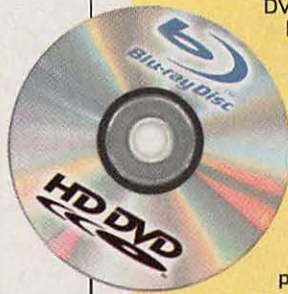
High-Def, High Storage: Blu-ray and HD DVD

While Blu-ray and HD DVD players are starting to trickle into home theater setups, they've been slow to take hold with computer vendors. These two competing formats are duking it out to become the consumer favorite for high-definition DVD playback.

Because the two aren't compatible and because players are still quite expensive, most buyers have been taking a wait-and-see approach.

If you want high-definition playback on your computer, options are currently limited. You'll find a few notebooks, notably some from Hewlett-Packard and Toshiba, that offer it (both companies offer HD DVD-ROM drives), and desktops are on the way in early 2007. System makers such as Dell and Sony are just now starting to offer desktops and notebooks that include Blu-ray drives, which not only let you screen high-definition movies on Blu-ray discs, but also can write up to 50GB of data on a double-layer disc.

We recommend you do the same thing most consumers are doing, though: waiting. Prices are still too high for either format.



6 DVD Drive: Why You'll Want To Burn

Even if you don't edit and write home videos to DVD, we don't recommend you forgo a DVD burner. You'll find it extremely useful if you need to create system-restore discs or back up music, photos, and video libraries. The good news is that all but the most basic of today's desktops are equipped with a DVD burner, and disc-burning speeds are not as great a concern as they were in the past.

Some midrange PCs are configured with a second optical drive. The first is typically a DVD burner, while the second is only a CD-ROM. Having a second drive makes copying discs much smoother, and we recommend adding one if it's not included in your base configuration. A high-end PC definitely should have two optical drives. (Two DVD burners may be overkill, however.) Budget shoppers should make sure they get at least a DVD-ROM/CD-RW combo drive, even if it means upgrading at checkout.

Most Mac desktop buyers don't have the option of adding a second internal drive, because the Mac Mini and the iMac don't have room for them. Mac Pro buyers can opt for a second DVD burner, though.



7 Expansion Slots & Ports: Bargain for the Future



To guarantee that your computer doesn't quickly become obsolete, you'll want to make sure it can be upgraded as new technologies and new demands come along. You'll want a free hard drive bay so you can add a second drive when you need the storage space. If it has free PCI expansion slots, you can add devices like a TV-tuner card. Desktop buyers should look for two or three free PCI slots. (If you're configuring a PC online, chances are you'll have to contact the vendor to find out the number of available drive bays and slots.) Also look for an ample number of USB and FireWire ports—you'll want to ensure that at least two USB ports and one FireWire port are on the front of the system, providing easy access for peripherals such as digital audio players and cameras.

Space-saving mini-systems, such as the Mac Mini, are typically closed boxes that cannot be expanded. While you'll save money with them up front, keep in mind that they can't be upgraded over time the way larger desktop computers can.

8 Speakers: Get an Earful

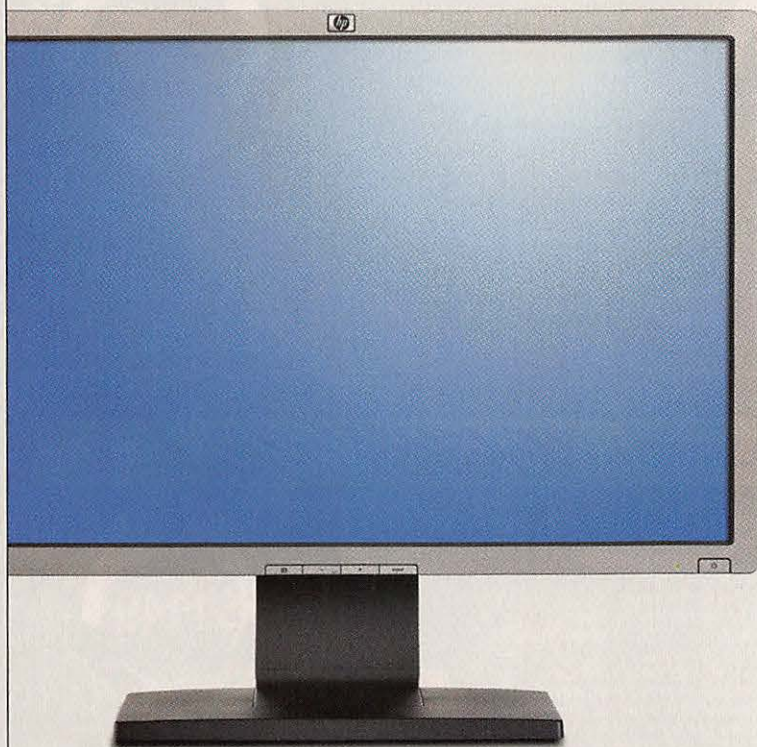
The last time you bought a new desktop, it most likely came with a pair of cheap, lame speakers. Now, computers rarely come pre-configured with speakers—and that's an improvement. If you decide to add them at checkout, don't go for the bargain set—spring for better audio quality. If you keep audio files on your computer, play games, or watch videos, you owe it to yourself to buy decent speakers.



9 Monitor: Why You Should Go Wide

Monitors are one area where the base configuration might not disappoint. Because LCD costs have plummeted over the past few years, many midrange PCs now come standard with 17- or 19-inch flat-panel displays. Not every vendor throws in an LCD, of course, but almost all at least make one available as a low-cost add-on. If you have a choice, go for a wide-screen display. This new format will enable you to view multiple documents side by side on a single monitor. Wide-screens are also great for watching DVD movies.

If you're buying a dream system, be sure to get a 21-inch or larger wide-screen display. These wide-aspect monitors are perfect for DVDs and high-definition television. Just make sure that your graphics card supports a high resolution—some of the larger models, for instance, require a dual-link DVI-D graphics card to drive their high resolutions. Also, because ergonomics are important, look for monitors that are height-adjustable.



10 Before You Buy: Add the Add-Ons

Before you click the final Buy button, consider a few add-ons that are typically available during customization for an extra cost: TV-tuner cards and wireless networking cards, as well as wireless keyboards and mice. TV-tuner cards are necessary to receive TV channels on your desktop, and are sometimes, but not always, included in Windows XP Media Center Edition PCs. If your computer will be connected to your home entertainment system, you'll want a TV tuner. Wireless cards are a must for home networking (you don't want to run cords from room to room), and wireless keyboards and mice make using your computer a little more flexible. We recommend adding them at checkout, if you have the option.

Comparing Warranties

Locating a computer's warranty information can be challenging, but it's worth digging up the details on the Web site so you know what you're getting into.

Smaller vendors often try harder with warranties. Cyberpower (www.cyberpowerpc.com), for instance, offers an above-average three years of service, lifetime labor coverage, and phone support for the life of the PC. (Plus, its phone lines are

staffed around the clock.) Polywell Computers (www.polywell.com) offers three years of parts coverage, five years of labor, and lifetime phone support, while iBuypower (www.ibuypower.com) gives three years of labor, one year of parts coverage, and lifetime phone support.

The big boys, on the other hand, aren't nearly as generous, and cost-cutting seems to hit support options first. Gateway

(www.gateway.com) and Sony Electronics (www.sonymstyle.com) offer one year of parts and labor, plus one year of free phone support. Dell (www.dell.com) matches that, and throws in a handy online service called DellConnect, which lets a remote technician access your system to repair it, in addition to one year of onsite service for some high-end models. Hewlett-Packard (www.hpshopping.com) also offers a year of parts and labor, one year of phone support, and a remote-assistance option.

Gaming specialist Alienware (www.alienware.com) offers a year of parts and labor (with onsite service) and one year of phone support. Apple Computer (www.apple.com) provides one of the poorest warranties around, giving buyers one year of parts-and-labor coverage, but only 90 days of free phone support.

Most companies give you the option of extending the basic warranty for a fee, which you may want to opt for if you're not a technically inclined do-it-yourselfer.



- Run all your gadgets quickly, seamlessly and simultaneously.
- Run all your applications at the same time with increased performance.
- AMD PowerNow!™ technology for longer battery life.
- Enjoy superb video playback, edit videos on the fly and deliver Super - fast graphic performance - all while on the go.



GAMER FX

- NVIDIA® nForce™ SLI Chipset Dual PCI Express Motherboard
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- NZXT® Apollo Gaming Case
- iBuyPower® CPU Liquid Cooling Technology
- Corsair 1024MB DDR2-800 Memory
- Serial-ATA-II 250GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
- 16x Double Layer DVD±R/±RW Drive
- 6-in-1 Media Card Reader
- 2X NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7600GS 256MB 16X PCI Express - SLI Enabled
- 8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
- 10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
- 600Watt Surround Sound Speakers
- Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse
- Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter

\$999

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 dual-core Processor

5200+ (Socket AM2)	\$1289
5000+ (Socket AM2)	\$1169
4600+ (Socket AM2)	\$1099
4200+ (Socket AM2)	\$1039
3800+ (Socket AM2)	\$999
AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 (Socket AM2)	\$1759



NIGHT GAMER FX

- NVIDIA® nForce™ SLI Chipset Dual PCI Express Motherboard
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- iBuyPower® Tank Gaming Case
- iBuyPower® CPU Liquid Cooling Technology
- Corsair 1024MB DDR2-800 Memory
- Serial-ATA-II 320GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
- 16x Double Layer DVD±R/±RW Drive
- 16x DVD-ROM Drive
- 2X NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7900GS 256MB 16X PCI Express Video Card - SLI Enabled
- 8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
- 10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
- Logitech X-530 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers
- Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse
- Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter

\$1329

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 dual-core Processor

5200+ (Socket AM2)	\$1619
5000+ (Socket AM2)	\$1499
4600+ (Socket AM2)	\$1429
4200+ (Socket AM2)	\$1359
3800+ (Socket AM2)	\$1329
AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 (Socket AM2)	\$2089

BATTALION 5550 TURBO



15.4" Wide Screen 16:10 WXGA TFT LCD 1280x800 Display
GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2

- AMD® Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology
- AMD® PowerNow! Technology
- HyperTransport Technology
- Enhanced Virus Protection Technology
- Mobile ATI® Radeon™ X700 128MB DDR Video
- 1024MB DDR-400 Memory
- Removable 8x DVD±R/±RW/CD-RW Drive
- 80GB 5400RPM Ultra-ATA100 Hard Drive
- 10/100MB Ethernet LAN & 56K Modem
- Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Mini-PCI Network
- 4x USB 2.0 & 1x Firewire IEEE-1394 Ports
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Card Reader
- High Performance Li-Ion Battery
- Free Deluxe Carrying Case

\$1149



AMD Turion™ 64 MobileTechnology MT-34 Processor	\$1149
AMD Turion™ 64 MobileTechnology MT-37 Processor	\$1159
AMD Turion™ 64 MobileTechnology MT-40 Processor	\$1199
AMD Turion™ 64 MobileTechnology ML-44 Processor	\$1279

BATTALION CLX



15.4" Wide Screen 16:10 WXGA TFT LCD 1280x800 Display
GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2

- AMD® Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology
- AMD® PowerNow! Technology
- HyperTransport Technology
- Enhanced Virus Protection Technology
- Mobile NVIDIA® GeForce™ Go 7600 256MB DDR Video
- 2GB DDR2-667 Memory
- Removable 8x DVD±R/±RW / CD-RW Drive
- 100GB 5400RPM Ultra-ATA 100 Hard Drive
- Built-in fingerprint security device
- 10/100/1000 MB Ethernet LAN & 56K Modem
- Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Mini-PCI Network
- Built-in 1.3 Mega Pixels CMOS Camera
- 4x USB 2.0 & 1x Firewire IEEE-1394 Ports
- 5-in-1 Built-in Media Card Reader
- High Performance Li-Ion Battery
- Free Deluxe Carrying Case

\$1399



AMD Turion™ 64 X2 MobileTechnology TL-52 Processor	\$1399
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 MobileTechnology TL-56 Processor	\$1435
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 MobileTechnology TL-60 Processor	\$1479
AMD Turion™ 64 X2 MobileTechnology TL-64 Processor	\$1569

Order Toll Free 888. 462. 3899

**\$679****BARGAIN 64**

- NVIDIA® nForce™ SLI Chipset Dual PCI Express Motherboard
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- NZXT® Trinity Mid-Tower Case + See Through Window + Neon Light
- Corsair 512MB DDR2-800 Memory
- Serial-ATA-II 160GB 7200RPM 3 Gb Hard Drive
- 16x Double Layer DVD±R/RW Drive
- NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7100GS 256 MB 16X PCI Express Video Card
- 8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
- 10/100/1000 MBps Ethernet LAN
- 600Watt Surround Sound Speakers
- Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse
- Add ViewSonic® VX922 19" LCD - Xtreme 2ms video for ultimate gaming @ \$299

**\$1069****VALUE ULTRA**

- NVIDIA® nForce™ SLI Chipset Dual PCI Express Motherboard
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Cooler Master Ammo-533 Gaming Tower Case
- Corsair 1024MB DDR 2-800 Memory
- Serial-ATA-II 250GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
- 16x Double Layer DVD±R/RW Drive
- NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7600GS 256MB 16X PCI Express Video Card
- 8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
- 600Watt Surround Sound Speakers
- 10/100/1000 MBps Ethernet LAN
- 19" Viewsonic® Q9B LCD Monitor
- Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse

**\$1609****GAMER SLI**

- NVIDIA® nForce™ SLI Chipset Dual PCI Express Motherboard
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Raidmax® RX-9 Gaming Case
- iBuypower® CPU Liquid Cooling System
- Corsair 2GB DDR 2-800 Memory
- Serial-ATA-II 320GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
- 16x Double Layer DVD±R/RW Drive; 16x DVD-ROM Drive
- 2X NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7950GT PCI Express 512MB Video Cards - SLI Enabled
- 8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
- Creative Inspire 8 Channel Surround Sound Speakers
- 10/100/1000 MBps Ethernet LAN
- Logitech Deluxe Keyboard; Optical Mouse
- Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter
- Add Viewsonic® Q19WB Wide-Screen 19 Inch LCD @ \$219

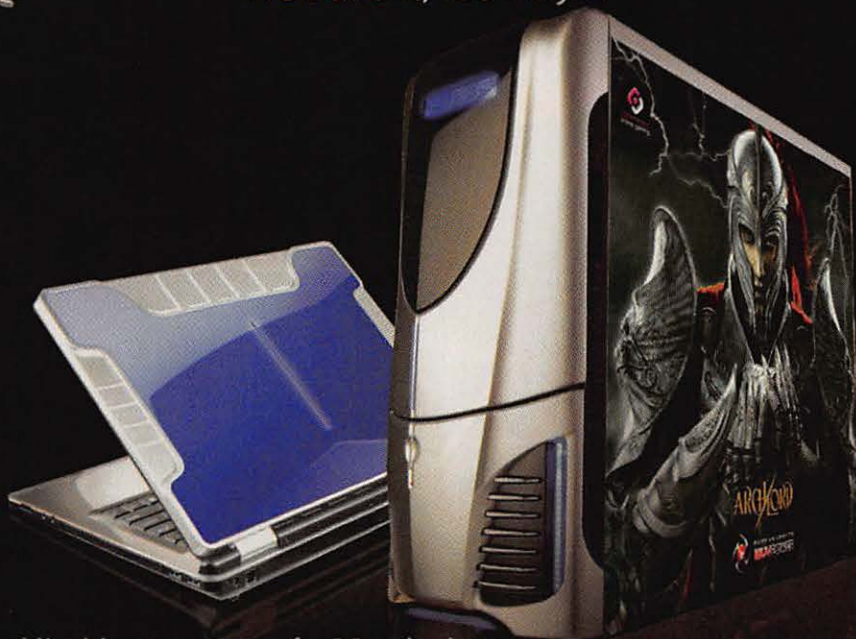
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 dual-core Processor	
5200+ (Socket AM2)	\$929
5000+ (Socket AM2)	\$829
4600+ (Socket AM2)	\$759
4200+ (Socket AM2)	\$709
3800+ (Socket AM2)	\$679
AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 (Socket AM2)	\$1399

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 dual-core Processor	
5200+ (Socket AM2)	\$1319
5000+ (Socket AM2)	\$1219
4600+ (Socket AM2)	\$1149
4200+ (Socket AM2)	\$1099
3800+ (Socket AM2)	\$1069
AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 (Socket AM2)	\$1799

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 dual-core Processor	
5200+ (Socket AM2)	\$1859
5000+ (Socket AM2)	\$1759
4600+ (Socket AM2)	\$1689
4200+ (Socket AM2)	\$1639
3800+ (Socket AM2)	\$1609
AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 (Socket AM2)	\$2339

**IBUYPOWER**

We Build It, You Play It

**iBUYPOWER RECOMMENDS
WINDOWS® XP MEDIA CENTER EDITION**

- The world's ultimate processor for PC enthusiasts.
- Discover the true potential of your PC. Break the speed limit.
- Enhanced Virus Protection, enabled by Microsoft® Windows® XP SP2.
- Cool 'N' Quiet technology means whisper quiet operation and significantly reduced power consumption.

WWW.IBUYPOWER.COM

BACK TO SCHOOL



NZXT® Trinity Gaming Case
GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
 IBuyPower® CPU Liquid Cooling Technology
 Asus nForce 570-SLI Chipset Dual PCI Express Motherboard
 Corsair 1024MB DDR2-800 Memory
 Serial-ATA-II 250GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
 16x Double Layer DVD±RW Drive, 16x DVD-ROM Drive
 2X NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7600GS 256MB 16X PCI Express Video Card-SLI Enabled
 8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
 10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
 Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse
 Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter
 Add Viewsonic® Q19WB Wide-Screen 19 Inch LCD @ \$219

\$1049

Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300	\$1049
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400	\$1089
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600	\$1189
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700	\$1429

POWER BEST BUY



Tunig Symmetry Gaming Case
GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
 IBuyPower® CPU Liquid Cooling Technology
 Asus nForce 570-SLI Chipset Dual PCI Express Motherboard
 Corsair 1024MB DDR2-800 Memory
 Serial-ATA-II 250GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
 16x Double Layer DVD±RW Drive, 16x DVD-ROM Drive
 2X NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7900GS 256MB 16X PCI Express Video Card-SLI Enabled
 8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
 10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
 Logitech X-530 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers
 Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse
 Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter

\$1329

Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300	\$1329
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400	\$1379
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600	\$1479
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700	\$1709

GAMERS MASTER



IBuyPower® Tank Gaming Case
GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
 IBuyPower® CPU Liquid Cooling Technology
 Asus nForce 570-SLI Chipset Dual PCI Express Motherboard
 Corsair 2GB DDR2-800 Memory
 Serial-ATA-II 320GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
 16x Double Layer DVD±RW Drive, 16x DVD-ROM Drive
 2X NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7950GT 512MB 16X PCI Express Video Card-SLI Enabled
 8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
 10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
 Creative Labs SB5-580 5.1 Surround Speakers
 Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse
 Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter

\$1729

Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300	\$1729
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400	\$1779
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600	\$1879
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700	\$2109

**CUSTOMIZE YOUR OWN LAPTOP
 WITH YOUR OWN IMAGE!**

HEL-80 TURBO

\$1339



Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5600
 (2MB L2Cache, 1.83GHz, 667 MHz FSB)
 Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7200
 (4MB L2Cache, 2.0GHz, 667 MHz FSB)
 Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7400
 (4MB L2Cache, 2.16GHz, 667 MHz FSB)
 Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7600
 (4MB L2Cache, 2.33GHz, 667 MHz FSB)

\$1339
 \$1399
 \$1539
 \$1779

- 15.4" Wide Screen WXGA TFT LCD 1280x800 Display
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Intel® Centrino™ Duo Mobile Technology
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor
- Intel® PRO/Wireless 802.11a/b/g
- Intel® 945 Chipset
- NVIDIA® GeForce™ Go 7600 256 MB PCI Express 3D Video
- 1024MB DDR2-667 Memory
- Built-in fingerprint security device
- Serial-ATA 80GB Hard Drive
- Removable 8x DVD±R/±RW Drive
- Built-in 1.3 Mega Pixels Digital Camera
- Gb Ethernet LAN & 56K Modem
- 3x USB 2.0 Ports
- 1x Firewire IEEE-1394 Ports
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Card Reader
- High Performance Li-Ion Battery
- Free Deluxe Carrying Case

596J NOTEBOOK

\$1459



Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T5600
 (2MB L2Cache, 1.83GHz, 667 MHz FSB)
 Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7200
 (4MB L2Cache, 2.0GHz, 667 MHz FSB)
 Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7400
 (4MB L2Cache, 2.16GHz, 667 MHz FSB)
 Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7600
 (4MB L2Cache, 2.33GHz, 667 MHz FSB)

\$1459
 \$1509
 \$1649
 \$1869

- 15.4" Wide Screen WXGA TFT LCD 1280x800 Display
- GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
- Intel® Centrino™ Duo Mobile Technology
- Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor
- Intel® PRO/Wireless 802.11a/b/g
- Intel® 945 Chipset
- Mobility 256MB ATI® Radeon X1600 PCI-Express 3D Video
- 2GB DDR2-667 Memory
- Serial-ATA 100GB Hard Drive
- Removable 8x DVD±R/±RW Drive
- Built-in 1.3 Mega Pixels Digital Camera
- Gb Ethernet LAN & 56K Modem
- 3x USB 2.0 Ports
- 1x Firewire IEEE-1394 Ports
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Card Reader
- High Performance Li-Ion Battery
- Free Deluxe Carrying Case

Order Toll Free 888. 462. 3899

**iBUYPOWER**

We Build It, You Play It
More fun while you get more done.

Get the power to do more at once with the Intel® Pentium® D processor's dual execution cores in the iBUYPOWER Dream 2007.



Dual-core.
Do more.



iBUYPOWER RECOMMENDS WINDOWS® XP MEDIA CENTER EDITION

DREAM 2007

Raidmax® Ninja Gaming Case
GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
iBuypower® CPU Liquid Cooling Technology
Intel® 965P Chipset PCI Express Motherboard
Corsair 1024MB DDR2-800 Memory
Serial-ATA-II 250GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
16x Double Layer DVD±RW Drive, 16x DVD-ROM Drive
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7600GS 512MB DDR3 16X PCI Express Video Card
8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
10/100/1000 MBps Ethernet LAN
600 Watt Surround Sound Speakers
Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse
Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter

\$999

Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300	\$999
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400	\$1049
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600	\$1149
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700	\$1389

Color Options -   -

GAMERS POWER

NZXT® Apollo Gaming Case
GENUINE Windows® XP Media Center Edition 2005 with SP 2
iBuypower® CPU Liquid Cooling Technology
Intel® 965P Chipset PCI Express Motherboard
Corsair 1024MB DDR2-800 Memory
Serial-ATA-II 320GB 7200RPM 3Gb Hard Drive
16x Double Layer DVD±RW Drive, 16x DVD-ROM Drive
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7950GT 512MB 16X PCI Express Video Card-SLI Enabled
Viewsonic® 19-inch Q9B LCD Monitor
8 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
10/100/1000 MBps Ethernet LAN
Logitech X-530 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers
Logitech Deluxe Keyboard & Optical Mouse
Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter

\$1429

Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300	\$1429
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6400	\$1469
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6600	\$1569
Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6700	\$1809

Color Options -     -

WWW.IBUYPOWER.COM

Intel, the Intel logo, Intel Core and Core Inside are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries.



Up to 5 Times Faster than USB 2.0 !

Serial ATA



Your computer system is only as fast as your slowest component. With the advent of Serial ATA 3Gbp/s hard drives, storage device is finally catching up with your multi-core CPUs. Vantec will take you to the next generation of peripheral connection. With special designed connector and cable, eSATA cable gives reliable transmission in a blazing speed that's 5x faster than 480mbps USB! This big pipe will revolutionize external storage and enable you to back up your data at least twice as fast.

STORE n SHARE



MUSIC



DATA



PHOTO



MOVIE

SATA External Hard Drive Enclosure



2.5" enclosure also available

SATA Removable Hard Drive Rack



eSATA PCI Express 3.0 Gbps Host Card



eSATA Notebook CardBus



for more information on where to buy please go to

<http://www.vantecusa.com/wheretobuy.html>

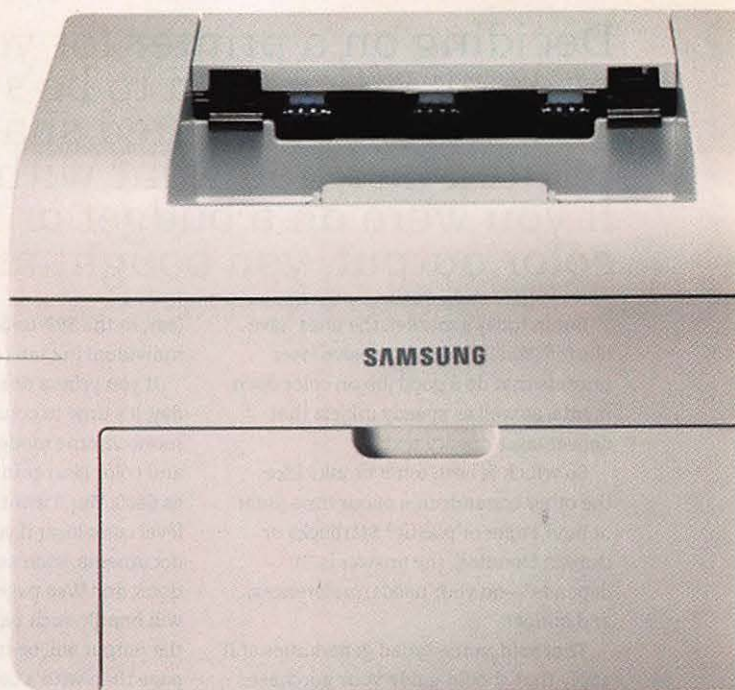
Copyright © 2006 Vantec Thermal Technologies. All Rights Reserved. All Registered Trademarks Belong To Their Respective Companies.

Vantec Thermal Technology, Inc.

43951 Boscett Road, Fremont, CA 94538

Tel. 510.668.0368 Fax. 510.668.0367

The \$199.99
Samsung
ML-2571N
Laser



The Great Debate: Inkjet or Laser?

EDITED BY **JAMIE BSALES**

How to decide which printer technology is right for you.

The \$149.99
HP Photosmart
8250
Inkjet



Deciding on a printer for your home or small office used to be straightforward. If you wanted sharp text printed fast, you went with a laser. If you were on a budget or needed color output, you bought an inkjet.

But in today's market, the lines have blurred. You'll find inexpensive laser printers that do a good job on color documents, as well as speedy inkjets that deliver laser-quality text.

So which is best, toner or ink? Like the other conundrums of our time (Rent or buy? Paper or plastic? Starbucks or Dunkin' Donuts?), the answer is "It depends"—on your needs, preferences, and budget.

That said, some broad generalities still apply that should guide your purchase. For example, if you plan to produce photos in addition to documents, an inkjet is the way to go. Only the loftiest color lasers can compete with the best \$150 inkjet on photo output. On the flip side, an inexpensive color laser is the better choice for small businesses that need to produce a lot of color graphics (such as brochures and flyers), thanks to the speed and lower per-page costs of these printers. If your requirements fall somewhere in between, however, you should be open to both technologies and let performance, individual features, and price (including the cost of consumables) steer you toward the best printer.

THINK TOTAL COST

At the office superstore, it's easy to just grab the \$49 inkjet printer at the front of the aisle and be done. But be warned: The printer with the lowest initial price typically will have the highest ongoing operating costs. Such units generally use a single ink cartridge for the color inks, and when one color goes dry, you have to replace the whole cartridge. Also, the tanks are often smaller than on more-expensive models, so you pay more per milliliter of ink.

A black-text page from a low-cost inkjet might work out to 10 cents per page, compared with as little as 2 cents from a personal laser printer. If you print infrequently (a few pages a week), then the low-cost inkjet is the way to go—it will be years before you wind up in the red because of the higher cost of consumables. If you print several pages a day, you should opt for a more expensive inkjet

(say, in the \$99-to-\$149 range) with larger, individual ink tanks.

If you print a dozen or more pages a day, it's time to consider a laser. A good monochrome model can be had for \$200, and color laser printers now start as low as \$400. You'll want to go with an entry-level color laser if you print more-complex documents, such as color flyers, presentations, and Web pages. A midrange inkjet will handle such pages with aplomb, but the output will be much more costly per page than with a color laser (typically 12 cents for an inkjet, versus 4 cents for a laser). Again, if you do only a couple of color pages a day, it will take a long time to justify the \$400 color laser over the \$150 inkjet. But factor in work-related documents and the kids' school research and projects, and you could find yourself replacing the ink tanks on that "inexpensive" inkjet every three months or so—at \$50 per change.

As the old saw goes, you can have it done cheap, or well, or fast—just not all three at once. The same goes for inkjet and laser printers. An inexpensive inkjet can produce beautiful output, but it will generally do so slowly. A color laser can produce excellent photo output relatively quickly, but is often very expensive. So when picking a reasonably priced home printer, settle on your priorities.

For instance, if you need to print top-quality photos, an inkjet is a must. Even most \$1,000 color lasers can't match the best \$100 inkjet (equipped with photo inks and the proper paper) for glossy pho-

to prints. But be prepared to wait a bit for such results: Most inkjets require a minute or so to produce a 4x6 photo, and up to 4 minutes for an 8x10. A color laser might produce an 8x10 in under a minute, but you wouldn't mistake the printout for a photo-lab enlargement.

As for text, inkjets have made tremendous strides in both speed and quality, but to our eyes laser printers still have the edge. A good inkjet can produce well-formed, crisp text on plain paper; print the same page on a laser printer, however, and the characters (especially at smaller point sizes) will really pop. And don't let manufacturer claims of 20 and even 30 pages per minute (ppm) fool you into thinking an inkjet is as fast as a laser. Those claims are generally for low-quality draft mode. A laser will be much speedier at outputting text and graphics pages than an inkjet set to highest quality. So if you print a lot of text documents, get a personal laser.

MORE FEATURES THAN EVER

After settling the inkjet-versus-laser question, the next step is to consider the individual features of a given model. For example, if you're opting for an inkjet for its photo capabilities, look for a unit that can deliver six-color (or even eight-color) output via either standard or optional cartridges. (Typical inkjet output is four-color.) Photo-centric printers might also offer a built-in color screen for previewing photos, plus a PictBridge camera port and/or memory-card slots to let you print photos without using a PC.

For a home-network environment with more than one PC, consider getting a model that has an Ethernet port or even built-in Wi-Fi compatibility, which will enable all PCs to access the printer. If you print a lot, another feature to look for is an automatic duplexer, which will



HP Deskjet
6940

let you produce two-sided output easily. After all, an easy way to trim your printing costs is to cut your paper usage. (Plus, your local forests will thank you.)

If you occasionally need to scan or copy documents, then consider an all-in-one printer. (See the sidebar, "All-in-One for All.") These multifunction models come in both inkjet and laser varieties. And, finally, if you're looking for the best places to buy printers online, turn to our Web Buyer section and check out the "Printers" sidebar.

INKJETS

GOOD

HP Deskjet 6940

Editors' Rating: 7.1 out of 10

Pros: Network-ready; PictBridge port; Windows-, Mac-compatible; speedy; decent print quality

Cons: Must switch ink tanks for photo printing
THE \$129.99 HP DESKJET 6940 is a basic color inkjet printer designed for home and small-office users who have low-volume printing needs and may want to print the occasional snapshot. The printer's no-fuss, low-profile design makes it easy to tuck into tight spaces, and its built-in Ethernet capability means you can leave it there and print from any networked computer in the house. It includes a built-in port for PictBridge-enabled cameras, enabling you to easily print photos without using your PC. You'd still need to change out ink tanks to get the best photo quality, however, which is a bit inconvenient.

The Deskjet 6940 performed well for a printer in this price class. It printed black text at a rate of 7 pages per minute (ppm) and an 8.5x11-inch photo at 0.6ppm. Print quality was serviceable for home or light office use. Black text looked sharp and

INKJETS

	GOOD	BETTER	BEST
	HP Deskjet 6940	HP Photosmart 8250	Epson Stylus Photo R1800
EDITORS' RATING	7.1	7.5	8.0
Technology	Inkjet (four-color)	Inkjet (six-color)	Inkjet (eight-color)
Rated Speed (Black/Color)	36ppm/27ppm	32ppm/30ppm	Not applicable
Maximum Resolution	4,800x1,200dpi	4,800x1,200dpi	5,760x1,440dpi
PictBridge Support	Yes	Yes	No
Memory-Card Slots	No	Yes	No
Interface(s)	USB 2.0, Ethernet	USB 2.0	USB 2.0, FireWire
Maximum Paper Size	8.5x14 inches	8.5x24 inches	13x44 inches
Duplexing	Optional	Optional	No
COMPANY	Hewlett-Packard 888-999-4747 www.hpshopping.com	Hewlett-Packard 888-999-4747 www.hpshopping.com	Epson America 800-463-7766 www.epson.com
DIRECT PRICE	\$129.99	\$149.99	\$549

clean, legible down to very small point sizes. In color graphics, jaggedness was a bit more apparent, but colors were bright and saturated. In our test photo print on HP photo paper, we noticed some graininess, but for the most part, the output was good enough for casual snapshots.

BETTER

HP Photosmart 8250

Editors' Rating: 7.5 out of 10

Pros: Economical, fast at default settings; flexible stand-alone operation; multiple connectivity options; Windows-, Mac-compatible

Cons: Grainy prints

RATHER THAN USING traditional small ink tanks, the \$149.99 HP Photosmart 8250 employs an innovative reservoir system fed from six separate tanks. The individually replaceable ink cartridges and their recycling system mean 4x6-inch prints can cost as little as 24 cents each. Although it functions serviceably as a speedy text printer (especially with the \$79.99 duplexing attachment), the Photosmart 8250's real strength is as a personal photo lab. On the downside, the printer's relatively large ink drops often produce a visibly grainy texture that some users might object to. Also, depending on the settings you use, you'll find printing speeds to be quite

a bit slower than advertised.

You can perform an impressive array of functions from the printer itself. Flip up the 2.5-inch LCD and insert a memory card into one of the slots (or connect a camera through the PictBridge port), and the first shot appears on the screen. You can scroll through all the images using the control panel's arrow keys and flag photos for printing. Options include cropping, zooming, rotating proof sheets, and panoramas. Editing tools let you add frames or special effects (such as sepia tones), as well as adjust brightness with a slider control.

Although our test prints were generally very good, they were affected by a grainy appearance, especially in broad areas of even color, such as the sky. In addition, we saw some stairstepping in diagonal lines, particularly within text. Colors were well-represented, however, with realistic flesh tones and excellent saturation and detail.

BEST

Epson Stylus Photo R1800

Editors' Rating: 8.0 out of 10

Pros: Excellent-quality color photos; fast

Cons: High-maintenance nozzles

A PERFECT PRINTER for the photo fanatic, the eight-color Epson Stylus Photo R1800 delivers long-lasting,



HP Photosmart 8250



Epson Stylus Photo R1800

exhibition-quality color prints as large as 13x19 inches. (You can even print banners up to 13x44 inches using Epson's roll paper.)

The \$549 R1800 displayed very good dynamic range and color accuracy, as well as the best flesh tones of any photo printer we've seen. Text looked extremely sharp; we had to examine it under a loupe to spot minor irregularities. Graphics did show some slight printhead banding in gradient fills, however, as well as minor jaggies in curves.

The R1800 printed an 8x10-inch test photo (at the Best quality setting) in an impressively swift 2 minutes, and it ranks among the fastest medium-format photo printers we've seen. Given its photographic bent, the printer is also reasonably speedy for printing text.

In nearly 90 days of use, the printer operated flawlessly, except for one incident. After several idle days, it nearly stopped printing red tones because its red nozzles were blocked. Running the head-cleaning process twice fixed the problem, but, unfortunately, Epson's printheads have a reputation for this type of behavior.

Epson employs its UltraChrome Hi-Gloss ink set in this printer. Photo prints using these inks and appropriate paper stock are rated to last from 64 to 200 years when properly mounted in a frame, under glass.

LASERS

GOOD

Samsung ML-2571N

Editors' Rating: **7.3** out of 10

Pros: Fast print speeds; great print quality; low cost of ownership; small footprint; network-ready; compatible with Windows, Mac, Unix

Cons: Limited paper-handling options; nonupgradable RAM

THE IDEAL monochrome laser printer will deliver fast print speeds and excellent text output while remaining relatively inexpensive to maintain and use. The Samsung ML-2571N meets all these criteria. For just \$199.99, you get a reasonably compact printer that's quick, inexpensive to use, and Ethernet-ready.

The ML-2571N supports Windows, Mac, and Unix operating systems, so

LASERS

	GOOD	BETTER	BEST
	Samsung ML-2571N	Lexmark C522n	Samsung ML-3051N
EDITORS' RATING	7.3	7.5	7.9
Technology	Laser (monochrome)	Laser (four-color)	Laser (monochrome)
Rated Speed (Black/Color)	25ppm/Not applicable	20ppm/20ppm	30ppm/Not applicable
Maximum Resolution	1,200x1,200dpi	2,400x600dpi	1,200x1,200dpi
PictBridge Support	No	No	No
Memory-Card Slots	No	No	No
Interface(s)	USB 2.0, parallel, Ethernet	USB 2.0, Ethernet	USB 2.0, parallel, Ethernet
Maximum Paper Size	8.5x14 inches	8.5x14 inches	8.5x14 inches
Duplexing	No	No	No
COMPANY	Samsung Electronics 800-726-7864 www.samsung.com	Lexmark International 800-539-6275 www.lexmark.com	Samsung Electronics 800-726-7864 www.samsung.com
DIRECT PRICE	\$199.99 (mfr. est.)	\$499	\$249.99 (mfr. est.)

most everyone on a network should be able to share the printer. Text prints cost about 2.6 cents per page, in line with more-expensive lasers. And the unit outpaced its competition in print speed: 16.7ppm for text prints and 18.2ppm for graphics prints.

Print quality also stood out. Text was clean and well-formed, and it was legible down to very small point sizes. Graphics quality was quite good, too, with excellent gray-scale reproduction and lots of detail in black-and-white photographic elements.

The ML-2571N's paper tray holds up to 250 sheets of paper; it's not expandable, however. The printer comes with 32MB of RAM, which, though not upgradable, should be more than adequate for average users.

BETTER

Lexmark C522n

Editors' Rating: **7.5** out of 10

Pros: Inexpensive for a color laser; speedy; high-quality text printing; network-ready

Cons: Relatively pricey consumables; mediocre at color graphics

COLOR LASER PRINTERS can easily top \$1,000, but Lexmark gives you a solid option for only \$499 in the C522n. This Ethernet-equipped model will quickly and easily handle work and school projects, though its output quality for color graphics and photos can't match that of less-costly inkjets.



Samsung ML-2571N



Lexmark C522n



Samsung ML-3051N

All-in-One for All

Sure, today all you need is a printer—but soon enough, you'll come across a magazine article you want to scan and e-mail, or that school form you wish you could copy and file. If you don't own a scanner or a copier, consider stepping up to an all-in-one printer.

All-in-ones (also called MFPs, for "multifunction printers") are built around the same inkjet or laser engines found in stand-alone printers, so you can expect the same output speed and quality as from a comparable stand-alone model. But an all-in-one gives you the added flexibility to copy, scan, and (on some models) fax from a single space-saving machine. They cost more than equivalent stand-alone printers (though less than buying a separate printer, scanner, personal copier, and fax machine), but the convenience of having the functionality when you need it can be a lifesaver. Here are three we particularly like.

HP OfficeJet 7410

All-in-One

Editors' Rating: **8.0** out of 10

Hewlett-Packard

www.hpshopping.com

\$499.99

The 7410 isn't cheap, but this inkjet all-in-one comes loaded with features, including Wi-Fi and Ethernet connectivity, fax functions, legal-size scanning and copying, and duplex printing. Add in excellent, fast photo prints, and you'll find you get what you pay for (in a very good way).



Dell Multi-Function Laser Printer 1815dn

Editors' Rating: **7.5** out of 10

Dell • www.dell.com

\$339

If a monochrome laser is more your speed, the 1815dn is a very good choice. It's network-ready, has a built-in duplexer, and offers a wealth of options for each of its functions (print, scan, copy, and fax). It's speedy at producing black text, and printed output looks very good, though the quality of color scans could be better.



Canon Pixma MP180

Editors' Rating: **7.0** out of 10

Canon U.S.A. • usa.canon.com

\$99.99

On a tight budget? Canon's MP180 is a bargain for a machine that prints, scans, and copies, especially given its surprisingly good print quality. This MFP features a built-in memory-card reader and a PictBridge port for PC-free photo printing.



The C522n's print speeds are high, and the unit excels at monochrome printing. It pumped out ordinary text documents at 14.4ppm, and it delivered 12.3ppm on color graphics. Plain text was a dark matte black with no fuzziness or rough edges—even 2-point type was legible. It captured good detail and shading on gray-scale photos. Color graphics and photos did not fare as well: The accurate colors and good detail were marred by crosshatching and blotchiness.

In addition to its 250-sheet paper tray, the C522n has only a single-sheet, hand-fed bypass slot. To keep two kinds of paper available, you'll need to buy an additional 500-sheet drawer for \$299. That's a minor concern compared with a larger issue: Consumables for the C522n are relatively costly. A page of plain black text costs about 3.2 cents, and a lightly covered color page about 15.6 cents.

BEST

Samsung ML-3051N

Editors' Rating: **7.9** out of 10

Pros: Inexpensive; expandable paper-handling options; network-ready; speedy, high-quality output

Cons: No autoduplexing function

THE \$249.99 SAMSUNG ML-3051N straddles the gap between an über-expensive office laser printer and a personal laser, in terms of both features and price. Plus, it delivers high-quality black-and-white prints.

This model is a network-ready monochrome laser with versatile paper-handling options. Two paper inputs come standard, accommodating a total of 300 sheets; you also have the option to add on a 250-sheet tray. The standard 64MB of memory is expandable to 320MB. Our only major gripe is the lack of an included autoduplexer.

The printer's speed impressed us. It printed black text at a rate of 19.2ppm and gray-scale graphics at 18.2ppm. It also delivered excellent-quality text. In our tests, letters showed smooth, sharp edges and were legible even at font sizes as small as 3 points. The ML-3051N also excelled with gray-scale graphics, scaling smoothly from darker grays to lighter shades, and exhibiting good detail in photo elements.

Reviews by John Blackford, David D. Busch, Dan Littman, and Felisa Yang

CNET.com



REAL POWER PRO



850W



WORLD'S FIRST SIX+12V RAILS

POWER FOR REALITY

REAL POWER PRO 850W



CERTIFIED NVIDIA SLI READY COMPONENTS
NVIDIA Branded Stacker is now available at <http://store.nvidia.com>

The Real Power for the Ultimate High Definition Gaming Experience Unleashed! Ultra-High End Image reality calls for increasing processing power to handle the graphic complexity. Cooler Master's all new Real Power Pro 850W answers to the call for the most reliable power source to back up the elite technology to deliver excellent performance and superb image quality. Being the World's First to truly support Quad SLI with dedicated +12V rails, Real Power Pro 850W is specially designed for NVIDIA's next generation High End Graphic Card G80. With our six ground-breaking +12V independent output rails for exceptional power distribution, Real Power Pro 850W reliably powers the cards while you enjoy the out-of-this-world gaming experience.

For more information, visit: www.coolermaster.com

TigerDirect.com



Save ^{up to} \$300 a year[†] with the new way to phone!

NEW!
No Credit Card
Required!

**Try Vonage for
1 Month FREE**
including:
see details below

-  **UNLIMITED** Local and Long Distance Calling Using Your High-Speed Internet Connection!
-  **FREE** Voicemail!
-  **FREE** Caller ID!
-  **FREE** Call Waiting!
-  **20 FREE** Premium Features in All!

Best Offer Yet!
American Express®
branded Prepaid Card!
worth

\$25

Buy What You Want!
see details below

UNLIMITED
Local and Long
Distance Calling
only **\$24⁹⁹/month!**



**Try 1 Month
FREE!**
see details below



Call: 1-800-590-8117
Visit: www.vonage.com/share05

**Keep Your
Phone Number!^**

Award-Winning Quality!



Winner for VOIP Service
July 2006



#1 Rated Digital Phone Service
C|NET February 2006

FREE GIFT!



**Get an American Express® branded
Prepaid Card worth \$25!**

After you sign up for Vonage, go to
www.web-rebates.com/vonage/von-7006
to redeem your prepaid card.

Buy What You Want - Use it Virtually Everywhere American Express is Accepted!

FREE MONTH OFFER ONLY ON \$24.99 PLAN. SERVICE FEE WAIVED BUT ALL OTHER CHARGES APPLY. FREE FEATURES INCLUDED IN SERVICE FEE AFTER FREE MONTH. NEW CUSTOMERS ONLY.

Vonage 911 service operates differently than traditional 911. E911 not available everywhere. See www.vonage.com/911 for details. High-Speed Internet Required. † Rates exclude: broadband service, activation, regulatory recovery fee, 911 fees & cost recovery, premium services, equipment, Vonage compatible equipment, disconnect fee, taxes, and shipping. International calls billed/min. Credit card required. Satellite TV, alarms and other systems may not be compatible with Vonage. See Terms of Service for details. ‡ \$300 savings claim based on 7/06 survey of competing land line service providers. For complete information see www.vonage.com/compare1. ^ Where available. Number transfer averages 10-14 days from customer authorization. Cnet reference used with permission from CNET Networks, Inc. Copyright 2006. All rights reserved. © 2006 Vonage. American Express prepaid card offered to new subscribers who maintain Vonage service for 30 days or more. Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing. Offer expires 1/31/07. Prepaid card issued by American Express Incentive Services, LLC and may be used virtually anywhere that the American Express card is welcome. Limitations to use may apply. Unused balances expire 6 months from date of issuance, except where restricted by law. Card cannot be redeemed for cash and is not transferable. Additional terms or limitations may apply. American Express prepaid cards are point based, with 1=\$1 in purchasing power.

Vonage

BY SEAN PORTNOY

RATING THE E-Tailers

WE SHOP UNDERCOVER AT **SIX TECH-BUYING SITES** TO SEE HOW THEIR PRICES, POLICIES, AND SUPPORT STACK UP.

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, we've gone undercover at brick-and-mortar PC chains to size up the shopping experience. But today's consumers are increasingly comfortable buying their tech on the Web, so we decided it was time to do the same sleuthing for online retailers.

We targeted six popular tech-shopping sites, ranging from old stalwarts (CDW, PC Mall) to relative newcomers (Newegg.com, ZipZoomfly.com). Then we checked out a host of features on each site—everything from the interface and the ordering process to the return policy and the customer support. As with our regular Rating the Retailers piece, we came up with buying scenarios designed to give the sites' e-mail and phone reps a good workout. We had editors ask each site for advice on two matters: buying a new internal hard drive for under \$150, and adding an extra 1GB of memory to their

system. (In both cases, we said we had an old Dell Dimension 4600 with 1GB of RAM.) Then, to test the ordering and delivery processes, we bought two products from each vendor: a bare-bones Seagate 250GB Barracuda 7200.10 internal drive and two 512MB Kingston PC2700 (333MHz) DDR SDRAM modules (or the closest equivalents we could get).

So, what did we find? Most of the sites are solid, dependable bets—none scored poorly in our rankings. But some really shine when it comes to helping customers who

need some hand-holding with tricky PC purchases, while others cater to techies, offering little, if any, advice. And

some feature eye-popping bargains and hold out juicy enticements such as free shipping. All delivered our orders promptly—many of the items arrived as fast as overnight, even though we used ground shipping for most of them. Read on to find out which site will suit you best.



CDW

Editors' Rating: 6.5 out of 10

Pros: Helpful phone support; multiple memory configurators

Cons: High prices; interface isn't consumer-friendly



AT SOME POINT, you've probably received a CDW catalog in the mail. The company, formerly known as Computer Discount Warehouse, has been in business for two decades, and even has a retail outlet in the Chicago area. But while CDW is one of the best-known virtual PC retailers, its current Web site doesn't promote itself as a place for home-tech buyers to shop. The front page highlights corporate products like switches and servers, and the company has a special site for government clients.

At first glance, the site is not well-organized, but once you do find a product category, you can filter selections by brand, price, and keyword. The site has other useful features for shoppers, such as user reviews and ratings, and, in the case of memory, five different configurator tools. And CDW offers a broad range of products, including motherboards and graphics cards, even if they're hard to find.

The company offers toll-free phone support, and, on both of our phone calls, we encountered reps with decent technical knowledge. On our memory question, the rep suggested we buy RAM modules in pairs (as Dell recommends), and recommended two 512MB modules from SimpleTech (\$99.99 each) or Kingston (\$119.99 apiece). The rep on our hard drive call first asked if we wanted an internal or external drive, then inquired whether we had an open 3.5-inch drive bay. Ultimately, she figured out from

the age of our PC that we needed a drive with an IDE interface—in fact, she specifically warned us not to buy a Serial ATA (SATA) drive. She then recommended two 250GB drives under our \$150 price limit: a \$92.99 Seagate Barracuda drive, and an \$89.99 Maxtor Diamond-Max 10 drive.

Our experience via e-mail was less satisfactory. Our question about a new hard drive was never answered, and the response to our memory-upgrade question was slow in coming. We sent a query on Thursday and didn't receive a reply until the following Monday. On the other hand, the rep was helpful. He first asked about our current memory configuration. When we replied that we didn't know, he sent another e-mail stating that the memory modules should be installed in pairs, and that each 512MB memory stick would cost

tax. (Our orders went to New York State.) At least the company doesn't charge a restocking fee as part of its 30-day return policy.

So, if your tech needs aren't too esoteric, or you need knowledgeable phone support, CDW's site is worth a visit. Just be prepared to pay extra.

Mwave.com

Editors' Rating: 7.3 out of 10

Pros: Competitive pricing; helpful phone support

Cons: Poor e-mail support; lacks memory-configuration tool; charges restocking fee

mwave.com

MWAVE.COM might not have the name recognition of CDW, but the company behind the site has been in the computer-retailing business since 1989. The site's interface targets

Mwave.com helpfully lets you browse compatible accessories while you shop for a product.

\$92. He then told us to call him back to help make the purchase. (CDW also offers live online chat during weekdays once you create an account on the site.)

Unfortunately, you pay a price for CDW's service. The site's prices were relatively high for both purchases we made. The two Kingston memory modules, for instance, cost \$60 more at CDW than at any of the other sites. Part of the reason: CDW was the only site on our list that charged us state sales

individual buyers, with a lengthy left-hand navigation list that links to myriad product categories.

You can browse categories by price or manufacturer, or use the advanced search function to drill down further. Among its top offerings, the site features a convenient section of motherboard-and-CPU bundles, and lists accessories for your selected product, such as data cables for bare hard drives in adjoining drop-down menus.

Newbies may have trouble searching for memory on the site; once you select PC Memory from the Memory category, you're presented with subcategories such as "DDR," "DDR2," and "SDRAM." If you don't know which one your system requires, you'll be hard-pressed to continue browsing with any certainty—especially since the site lacks a memory configurator. If you do know what you're looking for, however, you can use the advanced search to find memory based on RAM capacity and speed. The site also offers user reviews and

CDW's main interface doesn't make it easy to find products like motherboards and graphics cards.

ratings to help you along.

If you need further assistance, Mwave offers toll-free phone support on weekdays. For our call concerning RAM, the rep on the toll-free line told us we would need to contact the tech-support line (a toll call) to get assistance. That rep had us open the desktop case and extract one of the installed memory modules to check for a brand or memory type—not an inviting prospect for most users. He then recommended appropriate Kingston memory modules.

When we made our hard drive call, the rep again told us to call the toll tech-support line, instead of transferring us. After we told the rep what machine we owned, he looked it up and correctly noted we needed an IDE drive. He recommended three: a 320GB Western Digital unit for \$142, a 200GB Seagate drive for \$111, and a 160GB Seagate model for \$90. He then gave us the drives' inventory numbers to give the sales rep when we called back the toll-free sales line. He pointed out that the numbers were for boxed drives with instructions, not for bare drives. The boxed drives are pricier, with the Seagate Barracuda drive we ordered costing over \$40 more boxed than as a bare drive, but do come with instructions, cables, and software that some buyers might want.

Mwave also claims to offer e-mail support, but we sent two different messages on two separate occasions and got only one reply. It told us the company was unable to recommend any items.

When it came time to order, Mwave had very competitive pricing for the bare Seagate drive and the Kingston memory. Better yet, the hard drive arrived the day after we ordered it, even though we paid for ground shipping. As for returns, Mwave has a 30-day return policy, except for memory, processors, and refurbished products, which must

be returned within seven days. And the company levies a 15 percent restocking fee on all returns of nondefective products.

It may not be the easiest site for newbies to navigate, but fair pricing and live interaction with knowledgeable reps earmark Mwave as a site that can satisfy a broad range of tech shoppers.

Newegg.com

Editors' Rating: 7.8 out of 10

Pros: Good prices; low ground-shipping rates; extensive user reviews, ratings; deep search features

Cons: No product-information customer support; charges restocking fee



MANY TECHIES view Newegg.com as the gold standard of online tech stores, as evidenced by its strong showing every year in our readers' choice awards. With good prices and a huge customer

Price: \$94.99
Select An Optional Extended Warranty Plan
ADD TO CART
ADD TO WISH LIST

Review Summary (620 reviews):

Rating	Count
Excellent	505 reviews
Good	63 reviews
Average	21 reviews
Poor	14 reviews
Very Poor	17 reviews

by date posted

Reviewer	Rating	Comment
UniversityOfVA_Guy	5 stars	It's a hard drive!

Pros: Great price for the space. Works fine, does decent value for a reliable drive. I've had nothing but good things to say about it.

Cons: On a minor note, when I first got the drive it was kind of a pain to install. Got some help from the support team.

Newegg.com offers extensive user ratings and reviews for products, with some numbering in the hundreds.

base, the site has come a long way since its founding in 2001. It doesn't offer much in the way of hand-holding for neophytes, however.

Newegg lets you navigate via a lengthy list of product categories running down the left side of the page. Once you select a subcategory, it offers you three different ways to search for specific products. Guided Search lets you choose among top-level specs, such as manufacturer and price; Advanced Search adds a keyword search and more specs to select from, while Power Search lets you browse by multiple specs simultaneously.

Like Mwave, Newegg doesn't provide any kind of memory-selection tool. But

unlike Mwave, Newegg's customer support doesn't offer product-information assistance—as we were told in both replies to our e-mail questions. When we called the customer-service number, the reps reiterated this policy; one suggested that we click on the site's Help & Info tab for third-party product information. Likewise, when we used the site's live-chat support to ask about buying 1GB of RAM, the rep wrote that he could not offer buying advice. The company also doesn't accept any orders by phone, fax, or e-mail.

Newegg does shine in its user reviews and ratings, which are far more extensive than those on any of the other sites. Many products have dozens of user reviews, giving you insights into potential purchases.

The site also offers the best prices we found, including \$4.99 rates for ground shipping that it claims can reach anywhere in the United States (except Alaska and Hawaii) in three business days. As with Mwave, Newegg delivered our Seagate drive in one day.

The company's return policy varies by product category. Its standard return policy allows a return for refund within 30 days of purchase, and a return for replacement within a year. Certain products, though, are covered by a limited 30-day return policy, which is similar to other sites' policies in offering a refund or replacement within 30 days of purchase. The company does charge a 15 percent restocking fee on returned items, however.

As long as you don't need direct advice, Newegg's prices, selection and extensive user reviews should put the site at the top of your list.

PC Mall

Editors' Rating: 6.7 out of 10

Pros: 24/7 phone support; good customer-service help

Cons: High shipping costs; may charge restocking fee



LIKE CDW, PC Mall is an old-timer in computer retailing. It even has two physical locations in Southern California and one in Memphis, Tennessee. But while its home page is a little more consumer-friendly than CDW's, the site still caters primarily to businesses and government institutions.

It was easy to shop for our hard drive and memory. We could initially drill

AJUMP.com

Screaming Performance. Not Just for Games.



Matrix E6000 C2D SLI

\$3,353.00

Privé Mini SD37P2

\$1,099.00

Privé 630i

\$499.00

Matrix 5750 CrossFire

\$2,086.00

- Intel® Core™ 2 Extreme Processor E6800 2.93GHz 4MB
- (2x) NVIDIA GeForce 7900GTX PCIe x16 512MB DDR3 SLI VGA
- PhysX P1 Gaming Accelerator
- NVIDIA nForce4 SLI MB
- 1GB DDR2-800 Memory
- 160GB SATA 3.0Gb/s 7200RPM 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- 16X DVD-ROM & Dual Layer DVD±RW
- 11-in-1 Card Reader
- Microsoft Windows XP Professional w/ SP2b
- Raidmax ATX-701WB Chassis w/ 900W PS

- Intel® Core™ 2 Duo Processor E6400 2.13GHz 2MB
- ATI Radeon X1300 PRO PCIe x16 256MB DDR2 VGA
- 1GB PC2-6400 DDR2-800 Memory (2 x 512MB)
- 160GB SATA 3.0Gb/s 7200RPM 8MB Cache HD
- Dual Layer DVD±RW & 11-in-1 Card Reader
- MS Windows XP Home w/ SP2b
- Shuttle XPC SD37P2 MiniBarebone w/ Intel 975X chipset

- Intel® Core™ 2 Duo Processor E6300 1.86GHz 2MB
- Intel Extreme Graphics 2
- 512MB PC3200 DDR400 Memory
- 160GB SATA 3.0Gb/s 7200RPM 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- Dual Layer DVD±RW
- MS Windows XP Home w/ SP2b
- Raidmax ATX-302B Case w/ 420W PS

- Intel® Core™ 2 Duo Processor E6400 2.13GHz 2MB
- P5W DH Deluxe/WiFi-AP MB w/ Intel 975X Chipset
- ATI Radeon X1950XTX Hardware CrossFire Edition 512MB DDR3
- 1GB DDR2-800 Memory
- 160GB SATA 3.0Gb/s 7200RPM 8MB Cache Hard Drive
- Dual Layer DVD±RW & 11-in-1 Card Reader
- WinTV-PVR-150MCE PCI TV Tuner Card
- Media Center 2005 w/ SP2b
- In Win O3 Case w/ 750W PSU

Food for The Power-Hungry

The new Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor in the Ajump Gaming and Privé Desktop Series is built to handle increased physics and realism for your favorite games and other demanding applications.

FREE GIFT

1GB USB Drive
(w/ purchase of any Ajump System)

* Picture for display purpose only. Promotion ends 1/31/07.

www.AJUMP.com

Order Online or
Call Us Toll Free **1-877-692-5867**

Fully Customizable ★ Name Brand Components ★ 3-Year Warranty Available

Your configuration may not reflect the image above. All prices are subject to change without notice or obligation. Ajump.com is not responsible for any typographical and photographic errors. ©2006 Ajump.com Inc. All rights reserved. Celeron, Celeron Inside, Centrino, Centrino Logo, Core Inside, Intel, Intel Logo, Intel Core, Intel Inside, Intel Inside Logo, Intel SpeedStep, Intel Viv, Itanium, Itanium Inside, Pentium, Pentium Inside, Xeon and Xeon Inside are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries.

down by interface for hard drives and module type for memory; the latter could be troublesome, since a newbie might not know the difference between DIMMs, RIMMs, and SIMMs. Once you clear that hurdle, though, you can then search by the amount of memory you're looking for. While the interface allows you to further filter your search

answered on the same day, and after we told the rep the make and model of our computer, he responded with a list of drives in our price range. He also included the part number for us to use when ordering. Our memory question was answered the next day with a similar list of products, though the rep didn't mention the fact that Dell recom-

mends using dual-channel memory, meaning that we should get a pair of modules instead of a single one.

When it came time to order, Seagate's 250GB Barracuda 7200.10 wasn't available, so we purchased a 7200.9 version instead. The pricing was slightly higher than average, in part due to the \$10.22 shipping charge. Likewise, PC Mall's shipping fee for the Kingston memory was steeper than any other site's. The price of the

memory itself was also on the high side: about \$10 more than at TigerDirect, though still far less than at CDW.

(Oddly, PC Mall didn't charge us sales tax to New York on either order, though

several sales reps confirmed that the company charges relevant state sales taxes within the United States, and several mock orders we subsequently created showed tax charges.)

On its return-policy page, the company says it won't accept returns on

buyers who like the idea of 24/7 phone support and don't mind paying more for the privilege. Techies, however, will prefer the better prices at the other sites.

TigerDirect

Editors' Rating: **7.5** out of 10

Pros: 24/7 phone support; live-chat support; offers memory-configuration tool

Cons: Poor e-mail support; uneven phone support; may charge restocking fee

TigerDirect.com

TIGERDIRECT is another tech

veteran from the mail-order days that, like CDW and PC Mall, has a retail presence (a handful of outlets). But it's much better known for its catalog and its online store.

Like most of the other sites, TigerDirect lets you navigate its product categories via an extremely long list running down the left-hand side of the page. After you click on most categories, a list of subcategory options appears—interface choices for hard drives, for instance. You can also shop by brand or price range in the subcategories, though the site doesn't offer as many drill-down options as Newegg. It does give you a memory configurator, however, as well as user reviews and ratings.

TigerDirect provides toll-free phone support 24/7 for product information. The support personnel, however, delivered very mixed results. The rep who handled our hard drive inquiry quickly pointed us to a bare-bones 250GB Seagate IDE drive, though he didn't ask if we needed the

cables that a drive kit would provide. The rep fielding our memory question, meanwhile, even though we told him our PC's make and model, recommended a single 1GB U.S. Modular stick that the site's memory configurator doesn't recommend for our particular system. (Dell recommends you add memory in pairs to our specific PC model.)

E-mailing customer support wasn't much help, either. We received only an auto-reply to our first two e-mails to customer support. When we re-sent the e-mails, we did receive a reply to our hard drive question. The rep figured out we needed an IDE drive, but we never received a reply to our request for a recom-



PC Mall's Web site often recommends accessories that have little to do with the product being selected.

results by brand and price, you can't search by other specs unless you enter them into a keyword search.

The store doesn't offer a memory configurator, though it does link to Kingston's Web site and configurator. Like most of the e-tailers in this roundup, the site offers user reviews and ratings for products.

PC Mall's sales lines, meanwhile, are open 24/7, and the service is solid. The reps we spoke to helped us with each of our questions, though the rep handling our hard drive call routed us to tech support to get a recommendation (for a 250GB Seagate drive). For our memory call, the rep made appropriate recommendations after looking up the make and model of our system.

The site also provided assistance via e-mail. Our hard drive question was an-



TigerDirect is the rare tech e-tailer that offers customer support via live online chat with its reps.

products from certain companies, including Apple, Hewlett-Packard, Lenovo, and Sony. Depending on the circumstances of the return, a restocking fee may be applied to returned items, as it was for the RAM and hard drive we ordered.

Like CDW, PC Mall is geared toward

XTREME GEAR RECOMMENDS WINDOWS® XP

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 Processor

*Ultimate Smart Dual-Core Power and Performance
– Get More Done in Less Time.*

MADE TO DO MORE IN LESS TIME

- Run all your gadgets quickly, seamlessly and simultaneously.
- Run all your applications at the same time with increased performance.
- Can handle anything you throw at it.

AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology

- AMD PowerNow!™ for longer battery life.
- True multi-tasking capability – get more done in less time.
- Get creative. Get mobile. Get going.



Configure your Dream System at Xtreme Gear Today!

TOLL FREE 1-888-937-5580



XG XION 9000

- CoolerMaster Mini Aquagate Liquid Cooling System
- **Genuine Windows® XP Home Edition w/ SP 2**
- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Dual 16X PCI-E Mainboard
- Corsair 2048MB PC6400 DDR-2 800 Dual Channel
- 320GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 16mb Cache HD
- Dual (2) NVIDIA® 8800 GTS with 640MB 16X PCI-Express Video
- Sony 16X-DVD ROM Drive
- 16X DVD+RW with Lightscribe Technology
- 7.1 nForce® 3D Audio
- Logitech X530 5.1 Subwoofer Speakers
- Gigabit Network Card
- PCI 802.11G 54 Mbps Wireless Network Card
- X-Smilodon Case 500Watt Power
- 1 Year Limited Warranty
- + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport



XG XION 7000

- CoolerMaster Mini Aquagate Liquid Cooling System
- **Genuine Windows® XP Home Edition w/ SP 2**
- NVIDIA® nForce® 570 SLI Dual 16X PCI-E Mainboard
- Corsair 1024MB PC6400 DDR-2 800 Dual Channel
- 250GB 7200RPM SATA-II 3.0Gb/s 8mb Cache HD
- NVIDIA® 7900 GS 256MB 16X PCI-Express Video
- Sony 18X DVD+RW Drive
- Sony 16X-DVD ROM Drive
- 7.1 nForce® 3D Audio
- Logitech S100 Stereo Speakers
- Gigabit Network Card
- PCI 802.11G 54 Mbps Wireless Network Card
- X-Tsunami Case 420Watt Power
- 1 Year Limited Warranty
- + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport



XG ACTION 6000

- AMD Turion™ 64 X2 Mobile Technology TL-60
- AMD PowerNow! Technology
- HyperTransport Technology
- Enhanced Virus Protection Technology
- **Genuine Windows® XP Home Edition w/ SP 2**
- 15.4" WXGA Wide-Screen TFT Display 1280x800 Pixels
- Corsair 1024MB DDR-2 667 Dual Channel
- 100GB 5400RPM SATA Notebook Drive
- NVIDIA® GeForce® Go 7600 256MB Video
- 8X DVD+RW Drive
- 802.11G 54Mbps Wireless Network
- 10/100 NIC and 56k V.92 Modem
- 6 Custom Colors to Choose From
- 1 Year Limited Warranty
- + Lifetime Toll Free 24/7 Techsupport
- Free Shipping

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 5000+ Processor - \$ 2099

AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor - \$ 975

\$ 1285

mended drive. Our experience with the site's live-chat option was a little more fruitful. When we asked for a memory recommendation, the rep provided a link to the site's memory-configurator tool.

The site's prices for our Seagate hard drive and the memory modules were competitive, if not the lowest. But we hit a glitch when it came time to return the products. For some reason that wasn't explained, we weren't initially able to return the hard drive for a refund, though we could return the RAM. After several e-mails, TigerDirect sent a return authorization (although it didn't explain why it changed its mind.) The site's return policy says that a 15 percent fee may be applied to returned products that aren't defective, and that you must inquire to find out which products incur the fee.

Like Mwave, TigerDirect balances a deep inventory with the phone support that uncertain shoppers may find useful—and the site doesn't price items as high as CDW does. Our experience with phone support was mixed, however, and you shouldn't expect a reply if you send a question via e-mail.

ZipZoomfly.com

Editors' Rating: **6.9** out of 10

Pros: Good prices; free shipping; two memory-configuration tools

Cons: No technical sales assistance; no customer ratings/reviews; 15 percent restocking fee on all returns; memory configurators buried in site's navigation



FOUNDED IN 1998, ZipZoomfly.com is a relative newcomer compared with many other sites in this roundup. Like the other recent arrival, Newegg, it has good prices,

but, unlike Newegg, it sweetens the deal by offering free shipping. It doesn't offer much help to a perplexed buyer, however.

ZipZoomfly lets you navigate its site via the familiar long list of product categories

sales assistance, and advises you to seek out product information elsewhere on the Web. We decided to contact the site anyway, and when we reached the customer-service line on one occasion, we were

greeted with a recording advising that all customer reps were busy. We were given the option to leave a message, which we did, but we never received a call back. Another time, we managed to talk to a live rep about getting a new hard drive, and he reiterated that ZipZoomfly didn't offer product recommendations, but then volunteered to transfer us to Western Digital's support line. We received a generic response about its policy when we tried to e-mail the site.

If ZipZoomfly is lacking in buying information, the site makes up for it with good prices and free ground shipping. You also can upgrade to FedEx two-day shipping for just \$1.99. The site charges a 15 percent restocking fee for items returned within 30 days, and accepts CPU, hard

drive, monitor, and RAM returns for a refund for only 15 days after an item ships.

ZipZoomfly's interface is a bit rough around the edges, and the site won't provide you with much in the way of assistance, but its low shipping charges and good prices overall make it a worthwhile alternative to Newegg.

Jamie Bsates, John Burek, Jasmin Malik Chua, Rik Fairlie, and Erin Kandel contributed research for this story.



ZipZoomfly.com offers free ground shipping on all products it sells.

running down the left side of the page (in addition to a far simpler tabbed top navigation). You can browse by price and brand, as well as search by keyword, but the site doesn't let you drill down any further than that. ZipZoomfly links to Corsair- and Kingston-branded memory-configuration tools, but buries them at the bottom left-hand corner of the home page instead of promoting them in the Memory section. Unlike the other sites listed here, ZipZoomfly doesn't offer any user reviews or ratings of the products it sells.

That lack of shopping advice carries over to the site's customer service. ZipZoomfly specifically mentions that it does not provide technical support or technical

FEATURE COMPARISON

		TOTAL PRICES		SHIPPING TIMES					
	Editors' Rating	1GB of Kingston RAM	250GB Seagate Hard Drive	1GB of Kingston RAM	250GB Seagate Hard Drive	States in Which Sales Tax Charged	Charges Restocking Fee	User Reviews/ Ratings	Methods for Product Info Assistance
CDW www.cdw.com	6.5	\$210.22	\$109.44	One business day	Two business days	All states that charge sales tax	No	Yes	Phone, e-mail, online chat
Mwave.com www.mwave.com	7.3	\$124.54	\$79.90	Four business days	One business day	California	Yes	Yes	Phone, e-mail
Newegg.com www.newegg.com	7.8	\$118.27	\$85.63	Three business days	One business day	California, New Jersey, Tennessee	Yes	Yes	No
PC Mall www.pcmall.com	6.7	\$145.38*	\$90.21**	Two business days	Two business days	All states that charge sales tax	Yes	Yes	Phone, e-mail
TigerDirect www.tigerdirect.com	7.5	\$131.98	\$91.98	Two business days	Two business days	Florida, North Carolina, Illinois, Ohio	Yes	Yes	Phone, e-mail, online chat
ZipZoomfly.com www.zipzoomfly.com	6.9	\$124	\$84	Two business days***	Two business days***	California	Yes	No	No

Ordered products were two 512MB PC2700 333MHz DDR SDRAM modules (Kingston KVR333X72C25) and a Seagate 250GB Barracuda 7200.10 hard drive, unless otherwise noted. Prices include tax and ground-shipping fees. * = Kingston KVR333X64C25 ** = 250GB Seagate Barracuda 7200.9 *** = Sent using upgraded two-day shipping

Need Velocity at Home?

PC Club recommends Windows® XP Professional.



Dual-core.
Do more.

ENPOWER

Velocity Xpress ENVX01



LCD Sold Separately.

Buy Local & Get a **FREE*** D-link Router from Microsoft (Value \$49)

*Free router offered by Microsoft Buy Local program with Enpower system purchase. Shipping and handling not included. Visit www.localpcbuilder.com/redeem for details



All You Need for SLI-Ready Gaming Excitement

\$1099

genuine Microsoft® Windows XP Media Center Edition

Intel® Core™ 2 Duo
E6400 Processor

250GB
SATA2
Hard Drive

1GB
DDR2 667
Memory

7900GS PCI-e
256MB Video Card

DVD±RW
16X

Anti Virus
Anti Spyware



Liteon 18X Dual Layer
Dual Format DVD Burner

\$37.99 ~~\$59.99~~

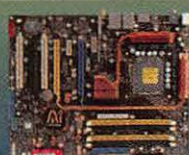
Limit One Per Customer. A1547041



EVGA 8800GTS
640MB Video Card

\$489.99 ~~\$499.99~~

A9802826



Asus P5N-SLI
Premium Motherboard

\$249.99 ~~\$279.99~~

A4802504



LinkQ ML-79 2400dpi Mouse

\$19.99 ~~\$39.99~~

A5041004/S



Logitech X-530 5.1
Speaker System

\$49.99 ~~\$59.99~~

A5147002

1-888-9PCCLUB

We accept: VISA, MasterCard, Discover Card, ATM, and American Express

www.pcclub.com

Phone Order Hours: 8:00am to 6:00pm Pacific Standard Time Monday to Friday Shop online @ www.pcclub.com or visit one of our 40 locations nationwide.

Prices, specifications, availability and terms of offers may change without notice. Taxes, fees and shipping charges are extra. PC Club is not responsible for pricing or other errors, and reserves the right to cancel orders arising from such errors. Supplies limited to stock on hand and vary by location. All promotions stated do not apply to prior purchases. PC Club limited warranty policy is printed at the back of our invoice. Intel, Intel logo, Intel Inside, Intel Inside logo, Intel Core 2 Duo logo, Intel Core 2 Quad logo, Intel Centrino, Intel Centrino logo, Celeron, Intel Xeon, Intel SpeedStep, Itanium, and Pentium are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. * Express upgrade services to Microsoft Windows Vista are offered by Microsoft Windows Vista and will be available when the program is released in January. For more details on how to upgrade, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/vista/getready/default.aspx>.

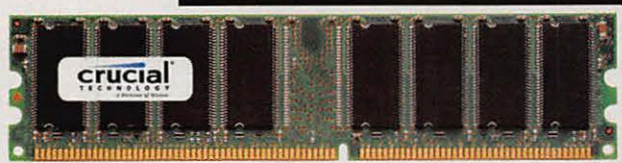
Enpower Systems Sold Exclusively at PC Club Stores

A Better Day, Everyday™



www.pcclub.com

MEMORY MYSTERY SOLVED, CASE CLOSED.



Finding a memory upgrade for your computer doesn't have to involve a lot of detective work. With just one click, the Crucial System Scanner takes the mystery out of finding the right RAM.

You know that you're ready for better performance by upgrading your system memory, but you're not sure WHICH memory is right for your computer. You might not even know your computer's manufacturer and model, much less anything about the mind-boggling mix of memory shapes, sizes, speeds, and capacities.

So how are you supposed to know which upgrade to buy? Don't spend hours tracking down the right memory — let the Crucial System Scanner take the guesswork out of upgrading! In just one click, our System Scanner tool analyzes your PC's configuration, then automatically recommends the exact upgrades for your system.

CLUELESS ABOUT MEMORY UPGRADES?

Just click the Scan My System button at Crucial.com, then sit back and get your report on the upgrade that's right for you!

- Limited lifetime warranty
- Free technical support
- Free shipping on qualified orders

For a limited time, on orders of \$40 or more shipped within the contiguous U.S.

System Scanner Report

Your computer currently

has 1024MB of memory, and

supports up to 2048MB. You

have an AGP graphics card.

Slot 1: 1024MB
Non-parity, DDR2
PC2-5300

Slot 2: EMPTY

THE CRUCIAL SYSTEM SCANNER
REVEALS THE EXACT
UPGRADES FOR YOUR SYSTEM

www.crucial.com/computershopper

Scan My System



crucial
TECHNOLOGY
A Division of Micron

The Memory Experts™

©2006 Micron Technology, Inc. All rights reserved. Information is subject to change without notice. Crucial Technology, the Crucial logo, Memory Advisor, and The Memory Experts are trademarks/service marks of Micron Technology, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Crucial Technology is a division of Micron Semiconductor Products, Inc., which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Micron Technology.

COMPUTER CURES ALFRED POOR

BLOCK THAT PROGRAM!

I'm having problems on several computers, and I think I know the program that is the root cause. I am going to reformat the hard drives, then reinstall the operating system and all the application software, but I want to prevent anyone using the computers from reinstalling the problem program. Is there a way that I can block users from installing or running that specific app?

CHRIS WHITE

I don't know of any way that you can block a specific program from being installed or run by other users. The best suggestion I can offer: Create a user account that prevents users from installing any new programs. You can do this in Windows XP by creating a "limited" user account.

Choose Start > Control Panel > User Accounts. Choose "Create a new account," then provide a name for the account. When you choose Next, you have the choice of Computer Administrator or Limited accounts. The Limited account will prevent anyone using it from installing any new programs, including the one you want to avoid.

GONE FOREVER?

Is there a way to delete a file so that you cannot recover it with one of those data-recovery programs that are available? I have some files I don't want some smart kid to be able to retrieve.

MITCHELL BRAM

The only way to be absolutely certain that a file has been permanently and irretrievably deleted is to destroy the disk on which it is stored. Short of that, you can be fairly certain that a file cannot be recovered if you delete it using a "shredder" utility, which overwrites the file repeatedly with a pattern of data that helps obliterate the original recording. Even shred-

der programs are not 100 percent effective, however, because additional copies of the data may be stored elsewhere in your computer. For example, the application might have paged some of the content to the virtual-memory swap file.

The best solution is to not provide anyone else access to the data. A removable hard drive can do just that; have one drive for your use and a second drive for other users of the system. When you are finished using the computer, remove your hard drive and replace it with the alternate drive, then place your drive under lock and key. This will provide far better security than any software solution.

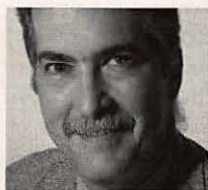
The only way to be absolutely certain that a file has been permanently and irretrievably deleted is to destroy the disk on which it is stored.

MAKING A SOUND DECISION

My current computer won't run any newer programs, but it has a great sound system. I would like to get a new computer, but I would like to connect—or at least be able to connect—my old PC to the new one so that I can keep playing music through the old sound system. Is this even possible?

JAMES PHILLIPS

A PC sound system consists of two parts: the sound card and the speakers. If your current computer's speakers are especially good, simply plug them into your new computer to continue to use them. If it's the sound card that



creates the great sound, see if your new computer has an expansion slot that can accommodate it, and whether the card manufacturer provides drivers compatible with the operating system on your new PC. If both are available, you can move the card to the new system and keep your great sound. (Note that even inexpensive sound cards and integrated sound circuitry are pretty good these days, usually offering built-in surround sound and other features, so you may want to give a listen to your new computer before you move parts around.)

As you suggest, you could also just leave your old PC up and running to use as a sound center. Rather than connecting it directly to your new computer, however, I'd recommend setting up a simple home network using Ethernet cables and a router. This will let you exchange files between the two PCs. Even better, connect a network-attached-storage (NAS) drive to your network using one of the many inexpensive solutions that let you share a hard drive right on the network. Store all your music files there, and you'll be able to access them from either computer.

GENUINE DILEMMA

I bought a used laptop that came with Windows XP Professional. Windows Genuine Advantage flags the Windows installation as "bad." Indeed, the label on the laptop shows that XP Home Edition was the original OS on the system. I did not get a restore CD with the laptop, and the original restore partition on the hard drive (if it existed)

is gone. Is there is a way to reload the original system (hopefully without wiping out the other software/data)?

JIM SANTIAGO

www

For more tips and buying advice, visit the Computer Shopper Forums:
computershopper.com/forums

HELP & HOW-TO COMPUTER CURES

It sounds as though a previous owner of your laptop installed an unlicensed copy of Windows, which is why it has been flagged as an illegitimate copy. The fact that you don't have the original distribution media for the laptop makes it difficult to correct the situation. Contact the machine's manufacturer to find out if you can buy a replacement copy of the restoration CDs. If not, then you'll likely have to purchase a fresh copy of the Windows operating system to resolve the problem.

MOVE DATA IN A FLASH

I have an old Windows 98 Second Edition (SE) laptop with only a CD reader. I suspect that the USB ports are either 1.0 or 1.1. I want to transfer about half a gig of data from it onto my new Windows XP laptop. I have SD flash-memory cards and a USB card reader. Is it reasonable to use the SD cards to transfer the data from the old laptop to the new one? What problems might I encounter?

JYOTHI RUNDEL

Windows 98 SE has much more reliable USB support than the original Windows 98, so that's a good starting point. You will almost certainly need a Windows 98 driver for the card reader, however, so if it did not come with one, check the manufacturer's site. If you can't get the old laptop to recognize the card reader, you can buy a new reader for less than \$10. (Make sure that it

supports Windows 98.)

USB 2.0 is backward-compatible with USB 1.0 and 1.1, so you should be able to read and write the data on both machines. It will take much longer to write from the older laptop with a USB 1.x port than it will take to read to the new PC over its USB 2.0 port. The theoretical maximum throughput for USB 1.x is just 1.5MB/sec, so it will take at least five and a half minutes to transfer the data to the SD card. Fortunately, depending on the speed of the memory card, loading the data to the new PC via USB 2.0 will go much faster.

ACCIDENTAL TOURIST?

With airport security so high these days and nobody trusting laptops to be laptops anymore, will putting a laptop through the X-ray machine destroy any hardware or corrupt the hard drive?

SAM LIU

This is a reasonable concern, but every source I can find indicates that there is no risk to electronic equipment from the X-ray scanners at airport security checkpoints. The reason is that the machines use very low-power X-rays that are not strong enough to damage electronic media. Flash media such as digital-camera storage cards or USB "thumb" drives are also safe to put through the scanners.

Still, it pays to be careful—follow the rule of "don't bet more than you can

afford to lose." If you have critical data on your laptop, make sure you have a backup copy somewhere else, such as on a CD or an online data-storage service.

I'M GOING TO GRACENOTE

Along with the drivers that came with my new sound card, the company bundled something called "Gracenote." I don't know what that's about, but it has a warning in the End User License Agreement that caught my eye: "The Gracenote Service uses a unique identifier to track queries for statistical purposes." Should I worry about this in terms of protecting my privacy?

PHOEBE COHEN

Gracenote is the name for an online music database that automatically identifies the album and track names when you rip a CD. The company reports that it issues each user a random numeric identifier—not traceable to a given computer or IP address—to count queries without knowing anything about who you are. The service uses this info to compile its Digital Top 10 and other lists. The service also uses your particular album queries to determine which ads and other promotions to present to you (meaning if you're ripping a lot of country albums, promos will be skewed toward country artists, not hip-hop).

The data tracked is innocuous, but if you're still worried, you can always reject the EULA and type in all the song names manually whenever you rip a CD.

TIP OF THE MONTH: RESOLVING RANDOM REBOOTS

One of the most difficult types of computer problem to troubleshoot is the random reboot—if you can't make the problem happen reliably, it's difficult to understand the cause. This month's tipster relates his experience with a source of reboots that might not be immediately obvious.

I've had two computers in the past two years that exhibited the dreaded random-reboot problem. In both cases, I found several bulging capacitors on the motherboard. Replacing the motherboard fixed the problem.

AL NERINO

This is an important point to consider, in addition to overheating and electrical problems. Capacitors are small, cylindrical components mounted on circuit boards. You can often spot a defective capacitor with a simple visual inspection. Some may show a bulging, domed top instead of the standard flat surface. Others may show signs of electrolyte leaks around the base of the capacitor. If you see either of these, you

should contact your system or motherboard manufacturer to inquire about repair or replacement.

Send us your favorite tip, and you could receive a tipster's prize package.

"Alfred Poor's Computer Cures," *Computer Shopper*, 460 Park Ave. South, 9th Fl., New York, NY 10016
computer.cures@computershopper.com

Please include your name. Due to the number of letters we receive, we cannot provide personal replies, nor return any enclosures.



F430

GAME ENTHUSIASTS WANTED



Stylish high performance car design with multi-coating glossy automobile paint job and aerodynamic ventilation intakes.



Fast CPU and overclocking experience recommended.

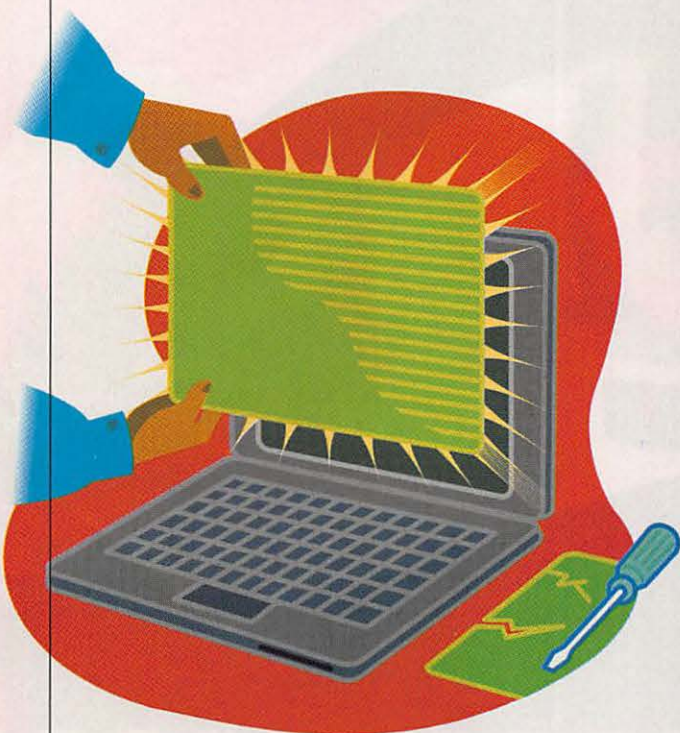


WEEKEND PROJECT

*Broken notebook display?
Popping in a new one is easier
than you might think.*

Replace Your Laptop Screen

BY DENNY ATKIN



WHAT'S MORE distressing than the sound of your laptop's screen cracking as it hits the floor? The voice of a tech-support rep telling you it will cost close to \$1,000 to replace it. With little more than a screwdriver, however, you can replace the screen yourself and save a bundle. Read on to see if a new LCD will fix your ailing laptop, and if so, how to find and install a new screen.

Illustration by David Flaherty

1 Determine if you need a new screen
If you've dropped your laptop—or dropped something on it—and the screen has fractured, the diagnosis is easy. Connect an external monitor to your notebook via its VGA-out port to verify that the notebook's other components still work. If the laptop functions properly in all other respects, it's time to start hunting for the parts to fix the screen.

If your display problems aren't the result of visible physical damage, however, the problem may not be the LCD. If your screen's backlight flickers, shuts down after a few minutes of usage, or doesn't come on at all, but you can still see a faint screen image, your problem may be the inverter, a small board that supplies power to the backlight. The good news is that these boards are available for well under \$100. (We'll show you how to locate and replace the inverter.) If replacing the inverter doesn't solve the problem, the backlight itself may be faulty. If that's the case, replacing the LCD should fix your problem.

If you see gibberish, lines, or a solid color on the screen, connect an external monitor and switch to that display (if you can). If the problem is evident on the external monitor, the issue is likely with your laptop's motherboard or video circuitry, not the display. If the external display works properly, the LCD or the cables leading to it are the likely problem.

2 Find and remove the bezel screws
Before buying a new LCD, you'll want to examine, and possibly remove, the current one. Doing so will give you a chance to spot other possible causes for your display problem, and to gather the necessary part numbers to ensure that you get the right replacement screen.

Before you begin, remove the laptop's battery and disconnect the power brick. For most laptops, you'll need only a couple of tools to remove the screen: a small Philips screwdriver, and a very small flat-head screwdriver or a knife.

First, you'll need to locate the screw covers. These small rubber



Carefully pry back the small rubber covers on the bezel to reveal the screws holding it in place.

covers are generally found on the front of the display's bezel (surrounding frame), though on some notebooks you might find some of the covers along the side of the screen. (Note that these instructions will work for most laptop models, but occasionally you'll encounter unusual designs

such as Apple's iBook G4, which uses Allen screws, or Apple's MacBook, which has no screws holding its bezel in place.)

Use the tip of a small flat-head screwdriver or knife to carefully pry back the corner of each rubber cover around the screen until you can see if a screw lies underneath. If you locate a screw, remove the cover and place it in a small plastic bag or other safe location. Typically, you'll find at least four, and perhaps six, screws on the bezel. After you've located them all, remove them and store them with the covers.

3 Remove the bezel

At the bottom center of the LCD screen, carefully work your fingers between the bezel and the screen, and gently pull the bezel. Usually, it will easily snap loose; if not, gently pull it in different directions until it does. Carefully work your way around the rest of the bezel, pulling it away from the rear plastic of the screen cover.

Once the bezel is off, you'll see the LCD in its metal frame. On most notebooks, the inverter board is directly below the screen. You may now be able to tilt the LCD forward, away from the plastic shell behind it. If not, check for additional screws securing the frame to the shell.

If you're troubleshooting a problem that doesn't involve physical damage such as a cracked screen, check the cable connecting the screen to the motherboard and inverter for loose connections or broken wires. If you're lucky, the solution to your problem may be as simple as reseating a loose cable or replacing an obviously broken one.



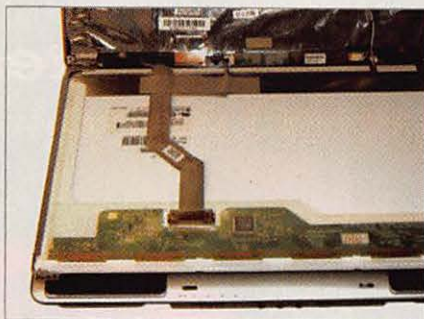
Once you've removed all of the bezel's securing screws, gently pull the bezel away from the LCD.

Tip: If at any point the bezel doesn't pop free with a moderate amount of force, check to make sure you didn't overlook any screws.

4 Find the right replacement parts

Now that you've exposed the screen, look for a label on the back showing the manufacturer's part number. This typically consists of one or more letters, followed by a series of numbers. Manufacturers sometimes use different screens for variants of the same laptop model, so having this number will ensure that you get the proper replacement screen for your laptop.

Armed with this information, you're ready to secure a replacement screen. Chances are you can purchase the screen from your notebook's manufacturer, but you'll probably pay a steep premium. Your best bet is to search elsewhere online. Enter the part number for the LCD (or the laptop's model number and terms like "replacement LCD") in a search engine to find a variety of online resellers for laptop parts. eBay (www.ebay.com)



Exposing the rear of the LCD panel lets you see its manufacturer part-number info, as well as reach its cable connections.

com) is another good source—you'll find new screens, functioning used screens pulled from broken notebooks, and replacement inverters.

A company specializing in replacement LCDs for most

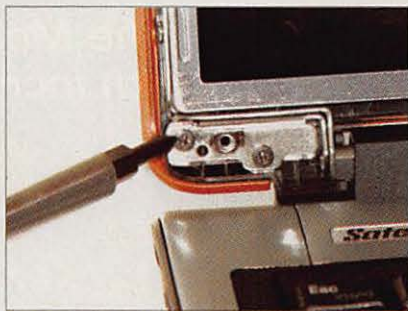
major laptop brands, ScreenTek (www.screentekinc.com) is another great place to start. It also offers improved high-gloss screens for some laptop models, as well as an assortment of illustrated installation guides.

5 Replace the broken screen

Before removing the broken LCD, you'll need to disconnect the cables connecting it to your notebook. The video cable is typically a long ribbon cable taped to the back of the screen. Remove the tape, then carefully unplug the connector from the back of the LCD. Also be sure to disconnect the power cable between the LCD and inverter.

If you need to remove the inverter to replace it or to access its power connector, simply remove the screws holding the inverter in place, then unplug the power connectors from each side of the inverter board.

Once the cables are disconnected, remove the screws holding the LCD to the metal frame, and slip the old LCD out. Installing the new LCD is simply a matter of reversing the process: Screw the new LCD into the metal frame, then connect the video cable and inverter.



After you position the new LCD, screw it into place in the metal frame.

6 Power it up

Before replacing the bezel and its screws, put the new screen to the test. Attach your power brick or reinstall the battery, and power up the laptop. If the screen doesn't work properly, power down, then double-check the inverter and video-cable connections.

Once you're sure everything's working, snap the bezel in place, replace the screws, and press on the screw covers. (You might want to add a dab of mild glue, such as Elmer's, to the back of the screw covers to secure them.) Your laptop is now back in action, at a fraction of the cost you'd pay to have the screen replaced by the manufacturer.

Life is quieter with Zalman

ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE ULTRA QUIET CPU COOLER **CNPS9700 LED**



The More Powerful CNPS9700 LED with Increased Size and Performance

CNPS9700 LED fully supports the new Intel Core2 Duo and AMD Athlon 64 X2 Dual Core CPUs. It has been upgraded with the best cooling performance acquired with greater dissipation area and Super Thermal Grease ZM-STG1.



Fatal1ty Champion Case **FC-ZE1**

The FC-ZE1 is a gamers' PC case equipped with black aluminum, red LED, and a friendly design for easy assembly and use.

Heatpipe Cooled 600Watt Modular Power Supply **ZM600-HP**

The ZM600-HP is a power supply equipped with high performance heatpipes that maximize cooling performance and modular cables that enhance user friendliness.



ZALMAN
COOL INNOVATIONS

Available at: **fry's electronics**
www.frys.com

newegg.com
www.newegg.com

TigerDirect.com
www.tigerdirect.com

Zip2.comfly
www.zip2.comfly.com

COMPUSA
www.compUSA.com

MICRO CENTER
www.microcenter.com

NEW PRODUCTS DIY

BY JOHN A. BUREK

Perfect CPU storm

Hot-running processors require extreme cooling. Thermaltake's \$46 **Big Typhoon VX** CPU cooler employs an oversize 120mm fan for extra cooling—and extra quiet, since its airflow volume enables it to spin slower than the smaller fans on most coolers. (A fan-speed knob also lets you tweak the spin rate.) Compatible with Intel LGA 775 and AMD Socket 754/939 CPUs, this cooling giant employs six heat pipes that elevate its fin-and-fan assembly to clear neighboring components. Installation with Intel processors is especially easy: Apply thermal paste, position the cooler and mounting bracket, snap four pins into place, and you're done. Thermaltake Technology, www.thermaltake.com



Case of envy

The \$149 **Antec Nine Hundred** ATX gamer-PC case is designed for maximum customizability and silent running. A titanic 200mm selectable-speed fan vents heat out the top, and the modular design gives you plenty of flex where to place drives and additional fans. (Three large 120mm light-up fans are bundled, and the case can host up to five.) You get nine 5.25-inch drive bays up front; within them, you can situate two hard drive cages to host up to six hard drives. Another nice touch: A storage well on the roof can hold a music player or other device plugged into the top-mounted USB or FireWire ports. Antec, www.antec.com

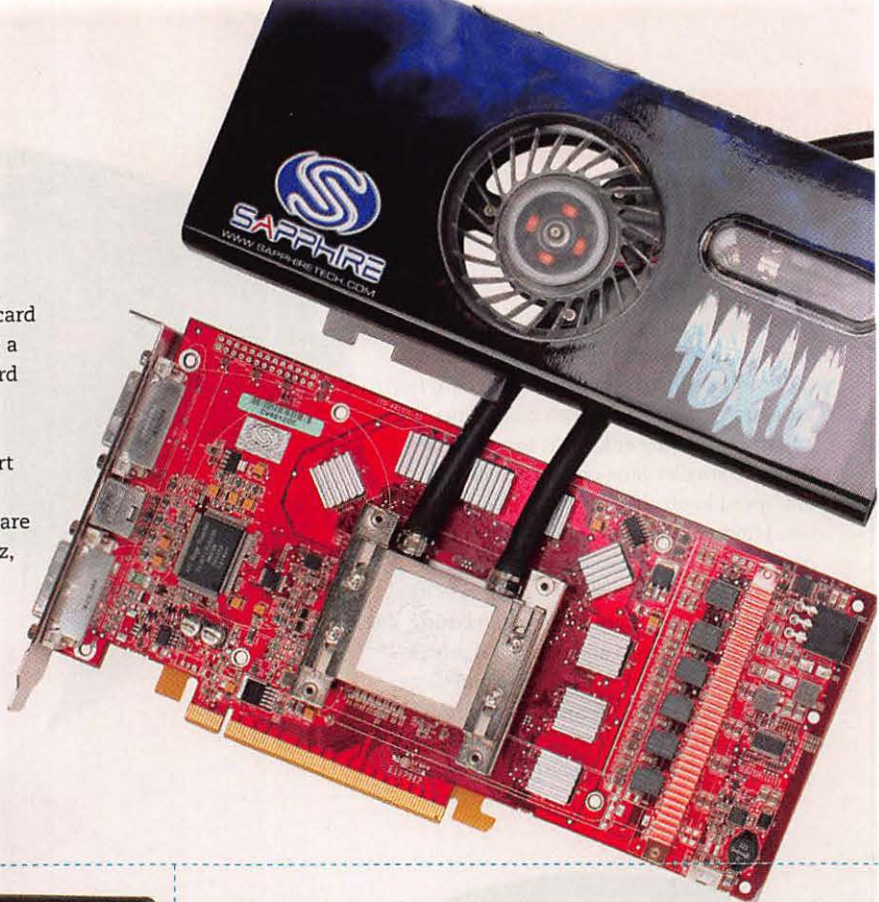
Strong, silent type

The ideal power supply is neither seen nor heard. In designing the \$199 **Silencer 750**, PC Power & Cooling left space between its exhaust fan and the other interior parts, which the company says lets air breeze through unobstructed, reducing fan-blade noise. This 750-watt ATX unit has two power leads for PCI Express (PCIe) graphics cards, as well as the requisite motherboard connections (24-pin main connector, plus eight-pin and four-pin 12-volt connectors). A whopping 15 more leads, including six Serial ATA (SATA), await your drives and other watt-hungry components. PC Power & Cooling, www.pcpowercooling.com



Hydro power

Sapphire's **Toxic X1950XTX** graphics card will bring seriously fast frame rates to a big screen near you. This \$549 PCIe card features ATI's top-shelf Radeon X1950 graphics processor, 512MB of GDDR4 memory, and the dual-link DVI support demanded by many large flat-panel monitors. Bundled overclocking software lets you juice the core clock to 695MHz, with the companion water-cooling card keeping things cool. (It occupies an adjoining PCI slot.) Sapphire also sells a same-price CrossFire variant for the ultimate in dual-card mayhem. Sapphire, www.sapphiretech.com

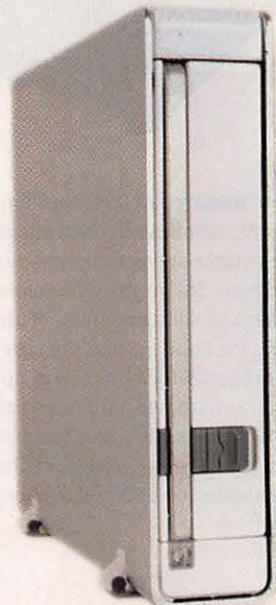


BYOD (bring your own drive)

The \$69.99 **Icy Dock MB559** is more flexible than most do-it-yourself external drive cases. The slick aluminum enclosure accepts one 3.5-inch SATA hard drive of up to 750GB capacity, and its removable-tray design lets you swap in a different drive without powering down. (Additional trays cost \$25 each.) Retractable feet let you orient the case on edge to save space. The dual-interface Dock connects to your PC via USB 2.0 or external SATA (eSATA); to use the latter, you can convert an internal SATA port to an eSATA one using the provided cabling and PCI-slot bracket. Icy Dock, www.icydock.com

Mix a quick mini-PC

Instant mini-PC: Just add CPU, RAM, and drives. The \$295 **MSI mPC 51PV** bare-bones kit features a Socket AM2 motherboard (for AMD Athlon 64 X2, Athlon 64, and Sempron processors) outfitted with onboard nVidia GeForce 6150 graphics, eight-channel audio, and 802.11b/g Wi-Fi. Installing your parts requires no tools: Untwist three thumb-screws, slide off the case back, and lever open an assembly to access the drive bays and slots. A flip-down front panel conceals a seven-format card reader, as well as USB, FireWire, and both digital (S/PDIF-in) and analog audio ports. MSI Computer, www.msicomputer.com





Dark Messiah

MIGHT AND MAGIC



UBISOFT®



TO ORDER **866.907.3536**

VISIT US ONLINE **www.vigorgamingpc.com**

Starting At
\$1099



↓ FORCE RECON

- Intel® Core™2 Extreme Quad Core/Dual Core/Core Duo Processor
- NVIDIA® GeForce® 8800 GTX w/768MB Graphics
- Vigor Monsoon II Active CPU Cooler

Starting At
\$749



↓ HORNET

- AMD Athlon™ 64/FX/X2/AM2 Dual Core Processor
- NVIDIA® SLI Ready
- NVIDIA® GeForce® 7950 GT w/512MB Graphics

Starting At
\$3099



↓ ATLANTIS

- AMD Turion™ Mobile Processor
- 19" WSXGA+ 1680x1050 Super ClearView Wide Screen
- NVIDIA® SLI
- Dual NVIDIA® GeForce® Go 7950 GTX w/512MB Graphics
- 1.3M Digital Camera

Starting At
\$1499



↓ ARTORIUS

- Intel® Core™2 Duo Dual Core Mobile Processor
- 17" WUXGA 1920 X 1200 ClearView Wide Screen
- NVIDIA® GeForce® Go 7950 GTX w/512MB Graphics
- 1.3M Digital Camera

BUILD YOUR OWN KILLER RIG @ WWW.VIGORGAMINGPC.COM

© 2006 Vigorgamingpc.com and Reken Company. All rights reserved. All brands and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. All prices and configurations are subject to change without notice or obligation. Original shipping charges and opened software are non-refundable. All returns have to be accompanied by an RMA number and must be in re-salable condition. Systems pictures may include some equipment and/or accessories which are not standard features. Vigor Gaming is not responsible for any typographical errors.

© 2006 Ubisoft Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Might and Magic, Dark Messiah Might and Magic, Ubisoft, Ubi.com, and the Ubisoft logo are trademarks of Ubisoft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Developed by Arkane Studios and Floodgate Entertainment. Valve, Half-Life, and Source are trademarks or registered trademarks of Valve Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Online mode developed by Kuju. Software platform logo TM and © IEMA 2006.

Polywell High Performance Quiet PCs

EXTREME High Definition Graphics



Quad-Core Extreme Fast Poly i680SLI

- Intel® Quad Core™ 2 Extreme Processor
- NVIDIA nForce® 680 SLI™ Chipset
- 2GB Dual Channel 800MHz DDR2 Memory
- NVIDIA® GeForce® 8800GTX 768MB Graphics
- 2x10,000RPM 150GB SATA Removable Drives
- Sony 16X DVD-RW Dual Layer Rewritable Drive
- 3.5" Floppy+7-in-1 Reader, 2x Gigabit LAN
- 7.1 Audio Sound, Stereo Speakers
- Dual Gigabit LAN, Firewire, 6xSATA RAID-5
- Logitech Keyboard and Cordless Optic Mouse
- 30" 2560x1600 Dual-Link LCD Panel
- Windows XP Professional (Free upgrade for Vista)

\$4,999

FX-62 Dual-Core SLI™ PolyStation 590SLI2

- AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-62 Dual-Core Processor
- NVIDIA nForce® 590 SLI™ Chipset
- 2GB Dual Channel 1066MHz DDR2 Memory
- NVIDIA® GeForce® 8800GTX 768MB Graphics
- 1.8TB 6x320GB RAID-5 SATA-II HD Storage
- Sony 16X DVD-RW Dual Layer Rewritable Drive
- 3.5" Floppy+7-in-1 Reader, 2x Gigabit LAN
- 7.1 Audio Sound, Stereo Speakers
- Dual Gigabit LAN, Firewire, 6xSATA RAID-5
- Logitech Keyboard and Cordless Optic Mouse
- 20" 1600x1200 High Resolution LCD Panel
- Windows XP Professional (Free upgrade for Vista)

\$3,599



Quiet Portable PC MiniBox 430AM2

- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 Dual-Core 4200+ Processor
- NVIDIA nForce® 430 Chipset
- 1GB 2xChannel 667MHz DDR2 Memory
- Fanless NVIDIA GeForce® 7600GS 256M Graphics
- 250GB SATA-II 7200RPM Drives
- Sony 16X Dual Layer DVD-RW Drive
- 9-in-1 Reader, Firewire, Gigabit LAN
- Logitech Keyboard and Optic Mouse
- Windows XP Home (Free upgrade for Vista)

\$899

SLI Dual Graphics Core2 Duo Poly i570SLI-Core2

- Intel Core™ 2 Duo Processor E6300 1066FSB
- NVIDIA nForce® 570 SLI™ Chipset
- 1GB 2xChannel 667MHz DDR2 Memory
- 2 x Fanless NVIDIA GeForce® 7300LE SLI™ Graphics
- 250GB SATA-II 7200RPM Drives
- Sony 16X Dual Layer DVD-RW Drive
- 9-in-1 Reader, Firewire, Gigabit LAN
- Logitech Keyboard and Optic Mouse
- Windows XP Home (Free upgrade for Vista)

\$899



Dual LCD Business PC Poly 430NB2-Slim

- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 Dual-Core 4200+ Processor
- NVIDIA nForce® 430 Chipset
- 1GB 2xChannel 667MHz DDR2 Memory
- Fanless NVIDIA Quadro® NV210S Graphics
- 250GB SATA-II 7200RPM Drives
- Sony 16X Dual Layer DVD-RW Drive
- 9-in-1 Reader, Firewire, Gigabit LAN
- Logitech Keyboard and Optic Mouse
- Windows XP Home (Free upgrade for Vista)
- Dual 19" LCD (2560x1024) Display

\$1199

Power Business PC + 30" LCD MiniBox 430NB2-5200, 1TB

- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 Dual-Core 5200+ Processor
- NVIDIA nForce® 430 Chipset
- 2GB 2xChannel 667MHz DDR2 Memory
- NVIDIA® GeForce® 8800GTS 640MB Graphics
- 1TB 2x500GB SATA-II 7200RPM Drives
- Sony 16X Dual Layer DVD-RW Drive
- 9-in-1 Reader, Firewire, Gigabit LAN
- Logitech Keyboard and Optic Mouse
- Windows XP Professional (Free upgrade for Vista)
- 30" LCD (2560x1600) Dual-Link Display

\$3,650



Quiet Media Center PC PolyCenter 430M2 1.5TB HD Video

- AMD 35W Low-Voltage 64-bit 3000+ Processor
- NVIDIA nForce® 430, GeForce® 6150 Graphics
- 512MB 2xChannel 667MHz DDR2 Memory
- 1.5TB 3x500GB RAID-5 SATA-II HD Storage
- Sony 16X DVD-RW Dual Layer Rewritable Drive
- 6-in-1 Reader, 1394, GigaLAN, Fanless P/S
- Windows XP HD TV Tuner Capture with Software, Remote
- 19" Wide Slim LCD 1440x900 DVI/VGA Display

\$1,888



20 Years of Customer Satisfaction
5-Year Warranty, Industry's Longest
First Class Customer Service

Polywell Computers, Inc 1461 San Mateo Avenue South San Francisco CA 94080 650.583.7222 Fax: 650.583.1974

ATHLON is trademark of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc.. nForce and GeForce are trademarks of NVIDIA Corporation. All other brands, names are trademarks of their respective companies.

800.258.9946

www.Polywell.com/us/shop1

TECHMARKET

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO SMART TECHNOLOGY SHOPPING

107 Midrange Desktops
112 Budget Notebooks
116 Mainstream LCDs
118 Ultracompact Digital Cameras

MIDRANGE DESKTOPS (\$750 TO \$1,499)

NEED TO KNOW

PROCESSOR Don't choose an underpowered processor, but look at CPUs one or two steps down from the fastest for the power you need at a good price. Frequent multitaskers or those planning to upgrade to Microsoft's Vista OS should go with a dual-core CPU.

MEMORY 512MB of memory is standard, you should buy 1GB. Otherwise, make the 512MB a single DIMM; you'll then have more flexibility to add memory later. Each additional 512MB of DDR memory will cost roughly \$50.

GRAPHICS Look for a discrete graphics card with at least 128MB of memory. If you plan to do video editing or 3D gaming, go with 256MB of memory. A premium graphics card costs about \$220 more than integrated graphics.

HARD DRIVE Opt for two hard drives of at least 160GB apiece, configured in a RAID Level 1 array to ensure your data is always backed up. Each additional 80GB of storage will cost about \$50.




OPTICAL DRIVES Opt for a DVD±RW as your first choice. Two drives are better than one, though, so go with a fast CD-RW or DVD-ROM for the second.

CASE Be certain the case offers adequate expansion room. Also, look for a few front-panel ports and audio jacks. A robust power supply (400 watts and higher) will add \$50 or more to the price.

SOUND Integrated sound is common, and superior to what you'll find in budget desktops. A dedicated sound card, however, is still a better choice. Upgrade: A quality sound card will cost about \$70 more than onboard audio.




MONITOR With CRTs all but dead, chances are your next monitor will be an LCD. Like other tech, the lower the cost, the fewer the features. The first things to go are digital inputs and ergonomic adjustments; less-costly LCDs also tend to have lower resolutions and higher response times.

—Matthew Murray, Associate Editor

Model	Base Price*	Processor	RAM	Graphics	Hard Drive	Optical Drive(s)	Monitor	Editors' Take	Find Out More
ABS COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES									
Ultimate M5 Vortex	\$899	2.2GHz Athlon 64 3500+	512MB	nVidia GeForce 7600 GT	160GB	DVD-ROM	None	A decent, if overpriced, bare-bones system, with too few features and too little upgradability for those who demand power and performance.	www.abs.com 800-685-3471
Ultimate X8	\$1,299	2.8GHz Pentium D 820	1GB	Two nVidia GeForce 7600 GS	160GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	None	Offers dedicated gamers more than the Ultimate X5 Vortex does, but falls short on hard drive space, considering the price.	
APPLE COMPUTER									
iMac	\$999	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	512MB	Integrated	160GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	17-inch LCD (integrated)	Apple's partnership with Intel has resulted in a speedier iMac with the Core 2 Duo CPU. Plus, you get innovative design and a ton of apps.	www.apple.com 800-692-7753
CYBERPOWER									
Gamer Ultra 8000 Dream	\$839	2.6GHz Athlon 64 3800+	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7600 GS	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer), DVD-ROM	None	A stylish, few-frills gaming rig with some nice, basic components just right for casual gamers' needs.	www.cyberpowerpc.com 800-707-0393
Gamer Ultra CrossFire 9100	\$1,055	2GHz Athlon 64 X2 3800+	1GB	Two ATI Radeon X1600 Pro	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer), DVD-ROM	None	A nice bump up in performance from the 8000 Dream. For full CrossFire potential, spend the extra \$50 to \$100 to upgrade the power supply.	
Infinity XLC	\$1,475	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	Two nVidia GeForce 7950 GT	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer), DVD-ROM	None	A good choice for extreme gamers—though they'll probably want more RAM than the 1GB included in the default configuration.	
DELL									
Precision 390	\$949	3GHz Pentium 4 631	512MB	nVidia Quadro NVS 285	80GB	CD-ROM	None	A solid entry-level workstation for the graphically inclined, but should have better specs for the price.	www.dell.com 800-999-3355
XPS 410	\$999	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7300 LE	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	19-inch LCD	A great entry point to the world of next-generation CPUs. Plus, it features a surprisingly large hard drive.	
XPS 210	\$1,099	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	Integrated	250GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	19-inch LCD	A small-form-factor PC that's got the basics covered, but lacks the power of larger models and the convenience of even-smaller boxes.	
GATEWAY									
DX420B	\$599.99	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	512MB	nVidia GeForce 7300 LE	160GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	None	One of the least-expensive Media Center machines you'll find, with more pep than you might expect for the cash.	www.gateway.com 800-369-1409
FX510	\$899.99	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7300 LE	160GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	None	More RAM and a much bigger hard drive make this a better bargain than the Profile 6 SB.	
Profile 6 SB	\$1,149	2.8GHz Pentium D 915	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	17-inch LCD (integrated)	An inelegant, underpowered all-in-one with a price that can't compete with other offerings out there.	

* = Base price reflects vendor's default configuration. Most models are configurable.

See computershopper.com for full reviews of products in boldface.

Model	Base Price*	Processor	RAM	Graphics	Hard Drive	Optical Drive(s)	Monitor	Editors' Take	Find Out More
HEWLETT-PACKARD									
Pavilion d4650y	\$899.99	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7300 LE	160GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	None	Front-panel ports for USB, FireWire, and audio/video make this Media Center PC even more attractive.	www.hp.com 888-999-4747
Pavilion m7690e	\$899.99	2.2GHz Athlon 64 X2 4200+	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7300 LE	160GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	None	A dual-core CPU, integrated TV tuner, and remote control add to the value of this sturdy Media Center PC.	
IBUYPOWER									
Value-Pro	\$999	2.2GHz Athlon 64 3500+	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7600 GT	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	17-inch LCD	Not cutting-edge parts, but this champ from 2005 still packs a pleasing punch if you don't need to open the case very often.	www.ibuypower.com 888-462-3899
Gamer EX	\$1,045	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	Two nVidia GeForce 7300 GT	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer), DVD-ROM	None	An excellent component set for midrange performance. Plan to expand? Upgrade to a better power supply.	
Night Dreamer FX	\$1,269	2.6GHz Athlon 64 3800+	1GB	Two nVidia GeForce 7900 GS	320GB	DVD±RW (double layer), DVD-ROM	None	A respectable midlevel gaming PC. Even comes with a sweet-sounding set of Logitech X-530 six-piece surround-sound speakers.	
LENOVO									
ThinkCentre M52	\$979	3GHz Pentium 4 531	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD-ROM	None	Built around a dated Pentium 4 CPU, but this business PC can still tear through most basic apps. Software/support package is top-notch.	www.lenovo.com 866-458-4465
POLYWELL COMPUTERS									
MiniBox 430AM2	\$1,038	2.2GHz Athlon 64 X2 4200+	1GB	Integrated	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	17-inch LCD	Not a configuration to get overly excited about. A fine PC for the basics; one year of 24/7 phone support costs extra.	www.polywell.com 800-999-1278
Poly1570SLI	\$1,125	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7300 GT	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	19-inch LCD	A nice-enough low-end gaming PC, though the included 400-watt power supply will likely prove inadequate for most SLI setups.	
SHUTTLE COMPUTER									
GS1100h	\$849	1.73GHz Pentium M 740	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	None	Stylish, near-silent midrange PC is a good fit for design-conscious and space-constrained consumers.	us.shuttle.com 888-972-1818
XPC X100	\$999	1.66GHz Core Duo T2300	1GB	ATI Mobility Radeon X1400	250GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	None	WinBook's Jiv Mini packs lots of features into a smaller package, but this PC offers more graphics power and hard drive space.	
XPC P 3700g	\$1,499	2.16GHz Core 2 Duo E6400	1GB	ATI Radeon X1900 GT	160GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	None	For more gaming muscle, you can configure this toaster-size system with CrossFire graphics—the case is designed to keep the two cards cool.	
SYSTEMAX									
Impact VXR2	\$899.99	1.66GHz Core 2 Duo T5500	1GB	Integrated	80GB	DVD±RW	None	A well-outfitted, compact Media Center PC for the space-constrained; the small hard drive is less than optimal, however.	www.systemaxpc.com 888-845-6225
Warhawk	\$1,340	2GHz Athlon 64 X2 3800+	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7600 GT	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer), DVD/CD-RW combo	None	The dual-core processor ramps up the speed and performance of this colorful, sleek-looking gamer's box.	
VELOCITY MICRO									
Vision GX	\$799	2.4GHz Athlon 64 3700+	512MB	Integrated	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	None	This PC might not be the best deal here, but it's not bad, delivering everything you need to ably handle routine tasks.	www.velocitymicro.com 800-303-7866
Gamers' Edge 1000 Value Gaming PC	\$999	2GHz Athlon 64 X2 3800+	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7600 GS	250GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	None	You get a boost in processing power over the Vision GX, along with an even bigger gain in graphics prowess.	
Vector PCX Digital Media PC	\$999	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	Integrated	320GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	None	Velocity Micro offers some serious desktop performance, with prices comparable to those of similarly configured machines.	
ProMagix PCX High Performance Home & Office PC	\$1,395	1.86GHz Core 2 Duo E6300	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7600 GS	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer), DVD/CD-RW combo	None	An able Core 2 Duo CPU and a solid mix of parts at the same relatively low price as the Vision 64.	
Vision 64 High Performance Home & Office PC	\$1,395	2.4GHz Athlon 64 3800+	1GB	nVidia GeForce 7600 GS	250GB	DVD±RW (double layer), DVD/CD-RW combo	None	We like this option for a stylish home-office performance PC, especially if you'll be editing images.	
WINBOOK COMPUTER									
Jiv Mini	\$999.99	1.66GHz Core Duo T2300	1GB	Integrated	100GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	None	Super-tiny PC packs an impressive array of features, including a DVD burner, a flash-card reader, Wi-Fi, and a built-in TV tuner.	www.microcenter.com 800-634-3478
ZT GROUP									
Home PC	\$889	2GHz Athlon 64 X2 3800+	1GB	Integrated	200GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	None	The integrated graphics could be improved upon, but that probably won't matter to the home users this otherwise-attractive rig targets.	www.ztgroup.com 866-984-7687
MCE System PVX6016	\$1,199	2.4GHz Core 2 Duo E6600	1GB	Integrated	Two 250GB	Two DVD±RW (double layer)	None	Huge hard drive capacity alone would make this a steal, even without the powerful processor and twin DVD burners.	

* = Base price reflects vendor's default configuration. Most models are configurable.

See computershopper.com for full reviews of products in boldface.

WE GOT GAME...



GLADIATOR 3400

- » Intel Dual Core 3.4Ghz
- » 1GB DDR2-667
- » 200GB SATAII HDD
- » nVidia 256MB 7300GS
- » DVD RW 16x
- » XP Pro + **Free Vista Upgrade**

\$899⁹⁹

#P3400

ASSIMILATOR 3800

- » AMD64 Dual Core 3800+
- » 1GB DDR2-667
- » 250GB SATAII HDD
- » nVidia 512MB 7300GS
- » DVD RW 18x
- » XP Pro + **Free Vista Upgrade**

\$929⁹⁹

#P3800

DOMINATOR 4600

- » AMD64 Dual Core 4600+
- » 2GB DDR2-667
- » 74GB Raptor 10K RPM
- » 250GB SATAII HDD
- » nVidia 512MB 7950GT
- » DVD RW 18x
- » XP Pro + **Free Vista Upgrade**

\$1599⁹⁹

#P4600

TERMINATOR 6600

- » Intel Core 2 Duo E6600
- » 2GB DDR2-667
- » 74GB Raptor 10K RPM
- » 320GB SATAII HDD
- » nVidia 1024MB 7950GX2
- » DVD RW 18x + SB XFi Xtreme
- » XP Pro + **Free Vista Upgrade**

\$2179⁹⁹

#P6600



visionman
Simply Better

- Celebrating 12 Years of Excellence
- Made & Supported in America
- Xtreme Customization Options, Vista Ready
- High-End Powerstations and Gaming PCs

Since 1994, Visionman has been creating extremely powerful configurations for gaming, high output, and power hungry applications. We dare you to find a better bang for your buck. Guaranteed lowest prices on extreme customization. Our systems are hands-down the fastest solutions on the planet. Call Toll Free or configure your dream machine online!

Visionman recommends Windows XP / Vista

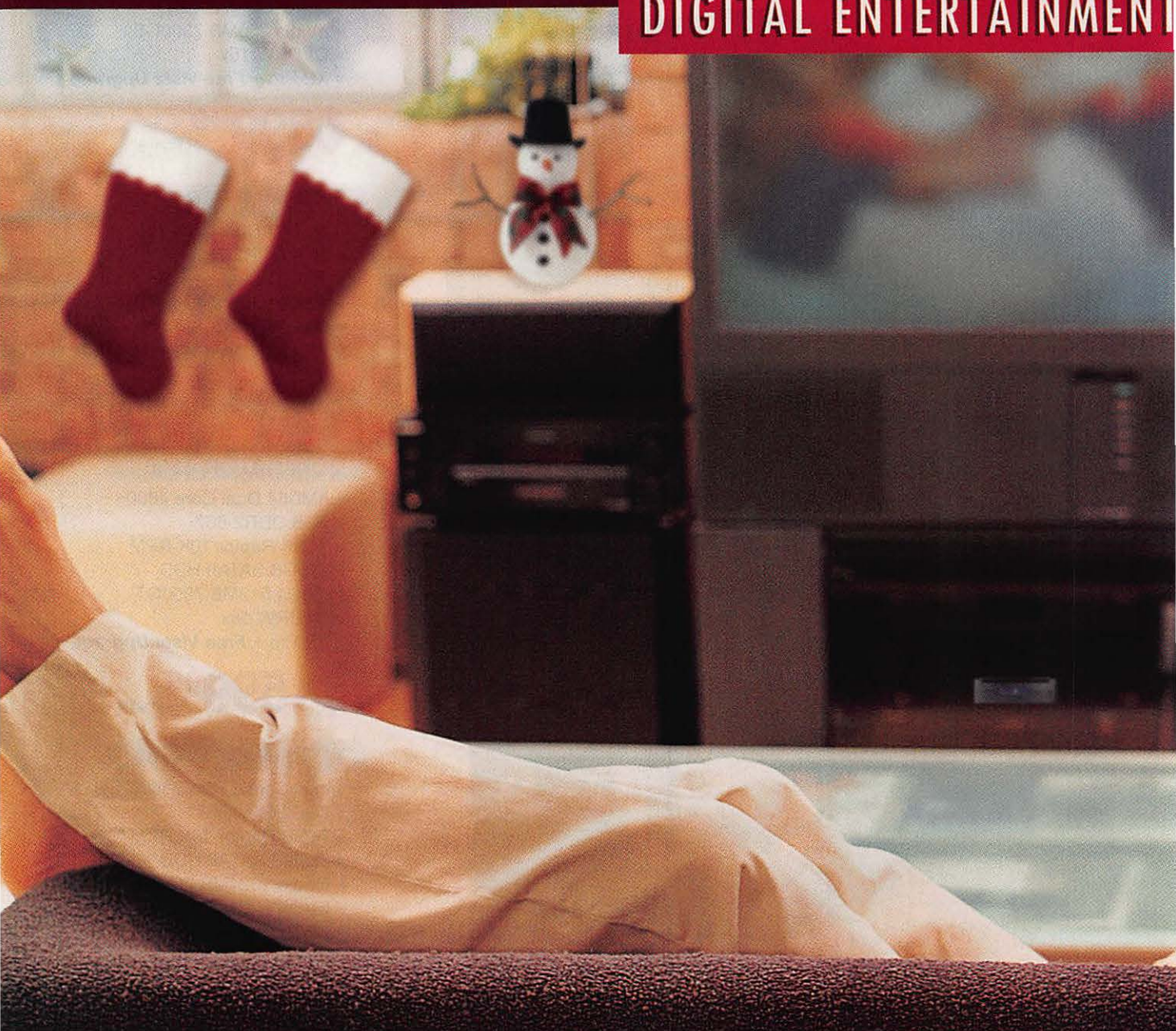
Order online at:

www.visionman.com

Call us at:

1-800-690-6771

A PLATFORM DESIGNED FOR DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT



Get ready for a new kind of consumer entertainment PC that will change the way you enjoy entertainment at home. AOpen Viiv-ready system, based on Intel Viiv technology, delivers the multi-tasking power of a dual-core processor-based PC and sleek new designs that fit your life style. Digital media enthusiasts can usher in the next generation of digital media software for amazing high-definition video and photo editing, content creation, and audio mixing.

Where to Buy:



www.pcclub.com

TigerDirect.com

www.tigerdirect.com

MyAOpen

www.myaopen.com

enano
COMPUTERS

www.enanocomputers.com



www.enviveit.com

AOpen

All logos are trademarks of their respective companies. AOpen miniPC barebone systems are designed to deliver ultimate user's experience, for final system configuration and installation please check with individual supplier.

1911 Lundy Ave, San Jose, CA 95131, 1-888-97-AOPEN

N THE HOME



miniPC MP945-VXR

- Smallest Viiv ready PC in the world
- Supports Intel Core Duo/Core 2 Duo processor
- Measures 6.5" x 1.97" x 6.5"
- Ultra quiet 29 dBA operation
- Component & Composite Connectors
- Slot-in Slim Super Multi (DVD/RW) Optical drive
- HD video support
- Digital audio support
- Built-in IR, MCE remote controller included

Visit: <http://minipc.open.com/US>



BUDGET NOTEBOOKS (LESS THAN \$1,000)

NEED TO KNOW

PROCESSOR Many budget notebooks ship with a low-powered Intel Celeron or AMD Sempron processor. More-powerful processors, such as AMD's Turion 64 and Intel's Core Solo, Core Duo, and Core 2 Duo, are starting to trickle down into budget models, however. These mobile chips have advanced power-management features and a full 2MB of Level 2 cache.

MEMORY Inadequate memory can drastically reduce overall performance, so don't be too frugal. Shoot for 512MB or even 1GB, if you can afford it. Each additional 512MB of DDR SDRAM will cost roughly \$75.

GRAPHICS Low-cost laptops will disappoint gamers because these models lack discrete 3D chips. A few manufacturers may offer budget notebooks with aging dedicated chips from ATI or nVidia, however, which should be adequate for older game titles.

HARD DRIVE A 40GB or 60GB drive may be plenty of storage for casual users, but if you have a large digital-music collection, play more than the occasional game, or edit digital

video, opt for 80GB or more. Each additional 20GB of storage should cost about \$40.

OPTICAL DRIVE Strive for a multifunction (DVD±RW) DVD burner, which writes to both plus- and minus-format DVD media. If you have no need or desire to burn DVDs, a DVD-ROM/CD-RW combo drive, which burns only CDs, will serve you well. Expect to pay about \$50 to upgrade to a DVD±RW from a combo drive.

WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY Integrated 802.11 wireless networking (Wi-Fi) is an essential feature. Most budget notebooks ship with 802.11b/g internal Wi-Fi radios. With rated data throughput of up to 54Mbps, 802.11g technology is all you need for everyday use.

DISPLAY Unless you're on a tight budget or require maximum portability, search for a wide-screen 15-inch-or-larger TFT. Whether you'll be watching DVDs or merely viewing several documents at once, more screen space is always better.

—Erin Kandel, Assistant Editor









Next month:
Desktop-
Replacement
Notebooks

Model	Base Price*	Processor	RAM	Graphics	Hard Drive	Optical Drive	Display	Wireless	Weight	Editors' Take	Find Out More
ACER AMERICA											
Aspire AS3100	\$499.99	1.8GHz Sempron 3000+	512MB	Integrated	60GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	15.4 inches	802.11b/g	6.2 lbs.	Entry-level features and lack of a DVD burner limit this inexpensive model's appeal. Attractive design is a plus.	us.acer.com 800-571-2237
Aspire AS7104WSMi	\$739.97	1.6GHz Celeron M 380	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	17 inches	802.11b/g	8.1 lbs.	Desktop-replacement model is as suitable for an office as it is for a college dorm. If your budget allows, upgrade to a full gig of RAM.	
TravelMate TM4222WLMi	\$949.99	1.66GHz Core Duo T2300	1GB	Integrated	120GB	DVD±RW	15.4 inches	802.11a/b/g	6.6 lbs.	Dual-core CPU and big hard drive are bright spots, but we wish this system offered a better mix of ports and a longer battery life.	
AVERATEC											
7100 Series	\$799.99	1.8GHz Sempron 3400+	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	17 inches	802.11b/g	7.2 lbs.	Nice price for a 17-inch laptop with a DVD burner. Doesn't skimp on features. Plus, the flash-memory-card reader is a nice bonus.	www.averatec.com 877-462-3462
2300 Series	\$899.99	1.6GHz Turion 64 X2 TL-50	1GB	Integrated	100GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	12.1 inches	802.11b/g	4 lbs.	One of the lightest models here; a dual-core processor, roomy hard drive, and entry-level price make it an attractive choice.	
2200 Series	\$949.99	1.8GHz Turion 64 MT-32	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	12.1 inches	802.11b/g	4 lbs.	Well-built, highly portable, and competitively priced, but poor battery life keeps this model from being one of our favorites.	
CYBERPOWER											
Xplorer X64-8000	\$989	1.8GHz Athlon 64 3000+	1GB	ATI Mobility Radeon X700	40GB	DVD±RW	15.4 inches	802.11a/b/g	6.8 lbs.	Aging graphics chip can't handle many games, but a multitude of ports adds multimedia appeal. Comes in 10 colors.	www.cyberpowerpc.com 800-707-0393
DELL											
Inspiron B130	\$549	1.6GHz Celeron M 380	512MB	Integrated	60GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	15.4 inches	802.11b/g	6.7 lbs.	Dell's entry-level model falls below the sweet \$600 mark, but don't expect it to handle much more than basic productivity tasks.	www.dell.com 800-999-3355
Inspiron 1501	\$549	1.8GHz Sempron 3500+	512MB	ATI Radeon Xpress 1150	60GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	15.4 inches	802.11b/g	6.2 lbs.	Specs similar to those of the B130, but with ATI graphics and a lighter case. If you can, spend \$150 to upgrade to a Turion 64 X2 CPU.	
Inspiron E1405	\$699	1.86GHz Core Solo T1350	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	14.1 inches	802.11b/g	5.3 lbs.	Capable notebook should satisfy most, but the similar E1505 (below), with its bigger screen and Core Duo CPU, is a better bargain.	
Inspiron 640m	\$729	1.86GHz Core Solo T1350	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	14.1 inches	802.11b/g	5.3 lbs.	Can handle the basics, but \$155 more gets you a dual-core CPU, 1GB of RAM, and a DVD burner.	
Inspiron E1505	\$799	1.66GHz Core Duo T2300E	1GB	Integrated	80GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	15.4 inches	802.11b/g	5.3 lbs.	One of the best deals in the category; offers dual-core processing, a 15.4-inch display, and a full gig of RAM for less than \$800.	

* = Base price reflects vendor's default configuration. Most models are configurable. Prices are subject to change.

See computershopper.com for full reviews of products in boldface.

TECHMARKET BUDGET NOTEBOOKS (LESS THAN \$1,000)

Model	Base Price*	Processor	RAM	Graphics	Hard Drive	Optical Drive	Display	Wireless	Weight	Editors' Take	Find Out More
GATEWAY											
NX260X	\$899.99	1.66GHz Core 2 Duo T5500	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	14.1 inches	802.11a/b/g	5.2 lbs.	Not a bad config, especially considering the Core 2 Duo processor. Road warriors will appreciate its light, compact design.	www.gateway.com 800-369-1409
NX560X	\$899.99	1.6GHz Core Duo T2050	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	15.4 inches	802.11a/b/g	6.3 lbs.	Though this model features a larger screen than the similarly featured NX260X, it's more than a pound heavier.	
HEWLETT-PACKARD											
Pavilion DV6000z	\$699.99	1.8GHz Sempron 3400+	512MB	nVidia GeForce Go 6150	40GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	15.4 inches	802.11b/g	6.6 lbs.	Has almost everything a home user could want; comes with media-friendly features like a built-in flash-memory-card reader.	www.hp.com 888-999-4747
Pavilion DV2000z	\$719.99	1.8GHz Sempron 3400+	256MB	nVidia GeForce Go 6150	40GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	14.1 inches	802.11b/g	5.3 lbs.	This good-looking, well-designed machine has dedicated GeForce graphics but only features 256MB of RAM in the base config.	
Pavilion DV6000t	\$729.99	1.6GHz Celeron M 420	512MB	Integrated	40GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	15.4 inches	802.11b/g	6.1 lbs.	We like the attractive design and multimedia features, but don't expect this laptop to break any speed records with its Celeron CPU.	
Compaq Presario V3000T	\$749.99	1.6GHz Celeron M 420	512MB	Integrated	40GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	14.1 inches	802.11a/b/g	5.3 lbs.	Unlike the V6000z, the V3000T lacks a discrete graphics chipset; can upgrade to a faster dual-core CPU, but it will cost you \$120.	
Compaq Presario V6000z	\$779.99	1.8GHz Sempron 3400+	512MB	nVidia GeForce Go 6150	40GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	15.4 inches	802.11b/g	6.6 lbs.	Also configurable with an Intel CPU; offers a decent mix of components, but its starting price is on the high side for what you get.	
Compaq Presario NX7400	\$979	1.6GHz Core 2 Duo T5500	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	15.4 inches	802.11a/b/g	5.6 lbs.	Thin-and-light business laptop offers enough features for basic corporate users, plus a wide-screen LCD for enjoying DVDs on the go.	
IBUYPOWER											
Battalion 101 S550-Turbo	\$989	1.8GHz Athlon G4 3000+	1GB	ATI Mobility Radeon X700	40GB	DVD±RW (double layer)	15.4 inches	None	6.4 lbs.	An aggressively designed blue (or red) exterior gives it a radical look; will fit in better on campus than at the office.	www.ibuypower.com 888-462-3899
LENOVO											
3000C Series	\$649	1.6GHz Celeron M 420	512MB	Integrated	40GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	15 inches	802.11a/b/g	6.2 lbs.	Capable budget notebook offers excellent battery life, but some components in this configuration need upgrading.	www.lenovo.com 866-458-4465
3000N Series	\$699	1.6GHz Celeron M 420	512MB	Integrated	80GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	14.1 inches	802.11a/b/g	6.1 lbs.	Delivers strong performance and good parts for the price. Battery life, however, could be better.	
SYSTEMAX											
NeoTach 3400	\$799.99	1.8GHz Turion 64 MT-34	256MB	Integrated	40GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	13 inches	None	4.2 lbs.	Turion processor is a plus, but at this price, should include more RAM, a bigger hard drive, and integrated Wi-Fi.	www.systemaxpc.com 800-262-6622
Pursuit 4155 B20	\$999.99	1.6GHz Core Duo T2050	1GB	Integrated	80GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	15.4 inches	802.11a/b/g	6.3 lbs.	Specs are nearly identical to those of Dell's Inspiron E1505, but this system is a pound heavier.	
Vigor	\$999.99	1.6GHz Celeron M 380	256MB	Integrated	40GB	DVD±RW	15.1 inches	None	6.6 lbs.	Magnesium-alloy case and antishock features protect against damage; most of its other specs are seriously skimpy, though.	
TOSHIBA AMERICA											
Satellite A110-ST1111	\$549	1.46GHz Celeron M 410	256MB	ATI Radeon Xpress 200m	40GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	15.4 inches	802.11b/g	5.8 lbs.	Features a wide-screen LCD and an S-Video port, but Toshiba doesn't offer upgrades for this model, so you're stuck with these specs.	www.toshiba.com 800-316-0920
Satellite M110-ST1161	\$849	1.73GHz Celeron M 430	512MB	Integrated	40GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	14.1 inches	None	5.2 lbs.	Spend a bit over \$100 to upgrade to a Core Solo CPU, a bigger hard drive, and built-in Wi-Fi, and you've got a nice starter laptop for under a grand.	
Tecra A6-ST3512	\$859	1.6GHz Celeron M 420	512MB	Integrated	40GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	14.1 inches	None	5.2 lbs.	An anemic starting config; can upgrade to a dedicated nVidia Quadro graphics card for \$80 more.	
Satellite U200-ST2091	\$999	1.73GHz Celeron M 430	512MB	Integrated	40GB	DVD/CD-RW combo	12.1 inches	None	4.1 lbs.	Tiny machine is likely not the best performer, but it's powerful enough for productivity tasks and has good battery life.	

ULTIMATE M6

SNIPER NIGHTHAWK

*Image shown may be with upgraded options



Six Month Rating Of 9.19

RESELEERRATINGS.com Platinum Award!

For Customer Satisfaction

ABS	9.19
ALIENWARE	6.95
Dell	3.81



abs

Also Available At:

Chief Value .com

ABS® Recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP
Express Upgrade to Microsoft® Windows Vista™



AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 Processor

Ultimate smart dual core power and performance - get more done in less time

- True multi-tasking capabilities and increased performance on digital media, content creation, Video & photo editing and audio mixing.
- Run all your gadgets quickly, seamlessly and simultaneously
- Run all your applications at the same time with increased performance
- Can handle anything you throw at it

- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 AM2 Socket processor 3800+* with HyperTransport™ technology
- AMD Makes Smarter Processors
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home with Service Pack 2
- ABS Stealth Black ATX Aluminum Chassis
- ASUS M2N32-SLI Deluxe NVIDIA® nForce™ 590 SLI X16 Socket AM2 Motherboard with True Dual X16 SLI Slots & IEEE802.11b/g Wireless integrated
- 1GB Corsair XMS2 Extreme DDR2 675(PC2 5400) Memory
- Dual NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7600 GT 256MB Video Cards with SLI™ Technology Enabled
- ADI AD1988B 8 Channel Audio
- Dual 200GB 7200RPM SATA Hard Drives in RAID 0 (400GB Total)
- Antec True Power 2.0 550W SLI-Ready Power Supply
- 16X DVD-ROM Drive
- 16X Double-Layer DVD±RW DVD Recordable Drive w/ Light Scribe

*This model number indicates relative software performance among this processor family.

Regular price ~~\$1,699~~

\$200 Instant Off!

Online price
\$1,499

COMPUTER SHOPPER READERS SAVE!!!

Enter promo code: **cs0150** and save an additional: **\$50**

(Online promo valid for Ultimate MS Sniper Systems Only. Promo Code must be entered at checkout to receive savings. Offer expires 9/13/07)

Visit **abs.com/amdcs01**

or call **800.876.8088**

Hours: Mon-Fri: 8:30AM-7:30PM PST Sat-Sun: 8:30AM-5:30PM PST

1 Year Limited Parts & Labor Warranty

Price, specifications and terms are subject to change without notice. For current pricing and specifications, visit <http://www.abs.com>. Illustrations may not accurately represent exact configurations priced. ABS® is not responsible for errors in typography and/or photography. Onsite service may be provided by a contracted third party provider. Technician will be dispatched if necessary following phone support. © 2006 All rights reserved. AMD, AMD Arrow logo, AMD Athlon, AMD Turion, Cool'n'Quiet and combinations thereof are trademarks of Advanced Micro Devices. HyperTransport is a licensed trademark of the HyperTransport Technology Consortium. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and other jurisdictions. Other products and company names are for identification purposes only and may be trademarks of their respective companies. ABS logo and all ABS trademarks are copyright ABS Computer Technologies, Inc.

MAINSTREAM FLAT-PANEL DISPLAYS (17 TO 19 INCHES)

NEED TO KNOW

ASPECT RATIO The standard proportion of width to height for a computer monitor is 4-to-3, although some monitors have a wider format of 16-to-9, designed for viewing movies or high-definition television (HDTV).

RESOLUTION An LCD looks best at its native resolution. Make sure you're comfortable with this resolution before you buy the monitor.

CONTRAST RATIO A contrast ratio of at least 500-to-1 will provide a more dynamically detailed image. The ratio is measured in varying ways, however, so rely on such figures cautiously.

PIXEL-RESPONSE RATE This measure, cited in milliseconds (ms), refers to how quickly a pixel can change colors. Lower numbers mean you'll tend to see less ghosting or streaking in movies and games. Most panels have response rates of 16ms or less; gamers and video buffs should look for response rates of 8ms

or less. Keep in mind that manufacturers measure this speed in different ways, oftentimes to their advantage.

LUMINANCE Luminance, or brightness, is expressed in nits or candelas per square meter (cd/m²). A rating of 200 to 250 nits is suitable for most productivity tasks; 450 nits is better for television and movies.

DIGITAL VERSUS ANALOG CONNECTIONS LCDs must convert analog signals to digital before they can be displayed. A graphics card with a Digital Visual Interface (DVI) port can send the signal straight to the display in digital format—no conversion is required. Most LCDs come with an analog input, some have both analog and digital, and a few are digital-only. A digital connection is best.

VIEWING ANGLE Brightness and image colors shift if you view an LCD off-center. If possible, try the panel before you buy, and remember that viewing-angle issues become more critical as panel size increases. —Les Shu, Staff Editor

Model	Price	Size	Native Resolution	Contrast	Typical Brightness	Pixel-Response Time	Interface	Editors' Take	Find Out More
BENQ U.S.A.									
FP71G+	\$209	17 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	Decent specs for the price, and top-tier panel quality to boot. Stand and connectivity options are basic.	www.benq.us 866-700-2367
FP72G+S	\$229	17 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	250cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	For just \$20 over the FP72G, you get BenQ's Senseye image-enhancement tech and a DVI connection.	
FP92W	\$269	19 inches	1,440x900	700-to-1	300cd/m ²	5ms	Analog, digital	Well-priced 19-inch wide-screen model delivers solid specs, including analog and digital connectivity.	
FP93GX	\$299	19 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	300cd/m ²	2ms	Analog, digital	Lightning-fast 2ms response rate is good for games, but DVD playback showed blurring and ghosting.	
FP93V	\$329	19 inches	1,280x1,024	550-to-1	270cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	Vibrant color quality and versatile cable-management options, but little adjustability.	
DELL									
UltraSharp 1707FP	\$239	17 inches	1,280x1,024	600-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	Attractive design, ample adjustability, and great image quality make this display a bargain.	www.dell.com 800-449-3355
UltraSharp 1907FP	\$309	19 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	High-end design and ergonomics at a budget price. Better-than-average image quality, too.	
EIZO NANA0									
FlexScan S1731	\$499.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	1,500-to-1	280cd/m ²	16ms	Analog, digital	Excellent contrast ratio and 10-bit (not 8-bit) color support are ideal for imaging work. A pricey professional-level tool.	www.eizo.com 800-800-5202
FlexScan S1921	\$599.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	1,000-to-1	250cd/m ²	20ms	Analog, digital	Larger, but not necessarily better than, the S1731. A good choice for still-image work.	
ENVISION MONITORS									
EN7410e	\$179.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	450-to-1	270cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	One of the least-expensive 17-inch models you're likely to find. Should work well for home users on a budget.	www.envisiondisplay.com 888-838-6388
EN9410e	\$199.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	Lacks a digital input, but this big-screen beauty's price is a plus if you're on a tight budget.	
GATEWAY									
FPD1975W	\$229.99	19 inches	1,440x900	700-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	Extras such as USB 2.0 ports and an attachable speaker bar sweeten an already decent deal.	www.gateway.com 800-555-2076
FPD1785	\$299.98	17 inches	1,280x1,024	1,500-to-1	280cd/m ²	25ms	Analog, digital	Gateway's Ez Tune anti-theft software password-protects your display so a thief can't use it.	
HEWLETT-PACKARD									
VS17e	\$259.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	If you don't need a digital input, integrated speakers make this a good choice for cutting down on clutter.	www.hp.com 888-999-4747
Pavilion f1905e	\$319.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	250cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	A good-looking display with a very basic feature set. Height adjustability is one of the few perks.	

See computershopper.com for full reviews of products in boldface.

TECHMARKET MAINSTREAM FLAT-PANEL DISPLAYS (17 TO 19 INCHES)

Model	Price	Size	Native Resolution	Contrast	Typical Brightness	Pixel-Response Time	Interface	Editors' Take	Find Out More
LENOVO									
ThinkVision L171	\$229	17 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	270cd/m ²	16ms	Analog	Sleek thin-bezel design adds to the appeal, as does the low price. Not the best panel for video playback, though.	www.lenovo.com 866-458-4465
ThinkVision L192p	\$369	19 inches	1,280x1,024	1,000-to-1	250cd/m ²	20ms	Analog, digital	It can tilt, swivel, and pivot, and it's height-adjustable. Best-suited for general business applications.	
LG ELECTRONICS									
Flatron L1732TQ-BF	\$239.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	1,400-to-1	300cd/m ²	4ms	Analog, digital	Uses LG's integrated F-Engine chip, which enhances images by improving color and contrast.	us.lge.com 800-243-0000
Flatron L1932TQ-BF	\$289.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	1,400-to-1	300cd/m ²	4ms	Analog, digital	F-Engine chip and quick response time are ideal for video and gaming. Reasonably priced for its specs.	
L1970HR-BF	\$329.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	1,600-to-1	300cd/m ²	2ms	Analog, digital	A stylish, ultraslim panel with one-touch setup, a good contrast ratio, and a speedy response time.	
NEC DISPLAY SOLUTIONS OF AMERICA									
MultiSync 1740CX	\$229.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	270cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	Dual-input display lets you toggle between sources. Decent price for a big-name monitor.	www.necdisplay.com 888-632-6487
MultiSync 1940WCXM	\$269.99	19 inches	1,440x900	700-to-1	300cd/m ²	5ms	Analog, digital	Wide-screen LCD is suited for multitasking, and fast response time delivers smooth DVD playback.	
MultiSync 70GX2	\$279.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	400cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	Slightly better specs than the MultiSync 1740CX, but still no DVI connection.	
MultiSync 90GX2	\$349.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	400cd/m ²	4ms	Analog	High style meets high quality. Image-enhancement technology and USB hub make it worth a premium.	
PLANAR SYSTEMS									
PQ1910M	\$299.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	Thin-bezel design and a reasonable price make this model a good choice for users of multiple displays.	www.planar.com 866-475-2627
SAMSUNG									
SyncMaster 740N	\$199.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	600-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	Samsung's most-affordable LCD offers impressive specs but no DVI interface.	www.samsung.com 800-726-7864
SyncMaster 740BF	\$229.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	300cd/m ²	2ms	Analog, digital	Extremely fast pixel-response rate; successfully blends value and performance.	
SyncMaster 740T	\$340.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	1,500-to-1	280cd/m ²	25ms	Analog, digital	Ultrathin bezel; height-adjustable, and can tilt and pivot. Very high contrast ratio.	
SyncMaster 713BM	\$359.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	Slim, attractive design; a better choice than the 910MP below if you don't need the TV functionality.	
SyncMaster 910MP	\$499.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	700-to-1	350cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	Why so pricey? Includes a built-in TV tuner and speakers, and power supply is integrated.	
SyncMaster 970P	\$629.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	1,000-to-1	250cd/m ²	6ms	Analog, digital	Amazing design is complemented by excellent image quality. Flexible base and neck.	
SHARP ELECTRONICS									
LL-171A	\$249	17 inches	1,280x1,024	430-to-1	250cd/m ²	20ms	Analog	Dull design is coupled with a painfully slow response time. Better deals abound.	www.sharppusa.com 800-237-4277
LL-T1815	\$339	18.1 inches	1,280x1,024	350-to-1	250cd/m ²	30ms	Analog, digital	Slow response time not great for video, but sRGB color reproduction and matching are ideal for still-imaging pros.	
VIEWSONIC									
Q7b	\$169.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	600-to-1	280cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	Respectable specs for a low price. Pick up two to tile for less than you'll pay for some single 19-inch models.	www.viewsonic.com 800-888-8583
VP930b	\$305	19 inches	1,280x1,024	1,000-to-1	250cd/m ²	8ms	Analog, digital	Highly adjustable, with great business-oriented software, but offers only mediocre image quality.	
VX724	\$325	17 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	300cd/m ²	3ms	Analog, digital	Features a quick 3ms response time. Gamers will go for this model.	
VX924	\$379	19 inches	1,280x1,024	550-to-1	270cd/m ²	4ms	Analog, digital	Packs an impressive 4ms response time that should please gamers and home theater buffs.	
XEROX									
XR3-17Gs	\$279.99	17 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	Glossy screen for deep, rich photo and video viewing—but glare under office lighting could be a problem for some.	www.xerox.com 800-275-9376
XA3-19b	\$319.99	19 inches	1,280x1,024	500-to-1	300cd/m ²	8ms	Analog	Stylish and compact, with decent specs and features. Should have digital input at this price.	

ULTRACOMPACT DIGITAL CAMERAS (UNDER 5 OUNCES)

NEED TO KNOW

RESOLUTION The quality of digital photos is measured primarily by the number of pixels a camera's image sensor can capture. A 6-megapixel camera, therefore, should capture more image detail than a 5-megapixel model can. Still, whether you choose a 5- or a 6-megapixel camera, you should be able to print good-quality images up to 11x17 inches. Higher-resolution models, ranging from 7 to 10 megapixels, allow you to blow up an image and crop details without losing sharpness.








LENS The ability of a digital camera's lens to magnify faraway action (that is, its optical zoom) is measured in terms of "x." Look for a model with at least a 3x optical zoom, or more if you often need to catch distant action. Pay no attention to digital-zoom specs—a camera's digital-zoom function simply enlarges a portion of the image without upping the resolution, leading to quality loss. A glass lens is preferable to a plastic one,

though vendors often don't specify which you get.

STORAGE MEDIUM Most digicams use wafer-thin flash-memory cards like CompactFlash, SD/MultiMediaCard, Olympus' xD-Picture Card, or Sony's Memory Stick. Cameras usually come with a small-capacity card, so you'll want to invest in an additional, roomier card with at least 128MB of capacity to store more photos. If you already have a PDA or a flash-based MP3 player, consider cameras that use the same storage format so you can share cards between devices.









BATTERY Some cameras offer only a proprietary rechargeable battery, usually either lithium-ion or nickel-metal-hydride, that can't be swapped out for a fresh one if it runs out of power while you're shooting. Better are models that can also handle disposable lithium or alkaline batteries; you can carry spares with you to use in a pinch.

—Erin Kandel, Assistant Editor

Model	Price	Resolution (Megapixels)	Optical Zoom	Included Memory	Storage Type	Battery Type	Weight	Editors' Take	
CANON U.S.A.									
PowerShot SD600	\$249.99	6	3x	16MB	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.9 oz.	Not many extra features, but quick performance and excellent images make this model a great choice.	usa.canon.com 800-652-2666 
PowerShot SD40	\$349.99	7.1	2.4x	16MB	SD/MMC	Proprietary	3.7 oz.	Canon finally gives fashion-conscious shooters a zoom lens—if only a 2.4x one. Comes in a choice of four colors.	
PowerShot SD430	\$449.99	5	3x	16MB	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.6 oz.	Has Wi-Fi onboard, so you can transfer/print images and control camera wirelessly.	
CASIO									
Exilim Zoom EX-Z60	\$199.99	6	3x	8.3MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.2 oz.	Impressive style, performance, and features aren't enough to make up for its soft, noisy, overprocessed photos.	www.casio.com 800-836-8580   
Exilim Zoom EX-Z600	\$249.99	6	3x	8.3MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4 oz.	Features an eBay Best Shot mode for taking pics of items to sell at auction—it's one of 33 scene modes.	
Exilim Card EX-S600	\$299.99	6	3x	8.3MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.1 oz.	Antishake technology, loads of scene modes, and stellar movie capturing are offset by mediocre image quality.	
Exilim Zoom EX-Z850	\$349.99	8.1	3x	8.3MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.6 oz.	Squeezes lots of features into a pocket-size form. Only drawback: a zoom lens that adds artifacts to images.	
Exilim Zoom EX-Z1000	\$349.99	10.1	3x	8.3MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.9 oz.	Highest resolution of any ultracompact; also features a 2.8-inch LCD and image-stabilization technology.	
EASTMAN KODAK									
EasyShare V570	\$299.95	5	5x	32MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.5 oz.	Couples a 23mm wide-angle lens with a 3x zoom lens for shooting flexibility, but image quality is only average.	www.kodak.com 800-235-6325
EasyShare V705	\$349.95	7.3	5x	32MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.4 oz.	Keeps the V570's best features, including its dual-lens design, but adds megapixels and improves image quality.	
FUJI PHOTO FILM U.S.A.									
FinePix A500	\$119.99	5.1	3x	12MB (internal)	xD-Picture Card	AA	4.4 oz.	Design—and feature list—are lean; offers just four scene modes, a small (1.8-inch) LCD, and no manual controls. Still, price is nice.	www.fujifilm.com 800-659-3854 
FinePix F470	\$219.99	6	3x	16MB (internal)	xD-Picture Card	Proprietary	4.3 oz.	An average shooter in every sense—nothing sets it apart from other cameras in this class.	
FinePix Z3	\$279.95	5.1	3x	10MB (internal)	xD-Picture Card	Proprietary	4.6 oz.	A stylish cam with antishake technology; a Dual Mode feature takes the same shot with and without flash.	
HEWLETT-PACKARD									
Photosmart E327	\$99.99	5	None	16MB (internal)	SD/MMC	AA	3.2 oz.	A budget camera handicapped by its small (1.8-inch) LCD, limited video-capture features, and lack of optical zoom.	www.hp.com 800-282-6672 
Photosmart M425	\$129.99	5	3x	16MB (internal)	SD/MMC	AA	4.8 oz.	At 1.7 inches, its LCD is even smaller than the E327's, but the cam does have optical zoom and red-eye reduction.	
Photosmart M527	\$169.99	6	3x	16MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.8 oz.	Boosts the LCD size to 2 inches, and adds a megapixel of resolution, but video maxes out at 320x240 and 20fps.	
NIKON									
Coolpix L4	\$129.95	4	3x	16MB (internal)	SD/MMC	AA	4.1 oz.	Resolution is a bit low but all most beginners will need; offers an optical zoom lens for just under \$130.	www.nikonusa.com 800-645-6687 
Coolpix L6	\$199.95	6	3x	23MB (internal)	SD/MMC	AA	4.4 oz.	Simple, sleek, silver cam doesn't offer much control and is on the slow side, but takes nice photos in good light.	

See computershopper.com for full reviews of products in boldface.

TECHMARKET ULTRACOMPACT DIGITAL CAMERAS (UNDER 5 OUNCES)

Model	Price	Resolution (Megapixels)	Optical Zoom	Included Memory	Storage Type	Battery Type	Weight	Editors' Take	
NIKON									
Coolpix S9	\$249.95	6	3x	24MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.1 oz.	Attractively priced for a 6-megapixel cam, but its feature set and image quality could be better.	
Coolpix S5	\$349.95	6	3x	21MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.8 oz.	Well-designed, including a click-wheel interface, but few manual controls. Images show only minor flaws.	
Coolpix S7c	\$349.95	7.1	3x	14MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.9 oz.	Includes built-in support for T-Mobile Wi-Fi access points, so you can e-mail photos directly from the camera.	
OLYMPUS AMERICA									
FE-180	\$179.99	6	3x	22MB (internal)	xD-Picture Card	AA	4.2 oz.	This inexpensive shooter won't wow you with features, but it takes decent shots, and the price is nice.	
FE-190	\$199.99	6	3x	22MB (internal)	xD-Picture Card	Proprietary	3.9 oz.	If you don't mind the lack of features, this cam offers good image quality and a slim body at a low price.	
Stylus 750	\$379.99	7.1	5x	17MB (internal)	xD-Picture Card	Proprietary	4.2 oz.	It's a bit slow and lacks manual exposure controls, but still not a bad snapshot camera. Comes in four colors.	
PANASONIC									
Lumix DMC-FX01	\$299.95	6	3.6x	16MB	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.6 oz.	Optical image stabilization—and a zoom lens that begins at a wide-angle 28mm—set this model apart.	
PENTAX IMAGING									
Optio E10	\$199.95	6	3x	10MB (internal)	SD/MMC	AA	4.6 oz.	Internal memory is lacking, and video-clip capture isn't the best, maxing out at 20fps.	
Optio M10	\$229.95	6	3x	22MB (internal)	SD/MMC	AA	4.2 oz.	6-megapixel shooter doesn't have any major gimmicks, but it features decent specs for a budget snapshotter.	
Optio S6	\$249.95	6	3x	23MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	3.5 oz.	Will please casual shooters with its ease of use and build quality, though image quality and performance are below par.	
Optio T10	\$299.95	6	3x	12MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.8 oz.	Has a touch-screen interface (and a stylus) for the roomy 3-inch LCD. You can draw stamps and frames on images.	
Optio W10	\$299.95	6	3x	10.5MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.9 oz.	Offers a waterproof body for extreme shooting, but it's a sluggish performer that delivers mediocre photos.	
SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS									
Digimax A503	\$129.99	5	None	24MB (internal)	SD/MMC	AA, CR-V3	3.5 oz.	Available in silver, black, or red—but color choices don't make up for the lack of an optical zoom lens.	
Digimax L60	\$229	6	3x	23MB (internal)	SD/MMC	Proprietary	4.6 oz.	Offers video-capture features such as a movie stabilizer, in-camera editing of clips, and the ability to merge clips.	
Digimax i6	\$299	5	3x	24MB (internal)	SD/MMC	AA, CR-V3	3.4 oz.	Features sleek wave design, built-in red-eye removal, anti-shake function, and ability to play MP3/video downloads.	
SONY ELECTRONICS									
Cyber-shot DSC-W30	\$199.95	6	3x	32MB (internal)	Memory Stick Duo, Pro Duo	Proprietary	4.5 oz.	Provides impressive photos and fast, easy operation in a simple package. Lacks manual controls.	
Cyber-shot DSC-W70	\$279.95	7.2	3x	58MB (internal)	Memory Stick Duo, Pro Duo	Proprietary	4.7 oz.	Bumps up the resolution, LCD size, and internal memory from the DSC-W30.	
Cyber-shot DSC-T10	\$399.95	7.2	3x	56MB (internal)	Memory Stick Duo, Pro Duo	Proprietary	4.9 oz.	A sleekly designed, pocket-friendly camera that's fast and easy to use. Lens is slow and narrow, though.	
Cyber-shot DSC-T50	\$499.95	7.2	3x	56MB (internal)	Memory Stick Duo, Pro Duo	Proprietary	4.6 oz.	Has optical image stabilization and a gorgeous 3-inch touch-screen LCD. The display can be difficult to use, however.	

THE BEST RECENTLY REVIEWED ULTRACOMPACT DIGITAL CAMERAS

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-T50 • \$499.95 • Editors' Rating: **7.6**

Sony's slim and sleek shooter takes nice pictures and has a beautiful 3-inch touch-screen LCD, but its interface can be difficult to master.

Kodak EasyShare V705 • \$349.95 • Editors' Rating: **7.2**

An ultracompact camera with an ultrawide lens, the EasyShare V705 offers more megapixels and better image quality than its predecessor, the V570.

Nikon Coolpix S7c • \$349.95 • Editors' Rating: **7.2**

Besides delivering solid image quality, Nikon's attractively designed Coolpix S7c also supports photo e-mail from T-Mobile Wi-Fi access points.



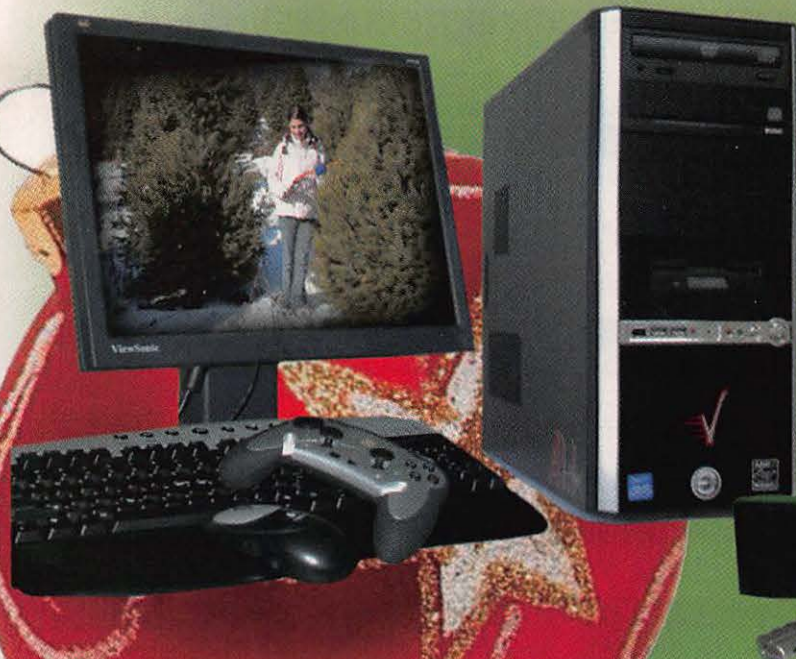
Sony Cyber-shot DSC-T50

THE V MACHINE

***BLAZING HOT
LIGHTNING FAST***



Desktop Computers
For Your Home, Office, School
A Perfect gift for the Holidays!



AI.1 STORM
VISTA Ready

SAVE \$250

Call for Instant Discount

AMD 64 X2 Dual Core Processors
Windows XP Professional
GeForce PCIe Graphics
250 GB SATA Hard Drive
19" LCD Display
Free Epson Printer

***Complete systems
Free 3 Year Warranty
starting at Only \$997***



Vex2 Extreme Gamer
VISTA Ready



***Order On Line www.thevmachine.com
or call Toll Free 1.866.921.4645
Free Quick Quote***



WEB BUYER

THE BEST SITES FOR ONLINE SHOPPING • BY KEVIN SAVETZ

- 121 Tech Products
- 121 Printers
- 122 Direct PC Vendors
- 123 Mac Hardware and Software
- 123 Software
- 124 Utilities

>>TECH PRODUCTS

abteletronics.com

Dreaming of a 400-disc CD changer or a surround-sound speaker system? **Abt Electronics**—in business for the past 69 years—has them, along with plenty of other goodies, such as big-screen televisions, home appliances, and computer products. Plus, the site has reasonable shipping fees on everything it sells.

allstarshop.com

When you wish upon **Allstarshop**, you'll find low prices on a twinkling collection of graphics cards, motherboards, and peripherals. You'll get free shipping on many items and plenty of information about each product.

amazon.com

Amazon.com is an unparalleled superstore with a massive inventory equaled only by its special features, such as personalized product recommendations and mobile access. The Early Adopter Products pages show what's fresh in electronics, video games, and DVDs.

batteries.com

Plug in and power up with **Batteries.com**, an online store specializing in batteries for watches, laptops, mobile phones, digital cameras, and other portable gadgets. The site features live chat with customer-service representatives who can help you find the right cells for all your devices. Check the Battery Glossary to bone up on current lingo.

bestbuy.com

Our readers voted **Best Buy** their favorite place to buy consumer electronics. The selection in each department is comprehensive and impressive. The best part? You can have your gadget delivered, or readied for pickup at a nearby store.

buy.com

Buy.com's vast million-product inventory includes computer hardware, software, electronics, video games, books, music, and DVDs. Sister site **BuyMusic.com** delivers music downloads starting at 79 cents a song.



Samsung
SyncMaster
970P from
Buy.com

cableorganizer.com

Tame that unruly mess of cables that snakes from the back of your computer or stereo system once and for all. **CableOrganizer.com's** wire ducts, cable ties, and cable sleeves can help round up those wily wires.

cdw.com

In addition to a wide selection of hardware and peripherals, **CDW** offers an Outlet section where you'll find deals on clearance merchandise and customer returns. Click the Mac Warehouse tab to reveal a medley of Apple hardware and peripherals.

chiefvalue.com

Chief Value serves up sweet deals on computer parts and accessories. The limited-time Featured Deals are truly enticing: We recently found a well-equipped new Acer laptop for \$520 and a 22-inch Acer LCD for \$329. You'll find similar bargains on a variety of products from an array of popular manufacturers.

circuitcity.com

Plug in to **Circuit City**, where you can choose from a quarter-million movies, video games, and CDs. The inventory also includes digital cameras, televisions, and PDAs. Have your products delivered, or pick them up in a Circuit City store.

compusa.com

The well-organized **CompUSA** rounds out the usual selection of PC hardware, peripherals, and accessories with areas devoted to home electronics and wireless gadgets. Set your own price on PCs at CompUSA's auction site.

computers.ebay.com

eBay is an unparalleled auction site and a unique shopping experience. Shoppers can set their own prices on components, including new and used PCs, software, tech books, and vintage computers.

computers4sure.com

Computers4Sure comprises 21 departments well-stocked with a broad spectrum of products, including networking gear, LCD monitors, and storage. Free ground shipping is available for many products.

cpusolutions.com

CPU Solutions will entice you with inexpensive PC components and upgrade kits. Shoppers will find several complete desktop PCs for less than \$500, and PC kits for under \$300.

directron.com

Directron.com is a hardware hacker's dream. The selection of PC gear includes cases, storage, motherboards, and software. Every order earns you the right to pick through the "free stuff" bin.

dirtcheapdrives.com

True to its name, **DirtCheapDrives.com** serves up excellent prices on a wide selection of hard drives. You'll find external and internal drives with every conceivable combination of interface and capacity.

discountlaptops.com

Check out **DiscountLaptops.com** for new notebooks from ChemBook, Panasonic, Sager, and Twinhead. The handy Complete Model Listing link provides a one-page comparison of the site's 40-plus available models.

ecost.com

Look to **eCost.com** for deals on PC components, software, electronics, and DVDs. You'll be enticed by short-lived but sweet deals in the Bargain Countdown area.

endpcnoise.com

As the name suggests, all of the case mods at **EndPCNoise.com** are devoted to making your computer run more quietly. You'll find devices to hush the din of your hard drive and internal fans, while sound-dampening foam will squelch whatever racket remains.

ewiz.com

eWiz.com is a whiz at selling inexpensive systems, components, networking gear, and software. You'll find some sweet bargains in the Featured Items section of the home page, and even more deals on the Weekly Specials page.

PRINTERS



dell.com/printers

PC specialist **Dell** also offers a broad selection of printers, including photo inkjets, handy printer/copier/scanner all-in-ones, and efficient laser printers. The site's Printer Buying Guide will help you match the right model to your needs.

epsonstore.com

Epson America specializes in inkjet and photo printers for the home and small office. Impact, wide-format, and point-of-sale printers are also available. When you buy directly from the Epson store, you get a 30-day return policy and free shipping on orders of more than \$125.

estore.usa.canon.com

Canon U.S.A.'s site sells the company's photo and multifunction printers, ink, and extended service plans. The Accessories area has Canon-printer add-ons, which can be hard to find elsewhere.

lexmarkstore.com

Lexmark International's online store focuses on inexpensive printers for home and corporate users. Its selection includes color inkjets and laser printers, all-in-one multifunction models, and consumables, as well as add-ons such as memory, software, and maintenance kits.

mostlyprinters.com

MostlyPrinters.com is, well, mostly devoted to printers, but you'll find a few other product categories, too. New and refurbished printers from Brother, Canon, Epson, and other manufacturers remain the main event, however. The site has a price-matching policy and plenty of information about every product.

printershowcase.com

Looking for a quick new color or monochrome laser? **Printer Showcase** sells dozens of models, ranging from inexpensive home models to high-end tabloid-format machines. Using the "test drive" feature, the company will print your document on your choice of printers and send the samples via overnight courier.

shopping.hp.com

When you buy a **Hewlett-Packard** printer from the source, you get free shipping on orders of \$100 and up. The selection includes all-in-ones, Deskjets, LaserJets, and photo inkjets. Plus, you can trade in your old printer for recycling and earn credit toward your new one.

fwdepot.com

You'll find at least 1,394 reasons to shop at **FireWire Depot**, which sells FireWire enclosures, external optical drives, PCI adapters, and hubs. Shop for high-speed USB 2.0 and Serial ATA cards and accessories, too.

insight.com

Insight delivers IT products for businesses, including networking hardware, projectors, and servers. The stellar **Narrow Your Results** feature and comparison tools will help you find the best product.

journeyware.com

Journeyware.com is a travel and technology gear site that sells ergonomically friendly laptop bags and rolling cases, along with cases for your PDA, camera, and cell phone. Shipping is free on orders more than \$50.

jr.com

Televisions, MP3 players, office products, and appliances abound at **J&R Music and Computer World**. Read the Product Guides for tips on buying and using audio and video gear, computers, digital cameras, and more.

newegg.com

Newegg.com is a nest of good stuff for do-it-yourself PC upgraders. The selection focuses on hard drives, motherboards, CPUs, optical-storage add-ons, and consumer electronics.

outpost.com

Shoppers at **Fry's Outpost.com** enjoy an ample catalog of hardware, software, cameras, and video games. Notable features include the Power Search function, special deals, and a 30-day money-back guarantee on most products.

partstore.com

PartsStore specializes in hard-to-find parts for just about everything, including computers, portable gadgets, and appliances. The selection of replacement parts includes bulbs, cables, remote controls, batteries, and more.

pcclub.com

Here's a club you'll want to be a member of. **PC Club** sells a full gamut of peripherals and custom-built PCs. Weekly Specials feature hot deals on storage, monitors, and accessories.

pcconnection.com

PC Connection can connect you to a world of PCs, peripherals, and software. Use the Rebate Center to find products with cash-back deals, or visit sister site **MacConnection (www.macconnection.com)** for Mac OS wares.

pcmall.com

Catering to businesses of all sizes, as well as consumers, **PC Mall's** catalog includes more than 100,000 products, with hot deals on notebooks, LCD monitors, and digital media. Sister site **MacMall (www.macmall.com)** is devoted to Apple hardware and software.

portable.com

ProPortable sells notebook and tablet PCs from Asus. You'll also find a sprinkling of other peripherals, including displays, wireless products, and home theater gear. The company includes a generous two-year warranty on custom-configured systems.

www.shop.teleadapt.com

The global-travel products at **Teleadapt** include regional phone and power converters, along with portable surge suppressors to keep your hardware safe, even on questionable foreign power grids.

surpluscomputers.com

Surplus Computers buys and sells corporate excess, overstock, and slightly obsolete PC hardware and software. The hardware choices include desktops, laptops, and parts. The software selection includes operating systems and office suites.

svcompucycle.com

Silicon Valley Compucycle specializes in products for keeping your PC cool, including CPU heat sinks, fans, and chipset coolers. Power supplies, processors, and memory round out the choices for PC builders.

thegpsstore.com

You may not know where you're going, but you'll know where you are right now with the help of a global positioning system (GPS) receiver. **The GPS Store** sells GPS units for the car, hiking excursions, and aviation, plus accessories and software.



Garmin Nuvi 350 from The GPS Store

tigerdirect.com

For deals and discounts, visit **TigerDirect**. This sizable catalog includes low-cost PC components, PDAs, and office equipment. Geeks on a budget can find desktop PCs for as little as \$250 and laptops for under \$500.

unityelectronics.com

Check out **Unity Electronics'** impressive selection of PC peripherals, including hard drives, optical drives, and networking products. The site is also well-stocked with cables and batteries, as well as parts for handhelds.

upgradation.com

You'll pledge allegiance to **Upgrade Nation** after seeing the site's selection of flash memory, hard drives, RAM, and other peripherals. Look for the green-truck icon, which means that a product ships free.

usbflashstore.com

The **USB Flash Store** stocks a large selection of flash-memory drives and cards. Among the inventory: Microdrive miniature hard drives, which will allow you to add 1GB to 4GB of very fast storage to your digital camera or other portable device. A flat \$5 shipping fee applies.

www.us.ncix.com

NCIX.com makes it easy to learn the pros and cons of the computer hardware and accessories it sells. Customer ratings and reviews are included on every product page, so you can see if previous shoppers were satisfied.

willoughbys.com

In business since the McKinley administration, **Willoughby's** specializes in digital cameras, film cameras, and camcorders. The catalog also includes all manner of photo accessories, including lighting equipment and digital-camera memory.

wirefly.com

If you're hunting for a new mobile-phone plan, buzz by **WireFly**, a site that allows you to compare and purchase calling plans offered by all the national wireless carriers, as well as many regional providers.

woot.com

Woot brings a truly unique angle to online shopping. The site sells only one product each day, but

it's usually a great deal. Act fast, because products frequently sell out by mid-morning. Even if you arrive too late to score today's featured product, the quirky product descriptions are worth the visit.

xoxide.com

Xoxide serves up a selection of PC cases, ranging from sophisticated to downright weird, from two dozen manufacturers. You'll also find PC-window kits and ultraviolet paint in the Case Mod Supplies area.

x-tremegame.com

The computer toys at **X-Treme Geek** include a cassette deck that mounts in a floppy-drive bay, a flexible tripod for digicams, a gaggle of strange USB-powered gadgets, and more.

zipzoomfly.com

ZipZoomFly targets savvy shoppers who want PC upgrades without the frills. You'll discover unbeatable deals on peripherals and accessories all around the site, and additional buys are up for grabs in the Open Box shop and Rebate Center.

zones.com

There's a zone for whatever you need at **Zones**: the home page for hardware and software, the Mac Zone for Apple stuff, the Creative Pro page for graphics pros, and the Zones Clearance section for special buys.

>> DIRECT PC VENDORS

abs.com

Expect gaming, multimedia, and business PCs aplenty at **ABS Computer Technologies**. The company offers a choice of Intel or AMD processors, a one-year parts and lifetime labor warranty, and toll-free technical support.

alienware.com

Alienware, now owned by PC powerhouse Dell, can still custom-build your dream game machine, be it desktop or laptop. Each is available with out-of-this-world cases in a rainbow of colors. Buyers get a personalized owner's manual and toll-free technical support any time of the day or night.

buympc.com

MPC Computers sells desktops, notebooks, and servers. You can custom-configure a high-performance TransPort notebook, tuned to your specifications, for business, multimedia, or gaming.

cyberpowersystem.com

Power up with a customized Intel or AMD system from **Cyberpower**. The selection includes 64-bit machines, gamers' dream systems, Media Centers, and budget PCs for everyday use.

dell.com

Dell's electronic storefront has always led the way in ease of use. The site is jam-packed with detailed information that makes it a snap to match a machine to your needs. Each system is configurable to the nth degree, and you can get quick access to online support customized for your PC.

falcon-nw.com

Once you get your talons on a **Falcon Northwest** PC, you won't want to let go. The heavyweight desktops and totable FragBox computers include the components you want and the custom paint job you crave. The FragBook laptop is a nest of gaming power in a tiny package.

gateway.com

One of the biggest players in online computer sales, **Gateway** has an enormous and informa-

MAC HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE



club-mac.com

The selection of Mac systems, peripherals, and software at ClubMac is hard to beat. Click the category tabs to zoom in on a bountiful selection of desktops, laptops, servers, USB/FireWire add-ons, and Apple-friendly apps. Also check the Blowout Deals tab for discounts on open-box items.

dealmac.com

Part of the larger Dealnews network, Deal-mac searches online and brick-and-mortar shops for the best deals on Apple-centric hardware and software. Dial up the deals on the Web site itself, via RSS feeds, or in the daily e-mail newsletter. Reader forums and a blog deliver even more money-saving tips.

macmall.com

MacMall's vast catalog of Apple products ranges from the minuscule iPod Shuffle to the massively powerful quad-core Mac Pro. Start with the New Arrivals section to check out the hottest, newest Mac gear.

macsales.com

Other World Computing delivers a massive universe of components, peripherals, and more for Macintosh users. Its inventory includes upgrade cards, memory, FireWire add-on devices, and iBook and PowerBook accessories.

maczone.com

Mac Zone will dazzle you with its catalog of Mac Pro desktops, MacBooks, and server hardware, along with software to make it all tick. Many hardware purchases include free memory, accessory kits, or other extras.

powermax.com

PowerMax Computers sells brand-new Macintoshes, plus pre-owned systems, peripherals, and software. Check the Bargain Basement for economical Apple add-ons.

smalldog.com

No bones about it—Small Dog Electronics stocks new and refurbished hardware, software, and peripherals. The catalog includes desktop and portable Macs, iPods, digital cameras, and all manner of accessories for each.

store.apple.com

Apple Computer's well-designed site allows you to custom-configure any Mac it sells—a feature lacking in other Mac-specific online stores. The Apple Store's online home also sells a wide array of Mac-compatible software and accessories.

tive site that sells custom-built desktops and notebooks, along with peripherals and other hardware.

hpshopping.com

At this site, choose among Hewlett-Packard and Compaq desktop and notebook computers, plus networking accessories, printers, handhelds, and digital cameras.

hypersonic-pc.com

Need computing power that's faster than fast? Go hypersonic. Visit Hypersonic PC for gaming systems, workstations, and laptops outfitted with the latest high-performance peripherals. Enthusiast options include 3D-graphics optimization and case customization.

ibuypower.com

iBuypower can power up your workspace with a 64-bit PC for less than \$500. Even the company's least-expensive PCs include large hard drives, dedicated graphics cards, desktop speakers, and other essentials. All products are backed by a 30-day money-back guarantee.

idotpc.com

Find a customized desktop, an economical bare-bones PC, or a personalized laptop at iDotpc.com. Menus allow you to create the PC that's right for you, letting you specify the processor, memory, optical drive, and other necessities.

lenovo.com

Lenovo sells IBM's former lines of ThinkCentre desktops, ThinkPad laptops, and ThinkVision monitors. Configure built-to-order PCs, and choose among accessories such as memory and printers.

maingear.com

MainGear specializes in premium PCs with advanced specs for gamers and other power users. The selection includes sleek-looking and colorful desktops, space-saving X-Cube machines, and powerful laptops.

monarchcomputer.com

Monarch Computer Systems creates built-to-order desktops, workstations, and servers. Configure the computer you want, then lock in the price for up to a week. If you're building a PC, check out the PC Parts section for components and peripherals.

overdrivepc.com

Specializing in systems for gamers, by gamers, Overdrive PC constructs premodded Intel- and AMD-based desktops. The custom-configuration options include your choice of case, water-cooling, neon lighting, custom cabling, and other extras.

sagernotebook.com

Specializing in notebook computers, Sager offers a variety of options, from budget machines to speedy multimedia units. Service includes a 72-hour repair-turnaround guarantee and free life-time tech support.

shopprostar.com

Each computer in ProStar Computer's line of notebook PCs is backed by a 30-day money-back guarantee, a speedy-repair promise, and free tech support.

sonystyle.com/vaio

Sony Style is a sleek-looking site selling Sony's line of VAIO desktops and notebooks, plus digital cameras, displays, and storage devices.

toshibadirect.com

The custom-configured notebooks and Tablet PCs at Toshiba Direct range from budget models to

the unique Qosmio laptops, which combine PC, TV, DVD, and audio features.

us.fujitsu.com/shop

Fujitsu's site focuses on portable computing, including notebook PCs and pen-based tablet computers. Each computer has several warranty options.

us.shuttle.com

Shuttle is known for its small-form-factor computers—perfect for tight spaces such as entertainment centers and cramped home offices. Case types include small cube designs and sleek, component-style, living-room-ready PCs.



Shuttle XPC
P2 2700

velocitymicro.com

In search of a 64-bit processor to push your games to the limit? They're in Velocity Micro's budget-minded Gamers' Edge and high-end Raptor models. The custom-configuration menus offer a mind-boggling array of component choices.

viciouspc.com

Vicious Gaming PC sells desktops and laptops with features gamers love, including your choice of Intel or AMD processors, customizable colors and side panels, and oodles of hardware options, such as physics-acceleration cards and RAID controllers.

visionman.com

Visionman specializes in custom-built PCs, workstations, and servers. The catalog includes bare-bones systems for do-it-yourselfers, Media Center PCs for pairing with high-definition televisions, speedy dual-core workstations, and inexpensive PCs sans operating system.

voodooop.com

Recently purchased by Hewlett-Packard, boutique PC maker Voodoo Computers specializes in high-end PCs for gaming and Media Centers—all thoroughly customizable. The CrossFire Omen desktop includes liquid cooling preinstalled, while the Voodoo Envy notebook includes options for extended battery life.

www.ztgroup.com

ZT Group builds and sells desktop and notebook computers for every type of user. The selection includes PCs for gaming, media, home offices, and businesses, with your choice of AMD or Intel processors.

>> SOFTWARE

atomicpark.com

Free shipping is available for AtomicPark.com's entire selection of business and productivity apps. Plus, you'll never pay a restocking fee. The new Direct Downloads section lets you use new software in minutes, not days.

bigclearance.com

Offering current-version software at clearance prices, the big selection at **BigClearance.com** includes wares from Corel, Macromedia, Microsoft, and others.

UTILITIES



free.grisoft.com

No PC should be without antivirus software—ever. **AVG Anti-Virus**, available for Windows and Linux, is a highly acclaimed, effective protection app free for noncommercial use. Commercial versions are also available to try before purchase.

f-secure.com

If you're feeling insecure, **F-Secure** can be your safety net. The company sells antivirus and Internet-security products for PCs and smartphones. Check your PC for viruses and get an immediate diagnosis with the Online Virus Scanner.

mcafee.com

McAfee's antivirus applications will help keep your home, small-business, and enterprise PCs free from all sorts of nasty malware. Some titles are available for a free 30-day trial download.

pcpitstop.com

PC Pitstop's line of optimization tools includes performance tuneups, a privacy scan, and spyware-crushing utilities. Many of the system scanners can be run from a Web browser without installing any special software.

sosonlinebackup.com

Making offsite backups doesn't have to be a chore—**SOS Online Backup** automatically backs up and restores your documents over the Internet. Plans start at \$3.65 per month for 50MB of backup space.

symantec.com

Symantec's line of security products for Windows and Mac includes Norton Antivirus and Norton Personal Firewall, along with backup utilities and PC-performance tools. Many are available for instant purchase and download.

zonelabs.com

Every Internet-connected PC needs a firewall. **Zone Labs** is the source for **ZoneAlarm**, a popular software firewall available in free and commercial versions.

buypcsoft.com

Buypcsoft.com sells Windows and Mac software in categories from business management to virus prevention. It's an efficient site with a good selection of big-name applications.

chipsbits.com

Chips & Bits is a source for games, selling entertainment software for PC and Mac, PlayStation 2, Xbox 360, PlayStation Portable, and other consoles. Check the Bargain Shelf for sweet under-\$10 and under-\$20 deals.

download.com

CNET Download.com will help you find shareware and free software, linking to thousands of programs for PC, Mac, and mobile devices. Well-written newsletters and down-to-earth reviews help you find the perfect program.

driverguide.com

With more than 100,000 downloadable drivers for every conceivable piece of computer hardware and operating system, **Driver Guide** is indispensable when you're repairing a malfunctioning system or piecing together a PC from spare parts.

dvdempire.com

Rule over the collection of videos, CDs, video games, and high-definition blue-laser DVDs at **DVD Empire**. You can shop for new releases, future releases, and bestsellers in each category. Plus, get free shipping when you order three or more items.

gamespot.com

With game news, reviews, and cheat codes, **GameSpot** is a one-stop shop for PC and console gamers. Downloadable previews and a price-comparison tool will help you get good deals on games you'll love.

handango.com

Your PDA and mobile phone need software, too. **Handango** delivers hundreds of commercial software downloads for your BlackBerry, Palm, PocketPC, smartphone, or other handheld. Browse the best-selling or newest software, then download the essentials for your device.

jumbo.com

Jumbo is a fitting name for this monstrous file archive, featuring shareware, freeware, and commercial-software demos for PC, Mac, and Linux.

liberatedgames.com

Free, legal games are yours for the taking. **Liberated Games** catalogs commercial game titles that have been released for free by the developer or publisher. Sometimes they even throw in the source code.

linuxgames.com

Linux Games delivers news and reviews of new games (both open-source and commercial), along with links to downloadable titles. In the Forums, you can discuss your favorite PC pastimes, game-development projects, and more.

9software.com

#9 Software is stocked with applications in nine categories, ranging from games to business applications. The company provides free shipping on orders of more than \$99.

nothingbutsoftware.com

You'll make much ado about **Nothing But Software**. This collection of apps includes games, educational titles, graphics programs, utilities, and more—all with flat-rate shipping. Try the programs in the Specials section for as little as \$7.

oldversion.com

Sometimes the latest version of software isn't the greatest version—bloat and feature creep can ruin a great program. **OldVersion.com** is a nifty archive of previous versions of applications, including Internet clients, utilities, and media players.

palmgear.com

Palm OS users will appreciate the large selection of free and commercial programs downloadable from **PalmGear.com**. Check out the list of "essential" apps, then sign up to get software news and tips.

secondspin.com

Buy and sell used video games, DVDs, and CDs at **Second Spin**. In the Just In Bin, choose among more than 1,300 used games, some selling for as little as \$4.99. Used products are guaranteed against defects.

snapfiles.com

Download shareware and freeware in a snap with **SnapFiles**. This site will point you to the latest software releases and Weekly Top 20 titles. Users' ratings and reviews show which software is worth checking out.

software-blowouts.com

Software Blowouts is home to oodles of inexpensive Windows and Mac OS software, with flat-rate shipping. Peruse the Blowouts page for education, entertainment, and utility titles, many for just \$9.95.

softwareoutlet.com

Plug in to **SoftwareOutlet.com**, a veritable virtual bargain bin. You'll find dirt-cheap applications and hardware accessories. Browse older software from defunct companies, plus modern titles.

softwarepatch.com

Keep your apps updated with help from **The Software Patch**, a repository of software upgrades. The Top Downloads list shows the month's most-popular updates—which are probably the patches your PC needs, too.

store.purplus.net

Purplus Software is a well-regarded seller of software for business, graphics, and music. The site offers free shipping on orders of \$45 or more.

tronixweb.com

When it's playtime, head to **Tronix**, a site specializing in software, hardware, and accessories for PlayStation Portable (PSP), PlayStation 2, Xbox 360, and other console video-game platforms. Scope out and preorder upcoming games in the Coming Soon section.

tucows.com

Tucows is an incredible library of freeware and shareware for Windows, Mac, and Linux. This recently redesigned site makes it easy to find the newest, most-popular, or top-rated software.

versiontracker.com

Keeping the software on your PC, Mac, or Palm OS device up-to-date doesn't have to be a chore. **VersionTracker** reports on the latest versions. Top downloads and editors' picks highlight which new software is worth getting.

viosoftware.com

Emphasizing low prices and great customer service, **VioSoftware.com** sells applications from Adobe, Macromedia, Microsoft, and other big-name publishers. Shipping is always free.

EliteScreens

A Projection Screen Company

Premium Projector Screens Available Now and Ready to Ship

Wall/Ceiling Manual Pull Down Screen - \$139

- 100" Diag. 4:3 / NTSC Format - Model M100NWV1
- 100" Diag. 16:9 / HDTV Format - Model M100UWH
- Advance Auto-Lock Pull Down Mechanism
- Dual Wall and Ceiling Mount Design
- 4 Side Black Masking Border



VMAX Electric Screen - \$399

- 100" Diag. 4:3 / NTSC Format - VMAX100UWH
- 100" Diag. 16:9 / HDTV - VMAX100UWH
- Standard IR & RF Remote Controls with Wall Switch
- Dual Wall and Ceiling Mount Design
- Plug and Play - Easy Installation and Setup

Ez-Cinema Floor Screen - F80NWH - \$199

- 80" Diag. 16:9/HDTV Format
- Ez Carry / Pull Up / Project Telescoping Support
- Top 6" Black Masking for both 4:3 and 16:9 ratios
- Portable Design for Indoor-Outdoor, Commercial and Home Theater Presentations



Silver Frame Fixed Frame Screen

SILVERFRAME100GH1 - \$349

- 100" Diag. 16:9/HDTV Format
- High Gain White 1.8 Gain Tension Material
- Stylish and Durable Brushed Aluminum Frame
- Sliding Bracket for Easy Setup and Installation

Elite Screens, Inc.
Phone Toll Free: 877-511-1211

*FREE Projector Mount with
each Screen Purchase
for more information go to
www.elitescreens.com/cs

Software and Hardware Savings for Students, Teachers, and Schools!

Get up to 85% off retail software prices
on the brands you know and use...



Quark®
QuarkXpress 7
Save! \$560
Only! \$189.⁹⁵
Brand New Version!



Makemusic®
Finale 2007
Save! \$360
Only! \$239.⁹⁵
Brand New Version!



Adobe®
Photoshop CS2
Save! 53%
Order Today!
Get the Best for Less!



Microsoft®
Office 2003 Pro
Save! 66%
Order Today!
4 Programs - 1 Price

Start saving with us today!

We carry thousands of industry leading software and hardware products at huge discounts for students, teachers and schools. These special prices are ONLY for the academic community, and are typically \$10-\$20 lower than most college bookstores! Visit us today!

FREE SHIPPING!
when you order online

**ACADEMIC
SUPERSTORE**

CS.AcademicSuperstore.com 1-800-613-8267

SPOTLIGHT

For advertising information call 800-999-SHOP

IRISCard

**It's the business
you want, not the cards!**

The IRISCard is a state-of-the-art business card management solution to effortlessly scan your business cards into Outlook, etc.

- ✓ Export to Outlook, Address Book, Outlook Express, etc.
- ✓ Small, light and portable
- ✓ Up to 100% accurate

Retype 1 business card / sec

\$169
~~\$299~~



\$99
~~\$129~~



IRISPen

**Retype over
1000 characters / sec**

You scan. It types!

The IRISPen™ is a pen sized scanner that quickly enters text and number into ANY application (Word, Excel, email and accounting software, etc.).

- ✓ Over 3.15" text per second
- ✓ Up to 100% accuracy
- ✓ Small, light and portable

\$99
~~\$129~~



To take advantage of the special and temporary pricing, visit:

www.irislink.com/shopper or call 800-447-4744



Peace of Mind in the Digital World

The Ultimate iPod Accessory



The Pod Safe™

The Pod Safe™ case and locking cable prevent loss, theft, and damage to your iPod while making it more convenient to use. Feel secure and free to use your iPod in more places.

iPod and iPod interface are registered trademarks of Apple Computer, Inc.

Travel Organized, Travel Secure



The Travel Safe

The Travel Safe keeps small, expensive items organized and secure when traveling. Be active and go out knowing your valuables are protected at your home away from home.

Includes jewelry pouch.

Pod Safe and Travel Safe also available in black.

The Best Price in Town!



3M™ Privacy Filters protect sensitive information.

3M premium-quality notebook and LCD monitor privacy filters excel at stopping prying eyes from viewing your monitor. Enables you to work privately in open, high-traffic environments.

3M is a trademark of 3M Company.

Send Thieves to Someone Else's Computer!



The Sonic Shock Alarm simply stops LCD projector theft.

A standard security item for colleges and institutions, the Sonic Shock Alarm repels thieves with a two-hour-long, 117 dB siren that can't be stopped. Easy to use and reuse. Never a false alarm. The Sonic Shock sends thieves elsewhere.

Also protects LCD and plasma TVs.



Käblit™ computer security packages save data.

Financial records. Your identity. Your technology. It's not the computer, it's the data and time you can't afford to lose. At Secure-It, we understand this reality. Our desktop security systems prevent theft of your data, your time, and your emotions.

Secure-It

Security Products Since 1983

See them, buy them at www.Secure-It.com
or call 1.800.451.7592

\$6.99 (Wow!) Qty 3+

Qty 2+: \$7.99
Qty 1: \$8.99

Remanufactured HP 51645a
(No. 45) ink cartridge.

inkfarm.com
the ink & toner supersite.™

PRICE REDUCTION!

COMPUTER SHOPPER

2.2 million
passionate technology
enthusiasts every month.

Source: MRI Spring, 2006.

**Turn your computer clutter
into cold cash!**

WE BUY brand name laptops, desktops and servers including Apple Macintosh. We buy from businesses, institutions and individuals. One unit or a thousand, working or not, contact us for a quote. **AND...**

WE SELL fully refurbished brand name laptops, desktops and servers. Get a new computer experience at a used computer price!

Call us today **(800) 960-1140**

MicroReplay

www.microreplay.com

MicroReplay, Inc. 309 Walnut Street, Wellesley, MA 02481 - (781) 237-1140

See Us At
Macworld Expo
Moscone Center
Booth #208

AD INDEX

1 & 1	1and1.com	52, 53
ABS	abs.com/amdcs01	114, 115
Ajump	www.ajump.com	45, 91
Alienware	www.aliware.com/fast	35
Antec	www.antec.com	20
Aopen	www.aopen.com	110, 111
Asus	usa.asus.com/shopper	33
Bose	www.bose.com/c5	10, 11
Buffalo Technology	www.buffalotech.com/laptop-quattro	14
ClubIT.com	www.clubit.com	68
Cooler Master	www.coolermaster.com	86
Crucial Tech	www.crucial.com/computershopper	96
Cyberpower, Inc.	www.cyberpowerpc.com	40, 41, 64 - 67
Dell	dell.com/shopper12	2, 3
Digital Storm	digitalstormonline.com	29
Handmark	www.pocketexpress.com	59
iBUYPOWER	www.ibuypower.com	76 - 79
Intel	www.intel.com/go/gaming	Cov. 3
In Win	www.in-win.com	99
iSkin	iskin.com	Cov. 2, 1
LG Electronics	www.lgusa.com	Cov. 4
Magix	www.magix.com	39
Moneual	www.moneual.com	72, 73
Newegg.com	newegg.com	9
PC Alchemy	www.pcalchemy.com	47
PC Club	www.pcclub.com	95
PC Mall	pcmall.com	12, 13
PC Pitstop	pcpitstop.com/shopper	31
PC Tools Software	www.pctools.com	49
PNY Technologies	www.pny.com/xlr8	6
Polywell	www.polywell.com/us/shop1	106
Prostar Computer	shopprostar.com	37
Provanage	provanage.com/cs	57
Rosetta Stone	rosettastone.com/css017	43
Sager	sagernotebook.com	60, 61
The V Machine	www.theymachine.com	120
Transcend USA	www.transcendusa.com	23
Trendnet	www.trendnet.com	54
Vantec	vantecusa.com/wheretobuy.html	80
Viewsonic	viewsonic.com/graphicseries	17
Vigor Gaming	www.vigorgamingpc.com	105
Visionman	www.visionman.com	109
Vonage	www.vonage.com/share05	87
Xtreme Gear	www.buyxg.com	93
Zalman	www.zalmanusa.com	102
ZT Group	ztgroup.com/go/computershopper	4, 27

All advertising is subject to Publisher's approval and acceptance without recourse. The advertising herein that is typeset and/or designed by Computer Shopper is the property of Computer Shopper and not that of the advertiser. The advertiser has purchased the right of reproduction in Computer Shopper only and does not have the right to reproduce the ad in any other place of publication. We are not responsible for mistakes, misprints, or typographical errors and will not issue credits of any kind for such errors. Advertisers and their agencies assume responsibility for the condition of the contents of advertising printed, and agree to indemnify the Publisher of Computer Shopper for any and all claims and expenses arising therefrom. Computer Shopper standards suggest to the advertiser that statements concerning shipping and handling charges, warranties, and money- or no money-back guarantees should be stated in all forms of advertising within Computer Shopper. The opinions expressed in the articles, columns, and ads are those of the writer and not necessarily those of Computer Shopper.

Computer Shopper,
460 Park Ave. South, 9th Fl.
New York, NY 10016

Sales Info: 800-999-7467
Editorial: 917-326-8700
Fax: 212-481-0920
Customer Service: 877-214-7390

WIN THIS!

ViewSonic 



Tell us what you think
about the January issue
and be entered to win a
ViewSonic VX2025wm
20" flat panel display.

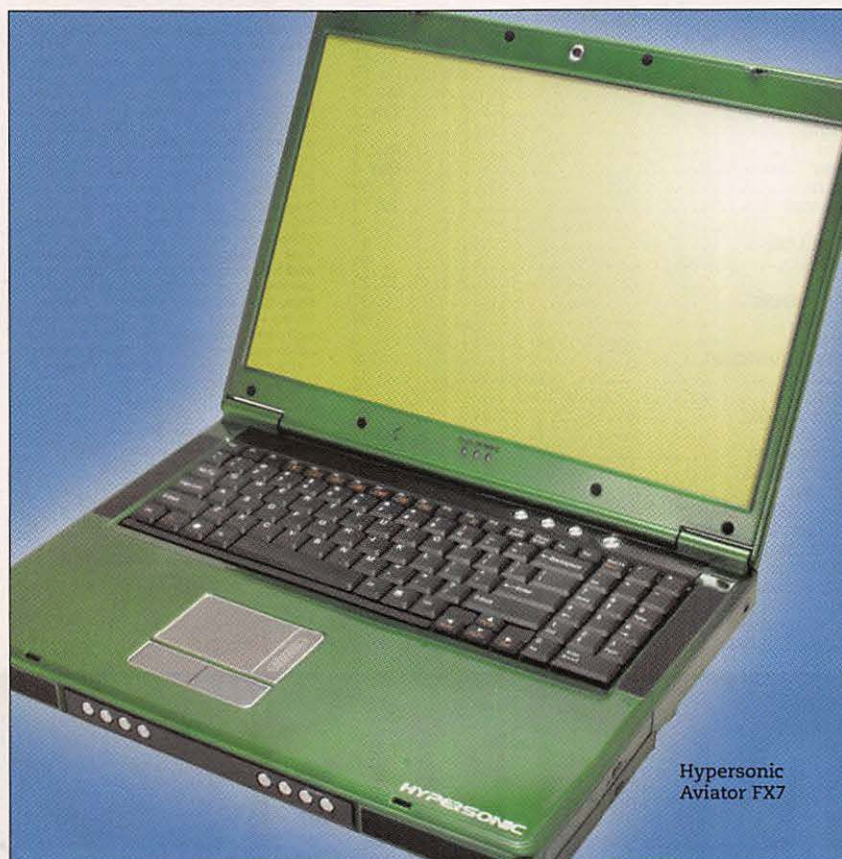
To enter go to
computershopper.com/survey



No purchase necessary to win. Void where prohibited by law. Sweepstakes is open to legal residents of the United States who are at least 18 years of age. Winner will be chosen at random from all participants entered by January 31, 2007. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries entered by the deadline. One entry per person. For a complete set of rules, see computershopper.com/survey. As an alternative method of entry, send a postcard with your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, age and the month of the issue of Computer Shopper magazine where the sweepstakes is advertised to Computer Shopper Research, 460 Park Avenue South, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10016. Postcards must be received by January 31, 2007.

The Right Desktop-Replacement Notebook

BY ERIN KANDEL



Hypersonic
Aviator FX7

Ready once and for all to junk that bulky desktop PC? A desktop-replacement laptop provides all the functionality of a traditional desktop in a portable package. Here's what you need to know to buy the right one.

3 GREAT BUYS

GOOD

Toshiba Qosmio G35-AV660
(www.toshiba.com, starting at \$1,899)
With the Qosmio, Toshiba delivers a best-in-class multimedia experience built on state-of-the-art components. Plus, the PC offers virtually every feature you could want, including a built-in TV tuner, a rocking pair of speakers, and easy-to-use media controls. (See review on p. 32.)

BETTER

Dell XPS 1710 ✓
(www.dell.com, starting at \$2,299)
Equipped with a powerful Core 2 Duo CPU and a slew of high-end components, the XPS 1710 offers blazing application performance, long battery life, and the best gaming experience you'll get from a notebook with a single graphics card.

BEST

Hypersonic Aviator FX7 ✓
(www.hypersonic-pc.com, starting at \$3,442)
Ideal for gamers, our Aviator FX7 test configuration packed a desktop-grade Athlon 64 CPU, along with a pair of double-layer DVD burners, two 7,200rpm 100GB hard drives, and a built-in TV tuner. The result: top-notch performance for a high price.

SHOPPING SPECS

CASE

Because you won't be traveling often with a desktop-replacement notebook, don't be put off by heft or weight. Powerful components tend to run hot, though, so ensure that the case provides proper ventilation. Magnesium and other molded metal enclosures usually dissipate heat better than plastic cases can.

PROCESSOR

For desktop-caliber performance, configure your notebook with a powerful processor, such as Intel's Pentium M or Core Duo, or AMD's 64-bit Athlon 64 X2. For maximum power, battery life, and multitasking prowess, pick a notebook equipped with Intel's next-generation Core 2 Duo CPU.

GRAPHICS CARD

If you play games, go for the latest graphics solutions with dedicated memory from ATI or nVidia. Some newer notebooks even manage to pack two video cards in a Scalable Link Interface (SLI) configuration. If you're not a gamer, but plan to upgrade to Microsoft's upcoming Windows Vista OS, insist on a discrete card with at least 128MB of RAM.

DISPLAY

Whether you'll be watching DVDs or viewing several documents at once, more screen real estate is always better. While wide-screen 15- and 17-inch TFTs are the norm, some desktop replacements offer displays as big as 20.1 inches.



**INTEL® CORE™2 EXTREME.
KNOW YOUR OPPONENTS ARE FINISHED BEFORE THEY DO.**



HALF-LIFE 2

**INTEL® CORE™2 EXTREME DESKTOP PROCESSOR.
THE WORLD'S BEST GAMING PROCESSOR.**

It's your chance to multiply everything you love about gaming. Learn more about the world's best gaming processor and how all Intel® Core™2 Duo and Intel® Core™2 Extreme customers may obtain free Half-Life® 2 content at www.intel.com/go/gaming



For more information on why Intel® Core™2 Duo processors are the world's best overall processors, please visit www.intel.com/core2duo.
World's best gaming processor claim based on 3DMark®2006 - CPU test results as performed by Intel Corporation, July 2006. Actual performance may vary. See www.intel.com/performance for more information. ©2006 Intel Corporation. Intel, the Intel logo, Intel Core, the Intel Core logo, Intel Leap ahead, and the Intel Leap ahead logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. All rights reserved.

©2006 Valve Corporation. All rights reserved. Valve, the Valve logo, Half-Life, the Half-Life logo, the lambda logo, Counter-Strike, and the Source logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Valve Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners. Free Half-Life® 2 game content with the purchase of a new or recently purchased Intel® Core™2 Extreme or Intel® Core™2 Duo effective 12/12/06-6/1/07.



WHEN YOU HAVE SUPERIOR TECHNOLOGY AND THE BEST WARRANTY, YOU HAVE PEACE OF MIND.

Relax. Reliability is here with the new line of LG flat screen LCD monitors featuring display sizes ranging from 17" to 55". Backed by a 3-year QuickSwap warranty program, our monitors feature ultra-fast response times, high-contrast ratios, and LG's award-winning *F-ENGINE* picture enhancing chip. LG's team of experienced engineers and dedicated R&D department can easily partner with you so your customers can work worry-free. For more info visit LGcommercial.com, email info@LGcommercial.com, or call 800-228-1236.

Brilliant as...Reliable as...Innovative as LG.



From desktops to digital signage solutions.

Specifications are subject to change without notice.

© 2006 LG Electronics, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, NJ. LG Design and Life's Good are trademarks of LG Electronics, Inc.

www.LGcommercial.com
www.LGusa.com