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iReplaceable?

When Steve Jobs resigned late in August – despite everyone expecting it sometime soon anyway, due to his ill health – Apple stock quickly fell a few points. The web was more reactive, and news stories popped up everywhere and speculations abound about how it's the end of an era, and the decline of Apple has begun...

Jobs is credited with bringing Apple out of near bankruptcy, and in just over a decade, increasing the stock value of the company over 100-fold. There aren't too many other people who can claim to have taken a struggling company, and led it to become the biggest tech company on the planet, so it's obvious that there are some XXXL-sized shoes to fill. Many believe that Tim Cook will be able to successfully handle things after Jobs, but there are also those who feel that Jobs is irreplaceable.

This is not the first time we've seen such reactions: pretty similar things were said when Bill Gates left Microsoft to pursue philanthropy, full-time. Many people have cited Microsoft's lack of ground-breaking innovation thus far in the age of tablets and smart phones as definitive proof that Gates' hands-on, day-to-day involvement is being sorely missed at Redmond.

All of this is just an opportunity for us media people to make up some creative headlines, get some extra eyeballs and try to invent new ways to tell the same story over and over again; but will it really affect Apple that much? I don't see it happening for quite some time, if at all. Just as Microsoft went through a lean phase in innovations whilst Apple and Google took over gadgets and the web, the future will probably see the reverse happening at some point. Much like the hardware wars between Intel, AMD and NVIDIA, the software wars will continue to see different brands emerge victorious from various battles, but none will win the war for your attention.

Of course leaders are important, and visionaries even more so, but given a decade, all of them are usually quite successful at transferring their visions down the chain of command. When it's an unsuccessful vision, it changes pretty quickly, and when it's super-successful, Apple-like, you can bet your life savings on the fact that the company will not try and fix what isn't broken, and the vision will continue unhindered – the board of directors exist for this very reason, doesn't it?

Leaders are extremely important in life; take for example, the anti-corruption rallies we're seeing around us, and even taking part in – without the catalyst that Anna Hazare is, none of us would be parading the streets fighting against the corruption that we've experienced almost all our lives. Real life needs wake-up calls. Products, or even brands, for that matter, are a different ball game.

No normal person flocks to Facebook because they love Mark Zuckerberg, or buys Apple products because they idolise Steve Jobs... it's all about the end product. Despite Jobs being credited for almost everything Apple has done over the past decade, you can bet there were hundreds, if not thousands of innovative ideas from scores of Apple employees that went into making the iPods, iPhones and iPads that the company has made billions from. No one man is ever solely responsible for a company of that size, or for products that popular.

"Just avoid holding it in that way" was Jobs' response to a complaint about the now infamous death grip of the iPhone. This of course sparked all sorts of reactions: some found it a cool reply, other thought it was unacceptable, but everyone went ahead and bought it anyway. Such was the draw to the device, that even an arrogant CEO, an obvious flaw in the product and web-wide bashing didn't put a dent in sales, then why would a change in the helm matter to the iPeople? No one is iReplaceable these days, and for that matter, no product is either... d

Robert Sovereign-Smith
Executive Editor
editor@thinkdigit.com

"No normal person flocks to Facebook because they love Mark Zuckerberg, or buys Apple products because they idolize Steve Jobs..."

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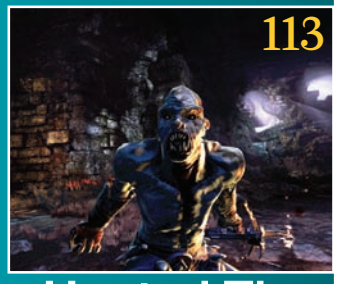

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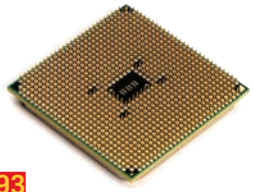

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Adobe EDGE
Adobe has launched its EDGE design tool for content creation using HTML5 and the latest web standards.

You've got nuked!
Ever wondered what it would be like if a nuke landed in your city?
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Feedback about the August 2011 issue of Digit

✉ I have been a subscriber for a year. I subscribed to Digit because your magazine provided valuable content on your both the DVDs. But last month I saw that only one DVD was present. I was a little confused but then i saw that there were two Fast Tracks. I was disspointed. This is cheating the subscriber. When I subscribed I was promised two DVDs but suddenly you started this single DVD thing. I think that you should provid 2 DVDs in September. I love the two DVDs and I also suggest that you should provide less videos and more software and full games.

Himanshu Naithani

✉ I have been a subscriber of Digit since 2009. It is good to know that your magazine has come to the 9th Rank amongst all English monthly magazines. The tweaks you gave in July issue were great and very helpful also. The only disappointing thing was getting only one DVD. Please try to give at least 2 DVD's with your magazine.

I liked the Fast Track on Rich Internet Apps and Chrome Apps. Please provide Fast Track on Microsoft SharePoint and also provide OpenSUSE's newer distro on your DVDs.

Gaurang Aggarwal

✉ Hey guys, for the past two issues, you have given 2 fastracks and a DVD. I am really liking this new tweak from your side. I think one DVD is enough. The quality of content which you provide in your DVD's are pretty good, so no need of the second one. I hope that other readers will also like this combo and vote for it.

Abhishek Kumar Dutta

✉ Two fast tracks are mind-blowing add-ons to Digit. I hope that you people continue to quench my thirsts for future technologies, stories, reviews and a lot more in the coming years! Keep up the good work!

Riddhish Ojha

d We're trying out one DVD and two Fast Tracks for a little while. Please vote for whether you want two DVDs or two Fast Tracks. We will decide one way or the other in the next couple of months. Interestingly it's neck-and-neck on the voting front for now.

Robert

✉ I am a regular reader of Digit. I was wondering if it is available digitally for Kindle? Can we subscribe to it? There are very few it magazines available for the Kindle, so it would be a good business idea also.

Mahadevan.P

d We've experimented with Kindle, but since we're a magazine, not a book, pictures mean a lot, especially infographics, which are colour coded to explain stuff. We will let all our readers know when we find a suitable e-version that is easy for us to produce on a regular basis, as well as offers the best possible experience for the readers.

Robert

✉ I am writing to you to offer my thoughts on the UI of the Digit DVDs. Back when you first unveiled the UI that was a copy of the Windows Vista UI, I was very put off. Not only did the interface itself function very poorly, it was neither aesthetically pleasing nor original. I was pretty depressed that the magazine and the creators I valued so much, delivered such a poor product. Worst of all, it was based on an already existing interface. Sure, you may say that it is a recognizable UI, but it is a UI meant for an OS, not a DVD catalog.

Now recently, you moved to using an iOS-esque interface. And I am yet again very saddened. This one is perhaps more pleasing. But the lack of originality and once again the poor functionality is really sour thing to swallow. I am angered by this issue as Digit is the nation's leading tech magazine and a product that aims at absolute excellence (which is why I love your magazine). I want Digit to be a trend-setter not a follower. Moreover, with something like UI and a UI for such a niche function one can easily come up with many innovative and unique designs.

Sir, please dont settle for any less. Also, if you wish you can crowdsource ideas on thinkdigit.com. I will surely contribute to such an endeavour.

Roshan R

d I understand your sentiments, however, I have always been a proponent of UIs being easy to use, and not flashy and cool.

Yes, we can get Flash Designers to "innovate" and put "creativity" into user interfaces, much like our competitors have attempted to do in the past. However, I think that would be a waste of time and resources that can be put to much better use – such as writing more articles.

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Java SE 7
Java 7 has finally released. It is the first release of the platform since it was acquired by Oracle

Hackable batteries!
Charlie Miller of Accuvant labs has shown that it is possible to hack a macbook's battery circuit and brick it!
http://bit.ly/p9KGJS

I was fond of the old interface for one reason only - it disappeared. It was so much like the OSes that people were used to, that everyone stopped focussing on the interface, and paid more attention to the DVD contents - just as they should. It then ran for 4 years, allowing readers to focus on what we gave, rather than what package we gave it in.

Interestingly, I have since received much more mail asking for the old one back, after years of people demanding the change.

Robert

✉ I was super excited when the August issue arrived at my doorstep. Hearing the Facebook alerts and forum chatter had made the wait killing. SKOAR! was awesome. But I have some feedback:

1 There are many typos in the magazine.
2 Very few game reviews. That's all right if you will provide SKOAR! every time.
3 Some pages were missing from my magazine!

d We will try to be more strict with editing our articles so that you do not get many typos. Gaming pages are limited, but we're attempting to bring back SKOAR!, so holler if you want more, and send in mails by the thousands to editor@thinkdigit.com to demand that it comes back regularly!

Although rare, if you find pages missing from your magazine or damaged pages, please write in to help@thinkdigit.com and report the problem.

Jayesh

✉ I'm an avid reader of Digit. I have a suggestion for you guys. I really enjoy the URLs you share for some popular/funny videos in Digit. But having to enter them correctly each time such a painstaking process. So I was wondering if you guys could build a small app to list all the URLs published in the magazine with a one line heading. Users could select the links they want to watch and click a button. Voila! All the links open up in a New Tab (of the default browser). I guess I am asking you guys to make us more lazy but I think this would make your readers not to miss even a single video.

Sridhar Rajendran

LETTER OF THE MONTH

✉ When the world was at a tech crisis
An entrant not so dominant
perforated amidst others,
Fetched a handful of flairs together,
And made for the technology's basis.
Being the world's largest selling
mag is a hard nut to crack,
While supervising everything on track-
Ordering, testing, reviewing,
benchmarking incessantly-
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Spreading articles and polls
that beseech denizen aid,
The magazine is tailor made
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And economical enough to be
afforded by people with any wages.
With articles, reviews, trailers and
a compendium of hacks all around,
Nothing other than team Digit
has an insight so profound.
I hereby prognosticate that
this quick navigator,
Shall become the tech world's
aviator...in near future!!!

Harshal Purohit

d That was very nicely done Harshal, thank you for that.

Robert

d We will consider this. We have QR coedes for a few sections, so stay tuned.

Siddharth

✉ I have been following you for a few years now...Your work is applaudable. Keep rollin'. You are the one who showed me the way when Windows OS was wrecking my life. All credit goes to you for saving my time, money and in a way my life... by introducing me to the 'Universe of Linux'. Isn't it great that now I can really do productive work on my machine rather than keep worrying about an unstable OS and updating my antivirus, antisypware, drivers etc. Linux is complete peace of mind. I really liked the new Digit DVD interface, but the DVD doesn't autoplay in linux. Its a minor glitch, I'm sure you'll fix this in no time at all.

Karan Surya

We are trying to see if we can get the DVD to autoplay on both Windows and Linux. More updates on that soon.

Sambhav

✉ I am reader of digit since my grade 11 and now I am a final year engineering student. It is really very difficult to put in words how the mag keeps me engaged! The world view section is a nice addition. I am astonished to know about the open source development in India and only came to know about it through your mag and it is good to see that Digit is now focusing more towards open source than its previous editions.

It's surprising that you somehow keep the magazine going from Enter to Esc packed with rich content and the editing team is really awesome. Two fast tracks and one DVD will be a nice option. I spread Digit to my friends and they appreciated me for my referral of the no. 1 magazine.

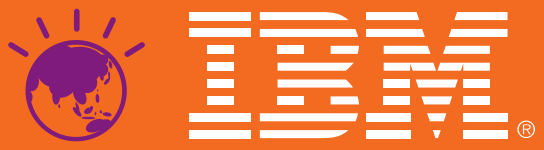
Anish Karunagaran

d We're glad that Digit satisfies your tech quench. It's always good to hear from an old readers who have been with us all for these years.

Nimish

CORRIGENDUM

In the July 2011 Wi-Fi router comparison test, the Dlink DSL2750U's price was wrongly printed as ₹1,699 instead of ₹2,000. Its rating and Best Buy award remain unchanged, despite the correction in price.



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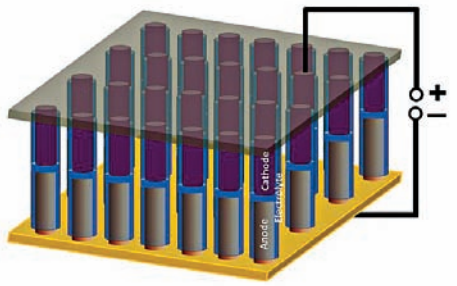
O&M 123 IBM AIX1

UNPLANNED DOWNTIME comparison based on ITIC 2009 Global Server Hardware and Server OS Reliability Survey as of July 2009 which polled IT managers at 400 corporations from 20 countries worldwide to quantify and qualify the reliability of 15 different server operating system platforms running on a variety of proprietary UNIX and Intel-based hardware platforms. As far as IT departments are concerned, anything that causes them to take the server offline, regardless of the cause, is unplanned downtime. Included in this category are instances of vendors releasing an unanticipated patch to fix a technical bug or security vulnerability. The results indicate that the IBM AIX on the Power series System p5 and System p6 servers is the clear winner; it offers rock solid reliability, besting all competing operating systems, including those running on Intel-based x86 machines. The IBM servers running AIX consistently score at least 99.99% uptime or just 15 minutes of unplanned downtime per server, per annum. IBM, the IBM logo, ibm.com, Power Systems, AIX, Smarter Planet and the planet icon are trademarks of the International Business Machines Corp., registered in many jurisdictions worldwide. Other product and services names might be trademarks of IBM or other companies. A current list of IBM trademarks is available on the Web at www.ibm.com/legal/copy-trades.html. (C) International Business Machines Corporation 2011.

A better posture...
Researches at BGU have developed a software that uses your webcam to monitor your posture

Nintendo apologises
Sataru Iwata of Nintendo apologised to early adopters of the 3DS for the drastic price cut for the device

Rice University researchers build nano-sized batteries



An innumerable number of devices run on lithium-ion batteries. Thanks to Rice University researchers, their size is no longer a factor (at least for mobile devices). Prof Pulickel Ajayan and his colleagues claim to have succeeded in building a complete lithium-ion energy storage device in a single nanowire. The researchers say their batteries are as small as devices can get, and hence immensely valuable as rechargeable power sources for the latest nanoelectronics.

The researchers tested two versions of their battery/supercapacitor hybrid. The first version resembles a sandwich comprised of nickel/tin anode, polyethylene oxide (PEO) electrolyte and polyaniline cathode layers. This setup proved that lithium ions could efficiently traverse the anode to the electrolyte, and then make their way back to the supercapacitor-like cathode. The cathode is called a supercapacitor because of its ability to discharge and charge quickly using ions in bulk.

"The idea here is to fabricate nanowire energy storage devices with ultrathin separation between the electrodes," said Arava Leela Mohana Reddy, a research scientist at Rice and co-author of the paper. "This affects the electrochemical behavior of the device. Our devices could be a very useful tool to probe nanoscale phenomenon."

Speaking about the time it will take such batteries to actually hit the streets, Sanketh Gowda, the paper's lead author, said: "There's a lot to be done to optimize the devices in terms of performance. Optimization of the polymer separator and its thickness and an exploration of different electrode systems could lead to improvements."

AMD reveals pricing and release date of the first 8-core Bulldozer Zambezi FX CPUs

AMD has revealed the approximate retail pricing of its first eight-core Bulldozer processors on a promotional webpage - $300. Part of its upcoming FX-Series, which also includes four and six core processors, the eight-core Bulldozers are codenamed Zambezi, with the first two to be released as the FX-8100 and FX-8150 models.

The AMD Bulldozer FX-8150 is the top-end offering - based on the 32-nm process, it has a 3.6 GHz core clock that can turbo up to 4.2 GHz, all whilst maintaining a TDP of 125 W. At the $300 pricing, AMD puts it roughly at the same price as Intel's current Sandy Bridge Core i7-2600 offering, a quad-core processor. However, AMD expects it to compete directly against Intel's upcoming Sandy Bridge Extreme processors, expected in Q4 2011, and Ivy Bridge processors, expected in Q1 2012.

The first Bulldozer processors are expected to be the Zambezi offerings, and are to be launched in October. Also expected with them are the four-core and six-core FX-4100 and FX-6100 processors.

Nintendo slashes 3DS prices to boost sales

Nintendo's not doing so well, announcing its first quarterly operating loss, and that it would be slashing prices of the Nintendo 3DS portable gaming console. The move

worries market watchers, who think it will further affect the company's falling stock prices, which dropped over 30% in the past quarter.

The Japanese video gaming giant still intends to sell 16 million of its projected 3DS units, but at 15,000 yen, the maximum suggested retail price in Japan has been cut by nearly 40%. The 3DS will be priced at $169.99 in the U.S., two-thirds its current going rate.

The quarterly operating loss is Nintendo's first recorded since 2003, which was when the company first started declaring quarterly earnings. While Nintendo is not the only Japanese company to be struggling to recover after the Tohuku earthquake, most rival consumer electronics companies, including Sony, have managed to stay above the line in contrast.

The next-generation Wii U, announced for 2012, is Nintendo's greatest hope to bolster its flagging position in the market, and we hope the Japanese giant manages to create an attractive offering in terms of both hardware and software. A lot of developers have already signed up to create titles for it, with the likes of Ninja Gaiden, Assassin's Creed, Darksiders, and Arkham City all scheduled to make an appearance.

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Apple richer than the US?
Apple's most recent financial results had put its cash reserves at around $76 billion, $3 billion more than the US treasury – for 3 days!

Happy birthday!
"Happy Birthday to you" is a copyrighted song and its copyright was purchased for $5 million by Warner Chappell

Sony PlayStation Vita to launch this October, in a 'phased global release'

A leaked flyer from Blockbuster in the United Kingdom has revealed that the PlayStation Vita, or the Android-based Next Generation Portable we are all waiting for, will be launching by October 28th this year. While Blockbuster has not confirmed the veracity of the flyer, it ties in with last week's rumours of the Vita emerging by the Fall.

Speaking to gaming site IGN, Sony confirmed that the PS Vita will be launching with a 'phased global release' in the 'holiday season.' European pricing of the product was also seen on the flier, at £229.99 for the Wi-Fi only version, and

£279.99 for the Wi-Fi+3G version. The price's rather extravagant compared to the already confirmed U.S. pricing of $249 and $299 respectively.

Sony hopes to breathe some life into its aging portable platform with the PS Vita, it looks like it will have a strong chance – it has a list of major launch titles (revealed at E3 2011); the apps of the entire Android platform; as well as the hardware to back it all up – with a Tegra 3 'Kal-El' processor quad-core Cortex A9-based processor and SGX543MP4+ graphics; as well as multiple input interfaces from gyroscopes to touchpads, analog sticks to a 5-inch OLED touchscreen. Check out our previous coverage for more details about the PlayStation Vita.

Meanwhile, it looks like Sony is strengthening the Vita's platform before launch, by giving out free development kits. Rubicon Development, an independent developer, has revealed in a report that it has received dev kits from the Japanese giant. Speaking to IGN, Steve Haggerty of Rubicon said:

"We've worked with Apple, and you can't get anything out of them. Microsoft rarely responds and I suppose Nintendo are okay, but Sony are always there to help. They always get back to you."

Asus Eee PC X101 launched in India; a MeeGo netbook for ₹12,499

Asus has launched a new netbook in India, called the Eee PC X101. It has arrived here ahead of several major international territories, such as the U.S. and Europe, where it is expected in the next couple of weeks. Priced at ₹12,499, the 10.1-inch netbook bears a very basic hardware configuration, and we wonder just how well it will do in the market, when there are plenty of other full-featured netbook offerings out there, at negligibly higher prices. Asus aims for it to be an alternative to both netbooks and tablets.

Asus has also chosen to release the Eee PC X101 with MeeGo onboard, not Windows, or any regular full-featured distro like openSUSE or Ubuntu. Looking at the specifications, which read almost like a tablet's, we realize nothing else but MeeGo might work – with just 8GB of built-in storage space (SSD) and 1GB of RAM. As many folks in the industry have observed, this netbook is a hybrid of a tablet and a regular netbook, unfortunately. No surfeit of ports (with no VGA and Ethernet), no optical drive, and no touchscreen.

The Taiwanese giant apparently intends to provide a fast, rich and intuitive computing experience, while at the same time keeping costs low with the operating system, and hardware. As for storage, a glaring omission, Asus has pre-loaded Dropbox cloud storage for free, allowing users to store some real data.

The Asus Eee PC X101 comes with a choice of an Intel Atom N435 or N455 processor. Other specs include Bluetooth 3.0 connectivity, a webcam, two USB2.0 ports, and a 3-cell battery that promises a four-hour battery life, using Asus' Super Hybrid Engine (SHE). The Eee PC X101 will be available in white, red and brown.

Xperia Play exclusive: FIFA 12 for Android

The hordes of Xperia Play owners across the world can rejoice with the knowledge that EA Mobile's FIFA 12 for Android will be available exclusively for them from the holiday season. The rest – those who own regular Android devices – have to wait till February 12, 2012. The full game for consoles and PCs will launch later this month.

Developed by EA Mobile for Android, EA Sport's FIFA 12 has been optimized for the "first PlayStation certified smartphone," capable of running at 60fps on its graphics processor. The Android version of the game sports improved audio, commentary and crowd chants.

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As per industry estimate of sports segment, greater than 135cc, April 2010 - Feb 2011

O&M 7681

18 **Mobile Watch**
Google buys Motorola. We analyse the implications

Pirates ahoy!
The British goverment has announced that websites holding copyright infringing material will no longer be blocked!!. **http://bbc.in/oRhl1P**

All Google and a little of Firefox

There is hardly a month that has gone by since the early 20th century where Google didn't feature in our monthly web watch section, and this time is no exception. We've got other participants, from Mozilla's release of Firefox 6, to a little Facebook we almost chose to ignore.

Google makes 'the web faster'

Google launched its Page Speed Service in early August, enabling publishers to speed up how fast their web pages loaded, by 25 to 60%. Page speed, or page load time is not just a factor in the bounce rate of a web page, but also Google's own Page Rank of it. All this is a part of Google's "Make the Web Faster" campaign, which in the past included the Page Speed browser extension, the Page Speed Online API, the SPDY protocol, and the mod_pagespeed Apache module.

With the new service, Google will start web hosting publishers' content on their servers, and present a web-optimized version to users. Publishers hence will not have to worry about compressing their content, caching solutions, or other website optimization details – Google will take care of it for them, once the publishers have pointed their DNS entry to Google.

Games for Data

Google has added twelve games to Google+, including the ubiquitous Angry Birds and Zynga Poker, as a new Google+ Games service. However, to play them, users need to give permission to the app to view a variety of personal information, including the user's email address, basic information about your account, and even a list of people that you have placed in your Circles, with the order or priority of them.

Facebook fights back

Google fired the first salvo, adding a dozen games to Google+ on Friday, but Facebook seems to have fired right back with new features that expand its own existing brand of social gameplay. While Facebook's gaming features may have been in the works for some time, it was certainly timed in such a way as to take some of the wind out Google's social gaming sails.

The new Facebook gaming features include a larger gaming screen and a ticker that appears to the right of the screen which shows friends' gaming activity, scores, and achievement.

Google Chrome 13 released with new Instant Pages feature

Google has released the thirteenth version of its Chrome browser with a number of interesting new features. Continuing on its usual track to improve web browsing speed, Google Chrome 13 introduces a new Instant Pages feature. In cases where Google can accurately determine where the user might go next, it can begin loading that page in the background and rendering it, so when the user clicks, the page is loaded instantly.

Google Chrome 13 also makes some improvements to the Omnibox that can also lead to speedier browsing. In Chrome 13, the Omnibox now taps into your browser history to offer matches from titles and URLs of previously visited websites.

The new version also adds one very unique feature – multi-selection of tabs. One can now select multiple tabs at a time (by pressing the Ctrl or Shift key pressed) and perform some operations on them in bulk. You could select multiple tabs, and close them together, close all other tabs, duplicate the tabs, pin the tabs, or bookmark the selected tabs. You can even select multiple tabs and drag them together to a another window or a new window.

Firefox 6 released

Mozilla has made its second rapid release; Firefox 6 is now available for download. As expected from this new release process, there are minor additions.

Firefox 6 should now load much faster if you are using Panorama. Firefox will no longer load tabs that are part of inactive Panorama groups. This means that your browser starts faster and becomes responsive faster as fewer websites are loaded to begin with. If you switch to a panorama group after loading Firefox, it will then begin loading tabs from that group.

Firefox now promotes the Firefox Sync feature while saving passwords or saving bookmarks. Another subtle new feature is that Firefox will now highlight the domain name in the addressbar, making it easier to ascertain which website you are visiting.

You can also check out a preview of Firefox 7 or 8 by downloading the Aurora or Nightly Firefox build. Remember that these can be very unstable at times and it is recommended you use then with a separate profile.

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That is the number of text messages sent in 2010, earning mobile companies over $140 billion in revenue!

Google buys Moto, causes Flipout!

August 15th saw an Independence Day announcement of an unexpected kind, with Google declaring that it would be buying Motorola Mobility – a deal that will make it a major hardware player in the smartphone business, allow it to spearhead the course of Android handset development and give it access to the wealth of patents the 82-year-old company has developed and amassed in its long and chequered history.

The news of the deal comes not too long after Google lost out on the Nortel Patent Portfolio – an estimated 6,000 telecommunication and other patents which were finally acquired by a consortium of companies including Apple, Ericsson, Microsoft, Research In Motion and Sony. The Google-Motorola acquisition is also seen as a way to bolster Google, the Android platform, and Android licensees against the numerous "anti-competitive patent attacks" that Apple and Microsoft have recently launched.

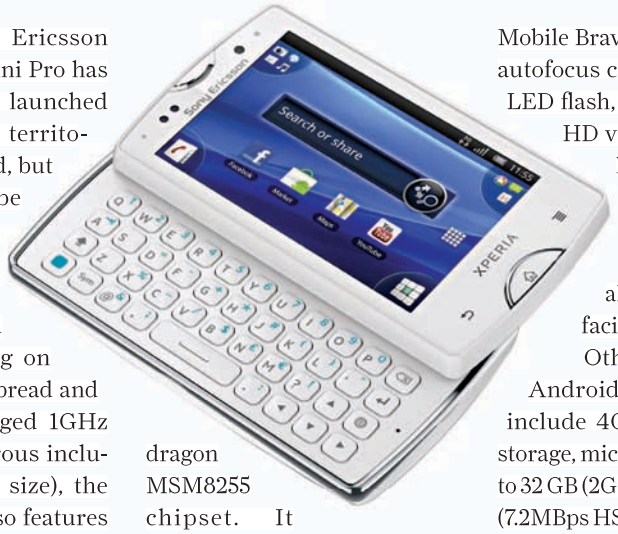
The implications of the deal are numerous, the biggest being Google's possible alienation of its Android handset partners. Google's CEO, Larry Page, was quick to point out however that Google would still be looking to maintain its relations with these partners – and that Motorola wouldn't be given any sort of insider advantage compared to its Android rivals.

Page insists that Android will remain an open platform and that Motorola will just be one more Android licensee. Motorola will be treated as a separate business, he claims.

In the meanwhile, Microsoft, the developer of Windows Phone 7 – one of the biggest rivals of Android, iOS, and BlackBerry mobile operating systems – has seen its stock prices shoot up after the deal, with market watchers sure that Google's move would cause handset manufacturers to concentrate on developing their WP7 line-ups to reduce the number of eggs in the Android basket, and protect themselves from competition from the Google-Motorola team.

QWERTY + Gingerbread + Mini Pro = Yummy!

The Sony Ericsson Xperia Mini Pro has still to be launched in many territories across the world, but will apparently be making its debut in the Indian market by the end of this week, priced at ₹15,399. Running on Android 2.3 Gingerbread and bearing a full-fledged 1GHz processor (a wondrous inclusion looking at its size), the Xperia Mini Pro also features a full QWERTY slider keypad.

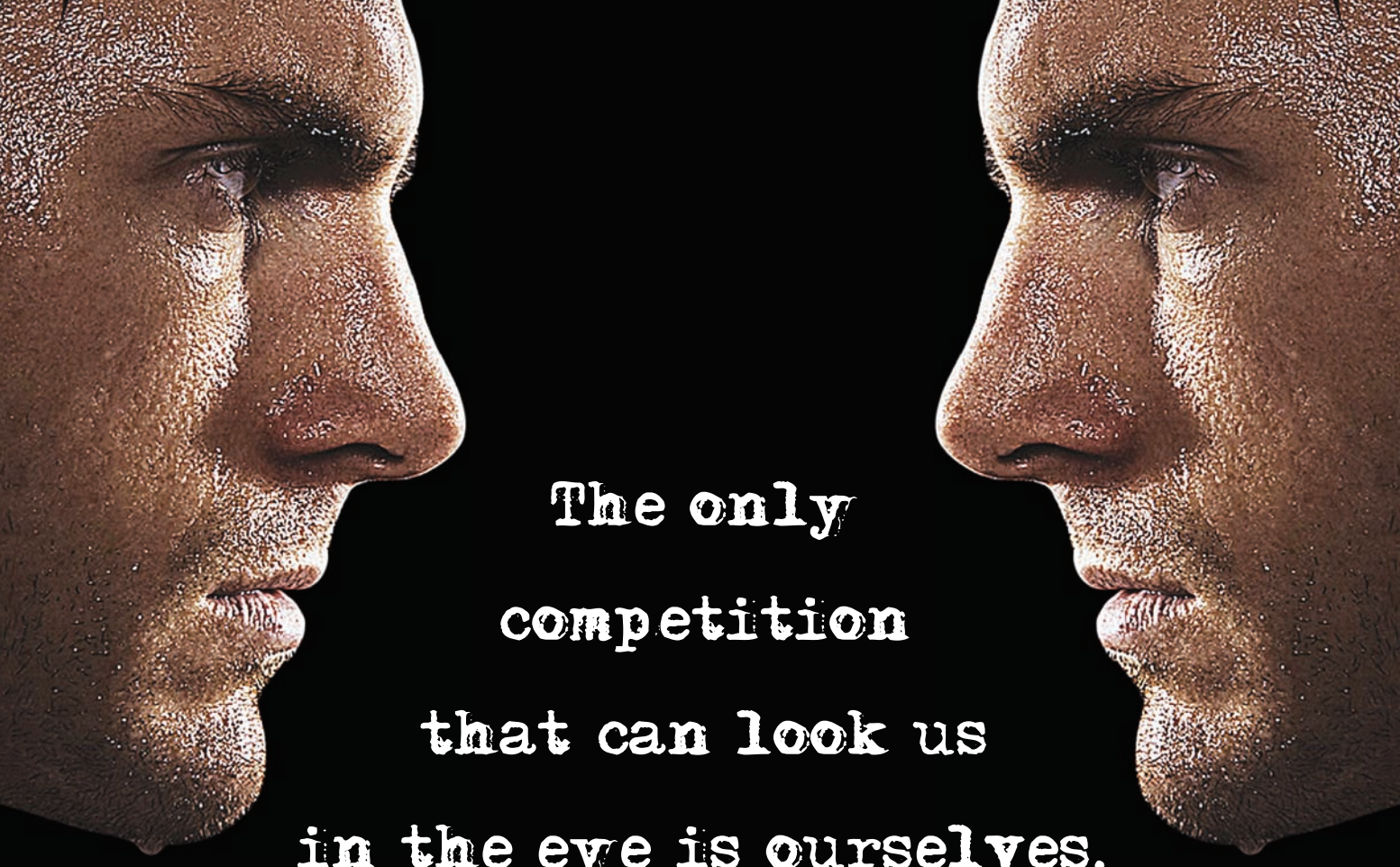


Specifically, the Xperia Mini Pro has a 1GHz Scorpion processor with an Adreno 205 GPU, part of the Qualcomm Snapdragon MSM8255 chipset. It comes with 512 MB of RAM. The Xperia Mini Pro has a 3-inch capacitive touch screen with a resolution of 320x480 pixels and is run by the Sony Mobile Bravia Engine. Its 5MP autofocus camera comes with LED flash, is capable of 720p HD video recording and has smile-detection, geo-tagging and image stabilisation features. It also has a VGA front-facing camera.

Other features of the Android QWERTY device include 400 MB of in-built storage, microSD expansion up to 32 GB (2GB card bundled); 3G (7.2MBps HSDPA and 5.76Mbps HSUPA) support; Wi-Fi b/g/n and DLNA support; microUSB port; and a 1,200 mAh battery rated to deliver up to 331 hours of standby time.

Now get a Moto for as low as ₹3,590

Motorola has launched three new dual-SIM phones in India – EX119, EX109 and Gleam EX212, starting at ₹3,590. Called slim and stylish by Motorola, the three phones bear Motorola's proprietary operating system, not Android, and support dual-SIM of the GSM-GSM type. Two of the three devices, the Motorola EX119 and EX109, are candy bar QWERTY handsets, while the last – the Motorola EX212, is a flip design reminiscent of yesteryear's Razr. The pricing of the Motorola EX109 is not yet known.



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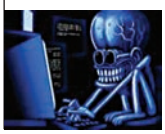

Largest Cyber attack
McAfee has reported that various multinational organisations, including the UN, have been under massive attack since 2006

Google vs Microsoft vs Apple
Google is now accusing Microsoft and Apple of buying bogus patents in a bid to raise the costs of Android devices

You *can* touch these!

RIM has launched three new smartphones bearing BlackBerry 7 OS, which, including CDMA variants for two of them, make five models in total. These could very well be five of the seven that RIM promised to bring by the end of 2011. We'll have to wait and see what the other two bring. The traditional QWERTY but super slim BlackBerry Bold Touch 9900 and 9930 we've seen before – they're the first announced devices for the BB7OS.

The new (at least officially) models are the QWERTY slider BlackBerry Torch 9810 and the full-touch Torch 9850/9860 pair. All seven models come with the speedy specs that were promised – a 1.2GHz single-core processor, and 768 MB of RAM. All of them bear 5MP autofocus cameras, and have NFC connectivity. BlackBerry 7 OS will bring a host of other enhancements of course, and is now built with Liquid Graphics, using a dedicated graphics processor for UI transitions, etc. The new native WebKit browser will be 40 per cent faster than OS6's, and twice as fast as OS5's. Check out our previous coverage for more details on the new OS.

Torch 9850/9860 | Bold Touch 9900/9930 | Torch 9810

Mike Lazardis, Co-CEO of RIM said:

"This is the largest global launch of BlackBerry smartphones in our history. The BlackBerry solution offers a best-in-class mobile communications experience that customers love and we think they'll be thrilled by the faster performance, enhanced browsing and richer multimedia delivered by these powerful new BlackBerry Bold and BlackBerry Torch smartphones."

At a price of ₹32,490, the BlackBerry Bold 9900 competes with other top-end phones in the market, from the Samsung Galaxy S II and HTC Sensation to the iPhone 4. We wonder if all the new features will sway Android and iOS fans the BlackBerry way. The phone's touchscreen plus QWERTY form factor gets the best of both worlds, featuring RIM's famous BlackBerry keypad, and a 2.8-inch transmissive display that is touted as a 24-bit high res display, with a resolution of 640x480 pixels – working out to a super dense 287 ppi. d

Apple #1 globally

The latest results in the on-going battle of global smartphone manufacturers are in, with reports from market research firms Strategy Analytics and IDC showing some interesting developments in the second quarter of this year. The market as a whole has grown 76.3 per cent since Q2 last year, with Apple and Samsung definitely looking to have enjoyed most of the benefits.

Q2 2011 saw Apple more than double its smartphone sales since the corresponding quarter last year, going from 8.4 million units to 20.3 million. Samsung did spectacularly well in the same period, with sales growing more than six times from 3.1 million units to 19.2 million. Nokia's smartphone sales, on the other hand, fell by a third in the second quarter, shipping 16.7 million units compared to 23.8 million the previous year.

The smartphone market shares have certainly been reshuffled, and now have three nearly equal behemoths on top – with Apple holding 18.5% for the first spot, Samsung is second with 17.5%, and Nokia third with 15.2%. Other manufacturers make up 48.9 per cent of the sales, up from 43.4 per cent in Q2 2010. d

The fate of Anna – Anna-based Nokia 500 smartphone

We were initially sceptical on hearing things like 'Nokia is now focussing on both Windows Phone 7 and Symbian' going around the industry. However, with the plethora of Symbian Belle phones in the making and the company's latest announcement of a new Symbian Anna device, the 500 (previously known as the Nokia Fate), things have certainly changed around a bit.

The Nokia 500 has something special in store – a 1GHz processor, making it the first Symbian phone to officially boast of that clock speed. With a MRP of €150, excluding taxes, the Nokia 500 is expected to hit markets by Q3 end, with a black body and six differently coloured back panels bundled. A white version is expected in Q4.

Other features of the phone include 256 MB of RAM, a 3.2-inch capacitive touchscreen with 640x360 resolution, a 5MP camera, as well as 3G (14.4Mbps HSDPA and 5Mbps HSUPA), Wi-Fi b/g, Bluetooth 2.1 with A2DP and EDR, and GPS (with A-GPS) connectivity. The phone also features 2GB of built-in storage, and a microSD card slot that supports expansion up to 32GB. The Nokia 500 is also expected to be lightweight, at 93 grams d

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Unlimited Data?
Research conducted by Validas indicates that most smart phones users barely consume more than 160 mb per month **http://bit.ly/pPQfpj**

Phantom v641

If high-speed video recording is what soothes your mood then look no further than this. Phantom v641 features a 4mega pixel sensor which shoots in 35 mm with 6 gigapixels/second throughput. It's got 32 GB of internal memory and weighs pretty heavy, both in your hands and pocket at 5.4 kg and a price tag of ₹67,5000 .

Black Ravioli
Big Foot

Paying ₹37,050 for a sound isolation device which eradicates acoustic coupling and ground borne vibrations might fall heavy on your pocket. But then again, if you're an audio connoisseur you'd overlook the amount. Big Foot enhances the audio output of any sound system and reduces the need for a hi-fi rack. Go ahead and get one if you like pure unadulterated music.

C1
Tourbillion Gravity

The unique feature of C1 Tourbillion Gravity is that the seconds display is on the right-hand side of the watch. Crafted with 18-carat white gold, this watch has flyback chronograph with 84-hour power reserve. Only for the uber rich at ₹14,400,000

Latin-American spidey
Our beloved friendly neighbourhood Spider-Man is now black hispanic teen in Marvel's new Ultimate line **http://bit.ly/pSjMsV**

War Driving!
This is the term used to describe driving around, searching for open Wi-Fi networks

Pro Gaming Table

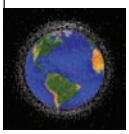
Here's presenting a gaming table for dedicated gamers who take their play sessions way too seriously. Pro Gaming Table houses multiple displays along with tons of space for putting your gaming accessories. The best part is it costs: ₹17055

FX Saber

Is there anybody who doesn't fancy a light saber? We guess not. Guys at FX sabers have been supplying sabers to Star Wars fans across the world for quite some time now. There are several blade types you can choose from. FX sabers are powered by lithium ion batteries and charge via adapter. Go from Padawan to Jedi master for about ₹6,120

Bonopo bicycle

When was the last time you heard about a cycle made of plywood? Our guess is never. This plywood wonder is no less than its aluminium counterparts. Apart from the light weight which is clearly its forte, Bonopo sports hydraulic disc brakes and single-gear drive. The bike is sturdy enough to handle rough terrain. No word on pricing though.



A housekeeper in orbit!
Scientists at the Italian space agency have put forward a plan to put housekeeping satellites in space to clear space debris **http://bit.ly/pNV6xw**

Did you know?
The votes for the Oscar awards are tabulated and counted by hand? Only two people know the result till it's announced!

Mac OS X Lion: A closer look

Apple's latest desktop computer OS is heavily influenced by iOS, its mobile platform OS. This path of mutual convergence seems interesting to say the least

Jayesh Shinde
jayesh.shinde@thinkdigit.com

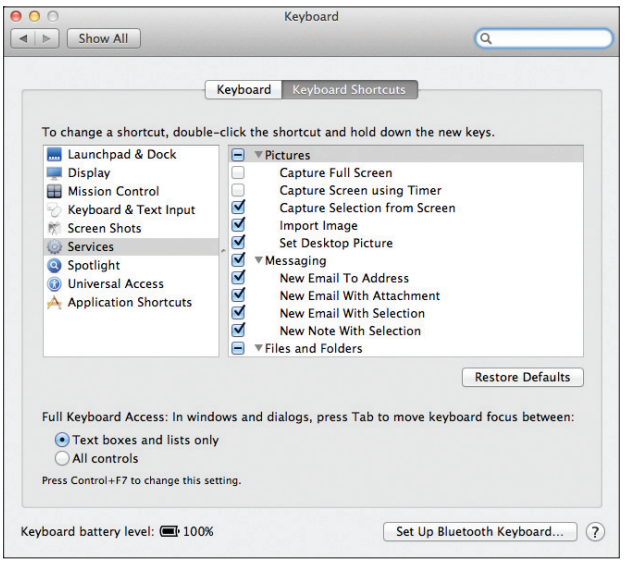
Ever since the iPhone's explosive debut back in 2007, Apple has been hooked on to the mobile device and its platform, iOS, to a level where most analysts and loyalists couldn't help but think the Cupertino-based company had diverted attention from its once flagship product, the iMac. It was understandable, given the iPhone and iPad's meteoric impact. However, Apple reassured fans by holding an appropriately named "Back to the Mac" press event in October last year, where, among other things, it previewed Mac OS X 10.7 Lion for the first time.

After several developer builds, Lion is finally out of the door. It's a step in Mac OS X's evolution where Apple has imported plenty of features and insights gained from its iOS business. Let's take a closer look.

Lion's new look and feel

With OS X 10.7, Apple has given subtle face-lifts to the overall interface as it was in OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard. In a sense, the tweaks signal the coming of age of Lion's look and feel, where the sense of glossy, in-your-face eye-candy is muted down to a level of understated elegance. The UI is a lot more sleeker, minimalist almost; no longer loud or over-emphasised.

Many blue highlights in pop-up windows, for example, are removed to make for a more monochromatic interface. If you see the image below, the buttons aren't acutely curved, neither are they filled with excessive glossy blue visual cues. Even



The new OS X 10.7 windows have colours toned down

Oil in L.A.

Los Angeles is the third largest oil field in the US. Drilling goes on in plain sight, camouflaged by buildings **http://bit.ly/rqtzOR**

Bacteria in hail

Pseudomonas syringae is found in nearly 85 per cent of hail in hailstorms. They absorb moisture and increase the freezing point of water **http://bit.ly/ncPdh5**

Touch is a recurrent theme in the new Lion OS

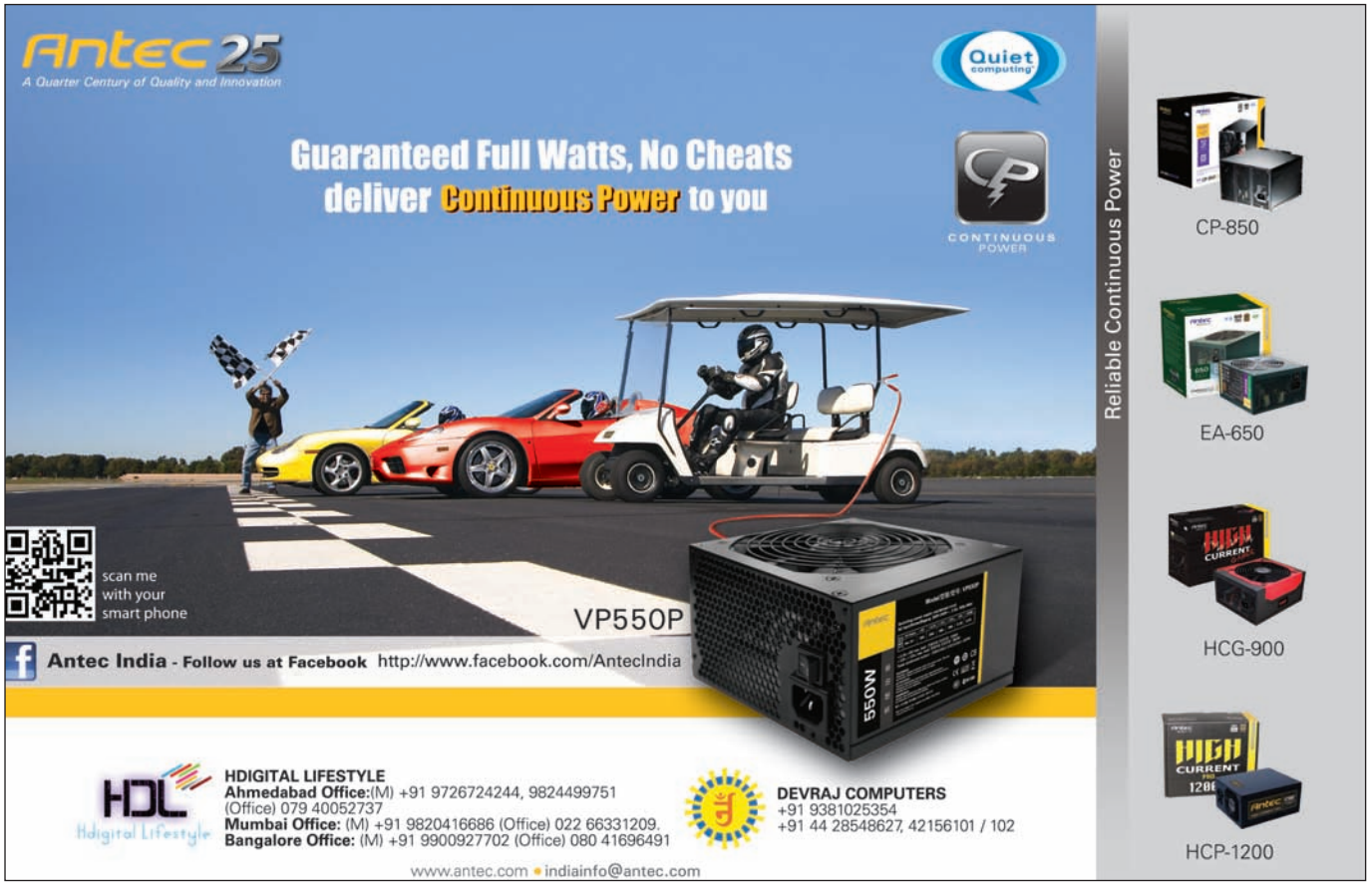
Scroll bars are hidden in Finder windows

the top tabs aren't glossy blue anymore – a regular feature associated with the older Snow Leopard's default colour scheme. The radio buttons are toned down and, overall, the interface doesn't distract. Also, the traffic lights red, yellow and green window buttons have gotten smaller in OS X Lion. The scroll bars – not visible in the Finder window – make the iOS influence plain to see. We prefer this new slightly colour-muted look of Lion's interface.

Apart from changing the Mac OS X Lion's login screen, Apple reinstates iOS lessons a little more forcefully by including a touch-enabled input device on every Mac it sells – whether it's the multitouch trackpad on the MacBooks or the Magic Mouse or Trackpad with the iMacs.

Touch-enabled devices were introduced in the pre-Lion era, but they become increasingly significant with Lion's out-of-the-box support for a slew of touch-enabled gestures. In fact, Lion mimics touch-input similar to an iOS device like the iPhone or iPad. While we're adept at clicking and gesturing on touch screen phones, trying to convince our brains to do the same on a desktop OS is a little difficult from the outset – an uncomfortable learning curve is necessary to enjoy the pure bliss that awaits at the conclusion.

The ability to resize a window from any of four sides and corners is a welcome addition to OS X Lion's user interface; we could never really understand why Snow Leopard and older versions of Mac OS X only limited window resizing from the bottom-right corner. In Lion, you merely



Zombie Outbreak?
Would you survive a Zombie outbreak? Read this very informative article **http://bit.ly/ncqbMY**

CS:GO
Valve is currently working on its next sequel for Counter-Strike, namely Counter-Strike: Global Offensive **http://bit.ly/oOLvyH**

The new Expose, Dashboard and Spaces mashup = Mission Control

need to stray the mouse pointer in any direction of the active window's boundary to see the pointer transform into a resize assist icon. An age-old itch scratched!

However, users are in for a minor shock when Lion informs them that the default scroll behaviour has reversed. If you scroll your finger up on the Magic Mouse, the active window in front of you will actually scroll down, against natural perception of motion. Luckily, there's a fix to this perceived problem: a minor disabling of a radio button in `System Preferences > Mouse`. In all Finder windows containing scrollable content, the new Lion UI shows no scroll bars when they're launched.

But scroll on the mouse or trackpad to trigger the overlay scroll bar to appear and scurry up or down. You'll witness a few instances of the massive influence exerted by iOS over Mac OS X.

Many of OS X Lion's "improved" UI features can be rolled back to how things were back in the days of Snow Leopard, should you find switching old habits an irritating exercise.

Mission Control and Launchpad

Apple has tweaked an existing feature of past Mac OSes and borrowed the essence of iOS to contribute towards Mission Control and Launchpad,

Another iOS feature comes to the Mac in the form of Launchpad

MAC OS X: DECADE MILESTONES

September 13, 2000: Apple released a beta version of its upcoming Mac OS X code-named Kodiak, a successor to OS X 9. Aqua interface UI surfaced for the first time. Apple sold Kodiak for $29.95 (₹1,367).

March 24, 2001: After the preview, Apple launched its first stable release of Mac OS X v10.0, Cheetah. Critics applauded the release but Cheetah had very few supported applications to entice mass adoption.

September 25, 2001: Apple fixed Cheetah's shortcomings by launching Mac OS X 10.1 Puma later that same year. Puma was much better than Cheetah and was sold for ₹5,890, but Cheetah users got it as a free upgrade.

August 23, 2002: Jaguar (Mac OS X 10.2) sported many significant changes over past OS builds – advanced graphics, improved performance and visuals, inclusion of an address book and iChat apps. Also Happy Mac gave way to Apple's logo during bootup on the screen, ending an 18-year-old ritual.

October 24, 2003: With Panther (Mac OS X 10.3) out of the door, OS X included much-adored first-time features like Exposé, Safari browser, an improved version of Finder and PDF rendering. Support for running Microsoft Windows reached unforeseen heights.

April 29, 2005: As many as 150 new features were released with Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger. Dashboard and Spotlight were introduced. In 2006, with OS X 10.4.4, Apple launched the first Intel-based Macs that ran on Tiger.

October 26, 2007: Apple launched Leopard (Mac OS X 10.5) with a bang, proclaiming over 300 new feature additions to the Mac's flagship OS. Unlike Tiger, Leopard had a single DVD for installation on supported Macs. It supported 64-bit apps and introduced Time Machine, Spaces and Boot Camp.

August 28, 2009: Apple killed support for PowerPCs with Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard. Instead of introducing a bunch of new features, Snow Leopard focused on fine-tuning, tweaking and improving the existing OS X experience.

July 20, 2011: Mac OS X 10.7 Lion was launched, where Apple introduced quite a few features from its insight into the hugely successful iOS platform.

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No Firefox 7?
Mozilla has announced that it is getting rid of version numbers for its Firefox web browser **http://bit.ly/ofmK5M**

Touchy feely!
Leeds University has tried to simulate pressure remotely in a bid to create a device to help doctors treat cancer **http://bbc.in/nOd7id**

respectively. Both these apps reside in the Dock next to the Finder.

Mission Control is a combination of Exposé, Dashboard and Spaces with some fresh features all rolled into one. At the top, you see a row of windows (if you have them open) which essentially is the old Spaces. To add a new Space, just click on the top-right corner; every full-screen app is shown as a Space. Below the top row you have the central, Exposé-like section where you see all open windows grouped by their app. In the bottom, you see the ever-present Dock with a spotlight under the apps that are open and highlighted in Mission Control. Mission Control is a lot of fun and is actually pretty useful.

Launchpad is instantly familiar to anyone who has used iOS before. It's a gesture-enabled app launcher with the ability to group apps together as folders, rename them, etc. – basically everything you thought you can do with apps on iOS' home screen. It instantly shows all the software available on your Mac in a tiled icon layout – a little different from the stacked layout when you click on Applications in Dock. Although it looks pretty, Launchpad is a little difficult to use on the iMac. It feels more convenient and natural to launch on the trackpad of a Macbook. Nevertheless, this is a handy new addition to OS X.

Interesting apps and features

While it's impossible to cover every small feature and app within the confines of this article, we'll list some interesting ones nonetheless.

Auto Save and Resume: Apps that support Auto Save (Preview, iWork, and TextEdit) can automatically save changes to your document as you work; think Google Docs. All changes are saved in the background and you can work without any distraction of pauses or progress bars. What's more, Auto Save in OS X Lion adds the changes directly into the file so there's only one copy of the document on your Mac. Definitely a useful addition.

Lion lets you restore your last session.

Resume is one useful feature, letting you save and restore your session "as it was" even after you shut down or restart your Mac. Lion saves a snapshot of your system as it logs off and reloads the instance when you log back in, resuming it in the exact same state as you last closed it. Apps, documents, windows, processes...everything is restored. Now you don't have to fret about closing your work. This is a great feature if you want to instantly restart your Mac to finish installing a new app, Hopefully, third-party apps will exploit it to the fullest.

Sharing between two Macs couldn't be more simpler

AirDrop: A new but limited feature, AirDrop lets you easily share files between Macs within close physical proximity of each other; works great at an office environment or home with multiple Mac users. It requires zero setup, no configuring and is extremely simple to take advantage of. Click on AirDrop on the left sidebar of your Finder window to see a radar-like image with your own Mac stationed at the bottom. If someone is accessing their AirDrop window within a range of ten metre, they pop onto your AirDrop radar (and vice versa). To share files just drag and drop on the Mac icon within AirDrop, that's it. Communication is secure and peer-to-peer.

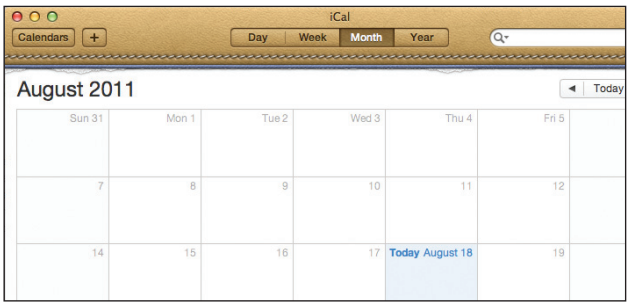
iCal: As you can guess, the UI is heavily influenced by the Calendar app on the iPad. Even though we like the leather-clad, hand-sewn, minimal look of the iCal in Lion, we don't like the disappearance of the extremely useful left-hand column (present in the older iCal) which would allow quick launch and flipping through multiple calendars.

The tab views at the top, that is Day, Week, Month and Year are identical to the iPad Calendar app and useful. The Quick Add feature for instantly adding a calendar event is nice and helpful, too.

Mail: The new email app's interface in Mac OS X Lion is inspired from... yes, you guessed it right, iOS's email app. It has a three-pane layout: the left pane has all your mailbox-related features like inbox, drafts, starred, etc; emails from the account are shown in the middle pane, arranged as per date, flags, etc; and the third, right-most pane displays the email content and conversation thread. The new Mail in OS X Lion has the ability to preview an email under its header, just like in iOS and the iPad. We don't mind the iOS-ification of the Mail app in Lion, it actually works out pretty well.

End of an era

With all new things, there comes an inevitable end to that which is old, whether we like it or not. With OS X Lion, Apple has officially discontinued support for Rosetta which used to allow running apps written for older PowerPC on newer Intel-architecture Macs.



Lion's new calendar app is influenced by its iOS counterpart

Apple has inconspicuously removed support for Front Row, Mac's media centre software. It has disappointed fans and bewildered users, especially because the newer Lion is more than capable of handling the app.

Last few words

Lion is no doubt a major step forward for Apple's Mac OS X and only time will tell whether Apple's philosophy of merging iOS with OS X will be a hit or miss. As things stand right now, Mac users are in a transition phase with Lion, and for $29.99 (₹1,369) you can see what all the fuss is about.

worldview

OUR PICK OF THE BEST TECH ARTICLES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

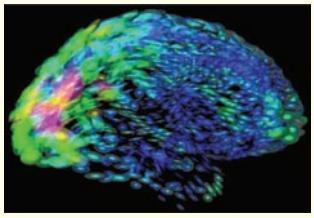
(MUST READS)

CREATION OF INNOVATION

How are ideas born? Does the Eureka moment really spark an idea? The article explains how innovation is derived. It's not the lighting of a bulb to initiate an idea, rather it's due to evolution of networked possibilities. Fascinating read

http://rww.to/iNWBBD

FINDING IT HARD TO MULTI-TASK?



If multitasking is troublesome for you, then you got your brain to blame for it. Research indicates that although our brain is a complex system, it can't register and process information, especially when there's too much of it. Read more

http://bit.ly/q2CQHP

BEST WAY TO READ BOOKS

There are several options in the market today to read books on such as tablets, smart phones and ebook readers. If you're one of those who use multiple devices to read their books, then this piece would bring clarity on how to decide on a book and the best way to read it. Find out more

http://nyti.ms/qwzqfj

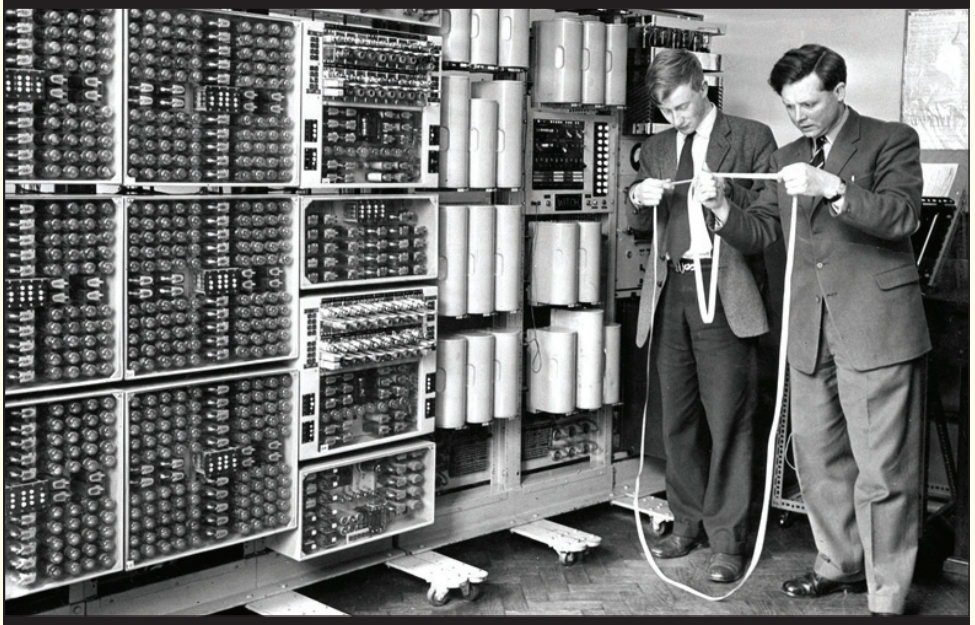
BECOME THE PHOTOGRAPHY OVERLORD

Everything you wanted to know to master the art of photography – from composing your images to editing them. This consolidated guide along with additional resources would help you sail through everything in photography.

http://lifehac.kr/pBPsFg

(Extreme Tech Corner)

COMPUTER LABS WHICH GAVE BIRTH TO THE DIGITAL WORLD



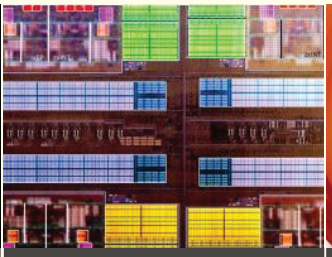
Throughout human history, inventions and discoveries have been led by a team of skilled and talented people. This article takes you back in time to discover six computer labs and the people behind it which laid the foundation to the digital world we experience today. Read more here

http://bit.ly/nALY7N

Human-like bots a possibility?

After countless number of man hours spent in the lab, IBM and DARPA have come out with two silicon chips that are almost identical to the human brain, constructed using transistors and arranged in a manner similar to the neurons of a brain. Read more here

http://bit.ly/nR3veM



Understanding the Bulldozer

Want to know what goes behind the making of AMD's next gen CPU Bulldozer? This article would give you an insight into AMD's latest architecture and what goes behind creating the future of smart computing. Learn more here

http://bit.ly/nH6fLh

Why Google needs Firefox

In November 2011, Mozilla's contract with Google will come to an end. It's interesting to see whether it'll be renewed or not as majority of Mozilla's earning comes from the royalties paid by Google. So how exactly do browsers make money? Find out here

http://bit.ly/pa0Jtb

SHORTS

REBOOT OF SCI-FI FILMS

Wouldn't we all like to see a remake or a spin-off of our favourite Sci-Fi films? Well acclaimed director Ridley Scott is planning a reboot of his popular science fiction film Blade Runner.
Here's Wired's list of six such films we'd love to see on the big screen again. Read more http://bit.ly/pHRewQ

COMPUTABLE KNOWLEDGE INFOGRAPH

Humanity has come a long way since 20,000 BC. Here's an infograph mapping key achievements in systematic data and computable knowledge. Check it out here http://bit.ly/mUbB6J

IS YOUR BROWSER SAFE?

In a test conducted by NSS Labs, IE 9 has topped the charts in fighting against malware with a 99 per cent detection rate. Sounds like guys at NSS might be Windows fanboys. Anyhow, here's CNET's analysis of the test where they take all other browsers and see what the scores actually mean.
Read more http://cnet.co/nOVOav

SO WHO'S NEXT AFTER HP'S webOS?

This year kicked off worth six major platforms in the mobile arena. Now there are only four. With the fall of webOS who's next in line to kick the bucket? Is it RIM's turn? Only time will tell, meanwhile read this prediction and see if you concur.
http://bit.ly/qzWAGQ

What Makes Content Go Viral? Awe, Angst, and A-Holes

- By MarkHachman

It's quite surprising what makes some blogs, posts or campaigns go viral. Read on to find out...

PCMAG DIGITAL NETWORK
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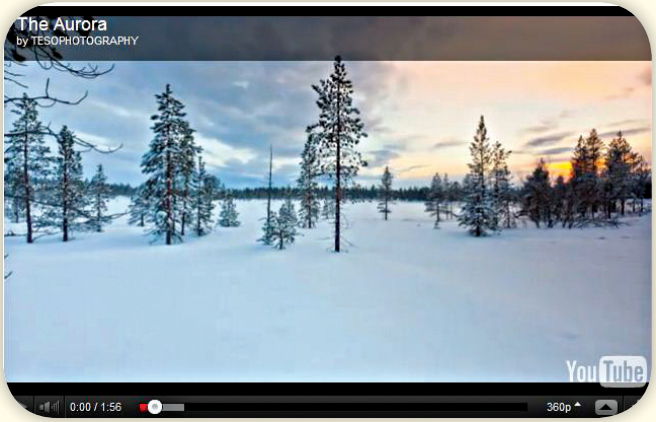
What makes a tweet, blog post, or ad campaign go viral? According to one of two recent studies, one of the best ways is to inspire awe in the reader. And if that fails, well, tick them off.

Last week, Chris Menning discovered that empathy leads to content "going viral," or being repeatedly passed around the Web, both on social networks and elsewhere. Surprised?

A forthcoming study by two assistant professors at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, meanwhile, parsed 7,000 articles in The New York Times to try and understand what boosted an article onto the "most emailed" list. The short answer? Provoking an emotional reaction via the three A's: anger, anxiety, and awe.

In a sense, both studies reiterate the conventional wisdom: "if it bleeds, it leads" is a journalistic cliche, and so-called "yellow journalism" has sold papers for a number of decades. Instead of provoking outrage or disgust, however, Menning took a slightly different tack: he discovered that a reader's sympathy for social awkwardness could create an empathic connection that prompted users to share that content online.

And Menning tested his hypothesis, creating a new meme ("10 Charts of Awkward Situations," or "lolgraphs") that drove three times as much traffic by referral as those that clicked directly on the BuzzFeed site.



An awe inspiring video hand picked by Mashable.com

Interestingly, Menning also found that a second meme, pairing a stock photo with a first-world cliche ("I poured my cereal into the bowl without checking to see if we still had milk. We didn't," one reads, against a photo that suggests abject despair) failed to take off, until someone removed the BuzzFeed tagline and republished it on Tumblr. There, it attracted over 68,000 Tumblr interactions and started spreading via variations on the theme.

"In attempting to create content that will go viral, many try hard to incorporate popular Internet memes hoping that the right catch phrase, reference, or format will be the magic bullet," Menning wrote. "Most often, it's not about the form that the meme takes, but the relatable common experiences that it conveys."

TICK PEOPLE OFF, AND THEY'LL SHARE – IT'S TRUE

Jonah Berger, who has studied the problem at the University of Pennsylvania, came up with a different conclusion: emotional arousal. Berger has published his second paper on the subject, which is due to be published in the The Journal of Marketing Research at a forthcoming date.

In January, Berger's paper in Psychological Science concluded that arousal drives sharing, specifically high-arousal emotions like anxiety or amusement, versus low-arousal emotions like sadness or contentment. Berger's January study showed users an emotionally-charged video, than and neutral video and article. A second experiment forced users to jog (physical, though not sexual, arousal). In both experiments, users who were emotionally aroused or physically aroused shared content more than those who weren't.

IS 2012 END OF THE WORLD?

Now we all have been exposed to this myth or as some want to call it a prophecy that the world will end in 2012.
From the Mayan civilisation to pessimistic hobos everyone has been taken by its fancy. But what do anthropologists make of it?
Find out more http://bit.ly/nMlc6y

SOFTWARE IS EATING THE WORLD!

If this sounds bizarre, then the recent developments in the tech world should be taken into consideration. Google buys Motorola, HP discontinues webOS. Both earth-shattering announcements, but how does it connect to the title? Find out on http://on.wsj.com/o6yleE

SCIENCE OF SMILES

Ever wondered what's behind a person's smile? In this detailed interview with Yale's psychology professor, the author tries to breakdown the very nature of smiling. Get to know what lies beneath that smile.
An interesting read at http://bit.ly/pQ138V

GORY DEATHS IN PC GAMES

Don't we all love when the protagonist in an action game rips the enemy's guts out? Here's a great round up of 25 videos featuring some of the most gruesome deaths in PC games. Things might get unpleasant! Don't say we didn't warn you.
Here's the link to go to http://bit.ly/oySU2B

Berger's upcoming paper goes further, however, suggesting that readers value and share hope and awe, but that they'll share content that makes them anxious and angry as well. The paper was co-authored by Katherine L. Milkman, an assistant professor of operations and information management at Wharton.

The study examined more than 7,000 New York Times articles over a three-month period to discover why they made the "most emailed" list. It tried to eliminate other sources of influence, such as the time of the day when the story was published, in which section it appeared, its topic, the popularity and gender of the author, and other factors.

Arousal, Berger and Milkman concluded, provokes; it prompts users to act. Anger, the most provocative negative response, also spurs action, while sadness

Classic example of a viral video 'David after dentist'

is a passive response, and generally does not result in content being shared. However, the most high-arousal, positive emotion is awe, meaning that awe-inspiring or, literally, "awesome" content is most often shared.

What does that mean? Awe-inspiring headlines included "Rare Treatment Is Reported to Cure AIDS Patient" and "The Promise and Power of RNA". Anxiety-inducing headlines included "For Stocks, Worst Single-Day Drop in Two Decades". Feel-good stories also did well, including "Wide-Eyed New Arrivals Falling in Love With the City". And "What Red Ink? Wall Street Paid Hefty Bonuses" provoked anger, and emails.

Popular blog theoatmeal.com

Interestingly, the authors found that a one-standard-deviation increase in the amount of anger provoked by an article upped the chances of being in the most-emailed list by 34 percent, or the equivalent of an additional 2.9 hours on the site's front page.

Berger and Milkman also tested their theory; the researchers dummied up a pair of ad campaigns, based on the premise that sausage maker Jimmy Dean had hired either a farmer or a rabbi as its new spokesman. Not surprisingly, the fact that pork products are not considered kosher in the Jewish faith amused most of the survey respondents, and they said they were more likely to share the news. They also asked the survey respondents which headline they would be most likely to share: one that said an airline "breaks" guitars, or one that reported that the airline "smashes" guitars. Again, unsurprisingly, most chose the latter.

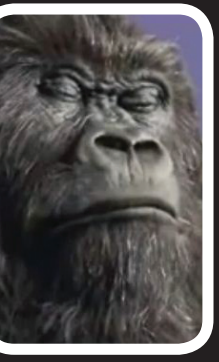
Interestingly, however, a third experiment proved that sadness can be a demotivating factor. When asked whether they would be likely to share about a woman's recovery (one version of the story used 9/11 as an excuse; the other, a fall down stairs) the respondents chose to share the second version more.

The study measured emailed stories, however, and not sharing of content on Twitter, Facebook, or blogs. But the study found the two overlap, with one exception.

"Analysis suggests that similar factors drive both virality and blogging: more emotional, positive, interesting, and anger-inducing, and less sadness-inducing stories are more likely to make the most blogged list," the study found. "Interestingly, the effect of practical utility reverses – though a practically useful story is more likely to make the most emailed list, practically useful content is marginally less likely to be blogged about. This may be due in part to the nature of blogs as commentary."

(worldview)

George W. Bush's term as President of the United States was one of the funniest, just ask Leno, Letterman and Co. Bush showcased an uncanny knack of putting his foot squarely in the mouth, leading to Freudian slips commonly known as "Bushisms." Just google the word if you want to go up in splits. Here's one compilation video of Bush's, well, Bushisms.
http://goo.gl/D4CPg



This ad is something which comes straight out of a pot filled evening. The ad has absolutely no relation to the product it's selling – a Cadbury chocolate bar, it's funny and refreshing nevertheless. If you're a Phil Collins fan you'd surely like this. Check out the video here
http://bit.ly/oWwbsM

(QR Code)

For a list of all the links from this section head over to http://bit.ly/nwCVZ6 Or point your phone to the QR code alongside

(PRODUCT LAUNCHES)

PENTAX Q

Pentax has launched the world's smallest interchangeable lens camera for ₹35,955. Featuring 1080p HD recording, this tiny camera sports 12.4 MP. A wide variety of lens can be attached to this little guy, including fisheye, telephoto and zoom. Hugely impressive.

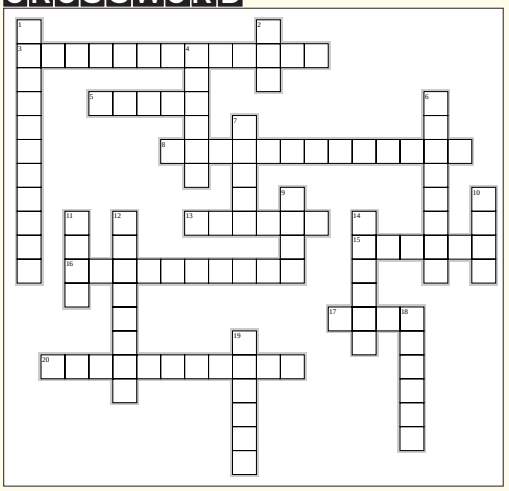
BLACKBERRY BOLD 9930

The new Bold on the block by RIM. 9930 features OS 7 which is not a major upgrade from its last iteration. The smart phone has 1.2 GHz processor with dual cameras capable of recording in 720p HD. Includes 2.8 capacitive touch screen. Available for ₹32,900.

TOSHIBA QOSMIO X775

Latest arrival from the Toshiba stable, the new Qosimo laptop sports a 17.3 inch display with full 1080p HD capability. Integrated is the NVIDIA 3D vision that makes it 3D ready. It also comes with a Blu-ray drive and GTX 560M graphics card, all for the tag of ₹85,590.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

3. Last man to have walked on the moon
5. Colourful candy bar mobile phones by Samsung
8. Fictional band Dethklok appears in which series
13. Upcoming version of Motorola Droid
15. Batman's butler and confidant
16. Family of mobile system on chips by Qualcomm
17. Name the next gen PSP
20. Google service recently banned in India

DOWN

1. Guy behind Napster
2. OS used in BlackBerry Playbook
4. Studio behind Crysis
6. Last name of founder and CEO of Mashable.com
7. Latest version of Windows Phone 7
9. Mac OS X 10.7?
10. Droid bot featuring in Star Wars series
11. First commercial computer with a GUI
12. Comic book writer and former Marvel comics chairman
14. Last name of Iron Man's computer
18. Firefox 7 codename
19. Amazon's famous e book reader

ABSOLUTE TIMEPASS

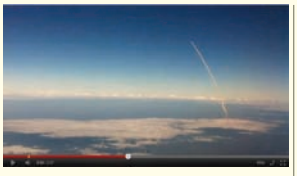
Top 3 YouTube Picks

Make sure your boss doesn't catch you goofing off with one of these playing on your screen

Beavis and Butt-Head

4:49 secs

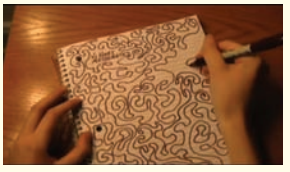
Showcased at Comic Con, this episode marks the return of Beavis and Butt-Head where Beavis is mistaken for Jesus. Laugh it off! http://bit.ly/puJ3lU



Rare space shuttle

2:07 secs

Filmed from an aircraft this rare video features the Discovery space shuttle as it embarks on STS-133. Enjoy http://bit.ly/hZOaJF



Inception squiggle

5:25 secs

Think you're an expert squiggler? Not only is this girl a squiggling pro, she has layers and layers of it like Inception. http://bit.ly/nTvy19

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zebmate — Premium portable media player

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POWER GRIP — Premium power strips

ZEBSTER — Premium laptop bags

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Siddharth Parwatay,
Mithun Mohandas,
Anirudh Rigidi
readersletters@thinkdigit.comw

USB gadgets

You just can't have enough of them

1 Combo Dock - ₹1,924

Spotted @ eBay.in
http://bit.ly/ComboDock

We used to swap CDs in school, but times have changed with HD media content being available and games topping 8 GBs. This HDD dock lets you hook up 2.5-inch and 3.5-inch SATA II drives, has a cardreader and two USB ports. It also features a one-button backup facility.

2 USB pencil sharpener ₹420

Spotted @ DealExtreme
http://bit.ly/USBShrpnr

There's just something so charming about a handful of perfectly sharpened pencils lying in a row on your desk, isn't it? But if you don't want to spend hours sharpening them, get this USB Pencil Sharpener for a whopping 420 bucks. One thing you could do to spite your boss is to sharpen all the pencils you can get your hands on, gather the resulting pile of shavings and scatter them in your boss's office and hope he gets the subliminal message. Are you up for it?

3 USB mini fridge - ₹863

Spotted @ DealExtreme
http://bit.ly/USBFrg

This useful contraption isn't much of a cooler. We'd rather call it a chillness maintainer. The thermometer pegs its cooling ability at 14°C, and it only holds one can. But with this device a cold drink that you'd usually gulp down can now be nursed at ease, even in our perpetually sweltering summers temps!

4 USB warmer - ₹250

Spotted @ DealExtreme
http://bit.ly/USBWrmr

If we put a USB fridge in here, then we simply have to put in a USB warmer for our readers from the cooler regions. What's better about this is that we have an in built 4-port USB hub too! You can even shove it underneath your seat as a butt-warmer. Though we wouldn't ask you to bring this closer to... er... your 'sensitive regions', needless to say doing that will fry your goodies. But a cuppa coffee? Sure... That's what its meant for.

5 USB fan - ₹343

Spotted @ PriceAngels http://bit.ly/USBFan

Fancy a cool breeze but can't access it because you've got the worst cubicle in the entire office? This fan promises to be silent and, at the same time, powerful.

6 10-in-1 USB charger with car adaptor - ₹255

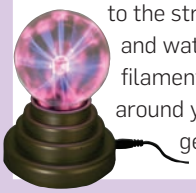
Spotted @ eBay.in http://bit.ly/10in1Charger

You must've come across multi-device USB chargers before, but this one has a car adaptor and wall socket adaptor as well. So, you can use it at home or on the go. Also with it, you can use it to charge your PSP, Motorola, Nokia, Sony Ericsson, LG phones and of course, the iPod.

7 USB plasma ball - ₹472

Spotted @ DealExtreme http://bit.ly/PlasmaOrb

Peer into the abyss of the future with the Plasma Ball. The filaments are attracted to any conducting material, so bring your hand close to the structure and watch the filaments dance around your fingertips!



8

USB aromatic oil burner - ₹159

Spotted @ PriceAngels http://bit.ly/USBAroma

Like lighting incense sticks but your office has a pesky 'fire' policy that doesn't allow it? Try this weird gadget that comes with a bottle of aromatic oil. Or you can go and get a few assorted bottles of fragrant oils from your local spa and get started on aromatherapy within your office or home. This can also be used to spread foul smell too, though we don't see how anyone can get away with that considering not many people would be rumoured to have one of these.

FOR THOSE WITH DEEPER POCKETS

The wristwatch phone

Spotted @ eBay India - http://bit.ly/UltiWatch ₹10,300

One of those "wow" devices that you usually remember from spy thrillers from your childhood. Complete with a touchscreen barometer, thermometer, compass, pedometer, altimeter, stopwatch and MP3 player, this super-gadget will certainly let you live out your age old James Bond fantasy. But on a functional side, it's meant for athletes and outdoor enthusiasts who don't want to be shackled by the restraints of a conventional phone.

9 USB mini vacuum cleaner - ₹80

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

This doesn't have much suction to boast of but if you're a stickler for desk hygiene and can't tolerate even one speck of dust on your precious devices, you may consider getting a USB vacuum cleaner. We bought one for 80 bucks at Lamington Rd. and tried it out. Unfortunately, it couldn't even pick up little bits of paper. If you do manage to find one that is powerful enough, then it would be quite a useful gadget to have lying around. Dust begone!

10

USB massager - ₹150

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

Long hours at your computer can take it's toll on your eyes, neck and everything else that moves. At such times a USB massager can be of great relief. This is not to be confused with a masseuse; no one's going to pop out of the device once you plug it in to give you a nice back-rub. If not for massages, it does make for great office pranks. Slip it underneath your co-worker's chair cushion and watch the laughter flow. Don't get caught though.

11 Laptop cooling pad - ₹150

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

A laptop cooler is a nice investment if you happen to be one of those unfortunate souls who got themselves a laptop that tends to overheat a lot. Some coolers do have the option of adjusting the height and inclination to increase air flow but that can only help a little. Having an overheated laptop for extended periods can cause significant damage in the long term. So do yourself a favour and get a good cooler for your laptop.

12 USB hub - ₹220

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

We've all run out of ports one time or the other and regretted the absence of a USB hub lying around the house or work place. We managed to get this one off Lamington Rd. for a price a wee bit higher than usual and you can see why. It has a multi cardreader and bluetooth in it. Did we mention that it's shaped like a submarine/pontoon/airplane fuselage? If you ever get bored with it, pass it on to your co-worker and share the fun.

@Home

Goodies for your lair

13 Levitron - ₹774

Spotted @ Deal Extreme
http://bit.ly/MagneticGyro

A cool gadget to play with, a levitron is great for improving one's hand-to-eye co-ordination and for messing around with magnetism. You get a set of weights to adjust the height of the magnetic top. We found it to be a great gift. The fun you can have with this is endless.

14 Portable guitar amp - ₹2,450

Spotted @ eBay.in
http://bit.ly/guitamp

While not many us who've started out with the guitar would find it difficult to invest in a good amp, a cheaper option like this is hard to miss out on. You have the option of connecting an audio input which will be superimposed onto whatever you're playing. You can adjust the tone and drive with this portable amp which comes with an audio splitter; so you can connect two devices onto the output from this device. The rechargeable battery runs for 15 hours at full capacity.

15 Temperature indicating faucet - ₹1,250

Spotted @ eBay.in
http://bit.ly/TempFaucet

This accessory may not really be of any practical use but it's ubercool! It has three LEDs which switch according to the temperature of the water and impart an ethereal glow to the jet of water. It is powered by the water flow and thus needs no batteries. You could try to find a hundred rational justifications as to why you'd like to own it, but the fact is simple - it's way too cool!

16 Breathalyzer Keychain - ₹195

Spotted @ DealExtreme
http://bit.ly/AlcoMeter

A great party tool for any responsible host. Not that we suspect any of you are not responsible or anything, we just put this here because it has a handy parking meter timer and an in built flashlight. Though there are rarely any parking meters in use on Indian roads right now, are they?

17 Solar boat - ₹460

Spotted @ PriceAngels
http://bit.ly/SolarBoat

We at Digit will always encourage the use of renewable sources of energy; it's one of the ways we'd like to contribute to the environment. Even if it means having to put in a toy in the list, for this is no ordinary toy, but a solar powered toy! You can use this to teach kids at school about solar energy and the works, or stick this in your fish tank.

18 Toothpaste dispenser - ₹799

Spotted @ eBay.in
http://bit.lyTthPstDspnsr

All you lazy blokes out there for whom squeezing out a blob of toothpaste is a tedious activity, this is for you. It has a toolless design and is easy to load up. All you have to do is insert the toothbrush into the cavity and push onto the lever using your toothbrush. You don't have to worry about the toothpaste bleeding out gradually or for the tube drying out eventually as the control part of the dispenser closes when the lever is not triggered.

19 Shower radio - ₹999

Spotted @ HitPlay.in
http://bit.ly/ShwrRdio

If you have a habit of performing every action in your life to a beat, we wonder what you'd do in the bathroom, without the Shower Radio. It runs on two AAA batteries and has a one-button scan feature. So now you can have a beat off (read dance-off) while in the shower. Then again you can get your hands on a cheap FM transmitter and transmit weird creepy noises when someone is in the bathroom. Sweet revenge!

20 Speakers with mood lighting - ₹615

Spotted @ DealExtreme
http://bit.ly/MdLighting

This makes a groovy addition to your desk. The speakers change lights according to the sound pressure level and needs a minimum volume to come on. It means you'd have to blare music in order to get the funky lights to come on. Reports suggest sound quality isn't too great and neither is build. But hey, short of a disco ball this is the next best thing!

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2378-771065-A00 April 2011

21 USB drum kit ₹675

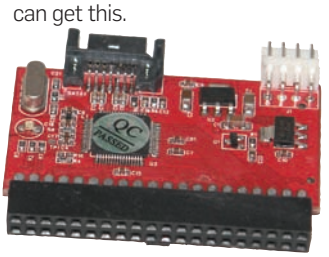
Spotted @ PriceAngels/eBay
http://bit.ly/USBDrumKit

If Gene Krupa or Buddy Rich had still been alive, they would've tried this and given a proper review but alas, you'll have to make do with us. For learners, getting a decent kit can be quite a pain, with second-hand kits starting at ₹7,000 and new ones costing close to 20K. This kit albeit silly does make for a good gift for youngsters. Moreover it's compatible with Sonar X1, Cubase and Nuendo. People who are serious about drumming should give this a miss and get a proper kit.

22 IDE - SATA Adaptor - ₹100

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

If you've got geriatric IDE drives lying around and want to increase your computer's storage capacity without buying new drives, the IDE-SATA adaptor is an ideal gadget for the job. This particular model can be used both ways, you can provide IDE input and get SATA output or vice versa. It's supprts SATA II and fits 3.5-inch HDDs. Models that support 2.5-inch HDDs are also available. Those who have ancient computers and want the extra storage space without investing in a new computer can get this.



FOR THOSE WITH DEEPER POCKETS

XFX Triple Monitor Stand - ₹17,450

Spotted @ XFXForce
http://amzn.to/XFXStand

The stand has a really heavy base and you can attach three monitors of upto 24-inch that accord to VESA 75mm or 100mm standard. You can tilt and swivel the entire stand or individual monitors separately. All the tools you need are stored in a hidden compartment at the back of the base. Max load bearing capacity is 30 Kg. The base has two USB and audio headers on the front and cable management clips on the back along the main stem. It comes at a premium, though. Add to that the cost of a triple monitor setup, and it's a fortune. Now you see why this is for people with deep pockets.

23 FarmVille alarm - ₹999

Spotted @ HitPlay.in
http://bit.ly/FarmAlarm

It'll wake you up to either a rooster crowing, a cow mooing or a sheep's baa(s). What's more is that it has a small slit on top which requires a key to be inserted to shut it off, and you must insert the animal corresponding to the sound heard or else it gets louder and louder. For fun, you can hide it underneath your sibling's bed to give them a surprising awakening.

24 Lava lamp - ₹2,999

Spotted @ HitPlay.in
http://bit.ly/FireflowLamp

An enigma of sorts till you figure out how this works. Quite a radical thing in the 70's the lava lamp is back again. Make your room groovy with this dancing wonder. It has an incandescent lamp in the base which heats coloured wax globules and makes them float. There are multiple models available with variations in the colour of the wax and the structure. The one we've got was shaped like a rocket. Coolness.

25 Key shaped piggy bank - ₹799

Spotted @ HitPlay.in
http://bit.ly/SavePiggyBank

Teach yourself the importance of saving money with a piggy bank. It's not shaped like a pig, so even if you had a really vague definition regarding animal cruelty then this won't fit in. It's made of hard plastic and has a metal base, so you'll hear a nice ring each time you drop a coin in it.

26 Grab-n-Go - ₹499

Spotted @ HitPlay.in http://bit.ly/GrabnGo

This is an ordinary torch lamp which runs on three AAA batteries and has five bright LEDs. You can mount it as a table lamp, closet lamp, in your car, underneath your desk, or anywhere you can attach the dock. When the need arises you can grab it and go! The batteries will last you 35 hours but we can't really be sure about that claim can we?

27 Remote control watch - ₹899

Spotted @ eBay.in http://bit.ly/RCWatch

With this gadget you can reduce your neighbour's TV volume and change the channel when Sachin is about to hit a century just to piss him off. The issue here happens to be the range which is limited to just 2.5 metres, so you'd practically have to be within your neighbour's house. Or maybe a simple hack using aluminium foil will increase your range.

Contraptions for your car

Must-have gadgets for the true road warrior

28 Brica UV alert shade - ₹1,422

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/UVAlert

This unassuming sun shade can save your skin. Literally! Ultraviolet Rays wreak havoc on your body's largest organ, your skin, causing anything from melanoma to severe sunburn. These sun-shades can be attached to your car windows and will block all incoming UVA and UVB radiation when open. Unless you want to go around looking like a pickled onion or a dried up prune, and have your skin peel off in strips, not to mention risking skin cancer, get some UV protection. Now!

29 Reversing camera - ₹1,500

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/RvrsCam

Ever wanted to emulate the terminator kid and drive backwards on the highway? Or wanted to reverse your car into your garage at speed? Well, this is the chance you amateur petrol-heads have been waiting for! Pop this camera behind your rear window or below your rear bumper and hook it up into a dashboard display and you are good to go.

31 Blind spot - ₹199

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/BlndSpt

Most of you won't even be aware that you have a blindspot. The first inkling you will have that something is wrong will be when a vehicle pops out of "nowhere" and you end up in a ditch. Your ideal mirror positioning should be such that you have a 360 degree field of view while looking directly at the road. This small gadget will be able to enhance the range offered by your regular mirrors.

30 Vacuum cleaner – ₹549

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/CarVacuumClnr

A trip to the beach is fraught with consequence. You shudder at the thought of all that sand, dirt, salt and traces of snacks that the kids will bring into your car. Here's a germophobe's perfect companion.

32 Car cleaning glove - ₹149

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/CleaningGlove

Do you shudder at the thought of a scratch on your car? Have no fear, the car cleaning glove is here. A glove? Yes, but one that's made of the finest, woven "Chenille" cloth. Soft and absorbent, it will keep your car surface scratch free while conserving water, too.

These awesome goodies were tracked down from online sources and local IT Hardware shopping centres. Go through the shipping policy before ordering from foreign sites. Products may or may not work as intended. The products we got off the street should be easily available at your local hardware market.

33 Tyre pressure gauge - ₹299

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/TyrePressure

Incorrect tyre pressure can result in everything from squealing tyres to a bouncy ride. You can even have your tyres disintegrate at higher speed drives! With this device, don't go around stopping your car every kilometer or so to check the tyre pressure all right?

Laws of Senior Recruitment # 43

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34 Magic pad – ₹250

Spotted @ HitPlay - http://bit.ly/MagicPad

A sticky pad of plastic that you can attach to the dashboard of your car. It is washable and can take loads of upto 8kg (so they claim). Fling on your mobiles, loose change or any little knick-knacks that you have or want quick access to and watch them cling to your dashboard like a mouse on a glue-trap as you drive over any road surface; be it the legendary salt flats of Bonneville or the fearsome dunes of the Sahara. Of course, we exaggerate.

35 Suction cups – ₹599

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/SctionCup

With a lifting capacity of over 200 Kg, these suction cups are very powerful.

Perfect for fulfilling your ambition of emulating the human spider, you might think. Unfortunately, the unwieldy latch mechanism precludes any such possibility.

Jest aside, this 12.5-inch long contraption is however very good for lifting glass into place, or, if you know what you're doing, you can use it to pull out those pestiferous dents in all the weird places on your car. Loose grip will never be an excuse with this around.

36 GPS car tracker- ₹2,399

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/GPSTrckr

This gadget will assist you in satisfying your deepest and darkest suspicions. You will no longer need to ask your girlfriend or boyfriend where she/he has been. You will know! The knowledge of their location will be at your fingertips. Pop this device into your car and laugh maniacally to yourself at the thought of the knowledge that will be yours. Maybe you can start your own private detective agency and actually do something with your miserable life.

37 Anti-skid pad – ₹85

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/AntiSkidPad

A simple rubber sheet that will keep your precious gadgets from slipping and sliding all over your dashboard. Not as effective as the Magic Pad, but at around a third of the price, it is good enough to keep your things in place while you go drifting around corners and indulging in traffic-light drag races. However, it isn't some sort of super sticky clamp though so make sure you don't go flying over bumps as there is no protection for vertical displacement.

38 Power inverter – ₹2,700

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/PowerInvrtr

Imagine you're stuck in rush hour traffic. Think of the frustration of start-stop traffic, moving along at a snail's pace, the maddening honking of irate drivers, revving of engines, breathing in petrol fumes, when you would rather be home enjoying your evening meal? Wouldn't a cup of tea be nice? Why not? Just get yourself this DC to AC 150W power inverter. It will not only allow you to charge your laptop on the go, but you can also plug in something like an electric kettle or mini-fridge to give yourself that much needed tea break or cool drink!

39 SOS car mate – ₹479

Spotted @ HitPlay - http://bit.ly/SOSCarMate

With a hammer capable of smashing the toughest automotive glass, a pin to deflate that pesky air-bag and a knife to slash your way through the tangled mess that is your seat-belt, this tool is the ideal companion to have when your car's own safety devices turn against you or when you just have to get out of the car as your flatulent friend purges his intestines.

FOR THOSE WITH DEEPER POCKETS

Mini IC engine - ₹7,499

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/ICEngine

Ah, now this is something really special. A 46AX, miniature aircraft engine manufactured by O.S. Engines, a Japanese company with a long heritage of making world class engines. The 46AX is one of the best aircraft engines in its class. Featuring a displacement of 7.5cc and max power output of 1.65hp @ 16,000 rpm, all this while weighing less than 500g make it a very powerful engine and perfect for the DIY model airplane enthusiast. It has been meticulously refined over a period of two years to produce one of the finest miniature aircraft engines ever made.

40 Four-in-one car charger – ₹299

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/CarTrplChrgr

Consisting of one USB port and 3x12V sockets, this device will effectively quadruple the no of extra chargers you can attach. Being a Digit reader, you would usually be festooned with a multitude of gadgets constantly running out of power. Get yourself one of these car multi-chargers and you can start your very own browse and buy store!

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Mobile madness

Useful, cool and quirky accessories for the mobile warrior

41 Capacitive stylus - ₹289

eBay India - http://bit.ly/101stylus

Although modern mobile OSes are designed to beautifully respond to your fingertips, the stylus isn't dead just yet. The reason is there's only so much accuracy your grubby paws can offer. Anything that requires a little more precision a notetaking/handwriting app perhaps or worse, a paint/sketching app and you'll soon wish you had this little device. It's specially designed to work with capacitive screens and not that expensive too. And in case you're wondering, no, any old twig won't work on your expensive new iPad.

42 Grass charging station - ₹850

Spotted @ Amazon - http://amzn.to/grassycharge

Before you think of fixing yourself a doobie, be warned, this ain't that kind of a charging station. It's meant for your gadgets and does a fine job of hiding away all the cable clutter that your power hungry gizmos are bound to create.

A compartment under the faux-grass accommodates all your adaptors and has hoops to wind the excess cable.

However since it's from Amazon and if you're not exceptionally lucky you might incur an excessive shipping cost. So, tread with caution on this one.

43 iPlunge - ₹550

Spotted @ eBay India - http://bit.ly/iplunger

One of the most ingenious low tech solutions to a very common problem how do you prop up your phone when your sitting back and watching that 58 min... er... educational clip? The iPlunge (which can also work with non-iPhone touch screens) clips on to the back of your device and props it at a convenient viewing angle leaving your hand free to tend to other things. No plumbing skills required. It works on any desk, table, plane, train where you might want to keep your phone.

44 The iKeyboard - ₹4,040

Spotted @ eBay India - http://bit.ly/ikeys

Meant for the keyboard warrior, this nifty little accessory is a bluetooth slider QWERTY keyboard case for the iPhone 4. If you're one of those people who just can't do without a physical keypad, and has probably put of purchasing an iPhone for its lack of keyboard love this gadget is for you. The accessory hooks up to your iPhone 4 via bluetooth and you can supposedly start typing as soon as you slide it out. The case even offers some amount of drop protection. Now, a price tag of Rs. 4,040 may be a little steep, but for someone who's already spent upwards of 30k on an iPhone 4, it may indeed fall into the affordable category.

45 Nano armband - ₹1,704

Spotted @ eBay India - http://bit.ly/NanoWatch

This could make a perfect gift for that sports freak friend of yours. One piece construction and with adjustable lycra strap, Griffin AeroSport promises flexibility and comfort for that morning run. And hey the rest of the times you can even make it a nano-wrist watch!

46 Universal wrist charger - ₹2,000

Spotted @ ThinkGeek - http://bit.ly/WrstChrgr

On a weekend getaway to the countryside, away from it all, the thing that you want to do most is update your Facebook status or make that one conference call pretending to be in office. But you can't do any of that because your phone's battery has run out. In your desperation you start looking for power sockets on nearby trees, with no luck. In this hour of need this wrist charger is your saviour. It's in effect a 1,500mAh battery pack that you can use even while operating the device. We still advise you to enjoy and have fun on your weekend getaway.

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47 Funky laptop skins - ₹559

Spotted at GadgetsGuru - http://bit.ly/LappySkin

In just over 500 bucks you can transform your battle-scarred old lappy into a funky looking designer piece. Within minutes, the shame you felt while pulling out your notebook will disappear and you'll be on your way to making heads turn. The skin comes in a size of 14 x 10.5 inch which is decent enough for most laptops.

48 Waterproof case - ₹699

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/WtrPrfCase

If you are the type of person who just cannot survive without your phone, you'd better want your phone to survive where ever you go; in the shower and even while scuba diving.

With an all-weather sealed PVC pouch and tested underwater up-to a depth of 3m, this is supposed to be one tough case.

49 Multi-directional iPad stand - ₹629

Spotted at GadgetsGuru - http://bit.ly/imultistand

If it functions as promised, this iPad accessory could perhaps even trump Apple's very own smartcover, especially if you're one of those who frequently uses the tablet on the work desk (you'd be surprised how many do). The multi-axis swivel design lets you set the iPad to the most comfortable viewing angle. A must have accessory to maximise your iPad media viewing experience.

50 Mobile phone zoom lens - ₹850

Spotted @ Mobile Barndo http://bit.ly/MobileZoom

Purists will most likely be smirking even as they're reading this. Yea we know, phones are not meant for serious photography. But since they say the best camera is the one that you have on you, you might as well retro-fit it with this killer zoom lens. It's actually a telescope with a adjustable bracket to latch-on to your phone. While we can't vouch for the efficacy of this idea the webpage for the device lists a number of phones for which it has been apparently tested. Still, it's the exact kind of device us geeks and DIY enthusiasts would like to fiddle around with.

51 SIM card reader - ₹149

Spotted @ eBay http://bit.ly/SIMCrdReader

Illegal in certain countries, but usefull nonetheless. The SIM card reader lets you read from & write data onto your SIM card. A word of warning though, phone companies have already thought of all the wondering haxOring you think you can do, so try not to mess up.

52 Voip handset - ₹590

Spotted @ eBay India - http://bit.ly/VOIPPhone

This handset adds tremendous ease to your interactions over Skype or any other Voip service. Simply plug this accessory to your laptop's USB port and you'll soon be making PC to PC and PC to Phone calls via Skype. The device even accesses your Skype information like contacts, call history, and displays it on an LCD screen. A highly functional device for a steal.

53 Old school phone for your mobile - ₹1,000

Spotted @ PriceAngels http://bit.ly/GrnddMobile

This is simply put a headset in the shape of an old school telephone, but it's far too cool to ignore. It plugs into your phone via a regular 3.5 mm jack. Health benefits include not frying your brains with cellphone radiation.

54 iPod boom dock - ₹999

Spotted @ HitPlay http://bit.ly/ipboomdk

This little device may not be big enough to carry on your shoulders but it still makes for a pretty decent travel companion. Be the life of any party with these tiny speakers.

Make it work

Knick-knacks for your productivity

55 Electronic bubble wrap key-chain - approx ₹650

Spotted @ DealExtreme URL - http://bit.ly/ElectricBblWrp

Stress reliever alert! Is your employer getting on your nerves? Feel like whooping the wind out of him or performing some maneuver out of Whackyourboss.com? You might wanna give this a try. Its got eight buttons that are supposed to feel like the real thing and when you 'pop' it, it makes a sound. What's even better is that every 100th 'pop' is a different sound - a fart, a bark or a burp. Collect them all!!

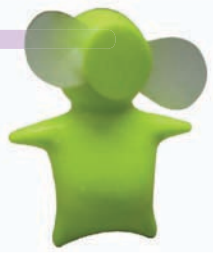
56 Sharpie Liquid Mechanical Pencil - approx ₹183

Spotted @ Amazon URL - http://amzn.to/LiquidPncl

Think of all the now-you-see-it-now-you-don't tricks that you can pull on your friends! Go into your sister's room and deface all the Edwards and Jacobs she has, make 'em more sparkly or for a change, give Bella a beard.

The possibilities are endless. By the time she tattles on you and brings in the cavalry (read Parents) you can slip in and wipe them off. Le Perfect Crime!!!

For about ₹400 you get two.



57 Portable Battery operated fan - approx ₹249

Spotted @ DealExtreme URL - http://bit.ly/PortableFan

Did your boss pull a George Costanza on you and stick you in a little room with no facilities? Get this fan to ease things up for you.

58 Remote plug - approx ₹225

Spotted @ DealExtreme URL - http://bit.ly/RmtPlug

Did your electrician screw you over by placing the electric sockets in those god-forsaken places? Then get your hands on this IR Remote controlled Socket. Plug this nifty gadget in and you can trigger the outlet using a small IR remote! Better yet, get a bunch of them and use them for every outlet in the house.

59 Butane workshop Torch - approx ₹549

Spotted @ DealExtreme URL - http://bit.ly/ButaneJet

Be warned - this is not a toy. This baby is rated for 1300°C. You could make your own computer cabinet or aluminium sculptures, impress women by bending metal bars with your bare hands(softened bars, that is), barbecue meat, fix everything lying around the house, destroy evidence *wink wink*. Refills available at ₹450.

60 Anti-static wrist strap - approx ₹89

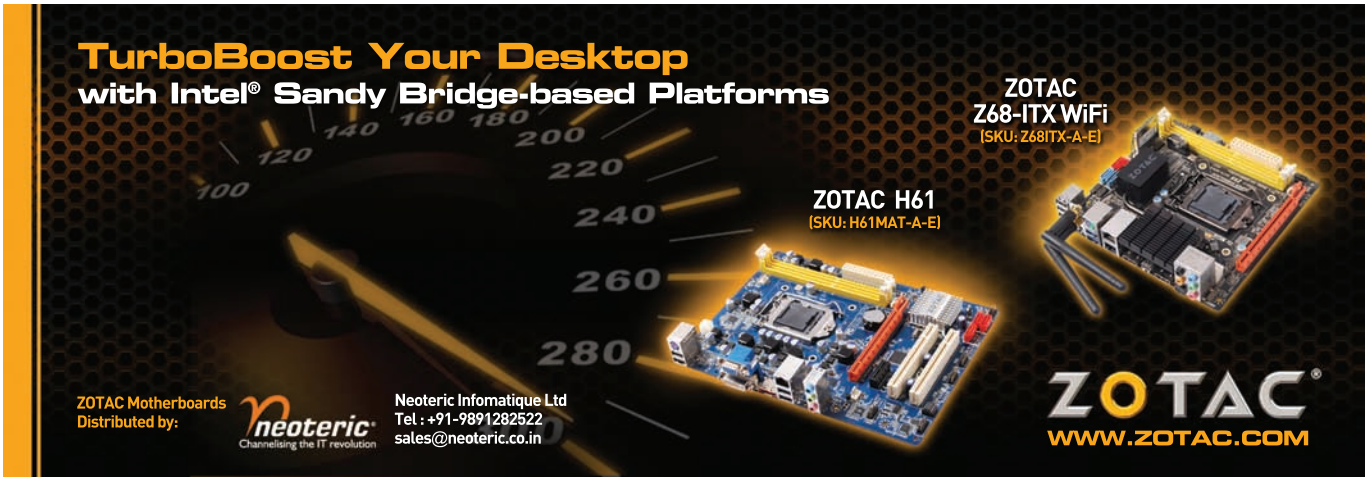
Spotted @ DealExtreme URL - http://bit.ly/AntiStaticStrap

If you have a carpet flooring or if you are Thor, you can't go around sensitive components without an anti-static wrist strap – oh no, sir. We were wondering what would happen if someone stood amongst a few Tesla Coils while wearing a wrist strap... care to experiment?

61 Running clock - approx ₹679

Spotted @ DealExtreme URL - http://bit.ly/RunningClk

Are you a heavy sleeper (read: lazy oaf)? May be a quick workout as you wake up is just what you need to get you on your feet. Then grab the Running Clock, this little gadget comes with a pretty loud speaker capable of putting out 80dB while running across the room from you.



62 USB NumPad - ₹130

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

You can embed this onto your bunker entry point as a password key-in device. Stupidity apart, this is indeed a neat gadget, especially if your activities include number punching at a ridiculous pace and you have to make do with a laptop/net-book whose numpad we all know requires the Fn key pressed down to be functional and isn't exactly well aligned. There's also a Backspace key and a custom key that puts in three zeros at once. Accountants will treasure this for sure.

63 USB MicroSD cardreader - ₹20

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

This thing is so small that you could smuggle it in and out of prisons by hiding it in unmentionable places on the human body. We'd attribute the string attached to the device as merely coincidence. Given the price that that this thing came in at, we aren't exactly sure as to what capacity cards this reader can support above the 4GB we tested it for but @ Rs.20 it's too sweet to ignore.

64 Jackly 31-piece Tool set - ₹80

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

You pull apart a piece of hardware and you come across weird shaped screws that none of your screw drivers can loosen up. Well this kit comes with bits you'd usually not find anywhere. It has Torx bits which are commonly used on HDDs and Nokia phones and Y-bits which are used on phone chargers. Getting this kit won't be redundant as most of the bits are for tiny screws so you won't have to dump any of your existing tools. Also the bit holder is magnetic, so you might wanna think twice before bringing this close to an exposed HDD.

65 USB mouse - ₹190

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

Yeah! No surprises here. If you're being a condescending bum right now, we'd ask you - Can you go long enough without one of these? We all have tried out touchpads on laptops but the comfort that a mouse provides can't simply be ignored. Not to mention that it also doubles up as a mace, anyone up for a homicide?

66 Keyboard organizer - ₹1,150

Spotted @ KeyboardOrganizer
http://bit.ly/KeBrdOrganizer

Not an ordinary multimedia keyboard, this one has premium features ordinarily found on some of the expensive keyboards. With three programmable keys, power-off button, volume dial & 14 multimedia buttons, feature laden would be an understatement for this curious keyboard! Oh, and we almost forgot, there's a hidden compartment beneath the keyboard.

67 USB foot switch - ₹509

Spotted @ PriceAngels
http://bit.ly/FootSwitch

A foot switch under Work Productivity? Suppose you are goofing off at work, you can assign a boss-key to the foot switch, so whenever you hear someone coming around to talk to you, all you need to do is trigger the foot switch and voila! You are working again!

68 Infrared thermometer - ₹915

Spotted @ DealExtreme
http://bit.ly/IRThermometer

An infrared thermometer measures the temperature of an object by using it's black-body radiation, which means you do not have to maintain physical contact with the object. This particular model has a distance-to-spot ratio of 8:1

FOR THOSE WITH DEEPER POCKETS

Watch Camera - ₹4,580

Spotted @ eBay.in
http://bit.ly/WatchCam

If you love James bond movies and always wanted to own a few of Q's gadgets, then this is as close as you can get. The watch camera has 8 GBs of memory, is capable of taking still images of 1600 x 1200 resolution and records video @ 20fps with a resolution of 640 x 480. We'd like to see a few scandals unfold with this watch. The mic has low gain though, and can only record audio from about 2 meters away. Journalists out to make a quick name would find this of great interest, we only hope that you don't come after us hoping for some scandalous scoop, not that we have anything to hide.

69 Scratchpad-cum-Mousepad - ₹999

Spotted @ HitPlay.in
http://bit.ly/ScratchScroll

This is the equivalent of using an Etch-a-Sketch as a mouse pad. You get a stylus along with the mouse pad, even if you can't find one when you need it, just use your fingers till you can copy it elsewhere. It's great for note-taking as it provides the feel of using a pen without wasting paper, so eco-friendly!

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Travel thingamajigs

Affordable accessories for the techie traveller

70 Flint spark lighter - ₹159

Spotted @ DealExtreme
http://bit.ly/FlintStick

An essential camping tool that won't disappoint you. Matches can get soggy, lighters can run out of gas but this nifty thing will produce sparks as long as you don't submerge it, but if you get one that has magnesium then you can make sparks underwater too, though we wonder why you'd want to do that. With Diwali coming up, you might be able to make use of this quite a lot. Cosplay enthusiasts could rig one of these to a staff and go nuts, you could be Gandalf! Fair warning though, magnesium flint sticks are capable of producing sparks as hot as 3,100°C and if you ever manage to light the stick on fire, there is no stopping it. It burns even in the absence of oxygen. Dangerous? Yeah! Cool? Damn right!

71 USB lamp - ₹50

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

This lamp is flexible and retains whatever way you shape it though it would have been a bit better if we could adjust its brightness, but for 50 bucks maybe that's a little bit more that we are asking for. Especially in hostels, if you want to give your roommate a rude wakening, just adjust the lamp to hover right above your roommate's eyes and flick it on, this thing is so bright that your roommate's dream world will light up instantly. Oh what fun!

72 USB charger - ₹ 60

Spotted @ Lamington Rd.

This can charge most batteries in the market, and with adjustable clips form factor compatibility isn't an issue. Also, nearly all PMPs available today are capable of being charged via USB. The influx of many USB devices in the market does mean that you end up using all available ports on your computer for some peripheral or the other. Multiple variants of the charger are available on the street from ones that have just one outlet mimicking Apple's iPod charger to ones that have enough ports to support the entire city.

73 Soccer binoculars - ₹120

Spotted @ DealExtreme - http://bit.ly/SoccerBinocs

An innocently disguised pair of binoculars, this may seem silly but once it folds up into a key-chain, nobody is going to suspect you were up to something.

If you have a habit of being up to no good, then you might want to reduce the chances of getting caught. With these binoculars, you won't be able to spot the fuzz from miles away, after all it only provides 3x28 magnification, but it goes a long way into looking inconspicuous. When caught at a crime scene, you could dangle the key-chain and go, "Officer, do you really think I could have done this?"

74 Emergency glow sticks - ₹899

Spotted @ eBay.in - http://bit.ly/GlowStik

Glow sticks are uber cool, period. Weather you want to throw an impromptu rave party or if you like to accessorise. Then there is the option of using the fluid inside to tattoo your eyeballs if you wish, but once activated the glow will die out in a few hours. A bunch of these are an essential for your zombie survival kit. Drinking the fluid is unlikely to cause significant morbidity or mortality but as with any self-luminescent object, we'd advise caution.

75 Complete USB accessory travel kit - ₹1,259

Spotted @ GadgetsGuru - http://bit.ly/usbTravelKit

Deep breath. Here we go: Stereo earphones and microphone, multiple USB A to A, FireWire to six-pin, RJ11 cable, USB A/M to USB A/Male, USB A/M to USB B/Male connector, retractable USB mouse, four port hub, RJ45 to USB... ok, we've run out of breath and there are six other accessories to go in this USB swiss knife. Nuff said.

76 52 mm macro kit - ₹299

Spotted @ eBay.in - bit.ly/MacroKit

This kit gives you four lenses ranging from 1x to 10x. The drawbacks being that you'd have to get very close to the subject and your depth of field becomes very narrow even at the smallest aperture. So, if you are on a safari and want to photograph that magnificent nose of an African lion or the pointy horn of the white rhinoceros, then this isn't exactly the kit to vouch for.

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77 SLR wrist strap - ₹249

Spotted @ eBay.in - http://bit.ly/SLRStrap

If you're tired of slinging the camera around your neck and would like to opt for some change or if you'd like to juggle your brand new DSLR, this wrist strap is a good option. It fits snugly and tightens about your wrist, then you attach the strap lug to your camera and you're ready to go. It feels good and secure but we do find it a bit counter-productive as your hand does get occupied and SLRs are not a light weighted to begin with.

78 Macro extension tube - ₹520

Spotted @ eBay.in - http://bit.ly/MacroExtension

You might be wondering what these rings have to do with macro lens, well this is actually used for taking Macro shots with your SLR. You might be thinking we're stark raving mad as you've never seen a Macro lens for less than Rs.20,000 or Rs.15,000 if you happen to get one of your friends to smuggle this in, but the basic principle about taking macro shots is to distance your lens from the sensor. The lenses that cost a lung do the very same thing except they are extensible while these come as three separate rings which you can attach one atop the other to get the desired macro shot. The difference? Not much apparently, except for the price. A scandal!

79 ezCassette - ₹1,119

Spotted @ eBay.in - http://bit.ly/icasette

If you've got one of those old cassette players in your car or at home and a PMP then you can make use of the ezCassette to club them together. Attach your PMP via the stereo plug and stick the module inside your cassette player. It's as if you've added a playlist feature to your old player, you can make use of all the features of the PMP and get the sound quality of your old system. It's a double win! The cable can be a hindrance for cassette bays that need to be closed. We don't see much issues with the ezCassette adapter other than the fact that it's rendered redundant if you have a 3.5mm stereo input on your old system.

80 Foldable flash diffuser - ₹400

Spotted @ eBay.in - http://bit.ly/FlSoftBox

At first glance this seemed like a baby bib but 'further inspection' revealed it to be a foldable flash diffuser. The diffuser helps soften the light and gives you a more uniformed distribution of light. You can also wear two of these around your arms as a pixie disguise.

81 Angry Birds backpack - ₹509

Spotted @ PriceAngels - http://bit.ly/AngryBag

Given the ongoing AngryBirds fever that's got everyone lunging fierce li'l birdies at piggies, this was too cute to ignore.

82 mp3 Sunglasses - ₹945

Spotted @ eBay.in - http://bit.ly/mp3vision

This is what you get when you club together a polaroid eyewear, a mp3 player, USB flash drive and clip all the wires. The battery life is a measly three hours and takes three hours to charge. The shades are polaroid and flip-up while the mp3 player boasts of a 2 GB capacity and a SNR of 87.2dB. Playback and volume control buttons are located on the stem.

83 Flash shoe extension - ₹375

Spotted @ eBay.in - http://bit.ly/FlSoftBox

You can attach a flash on one hot shoe which latches onto your camera and another one on the hot shoe at the end of the cable. You can choose which flash you want to fire or both together. though we'd pity your human subject especially if you are new to photography. Health warning:- Being subject to incessant, rapid bursts of light may cause seizures.

FOR THOSE WITH DEEPER POCKETS

Car mounted camcorder ₹5,400

http://bit.ly/CarCam
Spotted @ eBay

A gadget for the true driving enthusiast. This camera has a suction cup and can be mounted on any flat surface. Its adjustable head also means that you can swivel it in any direction to suit your needs. Those fancying themselves as TV presenters can feel like Jeremy Clarkson and present on exposition of the car they're driving. Self-professed amateur racers of course, can record their shenanigans for posterity. Just make sure you aren't foolish enough to do something illegal and post it on YouTube.

Assorted

A mish-mash of stuff that we know you want...

84 Universal nylon strap – ₹99

Spotted @ DealExtreme - http://bit.ly/NylonStrap

Made of just rubber and velcro, this ingenious device is perfect for attaching items like torches, scopes, etc. to your arm or bike helmet or even air rifles. This strap will come in very handy if you're a burglar and want to free up a hand by attaching a torch to your arm.

85 Piano roll – ₹1,799

Spotted @ DealExtreme - http://bit.ly/PianoRoll

Presenting, the Portable Roll-Up Piano. At a party? No electricity? No music? Not to worry, whip out your piano, roll it out with a flourish and start playing. Enthrall your friends and audience with your musical "genius".

86 Tritium key-chain – ₹425

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/TritiumKeyChain

A key-chain with a radioactive tritium core. Wait.... What? Radioactive? Isn't that dangerous? You want me to keep a cancer-inducing key-chain with me at all times? No. Not exactly. With a biological half-life of barely 14 days, it won't cause any harm even if ingested. On the other hand, what you will get is an uber-cool key-chain with a green glow that will last more than 10 years!

87 Mini apple speaker –₹110

Spotted @ Lamington Road

This little device is quite literally a small, mono speaker shaped like an apple. A cheap rip-off of the xMini capsule speakers, the sound quality leaves much to be desired. It's best used to augment the pitiful volume levels of your mobile phone's speakers.

88 Fiio E5 – ₹940

Spotted @ Fort, Mumbai

One of the cheapest and best portable headphone amps around. Slightly larger than an iPod Shuffle, the Fiio E5 packs quite a punch. Capable of handling headphones with impedances of upto 300 ohms.

89 AF-S 24-70 mm f/2.8 coffee cup – ₹1,299

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/NikonMug

A thermos flask designed to look exactly like a Nikon AF-S 24-70mm lens. Gift this cup to your dearest photographer buddy and watch his face light up with joy, only to fall again into an expression of miserable hatred when he realizes what he actually got.

90 Hybrid solar charger – ₹909

Spotted @ DealExtreme - http://bit.ly/SrvvlKit

The ultimate portable charger. You can charge the internal battery via a hand-crank or the power of the sun. It comes with multiple charging pins as well as a radio and flashlight. Whether you're at home and feel too lazy to get out of bed or whether you're the sole survivor of a nuclear holocaust, this is the device to keep your gadgets charged under any circumstances!

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91 Miniature gunship – ₹1,799

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/MissileChopper

Terrorize your office with this fearsome, missile toting RC chopper from Modelart! It has 2 missiles that can be fired independently along with a light for night driving. This 7.5" chopper comes with a complete set of spares so you can fly without fear of your chopper being rendered unusable by your amateur piloting skills. Get your friends to pick up a couple of these and you can have your very own dogfights!

92 LED "headlamp" - ₹599

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/LEDHeadLight

Whether you fancy yourself to be a naked mole rat, spending most of your life underground excavating tunnels or just need a night lamp to cram in some midnight "studying", this is an ideal tool for you.

93 Four-in-one pen – ₹349

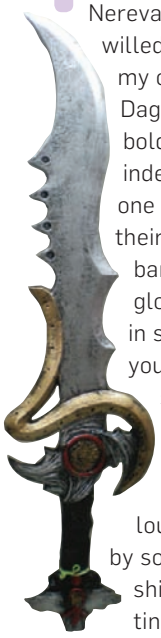
Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/PenRecorder

The pen is mightier than the sword and here is proof. This all-in-one gadget combines a pen, laser, LED torch and, the best part, an extensible baton. Whip this little thingy out of your pocket and show the neighbourhood bully who is boss! Also useful for professors of a more disciplinary nature.

94 Mythical sword – ₹999

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/MythicalSword

Dagoth Ur: "Are you really Nerevar reborn?? Nerevarine: "I am a self-willed hero, and I make my own fate." Dagoth Ur: "You're bold. I honour your independence. You're one to teach the gods their limits. I hope the bards will praise the glory of your death in song." If such are your dreams, get this sword, extruded in the ovens of Sahara Thermocole and meticulously handcrafted by some guy in a blue shirt. It's your destiny, take it!



95 iSteering - ₹1,192

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/iSteer

Accelerometer based racing games are available aplenty and what more do you need to enhance the driving experience than the iSteering! Lock your iPhone/Touch to it and immerse yourself in your game.

96 Light Sabre Key-chain - ₹335

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/sabrekey

The image of Luke Skywalker battling Darth Vader on the bridge of the Death Star while Darth Sidious watches with calculated malevolence has been etched into everyone's mind. This mini lightsaber key-chain while no substitute for a true lightsaber, will at least suffice as a poor substitute as you relive those moments in the drab confines of your cubicle.

97 Digital thermometer and compass - ₹589

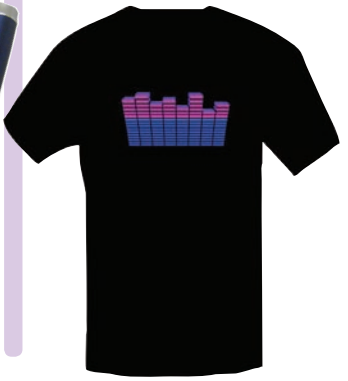
Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/SrvvlKit2

A tool for the outdoor geek, if such a creature even exists. Comes bundled with a digital thermometer with readings displayed in Celsius and Fahrenheit, back-lit clock and a digital compass. It also has a safety hook so you can hook it to your belt and wander freely about the wilderness checking your orientation and temperature.

98 LED music T-Shirt - ₹1,399

Spotted @ HitPlay - http://bit.ly/LEDTShirt

A T-shirt with a sound sensitive, visual, LED powered equalizer! What could be more cooler? A must-wear to the disco, on the street or even to college, this T-shirt makes a definite style statement. Powered by 4xAA batteries. The only draw-back? It isn't machine washable.



99 LED pocket lamp - ₹159

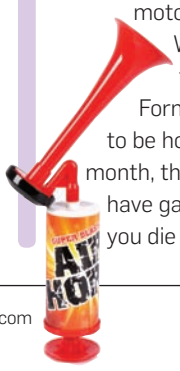
Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/CardLamp

A portable lamp that fits in your wallet. About the size of a credit card and only slightly thicker, this tiny little lamp will be your "glimmer" of hope in your "darkest" hour.

100 Air horn - ₹195

Spotted @ eBay - http://bit.ly/AirHorn

The air-horn, its ringing blasts a clarion call to all motoring fans. With the first Indian Formula One race to be hosted next month, this is a must-have gadget for all you die hard fans.



101 Disguised voice recorder – ₹655

Spotted @ DealExtreme

A devious device, this pen is actually a voice recorder masquerading as a pen. Charge it, insert a TF card upto 16gb and place it wherever you like. It will automatically start recording when it detects volume levels of over 60db.

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Used lens?
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Learn how to clean your camera lenses properly. All you need is a set of lungs and a cloth **http://smu.gs/oZ5hER**

Accessorise your dSLR

This DIY will enable you to create one of the most basic and essential accessories for your dSLR

photos.com

Anirudh Regidi
readersletter@thinkdigit.com

Photography is a form of art. It isn't just about taking a picture or cataloging a memory, it's an expression of your vision – your vision of what the scene in front of you can be. The function of a photographer is to bring this vision to life. In the days of film, photographers had to rely almost entirely on their experience to assist them in realising this vision. Now, with the advent and proliferation of digital cameras, this task has become much easier. The instant feedback gives us the ability to review our images on the fly and helps perfect the image to match our vision.

Among these various tools is a small, underrated little tool known as a remote shutter release. The main function of this tool is to release the shutter of the camera without the operator actually touching the camera. This might not seem like much, but when it comes to images with slow shutter speeds, every tiny vibration can have a drastic impact on the image. Mounting on a tripod does help, but when it's the pressure of the photographer's finger that can cause the vibrations in the first place, the remote trigger comes in very handy.

Remote shutter release

Consider a situation where you want to take photographs of lightning, or better yet, as Diwali is around the corner, fireworks, especially the rockets. The ideal way to go about this is to set up a tripod and mount your camera ensuring that it's pointing at the night sky where you expect the said lightning or rocket to explode into existence with all its fierceness and glorious brilliance!

Capturing this moment requires setting the camera on a tripod in "bulb" mode and releasing the shutter at the correct time; then waiting for the event to pass and then letting the shutter close. The longer the shutter exposure, the longer your streamers will be. This is a simple enough task on paper, but when you realize that you have to stand absolutely still for 7-10 seconds with your finger on the shutter release of your camera, you realize that there is a very real chance of ruining the image with unexpected vibrations. It is in situations like these where the remote shutter release will come in very handy.

Tips

Hunting around for the parts presented no problem; most of them were available at local electronics and mobile repair shops. We did run into some trouble while trying to construct the trigger. As you'll see on the next page, you require 2.5mm to 3.5mm headphone adapters. Unfortunately, the first pair we bought turned out to be a mono adapter when we actually needed a stereo adapter. The lesson here: make absolutely sure that you have a stereo adapter and a stereo line-in line-out cable. To verify, use a multimeter and do a continuity check, or just plug in some earphones and listen to a track which you know has stereo sound.

DIY

After a bit of delving around we found the approximate cost of a wired remote shutter to be in the range of ₹1500. Being Digitians and fiddle-some by nature, we dug around a bit more and found that the trigger circuitry is actually very simple to reproduce. Simple enough for a Digit DIY. Cost? Not more than ₹200.

The internet is choc-a-bloc with many designs for making a simple remote trigger. After a bit of brainstorming, we settled on one for the convenience of having a modular design and the ability to extend the cable as much as is required.

Fake Firefox update

Spam mail, including a link to a Firefox update which includes a password stealing trojan, is currently circulating. Beware

Bumpy ride

The London Ambulance service claims that speed bumps kill almost 85 people for every 1 person saved!

Items required (approx. ₹200):

Small empty bottle or container (we used a Tic-Tac container)

2.5mm to 3.5mm stereo headphone adaptors (2 nos. - ₹60 each)

Stereo line-out/line-in extension cable (1 nos - ₹25-50)

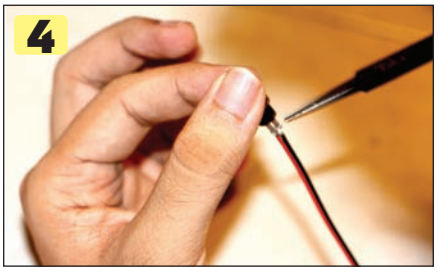
A length of wire 20 cm at most. (₹5)

Switches (2 nos - ₹20 each)

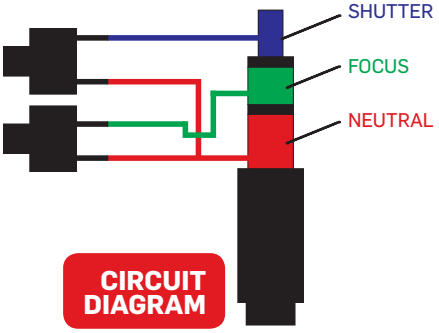
Tools required:
Soldering gun, solder and flux; wire strippers; drill (optional); a precise ruler or Vernier callipers; glue gun (optional); marker pen (optional)

Hold the container in your hand and decide where you want the buttons placed. Bear in mind that there will be two buttons.
Now, measure the diameter of the switches and note it down.

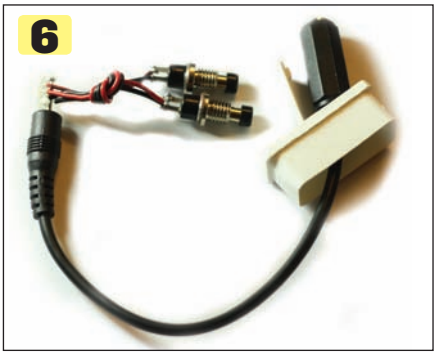
Drill the marked holes to a little less than the diameter of the switches. You might also need to make an opening at the bottom to put in the wires.



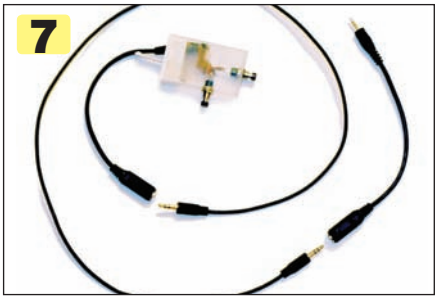
Solder the contacts as shown in the circuit diagram. Just make sure none of the contacts are shorted.



As we used a Tic-Tac box, we inserted a 2.5 mm to 3.5 mm adaptor through it and knotted the end to ensure it didn't slip out.



Attach the cables to the 2.5mm jack using the circuit diagram as reference. After soldering the contacts, we glued the whole setup so that the wires didn't come loose.



Carefully insert the apparatus into the box and slot in the buttons. Connect the cables as shown.
Your dSLR remote trigger is ready. Hook it up and fire away! Press the focus button to verify the focus, press the shutter button to focus and shoot.

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GNU GPL v3
The latest version of this copyleft licence has made some significant changes. Details in this quick guide: **http://bit.ly/gplv3guide**

GNU's take on OSS
If you really want to go deep into the differences between Free Software and Open Source software, this is an interesting read: **http://bit.ly/fsmosm**

Which Open Source licence is for you?

Even if you're not a developer, but are curious about how Open Source stays free, this is a must-read. But say you're thinking of building or are in the process of building an Open Source application. Which licence you should go for depends a lot on what your goals are. Read on to unravel the labyrinth of FOSS licences, and get one that fits your needs perfectly*

Siddharth Parwatay
siddharth.parwatay@9dot9.in

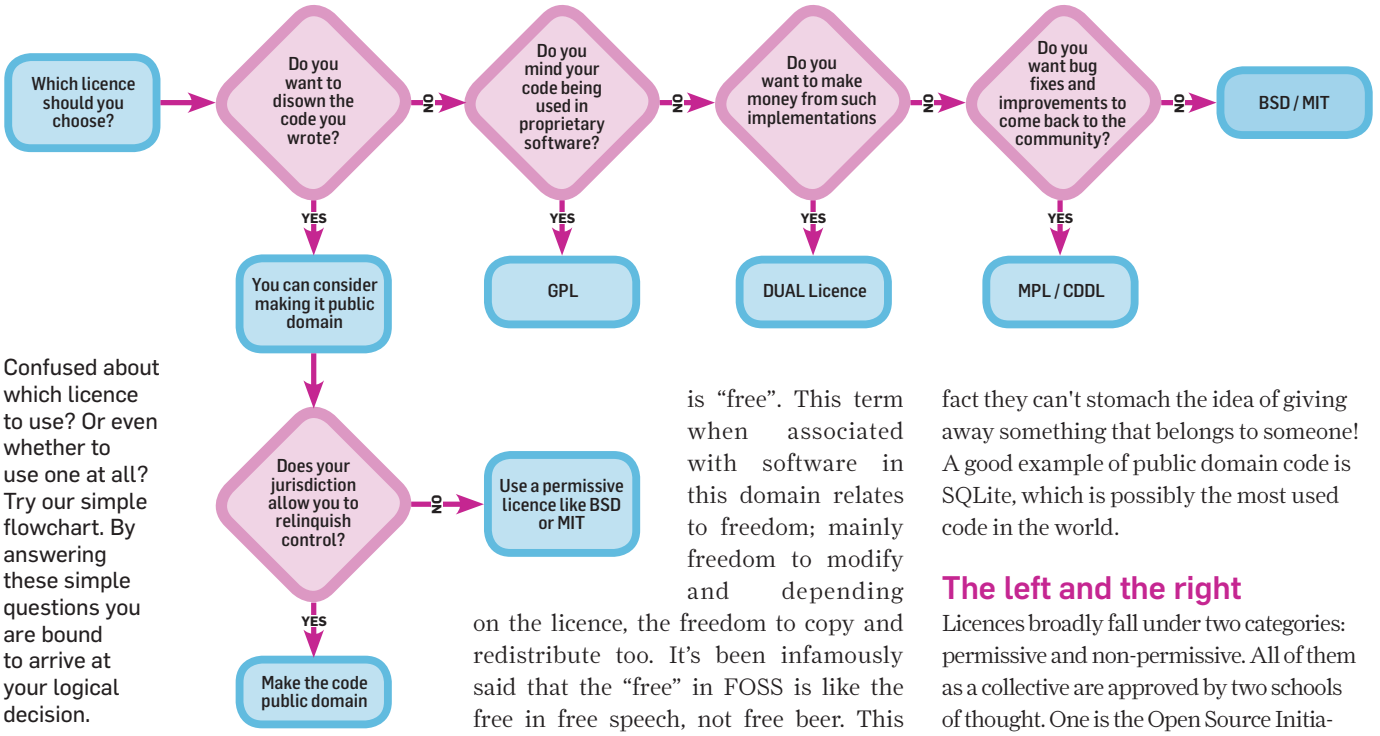
The world of Open Source is guided by a philosophy and is strongly bound by principles. The righteousness that permeates the far corners of this world is so strong that even when non-coders think of the subject, there's an inner glow they feel about being on the side of something that's not evil, something that has honour, a way of life that stands for something. Yes, when you install VLC or tinker around in Audacity you feel it too; it's like belonging to a movement and partaking vicariously in that collective warm fuzzy feeling. Ever wonder why that is? And what is it that keeps Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) what it is – open and free? Well, since we're laying it on so thick you've probably guessed it – yup it's the licences that govern the mechanisms of FOSS.

How do they do that? By being the guardians of the philosophy and protectors of the code creators' intentions. To understand this, we need to first delve into a bit of history which will also help us understand a few of the terms involved. The first and the foremost term (and perhaps the most often misused one) is "free". This term when associated with software in this domain relates to freedom; mainly freedom to modify and depending on the licence, the freedom to copy and redistribute too. It's been infamously said that the "free" in FOSS is like the free in free speech, not free beer. This means that free software is different from freeware and ergo Open Source need not always be free of cost. Surprised? It's true. The licensing framework is what allows some individuals and companies to make money off Open Source. The much-talked about dual-licensing model is one way to ensure that.

The poles of the spectrum

Now that we're getting to the actual licences part, it's important to understand the spectrum of licences that can exist. On one end, we have public domain code that has no copyright, while on the other end there is proprietary code. Public domain means that the creator of the software has relinquished his copyright over the code. In between the two poles we have licences like the Berkeley Software Distribution (BSD), GNU General Public licence (GPL) and various others. Some are closer (in the rights that they grant) to public domain while some are closer to proprietary or Closed Source software.

It's interesting to note that some countries, especially in the European Union, don't recognize the concept of public domain. The rationale is that if you wrote it, you're the author and treating that as a fact they can't stomach the idea of giving away something that belongs to someone! A good example of public domain code is SQLite, which is possibly the most used code in the world.



Confused about which licence to use? Or even whether to use one at all? Try our simple flowchart. By answering these simple questions you are bound to arrive at your logical decision.

The left and the right

Licences broadly fall under two categories: permissive and non-permissive. All of them as a collective are approved by two schools of thought. One is the Open Source Initia-

StayFocusd

This Chrome extension restricts the time you spend on time-wasting sites like Facebook to improve productivity!

tive (OSI) and the other is Stallman's Free Software Foundation (FSF). Both schools of thought have a few things in common and allow certain basic rights. These include the right to use, copy, modify to suit user need or create derivative works and redistribute software. Where the permissive and non-permissive licences differ is with respect to how each one is redistributed. The GNU GPL gives all rights but when it comes to redistribution, the provisions of the GNU GPL imply that the rights you got must be transferred to others. This means that GPLed code will forever remain GPLed.

The licence (in a viral manner) attaches itself to the entire code from then on. GPL is hence called a "copyleft" (as opposed to copyright) licence. Licences other than copyleft ones are permissive. Take the case of the BSD licence. It grants all the basic rights; even when it comes to redistribution you're free to redistribute under a different licence. All that it asks is that you acknowledge the original creators but not associate or use the original author's brand equity (so to speak) with your product. Therefore code under BSD can be used in proprietary software (and it often is). You can even chose a different licence for your product and charge fees. This is why characteristically on the spectrum it lies closer to public domain.

The licences themselves

What is a licence? Broken down, a licence is simply text that tells the user (and the world) how he or she may use the accompanying software and code. Back in the day when Open Source was gaining ground, many people came up with their own licences. On the OSI page that lists licences as per category, there are more than 50 licences (http://www.opensource.org/licences/category). Theoretically, if you understand legalese a bit and are smart enough to cover loopholes, you could come up with your own licence. Of course, it may not be approved by the OSI or FSF, but you could still use it.

Because projects (especially on the enterprise level) use code from a plethora of sources, it becomes difficult to keep track of the various samples and what licence governs them. Some developers (especially on the mobile side) and even large corporations don't really bother with any of the "licence stuff". But when working with parts of Open Source components, there should ideally be a concern for legalities. Should your application become widely used, and you've violated rights ascribed to a code package you've used, you're bound to face some action. Sometime back, Microsoft came under the radar for using GPLed code for one of its Windows 7 applications. When this news was publicised, not only was it embarrassing, but as per the licence norms Microsoft had to open source the code for that application. This disclosure spawned tracking software such as Developer Assistant from a IP company called Protecode. It ensures licence compliance by detecting violations in real time.

Which one is for you?

The answer to that question depends on a few factors. The first is: Did you write the code from scratch? If so, then the entire licence world is open for your picking. Heck, you can even keep it proprietary. The option to make money (and continue to be open source) is most easily available in this case. For example, Qt is available under both, GPL and Commercial licence as is the more famous MySQL.

But no one writes code from scratch these days. You take code from Open Source projects, mix and modify and build something of your own. In this case, what licence option is available to you depends entirely on what licence that code was governed under. Copyleft licences like the GPL make the resultant software also GPL. Check up on the accompanying box for details on which one to use when. It's important to note that going in for custom or esoteric licences will deter contributors.

**We wish to evoke IANAL and TINLA clauses of the Internet Bylaws section C. We are not lawyers and this is not legal advice.*

DO this

If you're still confused about which licence to use, you can take the help of this online tool to help you decide. All you have to do is tick the specific rights you wish to reserve, and the Licence Chooser will identify any licences that match your combination. Of course it's not exhaustive, but it does give a certain degree of information.
Link: **http://three.org/openart/licence_chooser/**

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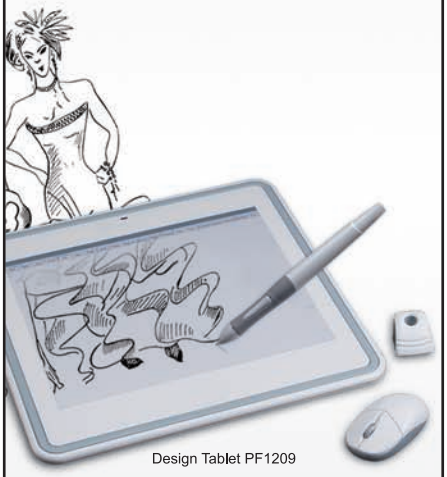
Your eyeball view. Our technology new.

Sketch your imagination

RIGHT HERE. RIGHT NOW.



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Chrome acceleration
Check out this link with tips on how to even further improve rendering speeds on Google chrome. **http://bit.ly/oISbet**

Lion on a stick
Apple is selling Mac OS X Lion on a USB stick for $69. **http://bit.ly/q7tKFn**

From overheating issues and programming troubles to security threats

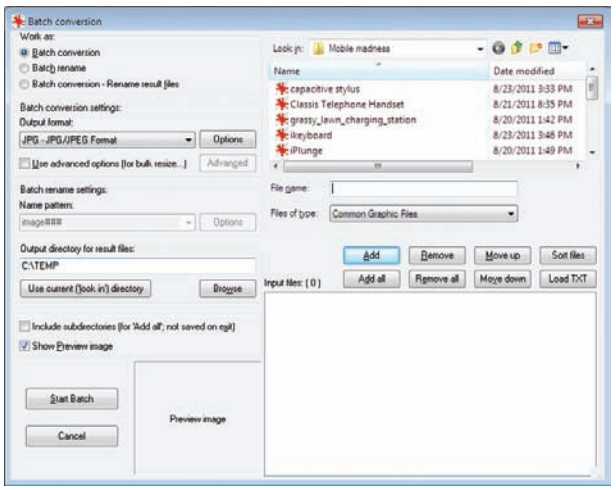
Everyone needs help troubleshooting tech problems and that's were we and our forum members are happy to help.

Resizing lots of images

I don't have Adobe Photoshop in my Laptop. Can you send me the software (any version) as I have got hundreds of photographs of my daughter's marriage which I want to reduce in size and send to my friend abroad. My friend told me that Adobe Photoshop can do this. If you have already given the software in our magazine in past please let me know.

Priyesh K.Mehta

You can install IrfanView from any month's DVDs, and use that to batch process images. You will be able to select all images, and convert them to smaller resolutions and file sizes. Open one of your images, and Press [B]. Look at all the options and also remember to look at the advanced options. Set the long side to be resized to something like 800 pixels, and then select all images, add them and then batch resize all in one go. You can also choose to make the images half, quarter, etc, sizes. Please remember: Do NOT set the output folder the same as the one where your originals are. If you get stuck anywhere along the way, let us know, and we'll can send you a detailed step-by-step workshop.



Batch conversion in Irfan View

Backup solutions

I am a regular reader of your esteemed magazine Digit from last 2 years. And I am working as Computer Programmer in KVK, Ghazipur. We have 5 PC connected with internet/LAN. I want to store the files/folders on 2 computers simultaneously through synchronization software for safety in accidental damage. In this regard, let me know about best available synchronization software available for us.

Ashish Kumar Bajpai

Have you considered using RAID 1 (Mirroring), to ensure that all data is backed up on anywhere from 2 to 4 disks? There are many synchronisation software available, but do you also have a versioning requirement?

Need auto upgraded bootable CD

I have a genuine Windows XP home edition sp1 bootable CD. But whenever I format the PC I have to download windows updates and install, which is a very time and money consuming task. Therefore I want to know if there is any way to download these updates and integrate with the copy of bootable Winxp CD which I have so that I do not have to download updates again and again.

Rohit Kunde

The whole process although fairly easy, is a little lengthy to explain here. It's called Slipstreaming and a Google search for "slipstream updates into win XP" will find all you need. In any case, here is a pretty good guide for slipstreaming Service Pack 3 - http://lifehac.kr/xpsp3xp

Temperature issues

I play Crysis 2 on my PC, it was working good since the starting (in june somewhere), then just a week ago it was working surprisingly awsome, then yesterday, due to heavy rain, there was fluctuation, I turned off my PC, when I started it again, it started normally (not in safe mode) but had the resolution changed, so I thought of changing the resolution, by mistake it went to such one, which my monitor didn't support, so the error "INPUT NOT SUPPORTED" started coming, I was tensed as in a hurry, I had pressed enter also and that setting was saved, today I got it done by a technician. After that, my PC is running the same, just when I run Crysis 2, it works really good on the menus, but when I start single-player or multi-player, it starts stuttering, then after some second the error comes "TEMPERATURE TOO HIGH, CHECK YOUR FAN OR HEAT SINK". Please tell me a solution asap, as my father won't allow me to call the technician again so frequently and that too for only a game.
MY SYSTEM SPECS :-

- Intel core 2 duo E7550 @ 2.93 ghz
- 2047 MB of RAM
- Windows Vista 32 bit
- nVidia Geforce 9400
- 500 GB HDD

Nishant Arya

Thermal events usually occur when your cabinet is not getting enough air flow to quickly dissipate heat. Open your cabinet, and ensure that the CPU and GPU fans are working properly when the PC is powered on, also ensure that there's no dust on either one. The best way to get rid of dust from heat sink fins is by a motorised high powered blower, if not those small mechanical squeeze blowers would do just fine. They're pretty cheap and available at almost any hardware / IT shop.

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M202

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Are there multiple iPhone or iPod players in your house? Now everyone can get a charge. Introducing the dual-dock [Octiv™ 202] for iPhone & iPod. It does everything a docking speaker does multiplied by two! Charge up and Rock out to your choice of music. With the free Music Mix app you can now shuffle songs from both players and seamlessly share each other's music without skipping a beat. Plus, its wedge design fits neatly on you desk, kitchen counter, and other tight spaces. Best of all, the Altec Lansing name means a crisp, clear sound to put your groove.

- Fits neatly in tight spaces like corners and kitchen counters
- Full-feature remote
- Built-in USB port lets you charge a third device
- Listen without interference, shielded for mobile phones

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Pokki
A small application that allows you to access a wide variety of web apps from the comfort of your taskbar. **http://bit.ly/qIqtrO**

SuperCopy
An alternative file copier with file prioritization. **http://bit.ly/osGIAH**

Programming woes

When I am using Ubuntu 10.10 Live CD it is working 'ok' except one thing - when I am writing and saving a '.c' program on a windows partition (either XP or Vista) it's ok, when I am compiling it using gcc or cc it is ok but the generated executable file has no execute permission! I am also failed to give any execute permission to it (both chmod command and GUI ways are tried!). So I am unable to execute it. But if the same thing can be done in the live user directory (i.e., /home/ubuntu) it gives the execute permission and executes it properly. Please help me whether there exists any way of executing files from windows partition or not ?

Roubhya Shankar Aluni

Windows has no concept of execute permissions, so you cannot set the execute permissions of individual files. Use the home directory instead. Keep your source files on your windows partition, but generate he output binaries in the home directory

While you cannot set the execute permissions of individual files on an NTFS / FAT32 partition, you can set permissions globally for all files on the partition while you are mounting it. If you want you can unmount and then remount the windows partition with the exec permission. You can do this by appending -O exec in your normal mount command.

Could this be a security threat?

Today I got a notification from Gmail , it says that my account is accessed from america 21 hours and in bracket "nokia.net:66.54.64.236' but 21 hours ago I used from my nokia mobile is there any danger.

Rajshekhar Sirimala

This is a Nokia server accessing your mail for you and compressing data to send to your phone. It's safe.

Abnormal CPU Usage (From www.thinkdigit.com/forum)

I have been facing a strange problem with my desktop since couple of days. whenever i do refresh on desktop the CPU usage sour up to 100%, hence i have to restart my PC to bring it down in normal state. I could not figure out the problem. please help me.

my processor is AMD Athlon II X4 965, OS is Windows 7 32bit.

soumya.b

Some processes could be using the CPU at 100%. Check for the process in `Windows Task Manager > Processes.` And kill the processes that using 100% CPU. Use software like ProcessExplorer for further details about specific process. CPU usage also increases drastically in case of Virus and Trojans in your PC. Scan 1st thru the updated Antivirus s/w.
- Tenida & pulkitpopli2004

Get me outta safe mode (From www.thinkdigit.com/forum)

My windows 7 PC is no more working in normal mode, it can only accessible in safe mode, system restore point is also not working, and after i entered into start up screen, the internet connectivity symbol is continuously displaying the connecting (green round circle) symbol..and even computer doesn't make any response even to my single left click! how to get rid off this suryaheatz

asingh

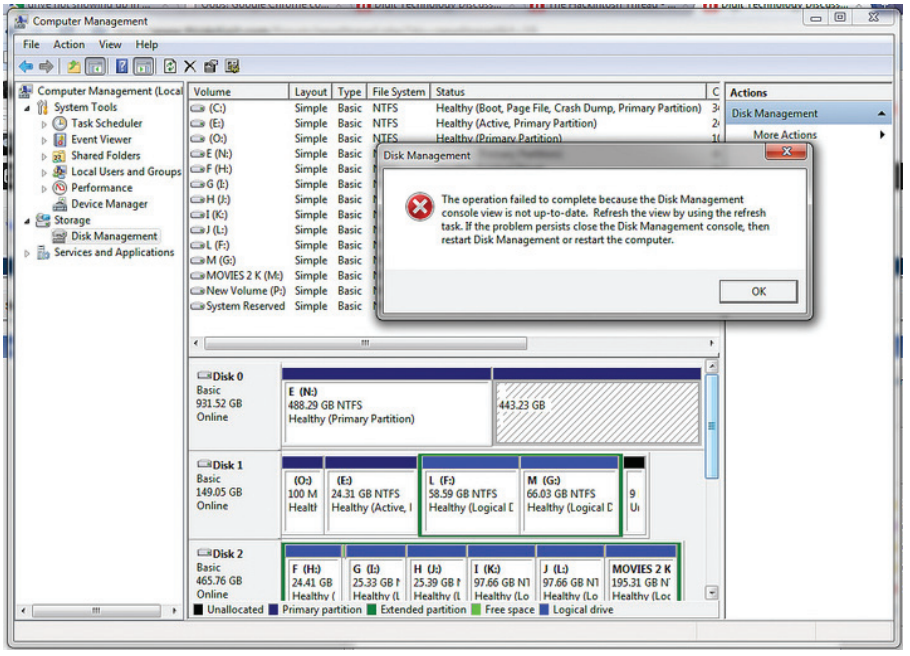
Go to Run `[Win] + [R] Type MSCONFIG` press enter. Under the Boot tab and uncheck Safe Boot to normal.

Disappearing partitions (From www.thinkdigit.com/forum)

I don't know how it happened but I have 1tb hdd , which i have partitiond into 2 .i.e. both 500 gb. but in windows 7 my second 500 gb partition is not showing , which has my personal data of 400 gb. i tried disk management in windows its shows my 1st 500 gb primary n healthy and second 500gb wich not showing in windows explorer/my computer blank .when I right clicked n said change drive letter and path it gave me error" disk operation failed ". i tried reinstall windows 7 , restored Bios settings but no help . When I installed windows xp it showed me my lost drive properly working. But I want it to be visible in win 7 only . Help!

nvrmndryo

run this command from a admin/elevated(run as admin, in vista/7) command line :
`chkdsk <volume label> /F`
where `<volume label> is the partition letter, like D: or H:`
example `chkdsk C: /F` this will check the C: partition for errors in the filesystem and correct them. Additionally, try programs such as partition find & mount (http://find-andmount.com/) or Gparted Live. Make a partition table using GParted live. Then again repair Win 7. The drive should be visible.



Error1

AUTODESK HOMESTYLER

A web app that allows users to redesign their home with the simplicity of drag-and-drop.

Autodesk Homestyler is a free web app, also available as a Chrome extension. It's a very handy application for designing and laying out the rooms of your home, and, if you were in America, you would be able to directly place orders for the items you selected to furnish your designed home.

The software also allows you to share your designs online on sites such as Facebook as well as export the design to professional software such as AutoCAD.

System requirements

It's recommended that you use a browser such as Firefox or Internet Explorer 9 that supports hardware acceleration of Flash content. Since the software is also a bit resource-heavy and will get bogged down on netbooks and low-speed internet connections.

Getting started

Having a rough sketch or diagram of the overall design before you begin will get things rolling in the right direction. You could run into unexpected problems if you try to modify your design later on.

You can also lay out the floor areas first and add the rooms on top of them. This helps as you'll have a general idea about where the rooms will go and so avoid overlapping walls.

Autodesk Homestyler. 59
Tablets 60
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NTFS 64
Mufin Player 66

2D design view

The interface

The interface is very simple. Everything is on an on-screen panel and you just drag whatever you need onto the main canvas. While all the items are classified based on various criteria, it's often easier to just search for what you need as everything is not necessarily where you expect it to be.

The layout

Basic room placement is quite easily done as the rooms snap to 90-degree angles. It's when you try to create angles and other shapes that you can run into trouble. The software doesn't provide a tool to measure angles accurately so you had better delve into the deep recesses of your mind to dig out what little trigonometric knowledge you may have left. The dimensions are shown on the fly however, so you'll always know what your wall dimensions are.

There are various tools available to nudge the walls to certain shapes, but it sometimes works out better when you split the wall and manipulate the axis and length yourself.

Placement rules

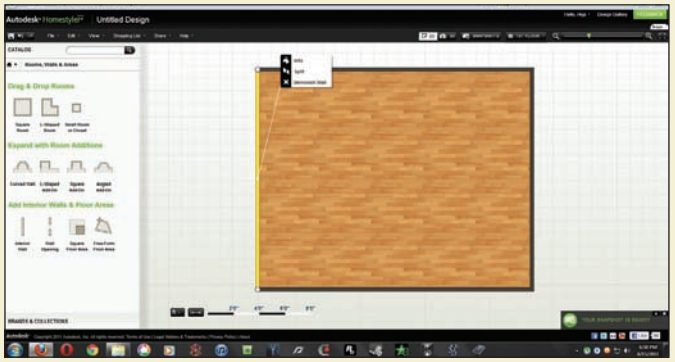
Homestyler has a feature called "placement rules". This feature basically ensures that everything you place in your design is following the laws of physics. For example, without placement rules, you wouldn't be able to place, say, a pot on a table. The pot would end up on the floor, clipping through the table.

You can enable placement rules by going to `Edit > Edit Preferences` and checking the box marked "Enable Placement Rules".

Placement rules can make moving large objects such as sofas around a room a challenge. This can be overcome by just holding down the [Shift] key while moving the object.

Furnish your home

Furniture is classified into living room, dining room, etc. for quick access so you can choose accordingly.



Basic layout

3D design view

It's important to note that the furniture is not to scale, so you may find your room looking a little too sparse or cluttered, especially when using furniture from different brands.

Clicking on an item of furniture before dragging it onto your design will sometimes provide you with various options regarding the dimensions and colour of the piece in question.

Snapshots

One very interesting feature of Homestyler is the ability to create photo-realistic snapshots easily.

To create a snapshot, just select the Snapshots button on the menu bar and click on "New snapshot". You'll now see a camera in your design. Position it where you like and rotate the field of view so that the camera is pointing in the direction you would like.

Name your snapshot and hit "Create snapshot" to begin the process. Autodesk will automatically accept your request, render the snapshot and notify you by e-mail whenever your snapshot is ready. The entire process rarely takes more than five minutes.

Sharing

Your design and all snapshots that you take will be stored online and can be shared at anytime. The interesting part about this is that your design, if shared, can be edited at any time by your friends, but they will only be allowed to edit copies created on their own profiles. Your design will remain untouched.

With these few tips to get you started, and a bit of effort of course, you should be well on your way to designing your perfect home!

TABLETS

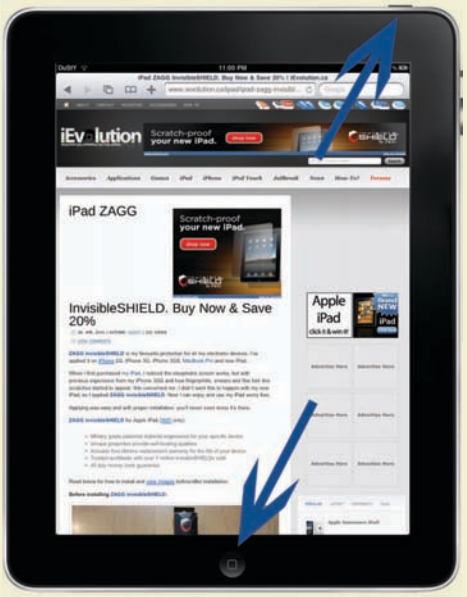
Tablets are all the rage right now. Whether it's the iPad or one among the army of Android tablets launching every month or even the reclusive BlackBerry PlayBook, whatever the platform, our tips will make you revere your tablet more than ever.

IPAD TRICKS

Take a screenshot

Not many people know that there isn't much difference between taking a snapshot of your screen on your iPhone / iPod Touch and taking one on your iPad tablet. In fact, it's exactly the same, minus the differing form factors of course.

To capture your iPad's screen, simultaneously click the Power button (top right) and Home button (bottom, centre) to see a quick flash on the screen and hear a shutter click sound from the device. That's it. You can access the saved screenshot from Camera Roll under Photos - from here you can choose to email the picture, print it or use it as a wallpaper, among other things.

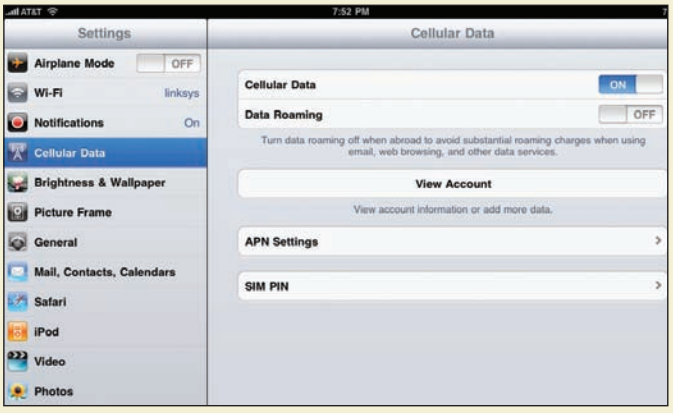


Press the Power and Home button simultaneously to take a screenshot of the iPad

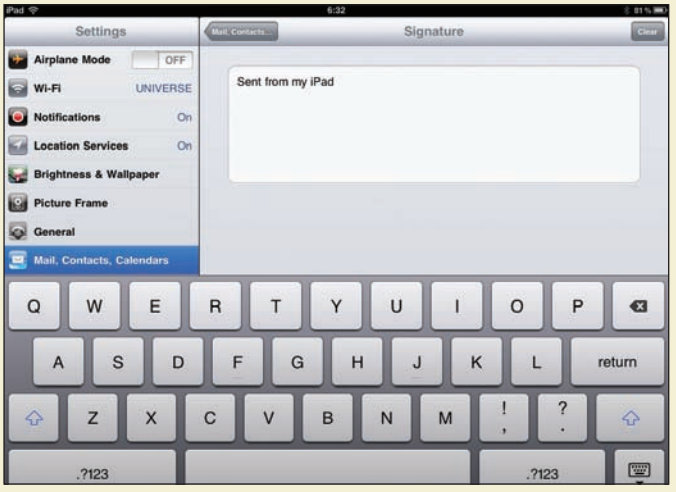
Disable 3G data roaming

If you jet-set quite a bit and recently bought an iPad with a 3G SIM, you'd do well to turn the 3G radio off whenever you leave your home network. You don't want to incur significantly higher data charges, unless you're on a corporate account and your employer is footing the bill.

Just go to `Settings > Cellular Data` and make sure both, Cellular Data and Data Roaming are checked off. Alternatively, you can also suspend your iPad's 3G radio by putting it in Airplane Mode (from Settings). Now all you



Don't forget to turn off your iPad's cellular data while roaming.



Delete the default email signature from the iPad

Homestyler can create photo-realistic snapshots

Kill app instances that don't need to run in the background

need is a free Wi-Fi hotspot to tap into.

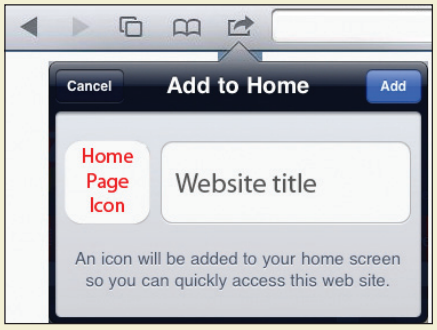
Delete 'Sent from my iPad' email signature: Not everyone wants to know that you're emailing from your iPad - unless you like showing off. Maybe you'd like to substitute the default email signature with something else, something a bit more informative or have nothing at all. You may want to include your official email signature when replying to office email from your iPad? Here's how:

Go to `Settings > Mail, Contacts, Calendars` and click on the Signature tab on the accompanying right column. You'll see the default "Sent from my iPad" signature in plain text in the subsequent pane. Select your keypad to edit the text to your official signature or hit delete to completely wipe off the sign. Exit Settings and notice the difference when you next send an email.

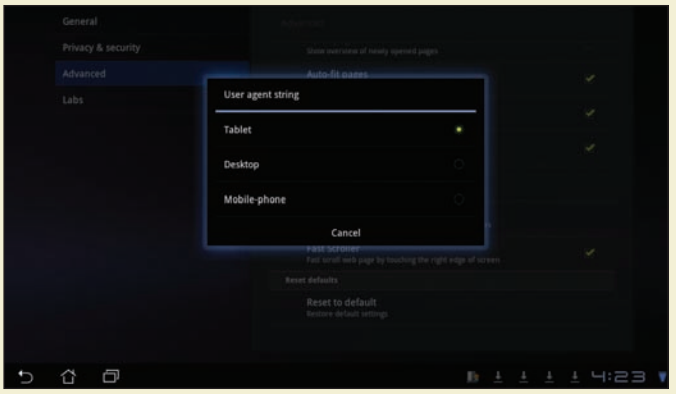
Kill running apps

Initially, when you have a limited number of apps, you won't notice the iPad (or iPad 2) slowing down a bit, but eventually - as the App Store populates the device with irresistible apps and games - you will. When you open app after app, it's just a matter of time. But how do you know which apps are running and which ones you wish to kill?

Multitasking with iOS 4 has made possible killing of background apps - this may even help you prolong your iPad's battery life. To know which apps are running in the iPad's background, double-click the Home button. You'll notice the default desktop grey out and a row popping up at the bottom of the screen which shows a whole host of apps with a red circle on top. Now just click on the apps you want to kill. Easy as pie, isn't it?



Add a site as an app to Home screen

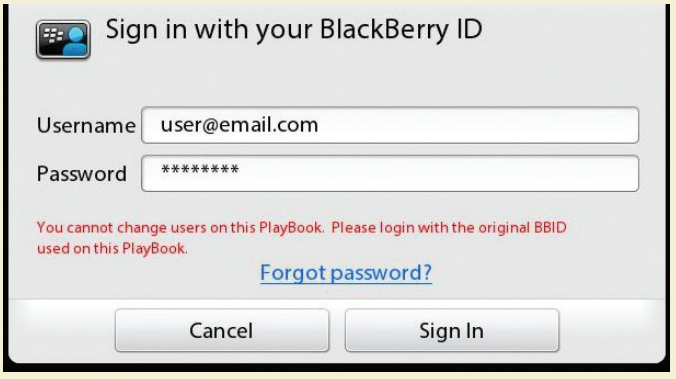


Browse web sites like you would on your desktop PC

Launch a web site as an app

Although there's a ton of iPad apps dedicated for websites, from news websites to online magazines, certain popular websites still don't have one - Facebook is a popular case in point. What do you do in such cases? Do you expect to launch Facebook every time through Safari's bookmarks? There's a simple fix for this issue, and no, you don't need an app for this trick.

Let's say you can't wait to login to Facebook every time you pick up your iPad. You can add a Facebook icon right to your home screen so you don't waste time getting onto Facebook. The next time you visit Facebook through Safari on your iPad, and notice the small arrow icon immediately next to the URL bar. Click on it. You'll get a dropdown option to "Add to Home Screen" and



You need to do a security wipe to log in with another BB ID

you can even rename the icon to whatever you want. This way, you can have one-click access to any website directly from your iPad's home screen.

ANDROID TRICKS

Browse sites as on your desktop

Since Android's primarily a phone OS, its browser is recognized as a mobile phone browser by most popular websites who have a phone-optimised version of their site. As you can imagine, viewing a 7-inch smartphone-optimised web site on a 10-inch tablet screen can be a severe mismatch - not to mention a sheer waste of screen space. How do you rectify the problem?

Most web sites allow you to select between a mobile and full version but you can manually override your Android 3.0 browser's default mobile version by tweaking it in Settings. Select Browser settings and click on Advanced tab. All you need to do is change the User Agent String to either Desktop or Tablet. Now, you should be able to view web sites just the way you see them on your desktop browser.

Encrypt your Android tablet's data

If you're using your Android Honeycomb tablet for official use, don't think your data can't be protected right out of the box - no third-party apps or no special services are required. Honeycomb adds data encryption (much like BitLocker in Windows 7) support right at the OS level.

To enable data encryption on your Android Honeycomb tablet, ensure your device is completely charged first. Next, put a password or an unlock pin on your tablet's Home screen. The final step is to go to `Settings > Location and Security`, and hit on "Encrypt data on your device." Google doesn't specify what sort of data encryption it uses, but hey, at least something's better than nothing.

BLACKBERRY PLAYBOOK

Delete the associated BlackBerry ID

During first use of the newly purchased Playbook, a Blackberry ID sign-in is compulsory to authenticate the device and associate your activity with BlackBerry's products and services with that account. To change the associated BB ID, you need to perform a security wipe on the PlayBook. Here's how:

Click on the gear icon on the top-right of PlayBook's screen to launch the Options menu. In the left column, select Security. Type "blackberry" to indicate security wipe followed by clicking on Wipe Data. This will restore your Playbook almost back to factory settings - take care, security wipe will delete your personal data, photos and videos from the device. Proceed with caution.

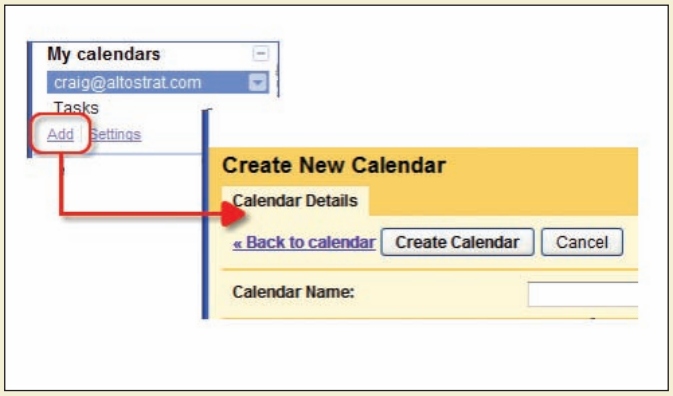
Delete apps

There are two ways to delete apps from the BlackBerry PlayBook. The first is like any iOS or Android device - hold down or long press the app icon to launch contextual menu, hit trash can to delete the app in question. Another way of deleting an app is through AppWorld. Launch Blackberry AppWorld in PlayBook and click on My World. In the list of apps that follow, hit on the delete button next to any app to toss it in the trash can.

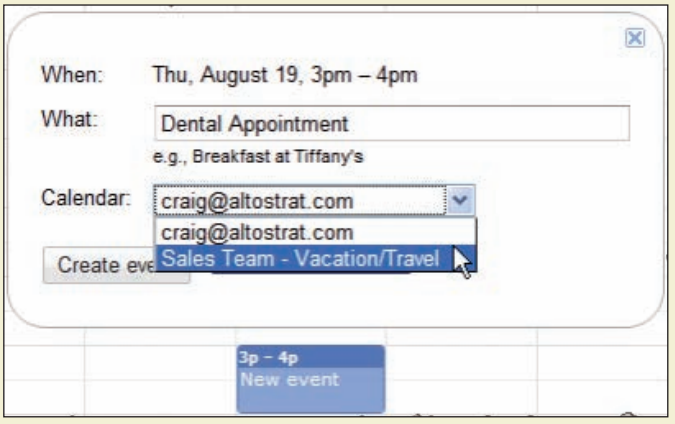
GOOGLE CALENDAR

Create a Team Calendar

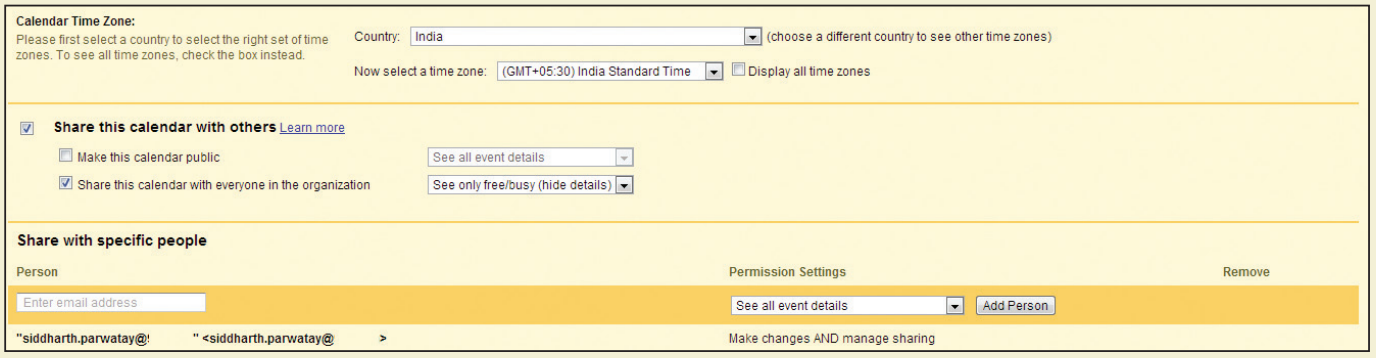
Like most people you've probably used Google Calendar and are aware that you can create your own calendar for work-related events. But did you know that you can create additional calendars to schedule and track other events? For instance, you can create a family calendar to schedule your important festive events, gatherings and social engagements or create a calendar with work mates to co-



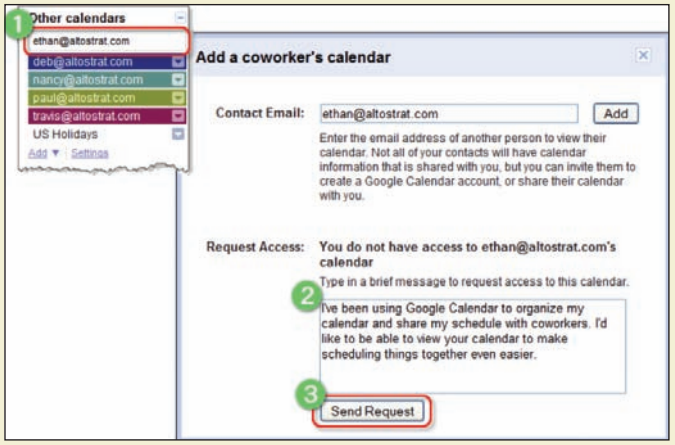
Create new calendar



Using the calendar



Sharing a calendar



Adding Other Calendars

ordinate team outings. To create a team calendar the first step is to create a regular calendar and share it. To create a calendar click Settings, then Calendar settings, then Calendars, and finally Create new calendar.

Share the calendar

"Share this calendar with others" enables you to either share the calendar publicly or share just it within your organization. After making a selection, you can then select what viewers are allowed to see when they view the calendar. The options available are defined by your Google Apps administrator. "Share with specific people" enables you to define a select group of individuals to view, modify or manage the calendar.

Use the calendar

After creating the calendar, it should now be visible in the 'My calendars' section of your main calendar. If it doesn't display immediately, you may need to refresh your browser window. Now when you create a new event, you have the option of creating it on your personal calendar or on your new team calendar.

Copy events between calendars

It's easy to display events on one or more calendars. Let's say you create an event on your personal calendar. You can quickly copy it to the team calendar without having to re-create it by following these steps:

1. Open the event's details screen.
2. From the 'More Actions...' drop-down menu, select the calendar you wish to copy the event to.
3. Click Save.
4. Now when you view your calendar, you will see the event listed twice - once on your personal calendar and also on the team calendar. if you want to hide the team calendar on your personal calendar, simply click its name in the 'My calendars' section. To view it again, simply click the name a second time.

Layering Google Calendars

Layering Google Calendars is a great way to see others' calendars layered on top of your calendar and can be a great time saver. For instance, layering calendars can help you quickly find a time when certain individuals are available for a meeting. To layer calendars you first need to populate your Other Calendars or My Calendars section by adding Co-workers calendars.

Adding a Co-worker's Calendar

To add a co-worker's calendar to the Other calendars section, simply enter their email address in the 'Add a coworker's calendar' field (1) and press Enter. If your co-worker has opted to share his or her calendar, it will display in the list below. If they've opted not to share their calendar, the 'Add a coworker's calendar' dialog displays allowing you to request view access to their calendar. To request access, edit the message in the text field (2) or leave the default message as is and click Send Request (3). Your co-worker will then receive an email indicating you would like to view their calendar. If they then share their calendar with you, you will receive an email indicating you can now add and view their calendar.

Using Layered Calendars

To layer multiple calendars, click once on the calendar or individual listed below the My calendars or Other calendars sections. You can layer multiple calendars over your calendar. Any calendar that displays color behind the calendar or individuals' name is layered on top of your calendar.

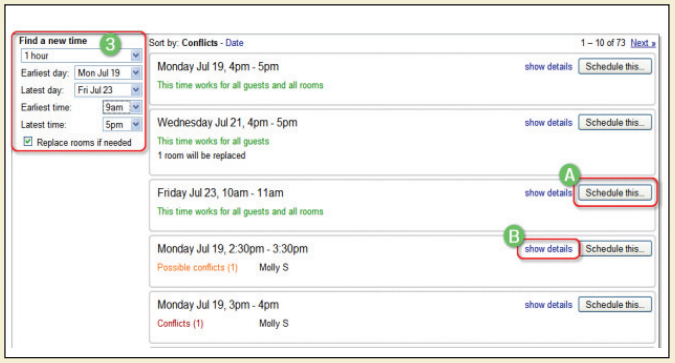
To remove or hide a calendar from being layered on your calendar, click once on the name of the calendar with a solid color in the My calendars or Other calendars sections.

Viewing multiple layers efficiently

If you have multiple calendars layered on top of your calendar, a quick way to show only your calendar, and hide the calendars of others. is to click the down arrow to the left or your name or email address and click Display only this Calendar. This also works with any calendar listed in either section.

Adding interesting public calendars

Google Calendar offers a selection of calendars covering popular holidays, sports team



Rescheduling meetings

Using Layered Calendars

schedules, and more. To access a directory of these public calendars, click Add at the bottom of the calendar list on the left and select Browse Interesting Calendars. You have everything from Indian public holidays to IPL matches.

Smart rescheduler

Often in chockablock calendars it's difficult to find a convenient time that suits multiple people. In such cases instead of going through everyone's calendars to look for a slot use the Smart Recheduler lab feature to automatically find new times for you and your team. To use this feature you must first enable it.

Enabling Smart Scheduler

Smart Scheduler is a Google Calendar lab. Labs in Google Calendar are accessed the same way you access labs in Gmail:

1. If this is the first lab you're enabling labs in Google Calendar, click Settings > Calendar Settings and select Labs. If you've already enabled labs in Google Calendar, then just click the green beaker.
2. Next, enable the 'Smart Rescheduler' and save your changes.

Rescheduling Meetings

Open the event in question in edit mode and click the small arrow at the right of the screen to reveal the enabled lab. There you'll find the Smart Rescheduler lab. Click "Find a new time....". On the "Find a new time" screen, enter the the length of the meeting and a date and time range if desired. The information to the right will update automatically. If you find a time that works based on the information in green, click "Schedule this....". If there is a conflict (orange or red text) click show details to view the conflict.

Enabling Tasks in your calendars

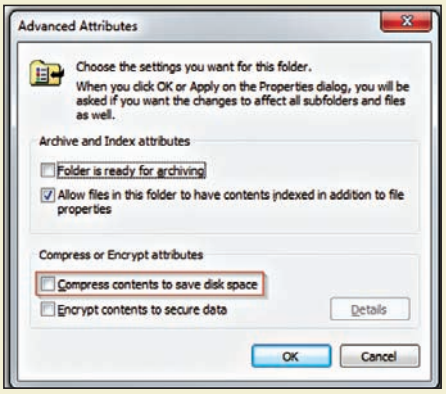
The same tasks feature that you see in Gmail can be enabled for Google Calendar as well. To do this click Tasks located in the 'My Calendars' section. Tasks will display to the right of your calendar. Click Tasks again, or click the small arrow, to minimize the section.

NTFS

Transparently compress your files

What does it even mean to transparently compress you files? Well, it means your files are stored in a compressed form on your hard drive, but any application can open it as normal. You can save some space (or a lot of space, depending on the contents of the file) and still continue using the file without worrying about zipping it and unzipping it each time since this feature is at the file-system level.

This only works on NTFS partitions that are configured a certain way — don't worry, unless you messed about with allocation unit sizes while formatting, this will work.

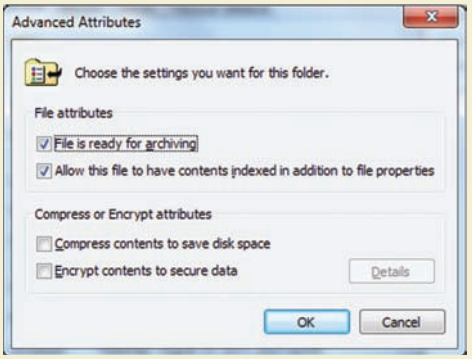


Check the box for compression and click OK

1. Right-click the file / folder you want to compress and click properties
2. Here in the attributes section you will find a button labelled "Advanced..."; click on it
3. Under the "Compress or Encrypt attributes" section, click on the chekbox labelled "Compress contents to save disk space"
4. Click OK twice, and you will see a progress report for compressing the files

Windows will now automatically compress this file while saving and decompress it while opening, so the application you use need not know that it is even compressed.

This works best for uncompressed text files. JPEG / PNG photos and even documents such as docx and odf are already compressed, and wont compress more.



The advanced attributed for a file, click on encrypt and click OK to encrypt.

Transparently encrypt your files

You can set up all the permissions you want for your files, but such "security" measures will easily be thwarted by someone who opens your hard drive under their own copy of Windows or Linux. If you really want to maintain control of your data, and ensure that it doesn't fall into anyone's hands even if they steal your hard drive, you should consider using encryption.

The procedure for encrypting is similar to the procedure for compressing mentioned above. The only difference is that in the 3rd step, instead of clicking on the checkbox labelled "Compress contents to save disk space", click on the checkbox for "Encrypt contents to secure data". You can't both compress and encrypt at the same time.

We have to warn you about using this though, since it can have some unpleasant complications if you are not careful. Here is what you should be aware of:

1. Encrypted files can only be opened by someone logged in with your user account, unless you specifically add others
2. Encrypted files are encrypted will a key that is encrypted with your password
3. Thus, encrypted files are only as secure as you password
4. You could loose all your encrypted files if you forget your password
5. You could loose all your encrypted files if you reinstall Windows

You should back up your encrypted file keys to ensure you can get access to your data if the worst should happen.

Use symbolic / hard links and junctions

We are used to looking at files and folders a certain way. We have drives, that have folders, that have further folders and files. If you want the same file in two folders you have to make a copy. This makes greatly constrains how you organize you computer.

Size:	26.8 MB (28,159,661 bytes)
Size on disk:	9.15 MB (9,603,612 bytes)

"Size on Disk" is much lesser than the "Size"

The fact is, NTFS allows the same file to exist in multiple folders at the same time, or under different names in the same folder! We are not talking about copies here, to be clear; NTFS allows for multiple files in multiple directories to point to the same data on the hard disk. This way the data is stored once, and each "copy" doesn't take more space.

Unfortunately Windows doesn't include good tools to actually make use of this functionality. So we recommend Link Shell Extension [link / path here] a free utility that add support for creating links to Windows Explorer. With it you can work the following:

- **Hardlinks:** Hard links are what we have described above. Multiple file names and locations all pointing to the same piece of data on the hard drive. If you create a hardlink to a file, it will start to exist in another location, but you can edit / view the file from either location. A hard link to a file has to be created in the same drive as the original file.
- **Symbolic Links:** These are more like shortcuts, is that you can create a link to a file in another drive or even on the network. Unlike shortcuts, symbolic links are transparent to applications, they will open the file directly instead of first interpreting the link.
- **Junctions:** Junctions let you create a link to a folder like you create a symbolic link. So a folder such as D:\folder1\folder2 could be linked to C:\foldera\folderb. You could access all files of D:\folder1\folder2 could be accessed C:\foldera\folderb. Any operations you perform on the linked location, such as adding / deleting files will actually happen in the original folder.
- **Volume mountpoints:** If you've used Linux, you'll know that it has a very different way of handling partitions, instead of C:, D:, E: etc, in Linux partitions are mounted as "folders" , so / hardrive, /home, /media/cdrom etc. Something similar is possible with Windows! You can have a new partition show up as C:\ partition instead of E:

Take advantage of fsutil

This is a nice utility included with Windows XP and above that allows you to control many low-level features of NTFS. NTFS is an advanced filesystem with many features, but this also means that unused features can impact performance. Some of these can be turned off or turned on for better performance.

Fsutil: Disable old DOS names

In the old DOS days, file names were limited to 8 characters, and each file could have a 3 character extension at most. A lot has changed since then, and now file names can be as long as 255 characters of Unicode — so you can even have file names in Hindi.

Windows 95 and 98 relied extensively on DOS, and thus they needed to maintain the old 8.3 names in addition to the longer file names. To maintain backward compatibility with older OSs even Windows 7 generates these file names. If you don't use any obscenely old software, you are better off turning this feature off.

To disable creating these file names, run the following command using the run dialog or the commandline:

```
fsutil 8dot3name set 1
```

This will disable it for all drives, while the following will disable it for all drives except the Windows system drive:

```
fsutil 8dot3name set 3
```

Another way to do this — use this if you are running Windows XP — to run the following command:

```
fsutil behavior set disable8dot3 1
```

Fsutil: Disable Last Access timestamp

Windows maintains a Last Access timestamp for each file and directory that keeps a relatively up to date record of when the file / directory was last accessed / modified. The trouble is, this will be updated each time you even open a folder. The latest timestamp will be written to disk, and this can have a performance impact especially if there is an application making a lot of updates to the disk.

However, this is a core feature and some applications rely on this information. According to Microsoft's own documentation, their Backup and Remote Storage applications / services need this enabled to function. Be caution and use only if necessary, there may be other third-party applications that need this information.

You can disable this timestamp using the following command:

```
fsutil behavior set disablelastaccess 1
```

Fsutil: Encrypt the paging file

You RAM has some of your most personal data, since it any running, or even non running applications will have stored some stuff there. This would include private documents, passwords etc. Once you switch your computer off though, all that data is lost so there isn't much to worry about.

However you computer also uses your paging file to store such data, and that paging file survives reboots. Yes, there is an option to delete the paging file at each boot, but that is not enough, since deleted files can easily be recovered. This feature will make your private data more secure, but it also has a performance impact, so be wary.

fsutil behavior set encryppagingfile 1

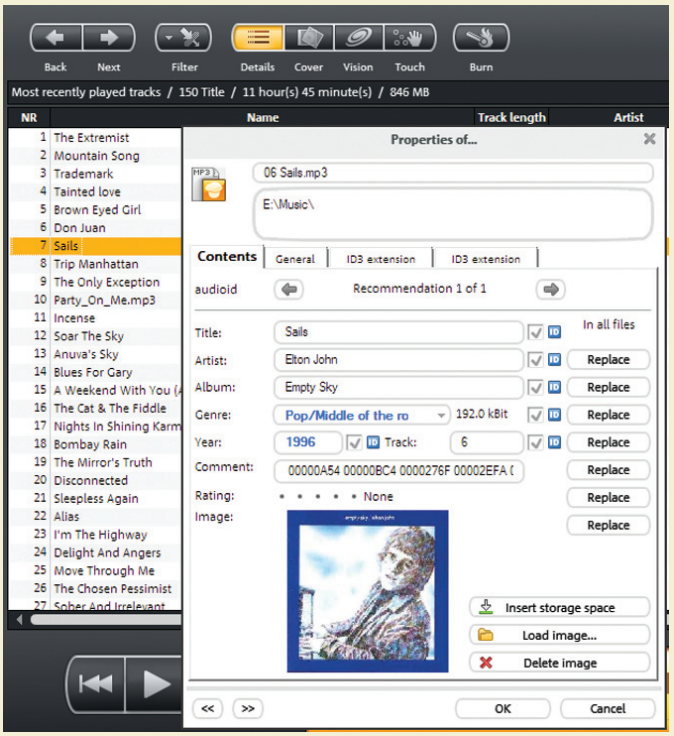
Changes will occur on reboot.

Pick the right Allocation Unit Size

You may have noticed an option to select an Allocation Unit Size while formatting a drive, and possibly wondered what it does. This setting can have an impact on performance and storage efficiency so it is important to understand how to select it and why.

The allocation unit size also known as the cluster size. A cluster is the basic unit of storage on the disk. Your file size might be measured in bytes, kilobytes etc, but it is stored in clusters. What this means is, if you have a 4 kB cluster size, the minimum amount of space that will be allocated for a file, will be 4 kB. So a file whether it is bit or the full 4 kB will take 4 kB of space; additionally a 6kB file will take 8 kB, i.e. two clusters. This is why there are two values for file / folder size, "Size" and "Size on Disk" in File properties. This difference can be quite significant — just check a folder with many files — since the differences add up.

For maximum efficiency it is best that the average file size be a multiple of the cluster size. This way lesser space is wasted per file. Since you can only change this value while formatting a partition, it isn't possible to know this in advance. However you can estimate this and accordingly organize your files. If you are storing larger files, such as music, videos etc. on a partition, use a higher cluster size, know that if you pick a size larger than 4 kB, then you will not be able to use



Edit Tags copy

file compression (mentioned above) on the drive.

If on the other it will have smaller sized files, such as those that accompany some games and software, it is best to go for a small cluster size. Cluster sizes can go down as low as 512 bytes i.e ½ kB.

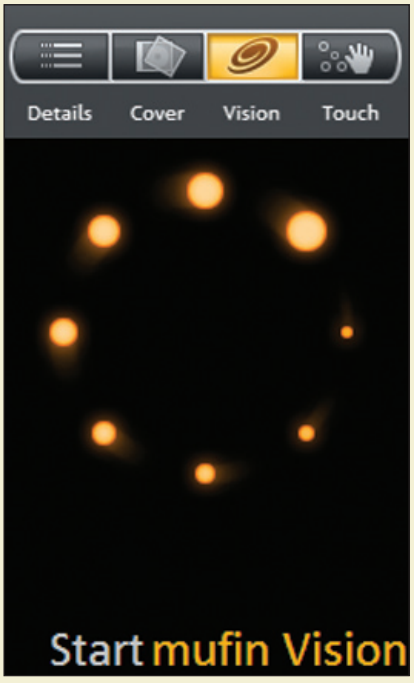
Pick wisely because once you pick a cluster size, it cant be changed without reformatting the drive! At least not using Windows itself. There are some advanced (non-free) partition management software that can resize the cluster size without needing to format the drive.

MUFIN PLAYER 2

Mufin is a refreshing new player that has a strong focus on music recommendation and cloud integration. The free version gives you online storage of upto 1GB in the form of a Mufin Drive and the player is supposed to have a good enough database to manage large collections of music. A much touted feature lets you analyse songs for evaluating similar characteristics for automatically generated playlists (kinda like Genius in iTunes).

Import music

When you start the player for the first time (Download: http://www.mufin.com/) like any other player, it will ask you to import your music. Mufin however doesn't just put music in a library for quicker access, it also analyses the tracks to identify their aural genre - happy, sad, synthetic, acoustic etc. Be warned if you have a large collection it'll take ages, and bring a slightly outdated system to a grinding halt. The player can import from iTunes as well as add files from the hard drive. Simply point to the path. Next, the player will prompt you to sign in with a Mufin account. It's recommended that you register for making full use of the features.



Playing music via mufin vision

Use Mufin Vision

Mufin Vision is a 3D visual-based method of displaying your music collection. The sound signature of songs is mapped on to the axes and each little orb in the floating universe is a song. You can jump from one song to another easily as per similarity (displayed as a percentage). If you have a touch screen you can even get around by swiping.

Adding music

Edit ID3 tags in Muffin

The player offers good management features as well. Select any song, right click and click "Search Track info (with Audio ID)". The player will download tags automatically including Album art. You can even bulk look up by selecting multiple tracks, and clicking the forward/backward arrow in the properties dialog box that pops up while looking up.

Send music to Mufin Drive

In the My Music section (top left) you will find access to your music by Selection or All tracks. The last column in the track listing is the muffin drive. Simply click each songs, individual orb and the upload process will begin. You can even select a bunch of tracks (Shift + select) and click Edit>mufin.drive>Upload Track to mufin.drive.

Transcode music

The player even allows you to convert tracks from one file format to another. Right click a track > Convert > Convert selection. Options include flac, ogg and many other.

Link your Android device

You can easily download the Android version of the device from here:

http://bit.ly/mufinmob. Once downloaded you can choose to analyse songs on your phone as well. On the phone it won't digitally analyse but rather look up identified tracks with its online database, thereby saving on processing porwer and your time. The Mufin vision browsing experience is available on your Android as well. Sign into your account to sync with your Mufin Drive.

Special tip

Be sure to watch the introductory video (at first start) with a keen eye. At around 15 seconds we spotted a QR code flash by and followed it. Guess what it led to? A Pro key for free!

The Sukhoi-T50
A stealth fighter developed jointly by India and Russia will enter production by 2015

FIRST LOOK

Pen your next circuit!
Scientists are working on a pen which uses silver particles as a base and can be used to draw circuits.

Blackberry Bold 9900: Needs a Hard Reset

RIM desperately needs to innovate if it wants Blackberry to capture market share

Srivatsa Krishna
Twitter: @SrivatsaKrishna

As a Blackberry addict and connoisseur, the Torch was a huge disappointment – it was a phone released while in beta, and as such one was eagerly awaiting Torch 2 and Bold Touch. In particular, the touchscreen integration on the Torch was awful, the screen poor in terms of resolution and the overall experience pretty dismal. One had high hopes from the Bold 9900 but it too disappoints. Let's start with what's good about it: the keyboard is the best in class. Simply put, no one else in the world makes keyboards like Blackberry does. Second, the touchscreen experience is markedly better than on the Torch. Thirdly, the build quality is significantly better than before, but still way behind peers like the iPhone, though it is thinner and sleeker than before. As far as good news goes, that's about it.

It took two brand new devices to be bought and returned because the Blackberry OS 7 is simply not a major improvement over OS 6 but actually a disaster while using the switch device wizard, which simply refused to work. I tried everything from wiping the device clean to removing third-party apps, but no luck. Finally it was done the old fashioned way by backing up and restoring which happened only after four attempts. Not just this, the first new device kept randomly rebooting itself – I did about 40 random reboots, yes 40 in 4 hours! The web and user forums also indicate that several others are facing the same issue. Blackberry should be ashamed on releasing buggy OS software time and time again. Has anyone ever heard of an iPhone rebooting by itself?

The Bold 9900's screen again disappoints with its mediocre resolution (640x480) – Samsung Galaxy S2 remains the best screen on any smartphone in the world today with the Super AMOLED, not to mention the myriad qHD and retina displays out there. The battery life is noticeably less than the Torch for the battery is smaller (1200 mAH vs. 1500 mAH on the Torch). The app store continues to disappoint, as does the user interface and the third-party apps. Another small gripe – when someone pays ₹31,000 for the phone don't you give him a 8 GB micro SD card with it like Samsung does? Also there are numerous complaints about its poor customer service and responsiveness in India – just search the web.

The only place where Blackberry pushes the envelope is with Near Field Communications (NFC) in the Bold, but then one is not aware of any NFC applications or outlets accepting them in India yet.

Blackberry's problem is it's simply not cool enough to attract the younger generation, and its corporate attractiveness is diminishing rapidly. All changes in it, be it the processor speed (still 1.2 GHz single core Snapdragon processor vs. dual core in most 2011 top-end smartphones), or features or the camera (HD video finally but no autofocus) are almost always incremental. It needs a brand new OS and one hopes the upcoming QNX doesn't disappoint at least on future smartphones. (Don't forget the QNX without a native email or calendar app and without direct web access was a disaster on the Playbook).

To sum up, Blackberry needs to realize that it cannot just remain the world's best smartphone keyboard maker and wrap a phone without a soul around it. It is in the business of primarily making smartphones and not keyboards and in a competitive marketplace where Android and iPhone are clawing into Blackberry's market share every single day, it should get out of its incrementalism and smugness of being the best corporate device, for that position is under serious threat today.

Srivatsa Krishna

The author is an LAS officer and a professional gadgeteer. The views expressed in this column are the author's and do not necessarily represent the views of Digit.

The case in point

20 cabinets (₹2,000 - ₹7,000) face off against each other to help you get the right fit

Nimish Sawant
nimish.sawant@thinkdigit.com

After selecting the core components of your rig, the next important decision is selecting the right cabinet to house them. Five years back, the person who assembled your PC gave you the most affordable cabinet along with a power supply. The situation now is completely different.

Cabinet selection is given as equal importance as the rest of the components, since a cabinet with poor air flow, poor build and no wire management features won't help in the longetivity of your core components. Cabinets as a product category vary in price range – from the sub-thousand rupee cabinets to ones over ₹25,000. Based on the user queries we receive, we concluded that most of the buying happens in the under-₹7000 price bracket. So we called for cabinets within this price range from around six brands and got around 20 of them. Here are the test results.

₹2,000 – ₹4,000

Cooler Master Elite 335

CM Elite 335 has a mesh design on the front frame while the lower half of the frame has ventilation cutouts on the edges. Clean and simple design is the mantra. The side panel has a bulging grill section which has the air guide on the inner side to direct the air out from the CPU cooler section.

The cabinet is quite spacious even for an ATX board. HDD and ODD bay trays are fixed and have the clip-lock mechanism to hold the drives in place. An Ideal case for those on a budget and are willing to spend some money on custom fans.

Circle UberCool

This looks like an ordinary cabinet except for the two red fans on the top portion. There's a fan controller with two USB ports on the side. The side panel has no fan section or provision to add a fan, but there are circular openings to let the air out. On opening the cabinet, you'll find a single fixed HDD and ODD bay frame. There's very little space to play around with after you've lodged an ATX board. There's some space on the side of the HDD bay frame where you can manage some unruly wires.

Also, we found the tray to bend in places – a sign of poor build. The base of the cabinet has minor rubber pads for absorbing vibrations. There's a dust filter under the base of the cabinet around the PSU section.

Cooler Master Elite 371

Cooler Master Elite 371 is a mid-sized tower built with ventilation in mind as the front portion is covered in mesh. This cabinet has no front fan but has a rear fan. There's a provision to add two fans on the top. The case is quite solid and we didn't notice any bending of the metal on the motherboard tray. However, there's little space to move around after an ATX board has been placed. The HDD and ODD bays have click locks.

ePRO Dragon

At first glance, this cabinet looks like an out and out gaming cabinet, but what's surprising is its low price point. The front frame has a black and red plastic design with neat spaces exposing the mesh section it hides. The side panel has a large 240 mm fan and a honeycomb grill on the outside. The cabinet interiors are grey. The HDD bay is detachable to help you in conveniently setting up your system and managing wires. Both, the HDD and ODD bays have a toolless click-lock mechanism for the drives. For a cabinet this economically priced, the build quality is quite sturdy. It's ideal for gamers on a budget.

Zebronics Fantasy

The glossy red surface is a surefire dust magnet. The front frame has a slide mechanism to reveal the connecting ports. The lower half has a mesh opening for air intake with a triangular power button upfront. The side panel is transparent and has one 120mm and one 80mm fan. The PSU is mounted on the top. We noticed that once you add an ATX cabinet it leaves very little space to maneouvre around. The fixed HDD bay tray doesn't help matters when you want to add in a longer graphics card.

ePRO Dragon

Zebronics Aviator

Despite its compact size, our board fit in perfectly. Once again though not much room to maneouver around. The HDD bay has no clip lock system. The HDD has to be placed with the SATA ports coming out towards the side of the motherboard. So if you want to add a card, one bay will have to be sacrificed.

We like the two fans on the side panel which can be manually controlled with a switch. Also this is one of the few boards that has support for an SD card reader.

Cooler Master Elite 430 Black

CM Elite 430 Black is a simple looking case with a black plastic frame covering the 120mm fan behind the mesh and opening out to show the 3.5-inch and 5.25-inch bays. The front panel is removable and has dust filters around the 5.25-inch bays. The side panel has a transparent window with provision to add a 120mm fan. The side panel is very weak, as in it easily bends on applying minimal pressure. The HDD and ODD bays have a tool-less design, and there's around 90-95 mm free space between the motherboard edge and the HDD bay frame. We were surprised to find no rear fan.

NZXT Source 210

The Source 210 Elite looks fleetingly like the H2 thanks to the front frame jutting out from the plane of the frame. The ports are located at the top edge. There are slits around the front portion for ventilation and the entire frame can be detached to add two fans at the front. On the top, there's a provision to add two fans.

The side panel doesn't have any fan but you can add one 120 mm fan. Inside the cabinet there's sufficient space to move around even after adding an ATX board. The motherboard tray is quite sturdy and there's enough space to manage the wires between the right side panel and the board tray.

Considering the board has just one rear fan, you'll need to invest in additional fans if you want a cooler system. It's great for amateur case modders as there's ample scope to experiment with fans.

Circle Polar

The front frame has a glossy exterior along with recessed optical drive bay and connecting ports located in the front. On the inner side of the side panels you'll find 0.5cm thick sound dampening foam. The base and top portions also have these sound dampening foams. This case is targetted at those users who want an extremely silent system.

The HDD bay is removable and there's sufficient space within the cabinet for wire management. There are dedicated dust filters on the base of the cabinet.

Cooler Master USP 100

The logo in the lower half of the cabinet also functions as the power button. The mesh appearance is maintained from top to bottom for optimal ventilation. There's a dust filter on the inner side of the mesh. The ports are located on the top with a slightly depressed top portion to have a portable HDD.

The side panels of the cabinet have an option for two intake fans. The base of the cabinet has anti-vibration pads for the PSU. There are enough wire management options with dedicated U-shaped plastic cable management clips located just on the periphery of the motherboard tray.

Circle Volcano

Volcano's whole front frame is detachable and doesn't have any dust filters on the inside. The connection ports (USB 2, USB 3 and eSATA) are located on the top of the cabinet just behind the power button and under a slide door.

The presence of green coloured anti-vibration rings is quite a good feature as it prevents HDDs and ODDs from unnecessary vibrations. The USB 3.0 wire must be connected to the USB 3.0 port on the motherboard back I/O panel. Overall it has a pleasant design inside.

Antec Sonata Proto

The top half of the front face can be locked and hides the 5.25-inch bays and the power/reset buttons. There are only two thumb screws on the left hand side panel which can be locked with the help of a key. This prevents an unauthorised person from opening your cabinet.

The all-metal body has sharp edges. Specially the 3.5in HDD bays. Although the are the click-lock types, but since they are made of metal you have to be doubly careful around its edges. Also the 3.5in bays are located very close to the front wall such that your finger will get sandwiched between the clip and the front edge.

₹4,001 – ₹7,000

NZXT Guardian 921RB

This was one of the most well-designed cabinets that we tested and the only one with connection ports on the side. The Guardian has a definite head section, a body and the base. The three slits forming a Y shape get illuminated when the system is on. The head portion has an LCD readout of temperatures of the components inside. This feature was quite interesting and adds a professional touch to the cabinet. The front frame door opens to reveal three 5.25-inch bays and two 3.5-inch bays along with a fan at the base.

The side panel looks quite attractive with its designer window which holds a fan in the centre. This portion tends to bend easily under minor pressure. The HDD can be lodged with the help of two plastic rails and nails at strategic positions to lock the HDD. With an

C and E series refresh
AMD has refreshed the C and E series of Fusion APUs claiming to offer more battery life than their previous avataars

Sony DSLR family addon
Sony has added another DSLR to its Alpha series named the A65 having a 24.3 MP CMOS APS-C

NZXT Guardian 921RB

ATX board inside the cabinet, there's little space to maneouvre around, but it's ideal for a microATX board.

We would have liked to see anti-vibration rubber rings for the HDD and the PSU on this otherwise feature rich board.

Antec NSK 4482

The front portion of the frame is slightly protruded with gaps for air ventilation on the edges. It looks simple, and this look carries onto the side and top panels as well. This is a rare board in which you have to open the top panel first to unlock the side panels. It comes with an Antec 380W power supply, but we used out own Corsair HX620W for the performance tests. There's a proper section to house the PSU, and if you aren't using the ODD you can use that space to manage wires. The HDD bay has anti-vibration rings but the design requires you to screw in your HDD. This is something we didn't like. You can only add one fan in the front portion. Also, things get cramped if you're using an ATX board, as there's little room for wire management if you add in more HDDs or ODDs.

Cooler Master Storm Enforcer

The bevelling on the lower half of the front frame resembles the thorax of a honey bee, whereas the top half is a solid bevelled lid which opens to reveal the 5.25-inch bays. The matte black finish ensures that the front frame is dustproof. The Enforcer houses two USB 3.0 ports and the top portion has a slight depression just behind the location of the ports. This is an interesting touch as you can just place your portable hard drives in that space.

The side panel has a transparent window without any provision for adding a fan. We found it to be much stronger than the tinted window seen on NZXT Tempest Evo.

The base of the cabinet has anti-vibration pads for the PSU and just in front of them is a rectangular structure to either house a 2.5-inch driver or manage the wires coming out of the PSU there. The HDD bay can be detached as well as rotated. The USB 3.0 adapter can directly be connected onto the motherboard, which is a huge plus.

Zebronics Invader

This is one of the largest cabinets we have in this comparison. It has a click-lock mechanism on both the side panes which is interesting. But you cannot lock the cabinet with a key as you can in the Antec Sonata Proto cabinet. Just above the power button on top, you have four fan control buttons. Behind it there's a slider which reveals two USB ports, an eSATA port and a regular SATA port. On the front of the cabinet you have the SD / CF card slot.

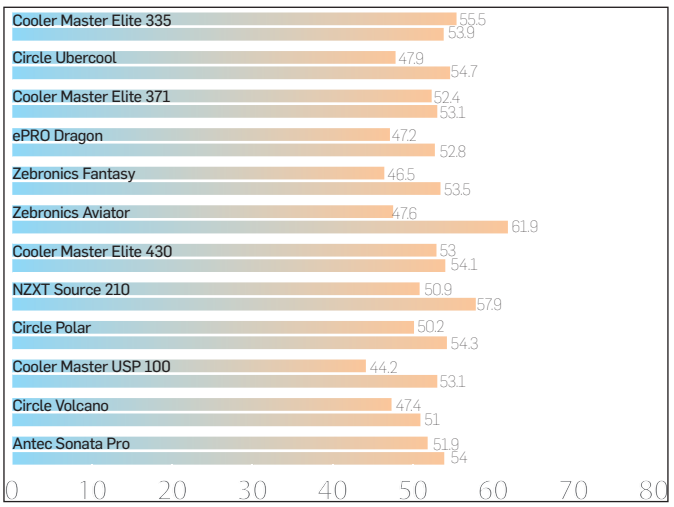
The glossy surface is a dust magnet, but overall the design is quite appealing with the grilled sections neatly complementing the solid glossy plastic.

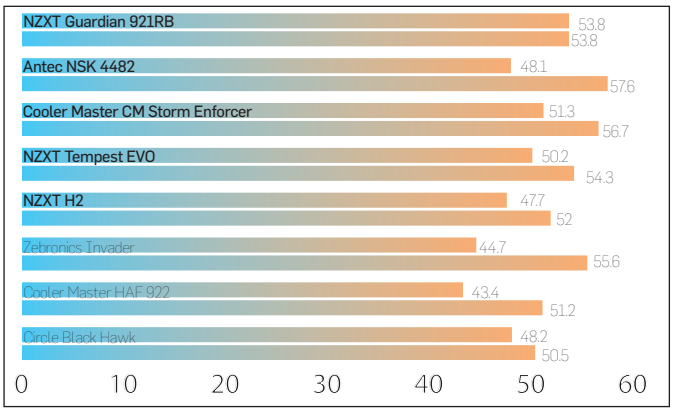
Internals are quite spacious, and you have a 2x80mm fan door on the side which is independent of the side panel. This door is removable incase you don't want it. HDD and ODD bays are situated at around 70 mm from the far end of the board, which means there's enough space to add in a long card without affecting HDD bay frame. On the other side of the panel there's sufficient space to manage the wires.

Cooler Master HAF 922

Cooler Master HAF 922

The sturdy body with matte black anodised finish looks a bit dull when your system is off. The front panel is designed with air flow in mind and you'll find a 200 mm intake fan with mesh slots through the entire frame. Side





Performance is measured by finding the difference between core temperatures and ambient temperatures in degrees Celcius. Seen above are cabinets with their respective CPU delta (top bar) and GPU delta (bottom bar)

panels have noticeable tapering bulk which helps in managing thicker wires behind the motherboard base. The top portion houses the power/reset and fan LED buttons. But they are recessed within the indented top portion of the cabinet where you can place a portable HDD. There's a provision for adding either a 200mm fan or two 120mm fans on top.

Inside the cabinet the HDD bays have a toolless design. There's enough space to maneouvre around inside the cabinet once you place your ATX board. Wire management is a breeze, thanks to enough space between the tray and the right-hand side panel.

Circle Black Hawk

Black Hawk is a proper gaming cabinet. There are two fans in the front portion and it has two USB 2.0 ports, two USB 3.0 ports and an eSATA port on the top edge. That will take care of pretty much all your connectivity needs. Fan control buttons are also present. We really like the whole grilled metal look with the fan sections protruding on the front and top.

Inside the cabinet you're greeted with a very modular design. A tray separates the motherboard section from the PSU section. There's provision to add an extra fan there. There's also sufficient space between the HDD bay frame and the motherboard. An interesting addition to the toolless HDD bays are the green shockproof rings which protect the HDDs and ODDs from unnecessary vibrations within the cabinet. The USB 3.0 connection must be routed out of the grommets for liquid cooling into the USB 3.0 ports on the back I/O panel of the board. This essentially means that you'll lose two USB 3.0 ports on the back I/O panel of your motherboard. It would have been nice to have USB 3.0 header, which can fit directly onto the motherboard, thus giving you more USB 3.0 ports. Wire management is hassle-free as there's enough space behind the motherboard support base and the side panel. Also there are notches at strategic locations to help tie up hanging wires.

EDITOR'S PICK digit SEPTEMBER 2011

Circle Black Hawk

NZXT H2

Coming in all black, the H2 has a flat plain door with chrome accents on the edges. The frame opens to reveal three 5.25-in bays and two 120mm fans on the lower half. These fans are clipped on and there's a circuit which is completed when the top left-hand corner of the fan's enclosure touches the contact on the frame.

Thumb screws hold the side panel in place and there's no opening on either of the side panel in terms of mesh or grills. The top portion of the cabinet is interesting. It has the power

HOW WE TESTED

On the outset we decided to limit the cabinets within the price range of ₹2,000 to ₹7,000. Within this range we further split the cabinets in the price bracket ₹2,000 - ₹4,000 and ₹4,001 - ₹7,000.

TEST RIG

Processor: Intel Core i5-2500K
Motherboard: MSI P67A GD55
RAM: 2 x 2GB Kingston HyperX DDR3
Operating System: Windows 7 Ultimate
Graphics Card: AMD HD 6850
Power Supply: Corsair HX 620W

We assigned 60 per cent weightage to the features and the rest to performance. We noted the location of USB ports, power buttons, audio/mic jacks, options to add more fans, wire management, etc. More points were given to boards having a toolless design. We also measured the thickness of the board with the help of a Vernier Callipers.

For performance we calculated the difference between the ambient temperature and the core component temperatures such as CPU and GPU cores. To stress the CPU we ran CineBench R10 in five loops and noted the maximum temperature of the hottest core (using RealTemp) in the last two runs. Ambient temperature was measured with a digital thermometer.

For the GPU test we ran the Unigine Heaven v2.0. Settings were: Extreme Tessellation, Resolution of 1920x1080 and 4x AF. We used MSI AfterBurner utility to get the temperature of the GPU core.

In both the CPU and GPU tests, we locked the fan speeds (stock cooler for CPU and GPU fan) to 40 per cent as we wanted to see how cool the components stayed with the fans within the cabinet.

Cabinets	From ₹2,000 to ₹4,000								
Brand	Cooler Master	Circle	Cooler Master	ePRO	Zebronics	Zebronics	Cooler Master	NZXT	Circle
Model	Elite 335	Ubercool	Elite 371	Dragon	Fantasy	Aviator	Elite 430	Source 210 Elite	Polar
Price (₹)	2,000	2,100	2,200	2,250	2,400	2,550	2,750	2,800	2,900
Features (Out of 60)	18.72	21.48	22.08	24.54	15.9	23.28	21.06	19.74	23.7
Performance (Out of 40)	31.49	32.98	32.46	33.89	33.82	30.75	31.95	31.11	32.53
Grand Total (Out of 100)	50.21	54.46	54.54	58.43	49.72	54.03	53.01	50.85	56.23
Specifications									
Dimensions (L x W x H in mm)	468x191x437	451x180x465	497x190x424	495x196x444	430x180x430	466.5x185x437	490x190x424	495x195x440	483x198x419
Weight (in kg)	6	NA	4.6	NA	4.5	6.8	4.7	6.5	NA
Colour	Black/Blue	Black	Black / Silver	Grey	Black / Red	Black	Black	Black	Black
Features									
Thumb screws for opening side panels (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Location of Ports and Power button	Front	Front	Front	Front	Front	Top	Front	Front	Front
USB 2.0 / 3.0 / eSATA ports	2 / 0 / 0	6 / 0 / 0	2 / 0 / 0	2 / 0 / 0	2 / 0 / 0	2 / 0 / 0	2 / 0 / 0	2 / 0 / 0	4 / 0 / 1
5.25in / 3.5in (int) / 3.5in (external) bays	4 / 6 / 1	4 / 5 / 0	3 / 5 / 1	5 / 5 / 0	4 / 5 / 0	4 / 4 / 1	4 / 5 / 2	3 / 8 / 0	4 / 4 / 0
Expansion slots	7	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Click lock HDD bays (Y/N)	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
PSU location (Top / Bottom)	Top	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	Top	Top	Bottom	Bottom	Top
Option to lock cabinet (Y/N)	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Liquid cooling grommets	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	0
Fans (Number / diameter in mm)									
Front	0	1 / 120	0	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	0	1 / 120
Rear	1 / 120	1 / 80	1 / 120	1 / 120	0	1 / 120	0	1 / 120	1 / 120
Side	0	0	0	1 / 240	1 / 120, 1 / 80	2 / 120	0	0	0
Top	0	2 / 120	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fan Contoller (Y/N)	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Dust Filters around fans									
Side / Top / Botton	N / N / N	N / N / N	N / Y / Y	N / N / N	N / N / N	Y / N / N	N / Y / Y	N / N / N	N / N / Y
Miscellaneous									
Wire strings for cables mgmt	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N
Thickness (Vernier callipers in cm)	0.07	0.078	0.052	0.09	0.128	0.132	0.074	0.082	0.074
Performance									
CPU Temperature Delta (degree C)	55.5	47.9	52.4	47.2	46.5	47.6	53	50.9	50.2
GPU Temperature Delta (degree C)	53.9	54.7	53.1	52.8	53.5	61.9	54.1	57.9	54.3

button, fan controller and the USB 2 and USB 3 port. There's a bay for a SATA HDD on top with a covering; Behind this is a magnetic cover which when opened reveals a space to add an additional 140mm fan.

The cabinet's side panes and front door have foam for dampening noise. Disappointingly, the build quality of the HDD trays is quite flimsy though. Wire management is taken care of by the grommets on the motherboard tray.

NZXT Tempest Evo

The front frame looks quite simple, but the two projections on the side which continue on the top have an angular design which rises up and then tapers down giving a classy touch to the cabinet. Each of the two front fans have their separate dust filter.

The side panel has a tinted window design which tends to bend on minimal pressure. Assembly of fans on the EVO is quite prolific, with two 140mm fans on top, one on the side, two in front and one on the rear, you can be rest assured that your components have enough cooling inside the cabinet.

PSU has anti-vibration pads and there are two cages for holding upto eight drives. There are dedicated grommets on the base support of the motherboard for wire management. Also, the panel on the other side bulges out slightly so that the wires coming out of the other side have some breathing space. There's around 100 mm which is enough space between the motherboard edge and the hard drive bay.

Verdict

Cooler Master HAF 922 won the **Best Performer** thanks to its silent and cool operation within the cabinet.

In the ₹2,000 to ₹4,000 segment, **ePRO Dragon** won the **Best Buy** as it had many features and provided a decent performance thanks

BEST BUY digit SEPTEMBER 2011

BEST PERFORMER digit SEPTEMBER 2011

EDITOR'S PICK digit SEPTEMBER 2011

	From ₹4001 to ₹7000									
Cooler Master	Circle	Antec	NZXT	Antec	Cooler Master	NZXT	NZXT	Zebronics	Cooler Master	Circle
USP100	Volcano	Sonata Proto	Guardian 921RB	NSK 4482	CM Storm Enforcer	Tempest EVO	H2	Invader	HAF 922	Black Hawk
3,300	3,400	3,600	4,400	4,500	5,400	5,700	5,800	6,300	6,690	6,900
20.4	27.9	17.76	27.36	13.08	28.14	31.02	29.94	32.28	26.52	35.46
34.68	34.57	32.24	31.89	31.93	31.42	32.53	34.07	33.59	35.7	34.55
55.08	62.47	50	59.25	45.01	59.56	63.55	64.01	65.87	62.22	70.01
508x214x483	500x185x434	440x205x481	522x206x459	420 x200 x420	523 x229x489	562x211.5x521.5	520 x215x466	516x210x450	563x253x502	530x200x560
7.2	NA	7.5	8.2	8	8.9	11.2	8.9	12.5	10.9	10.2
Black	Black	Black	Black	Black / Silver	Black	Black	Black	Black	Black	Black
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Top	Top	Front	Side	Front	Top	Top	Top	Top	Top	Front
2 / 0 / 0	2 / 1 / 1	2 / 0 / 0	2 / 0 / 1	2 / 0 / 0	2 / 2 / 0	2 / 0 / 1	3 / 1 / 0	4 / 0 / 1	2 / 0 / 1	2 / 0 / 1
4 / 6 / 1	4 / 4 / 1	3 / 4 / 2	3 / 4 / 2	3 / 3 / 2	3 / 6 / 1	2 / 8 / 1	3 / 8 / 0	4 / 5 / 0	4 / 5 / 1	3 / 7 / 0
7	6		7		8	7	7	7	7	6
N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bottom	Bottom	Top	Bottom	Top	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom
N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
0	4	0	2	0	3	4	2	2	2	4
1 / 120	1 / 120	0	1 / 120	0	1 / 200	2 / 120	2 / 120	1 / 140	1 / 200	2 / 120
1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120	1 / 120
0	1 / 120	0	1 / 120	0	0	1 / 120	0	2 / 80	0	2 / 120
0	0	0	0	0	0	2 / 140	0	2 / 120	1 / 200	2 / 120
N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
N / N / Y	Y / N / N	N / N / N	N / N / Y	N / N / N	N / N / Y	N / N / Y	N / N / Y	Y / N / Y	N / N / N	Y / N / Y
N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
0.152	0.124	0.12	0.09	0.1	0.084	0.154	0.07	0.128	0.081	0.076
44.2	47.4	51.9	53.8	48.1	51.3	50.2	47.7	44.7	43.4	48.2
53.1	51	54	53.8	57.6	56.7	54.3	52	55.6	51.2	50.5

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ePRO	91 20 2563 0450	info@eprous.com	www.eprous.com
NZXT	91 22 6740 2000	sales@primeabgb.com	www.primeabgb.com
Zebronics	91 44 4000 0007	enquiry@zebronics.info	www.zebronics.net

to the 240mm fan on the side panel. Also its pricing was very low as compared to its competitors. However, there were quite a few cabinets in this category that impressed us even though they didn't win any prize. Among them are Cooler Master Elite 335 (best for extreme budget buyers but limited features), Antec Sonata Proto (the only cabinet with a locking mechanism and decent performance) and finally Cooler Master USP 100 (scored the highest in terms of performance in this category and ideal for gamers).

Finally, in the ₹4,001 to ₹7,000 segment the **NZXT Guardian 921RB** won the **Best Buy** for its economical pricing for the features and performance. **Circle Black Hawk** won the **Editor's Pick** for the highest overall score and it was consistent in both its feature and performance. Zebronics Invader was also quite impressive as it was a full tower cabinet under ₹7,000 with some interesting additions such as the SD card slot, SATA port among other features.

Mirror mirror
The mirror system on the A33 owes its origin to the Canon Pellix camera in 1965 that had a semi-transparent pellicle mirror

Outsourcing?
Nikon doesn't make their own sensors, and mostly use Sony ones. This includes the gigantic 24MP unit in the D3x, and the excellent low-light 16.4MP unit in the D7000

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SIZE MATTERS

Sensor sizes, that is... We've got 11 worthy dSLRs in this test

Like every other gadget, dSLRs are also slowly shrinking in size, while growing in performance. Advancements in sensor, lens and allied technologies mean increased resolution, dynamic range, sharpness, and high ISO performance. Although Canon, Nikon, Olympus and Sony are the only brands officially present in India, and Olympus has only one model currently available. We've covered all these brands, and got five cameras from Canon, four from Nikon and one each from Olympus and Sony.

ENTRY-LEVEL

These cameras are typically smaller, built of less exotic materials and offer less performance than their costlier counterparts. The biggest advantage is their smaller size. Such dSLRs start at around ₹25,000 – the same price as some high-end ultra compacts, ultra zoom cameras. However, with their larger sensors these dSLRs obviously outperform point-n-shoots priced similarly. You also get the flexibility of removable lenses, as well as access to high-end lenses that offer even more quality.

There are five cameras in this category – Canon EOS 1100D and 600D, Nikon D3100 and D5100 and the Sony A33.

Features and ergonomics

The Sony A33 is built decently, but not as good as the Canon and Nikon cameras in this segment. The quality of materials used is good, but the same can't be said for the lens. The kit lens is shockingly tacky, their zoom mechanism isn't smooth. Canon's 1100D is well built, better than the previous EOS 1000D, but it lacks any sort of rubber grip, and has a smooth body to boot. Its polycarbonate shell feels robust and at par with Nikon's D3100. The D3100 is a bit smaller than the Canon 1100D and has a much better grip.

Quite surprisingly, the buttons on the 1100D feel softer and better to use than the costlier 600D, but in reality, with deeper key travel, they aren't as intuitive to use because at times you find you haven't pressed the key hard enough. The mode dial on the 600D feels a lot more solid. While the 600D has a rubber grip that feels infinitely better, the 1100D has marginally larger buttons – a good thing.

In comparison, the D5100 is solidly built, and easily feels as well built as the Canon 600D, but is a bit narrower, while being a bit higher. Both these models are direct competitors, and both feature 3-inch, articulating LCDs, unlike their lower-end brethren.

The Nikon D3100 and Canon 1100D don't have an articulating LCD, while the Sony A33 does. Incidentally, the Sony A33 also has a different mirror arrangement. The mirror is now semi-transparent or translucent and reflects 66 per cent of light on to the sensor and the remaining to the viewfinder. This makes for a smaller camera, without space for the mirror flip-up, and also a faster camera. The minus is its sensor gets less light, as does the viewfinder, making the scene darker.

Sony A33

The D3100 and D5100 have similar control systems. Neither camera has any buttons on the left of the LCD and in this regard, Canon and Nikon are the same. The Nikon D3100 and D5100 have a similar menu system, and it's much more visual than Canon's system. For example, on Canon, changing ISO involves highlighting a number, but with Nikon, a helpful photo appears that indicates the kind of shooting setting best suited for the currently selected ISO. While pros will scoff at such a newbie system, first time dSLR users will find it useful.

The Sony A33 might be called a dSLR, but it's quite tiny, and the body design is nearly identical to the NEX-5 – Sony's "powerful compact camera" with removable lenses and a larger sensor. The A33 has the same APS-C size sensor with a 1.5x frame factor, and also a similar control system. Sony has tried to move away from the classic button and dial system, and the A33 has more on-screen menus and a lot of the settings involve pressing a button, then

Did you know?

There are microscopic lenses built on to the sensor that direct light coming in from the lens on to the photosensitive regions of the sensor

USB-tethered shots

Chainfire has built an app for USB-tethered shooting for Canon dSLRs using Android 3.0 and Samsung's Galaxy S2. A similar app for Nikon dSLRs can be expected soon

HOW WE TESTED

We divided the contestants into three major categories: entry-level dSLRs, enthusiast dSLRs and pro dSLRs. We listed all possible specifications, but only features were assigned a score and taken into account for computation of winners. For example, specifications such as sensor size and shutter speed range were listed but not scored, whereas the presence of an auto ISO mode was. For each camera, we rated the menu system and its intuitiveness, as well as the ergonomics and of the buttons and dials and their layout, and build quality.

We didn't want a camera's image quality restricted by the quality of lens. Sony didn't agree to send us the lens we wanted; but Canon, Nikon and Olympus did. For Olympus, this was the Zeiko 12-60 and Zeiko 35-100 f2.0, and for Canon and Nikon we used their 24-105 f4 IS USM and 24-120 f4 IS SWM, respectively. For Sony, we used their 18-55-kit lens.

Our image quality tests consist of focussing and subjective image quality tests. For focussing, we check each camera for front or back focussing. We focussed at a point on a diagonally placed display. A spreadsheet is displayed on the screen, since its cells serve as a good way to gauge front/back focussing. With a particular cell within focus, we observe blur and sharpness of the adjoining cells. If the sharpness is uneven further away, the camera is front focussing and if it's closer to the camera, it is a problem with back focussing. We also test each camera for wide angle and long range focussing accuracy. Here, we observe detailed objects with textures such as flowers and fruits. We do this indoors and outdoors.

In image quality, we check dynamic range and highlighting. We shoot brighter objects with dimmer and reflective backgrounds to check for spot highlighting and detail. The more overblown the detail, the lower the dynamic range of the camera's sensor. These tests are done at ISO 100 and ISO 200. For quality and micro detail, we use our test scene with a lot of colour, texture and detail. For stability, each camera is mounted on a tripod.

We use the same scene for higher ISO tests, where we keep changing the shutter speed to ensure proper exposure. For this studio test, we use a fixed aperture setting of f8. Auto white balancing is used – this also allows us to judge how well the white balance of each camera works with fluorescent light. For ISO tests, we increase ISO settings through 400, 800, 1600, 3200, 6400 and 12800. We shot in JPEG mode for most of the tests, and also used the RAW mode to check the camera's image processing.

We tested video quality at 720p and 1080p resolutions. We used zoom liberally to check for focus and clarity, and audible noise. Two 30 second clips were taken, one indoors and the other outdoors. For our flash tests, we used entry-level flashes for those dSLRs that didn't have integrated flash units.

spinning a dial and watching the on-screen menu also spin to the selected value. While this visual-based interface is novel, it isn't as intuitive as looking through a viewfinder. The sweeping panorama mode works pretty well, and is useful if you desire to capture a really wide angle view.

Overall, Sony's menu proves to be a little more visual, but also a little cumbersome to change settings quickly. Of course it could just be that we need to get used to Sony's attempt to do something new here. Nikon and Canon largely stick to their proven menu systems.

Performance

The first mini battle takes place between the Canon 1100D and Nikon D3100. The Sony A33 falls a little behind, as it struggles to resolve more detail in our test scene. This could be an issue with the lower quality lens, but to Sony's detriment they weren't willing to part with another lens after repeated attempts. The 1100D resolves more detail than the D3100. The D3100 does have a slightly more realistic texture to the orange, but overall, the 1100D appears sharper. The D5100 is clearly better than the D3100, but is very close with the Canon 1100D and 600D. Surprisingly, the 1100D holds up pretty well here, and is able to offer a brilliantly sharp image. Focussing was spot on, too.

The 600D seems to have a softer output than the 1100D, which strangely changes in the higher ISO tests, where it is able to both suppress noise and deliver more detail than the 1100D. This might be less about the sensor, and more about a stronger noise filter. However, it is outclassed by the D5100 that outperforms both Canon cameras in terms of texture.

Canon EOS 1100D 100 per cent crop at ISO 3200 - surprisingly clean output

Sony A33 100 per cent crop at ISO 3200 - note the increased noise compared to the Canon EOS 1100D

	Up to Rs.50,000 (Amateur dSLRs)					50,001 to 1,00,000 (Semi-pro/enthusiast dSLRs)				Professional dSLRs	
Brand	**Nikon**	**Canon**	**Nikon**	**Sony**	**Canon**	**Nikon**	**Canon**	**Olympus**	**Canon**	**Canon**	**Nikon**
Model Number	**D3100**	**EOS 1100D**	**D5100**	**A33**	**EOS 600D**	**D7000**	**EOS 60D**	**E5**	**EOS 7D**	**EOS 1D Mark IV**	**D3x**
Price (₹)	**29,950 ***	**29,990 ***	**34,450**	**37,990 ***	**46,990**	**59,450**	**65,295**	**85,000**	**87,995**	**2,59,995**	**5,24,950**
Grand Totals (Out of 100)	**65.30**	**63.78**	**67.34**	**67.80**	**66.90**	**73.91**	**71.68**	**67.63**	**73.38**	**79.76**	**68.03**
Features (Out of 25)	**16.25**	**15.75**	**16.43**	**17.38**	**16.55**	**18.38**	**17.99**	**18.98**	**19.03**	**19.85**	**17.23**
Build and ergonomics (Out of 20)	**13.05**	**12.88**	**13.35**	**12.65**	**13.16**	**14.48**	**14.45**	**14.05**	**15.79**	**16.07**	**17.14**
Performance (Out of 55)	**36.00**	**35.16**	**37.57**	**37.77**	**37.19**	**41.06**	**39.24**	**34.61**	**38.57**	**43.84**	**33.66**
Pros (+)	Shoots full HD	Well built	Good high ISO performance	Very good high ISO performance	Well built, good performance	Great ISO performance and AF system	Great for video	Superbly built	Great AF system, good performance at lower ISOs	Superb low light performance, great AF system	Superb AF, Superb quality at base ISOs
Cons (-)	Control layout	No full HD support	Feels small	Viewfinder is darkish	Expensive	Not a pro body	Expensive	Performance could be better	Default output is soft	Expensive, not a full frame	Very expensive, high ISO poor
Features											
Specifications											
Sensor resolution (in megapixelsl) / Type	14.2 / CMOS	12.2 / CMOS	16.2 / CMOS	14.2 / CMOS	17.9 / CMOS	16.4 / CMOS	17.9 / CMOS	12.3 / CMOS	17.9 / CMOS	16.1 / CMOS	24 / CMOS
Sensor dimension (in mm) / Area (in mm^2)	23.1 x 15.4 / 355.74	22.2 x 14.7 / 326.34	23.5 x 15.6 / 366.6	23.5 x 15.6 / 366.6	22.3 x 14.9 / 332.27	23.1 x 15.4 / 355.74	22.3 x 14.9 / 332.27	17.3 x 13 / 224.9	22.3 x 14.9 / 332.27	27.9 x 18.6 / 518.94	36 x 23.9 / 860.4
Viewfinder type	Penta-Dacha mirror	Optical Penta Mirror	Optical Penta Mirror	Electronic	Optical Penta Mirror	Optical Pentaprism	Optical Pentaprism	Optical Pentaprism	Optical Pentaprism	Optical Pentaprism	Optical Pentaprism
Minimum / Maximum ISO speed	100 / 3200 (12800 in H2 mode)	100 / 6400	100 / 6400 (25600 with boost)	100 / 12800 (25600 with boost)	100 / 6400 (12800 in H)	100 / 6400 (25600 with boost)	100 / 6400 (12800 in H1 mode)	100 / 6400	100 / 6400 (12800 in H1 mode)	100 / 12800	100 / 1600 (6400 in H2)
Fastest / Slowest Shutter Speed (seconds)	1/4000 sec / 30 sec	1/4000 sec / 30 sec	1/4000 sec / 30 sec	1/4000 sec / 30 sec	1/4000 sec / 30 sec	1/8000 sec / 30 sec	1/8000 sec / 30 sec	1/8000 sec / 60 sec	1/8000 sec / 30 sec	1/8000 sec / 30 sec	1/8000 sec / 30 sec
Bulb Mode (Y / N)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Number of focus points / Cross-type points	11 / 1	9 / 1	11 / 1	15 / 15	9 / 1	39 / 9	9 / 9	11 / 11	19 / 19	45 / 39	51 / 15
Built-in Flash (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Aperture / Shutter Priority Mode (Y/N)	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y	Y / Y
Continuous Drive (frames per second)	3	3	4	7	3.7	6	5.3	5	8	10	5
LCD Size (in inches) / Resolution (dots)	3 / 9,30,000	2.7 / 2,30,000	3 / 9,21,000	3 / 9,21,000	3 / 1040000	3 / 9,20,000	3 / 9,20,000	3 / 920000	3 / 9,20,000	3 / 9,20,000	3 / 9,20,000
Status LCD on top (Y / N)	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
HDMI out (Y / N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Max Video capture resolution (in pixels)	1980 x 1080 @ 24 fps	1280 x 720 @ 29.97	1920 x 1080 @ 30fps	1920 x 1080 @ 60fps	1920 x 1080 @ 30fps	1920 x 1080 @ 24 fps	1920 x 1080 @ 30fps	1280 x 720 @ 30fps	1920 x 1080 @ 30fps	1920 x 1080 @ 30fps	NA
Battery Type / Capacity (mAH)	Li-ion / 1030 mAh	Li-ion / 1500 mAh	Li-ion / 1030 mAh	Li-ion / 1080 mAh	Li-ion / 1120 mAh	Li-ion / 1900 mAh	Li-ion / 1800 mAh	Li-ion / 1800 mAh	Li-ion / 1800 mAh	Li-ion / 2,300 mAh	Li-ion / 2500 mAh
Format of memory card (CF, SD etc)	SD	SD	SD	SD, MS Pro	SD	SD	SD	CF + SD	CF	CF + SD	CF
Dual Card Slots (Y / N)	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Integrated vertical grip (Y / N)	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Weight, body only (in grams)	455	450	509	500	515	780	755	800	820	1180	1240
Lens mounts supported	Nikon F mount	Canon EF/EF-S	Nikon F mount	Sony Alpha	Canon EF/EF-S	Nikon F mount	Canon EF/EF-S	Nikon F mount	Canon EF/EF-S	Canon EF	Nikon F mount
Image stabilisation built-in body (Y / N)	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Build Quality (So 10)											
Body / Buttons and dials	6.25 / 6.5	6 / 6	6.5 / 6.5	6 / 6.5	6.75 / 6.5	7.25 / 7.25	7 / 7.25	8.25 / 7.75	8 / 8.25	8.75 / 8.75	9.25 / 9.25
Bays & moving parts / LCD screen & status displays / Rubber flaps	7 / 7.25 / 6.75	7 / 7.25 / 6.75	7 / 7.25 / 7	7 / 7 / 6.5	7.25 / 7.25 / 6.25	7.25 / 7 / 7	7 / 7.25 / 7	7.25 / 7 / 7.25	8 / 8 / 7.75	8.5 / 8.5 / 8.25	8.75 / 8.5 / 8.75
Ergonomics and usability (So 10)											
Grip comfort and feel	6.25	6	6.25	5.75	6.5	7	7	7.75	8	7.75	8.75
Placement of buttons and dials	6	6.25	6.25	5.5	6.5	7	7.25	6.75	8	7.75	8.25
Intuitiveness of menus / Menu details	8 / 5.25	7.25 / 5.5	8 / 5.5	7.5 / 5.5	7.25 / 5.5	7.5 / 8	7.75 / 7.25	5.75 / 7	7.75 / 8	7 / 8.75	7.5 / 9.5
Performance (at ISO 100, 200)											
Quality (dynamic range, highlighting)	7	7	7.25	7.25	7	8.25	7	7.25	7	8.75	8.75
Quality (sharpness, micro-details)	7	7	7.5	7	7	7.75	8	6	8	8.5	8.75
Back/Front focussing test (So 10)	7.5	7.5	7.75	7.5	7.75	8.5	8	8	7.25	9	9
Effectiveness of Image Stabilisation	5	5	5	6.5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
High ISO tests (So 10)											
ISO 400	7.75	8	8	8.5	7.75	8.5	8.25	8	8.5	9.25	8
ISO 800	7	7.75	7.5	8	8	8	8.25	8	8	8.5	7
ISO 1600	6.5	7	7	7	7.5	7.75	7.5	7	7	8.25	5.5
ISO 3200	5.5	6.75	6.5	5.5	6	7.75	7	6	6.25	8	4
ISO 6400 / ISO 12800	4.5 / 2.5	5.5 / 0	4.25 / 2.25	4 / 2	5 / 3	7.5 / 4.25	6 / 3.75	5 / 0	5.5 / 3.5	7.5 / 6	2 / 0
Flash test portrait / fill-scene	7.5 / 7.25	7 / 7.25	7.5 / 7.25	7 / 7	7 / 7.25	7.5 / 7.5	7.25 / 7	8 / 7.5	7.25 / 7	7.5 / 7.5	8 / 7.75
Video Quality 720p /1080p	7.25 / 7.5	7 / 0	7.5 / 7.75	7.5 / 7.5	7.25 / 7.5	7.25 / 7.25	7.25 / 7.5	7 / 0	7.5 / 7.75	8 / 8.5	0 / 0
Audio Quality	6.5	6.75	6.75	7	6.75	6.75	7.25	6.5	7.25	7.25	0

** price includes the kit lens*

In our high ISO tests, once again, the Sony A33 disappointed with more smearing of textures, colour and details at ISO 800 and above. The Canon 1100D is shockingly less noisier at ISO 800 than its costlier sibling, the 600D, but very slightly so. However, the 600D is still more detailed, and textures are more evident on the 600D. The D3100 cannot handle noise too well, while the output is mostly clean, some smearing of details is visible, and the 1100D is better in this respect. The D5100 does show a bit of noise, but also shows a lot of detail. However, the 600D is a bit better than the D5100 in terms of finer details. In fact, at ISO 1600, it is actually more detailed than the 7D.

At ISO 1600, the Nikon D5100 displays a bit of chroma noise while the output from the 600D is free from this. Both cameras are fairly close, but the 600D just eases ahead. At ISO 1600, the 1100D and the D3100 are about equal, the former shows less noise, while having a softer output, while the D3100 has a little more of noise, but shows a bit more detail. Surprisingly, the output from all these cameras, including the A33 is quite pleasant at this sensitivity, as long as you don't work with close to 100 per cent crops.

And the winner is

All considered, the D5100 offers a lot for the money – full HD recording, a great sensor capable of much detail and rugged body. It won our Digit Best Buy award after carefully considering all the facts and numbers. The D3100 and Sony A33 also make very good buys and came up with identical value scores, a little behind the D5100. In fact, with full HD recording, a new menu and mirror system, the A33 offers a tremendously detailed output at up to ISO 400, and is mostly grain free till ISO 800. It bagged the Editor's Pick.

ENTHUSIAST DSLRS

For many, this will be the most interesting category. These cameras typically offer improved ergonomics and better image quality with larger, more rugged bodies that are just about better in every way. Many pros in India, who do not need the higher-end full frame dSLRs, actually use cameras in this segment for their work. We received four cameras in this price category two from Canon – the EOS 60D, 7D and one each from Nikon (D7000) and Olympus (E5).

Canon EOS 60D: ₹65,295 (body only)

The EOS 60D is a well-built dSLR that exudes a quality feel in hand. It has a nice ergonomic grip and an articulating LCD, as well as an 18 MP sensor derived from the 7D. It isn't as well built as the 7D, and is slightly smaller, but has almost the same button layout, with dual dials and a status LCD. However, the buttons on the left of the LCD have moved to the right, to accommodate the articulating LCDs mechanism. The buttons near the status LCD feel clicky, and are set flush in the body, making them a little less intuitive. The 60D isn't weather sealed. The Nikon D7000 feels better built, with slightly tighter shut lines.

The ergonomics of the 60D are a bit questionable, with play and delete buttons being located on opposite ends of the camera. The 4-way joystick seen on the 7D and 5D Mark 2 has been moved and is inset in the rear dial. With its 9 cross point focussing system, the 60D focuses fast, but the focus points feel a bit sparse, and are not configurable. We prefer the focussing of the D7000 and the 7D. The LCD on the 60D is a bit sharper than the 7D, but the difference isn't very noticeable.

At base ISOs, the 60D offers a clean, detailed output. The colours are punchy, and there's a lot of detail. There's no noise at ISO 400, and just a little at ISO 800. We noticed the 60D trying just a bit harder to remove noise and therefore there is a little loss of detail. The D7000 in contrast offers even less noise, while maintaining more detail and higher dynamic range, noticeable in the quality of the highlights it produces. At ISO 1600, the 60D's output is largely clean and noise free, but more detail is lost. ISO 800 and 1600 show similar levels of noise – a very good result. At ISO 3200 there is some chroma noise visible, but the output is still largely clean. The effects of some ham-handed noise control is visible however, as more detail is lost and textures appear a bit flat. ISO 6400 shows a lot of chroma noise in 100 per cent crops along with some loss of detail, but when viewed at a normal size, the output is still quite punchy and pleasing.

Canon EOS 600D

Nikon D7000: ₹59,450 (body only)

The replacement for the D90, the D7000 actually has more in common with the D300s, with a partial magnesium alloy body, a 39-point focussing system with 9 cross points. However, in terms of its look, it looks more like the D90 and is a size smaller than the D300s and the 7D, with less rubber on the grip, but in hand, it feels extremely solid partially on account of its smaller size. The control layout is similar to the D300s, with some differences. There's no ring for metering, and the focus switch has just 2 modes instead of 3, the third being continuous focus that can be activated via the rear dial. There is also no switch for setting the auto-focus area and points like the D300s. The status LCD is smaller than the D300s and less detailed. The drive mode dial is located beneath the menu dial and is locked against accidental usage with a small button. A dedicate video mode switch is a welcome addition.

Finally, we see 2 card slots – very useful since the D7000 allows both slots to be configured in a number of ways – image + video, JPEG + RAW or as a backup. One minus compared to the 7D is the D7000 doesn't allow fast configuring of the focus points, and with the 7D you can select any one point or group them.

The D7000 focuses really fast, accurately and it captures a lot of detail. At base ISOs, the D7000s output is very clean, with great highlights, better than the 7D and 60D. At ISO 800, there is minimal noise, and little difference at ISO 200. The D7000 controls noise reasonably well at ISO 1600, and maintains more detail than the 7D and 60D that have a softer output. At ISO 3200, the D7000 is sharp, although highlights take a toss, but noise is still well controlled. At ISO 6400, the D7000 begins to lose its composure and noise

dSLRs for video?
A J.D Power survey shows that one third buy for shooting video, and each photographer takes an average of 918 shots a month

Another Hallmark holiday?
August 19th, the day Louis Daguerre's daguerreotype was announced as a free gift to the world by the French is celebrated as World Photography Day

begins to obscure details and textures. However, this is evident in 100 per cent crops and not when viewing the image full-screen. ISO 12800 is clearly avoidable, except for emergencies, for the dynamic range takes a nosedive and the noise that was slightly evident all along now becomes blatant, blotting out finer details. Still for a crop sensor, the D7000 performs commendably and there is no doubt that it is much better than the Nikon D300s we tested last year, and better at ISO 3200 and onwards than the Canon 60D and 7D. It wins our Best Buy award for its brilliant mix of performance and price.

Canon EOS 7D: ₹87,995 (body only)

The Canon 7D sits at the top of Canon's range of dSLRs with crop sensors. It has a very solid build, with a magnesium alloy body and a nice rubber grip on top. It feels very solid, but not as chunky as the D300s. Canon nails ergonomics on its head – the 7D has a near perfect control layout and ergonomics. Whether it is selecting focus points, or changing some setting, the 7D is very intuitive to use. The buttons are well spaced and large, and while they have a bit extra travel, they work well for the most part – the extra travel's good with gloves on. The 19 cross point focussing system is very fast, although some might find the focus points a bit sparse, we feel the focus points don't cover as much of the frame as we'd like – the D7000 has better frame coverage. Both cameras focus equal in accuracy, although the 7D is a little faster in lower light. With a lack of contrast, both systems will "hunt".

The 7Ds menus are detailed, but not as intimidating as the D7000's. Canon has chosen a good bunch of settings, one isn't boggled with extras that will be used once every 5000 shots. The 7D supports CF cards, but misses a trick with only 1 slot. The status LCD is reasonably detailed, while a dedicated video mode and live view button is a nice addition. The one button RAW + JPEG button is useful.

The 7D produces good clean images at base ISOs right up to ISO 400. There is one huge problem however – the 7D struggles with displaying any sort of detail with the colour red, and our red flowers appear flat – there is no texture, and the nuances of the petals get lost when viewing a 100 per cent crop. In fact the petal edges aren't visible – too soft. At ISO 800, there is a fair bit of noise present in dim conditions, but our test scene with its bright lighting looks clean and largely noise free but textures look softer. The D7000 in comparison is a little more detailed. At ISO 1600, the 7D still manages a clean output, but with textures and details losing their liveliness. However, for small to medium sized prints, the output is acceptable. At ISO 3200, the 7D starts to lose a bit of dynamic range, and noise now becomes clearly visible. However, in comparison, the 60D with the same sensor shows a bit more chroma noise, and had some anomalous bright pixels whereas the 7D is free from this. ISO 6400 isn't the cleanest around, but for a crop sensor it does pretty well. The D7000 preserves more detail, while showing about a similar amount of noise, and is thus better than the 7D at ISO 3200 and more so at ISO 6400.

A 100 per cent crop shot with the D3x. Note the fine texture. The image is as good as your eyes see it

Olympus E5: ₹85,000 (body only)

The E5 won't win any awards for its looks, but it's extremely well built with a metal body, very rugged. Even the popup flash unit is built of metal – something we've not seen. With support for dual cards, one CF and one SD, the E5 offers good versatility, given that you can configure the card slots in a number of ways.

The E5 is comfortable to hold and the dials within easy reach. Unfortunately, (and here's where Olympus starts to get things wrong), the menu system isn't the most intuitive and it takes a while to get things going. The buttons are small, and not laid out very intuitively, and having directional joypad-like buttons is typically a no-no for dSLRs in this price segment. The status LCD is reasonably detailed but has a weak illumination lamp. The main LCD isn't good for cameras in this price segment, during live view it flickers – not something that is very conducive for judging composition and lighting before clicking.

The sensor on the E5 is smaller than the regular APS-C sensors on most other cameras. The sensor is a micro 4/3

Olympus E5

meaning it has a crop factor of 2. Thus theoretically, we weren't expecting as much in low light. At base ISOs, the E5 has a good clean output. It is fairly detailed, but misses out on liveliness in highlights. In our test shot, the camera captures texture nicely, and even manages to highlight flaws on the surface of a fruit. There is a very slight amount of noise visible at ISO 400, but it's not unpleasant. With normal viewing, ISO 800 isn't a lot different from ISO 400 – a good thing. There is no extra noise, but a slight loss of sharpness and detail, and a further reduction in dynamic range. Still, the E5 manages some nice highlights.

At ISO 1600 darker materials lose textures, and the black cloth looks flat. There is a bit more noise, but the sensor really struggles to resolve details. ISO 3200 is noisy, with a loss of colour and clarity but is okay for screen size

previews. ISO 6400 is grainy, with a lot of loss of detail, and washed out colours.

PRO DSLRS

Canon EOS 1D Mark 4: ₹2,59,995

The camera's built like a tank, has great in-hand feel, tight seams, weather sealing, metal body – the works. However, the rubber grips aren't as cushioned and soft as the Nikon D3x, and neither are the grip's contours as comfortable. The Mark 4 has a crop sensor that is larger than APS-C, called APS-H by Canon. It offers the best of both worlds – better performance in low light than APS-C sensors, and more corner sharpness with lower vignette than full frame ones.

The Mark 4 has a good button layout, despite being different from other Canon cameras. There are no buttons down the left side, they're moved to the left shoulder of the camera. There are 2 status LCDs, both quite small, and the rear one doesn't show a lot of info, unlike the D3x and D3s that allow previewing and changing some settings like WB and ISO. The menus are detailed, and a bit complex, but not as deep as the D3x.

The 1D Mark 4 focuses very fast, and accurately. Its 45 points are good, but the frame coverage is strictly decent, and with so many points, the viewfinder around the centre can look a little busy. Image quality is excellent, as expected. Immediately visible is the far improved specular highlights on the paper clips compared to the 7D and the D7000 that are of course much cheaper cameras. The highlights are easily at par with the D3x, with the larger sensor on the Nikon only scoring a bit more detail with textures of some fruit.

At ISO 800, the Mark 4 is clean, very clean, with no loss of detail and absolutely no noise. ISO 1600 has a touch of noise, but it's like film grain and looks integral to the output without disturbing it. The details and highlights remain almost unchanged. Some of the texture on the fruit does seem to have become a little less pronounced, but it's still more than what the other crop sensors managed. At ISO 3200, the cloth's fine texture is still clear, and the paper clips still have good highlights although they have lost some detail. Some parts of the cloth that are facing our lights seem to have taken on a slightly greyish tinge from their default black, but really, this is only noticeable in 100 per cent crops. At ISO 6400 there's more noise smearing details, but smaller prints should easily be possible. Surprisingly, the Nikon D7000s output seems a bit close to the Mark 4 – high praise indeed. And through all this, corner sharpness is much better than the D3x, and the Canon 5D Mark 2 (not part of this test).

With its high speed shooting, and amazingly clean and detailed output quality up to ISO 3200, the 1D Mark 4 is really meant for action sports shooters or for pros looking to shoot wildlife. At ₹2,59,995, many people will prefer opting for a full frame and there are some cheaper ones about, but the 1D Mark 4 is the true king of the crops, just not very affordable! Having edged out the D3x at higher ISOs, it also bagged our Digit Best Performance award.

Nikon D3x: ₹5,24,990

We were pretty surprised when Nikon sent us the D3x – a pro studio tool. It's a massive looking camera, with a plush integrated vertical grip, a huge bulge at the top for the large pentaprism viewfinder and a very solid magnesium alloy frame that's weather sealed and covered in certain parts with thick, heavy duty rubber. The D3x is bristling with buttons, dials and knobs, and while the control system is intimidating at first, it grows on you within the first 6 hours of use. It feels better in-hand, than the Canon 1D Mark 4.

The D3x is blessed with dedicated buttons for nearly everything, and in conjunction with the dials and the 2 status LCDs, accessing vital settings is easy and fast. The menus are very deep though, and loaded with more options than most will use, some require referral to the manual. Most D300 users will feel right at home. The 51-point AF system is fast, has decent frame coverage and focuses extremely accurately. Owing to its larger sensor, the viewfinder is also a bit brighter than other cameras in this comparison.

Canon EOS 1D Mark 4

The D3x is an older camera, and video shooting is missed. However, pros will love 24 MP sensor more than makes up in the still image department. The D3x shows excellent resolution and sharpness at base ISOs. In fact, highlighting is so natural it looks like your looking at a real scene and not a captured image. The D3x resolves fine detail and texture very nicely, much more so than the 7D, D7000 and lesser cameras. Though this is only visible when working with 100 per cent crops, and so the D3x is clearly a tool for the discerning professional.

It's not without flaw though, as at ISO 400 a tiny bit of noise creeps in – there's lots of detail, but 100 per cent crops don't look as pristine as they look at ISO 100. ISO 800 is noisier, and while not serious, it is enough that you might not want to use it for images that matter. ISO 1600 and 3200 are not really usable. We've tested the D3s earlier and are happy to announce that it is still the low light champ and is better than all the cameras here, the D3x included. In fact there is an at least 4 ISO stop advantage. In our performance scores, you might be surprised to see the D3x score low, but remember that it doesn't shoot video, and isn't good at higher ISOs. For studio shooting, check the dynamic range and detailing scores – it outscores other cameras quite easily.

It is also good when cropping photos, due to the huge sensor resolution. Pros do a lot of this. It will also allow larger prints if the image is captured at base ISOs (up to ISO 200). Still, blowing upward of ₹5 lakhs on a dSLR that is vulnerable in low light seems daft. If you're looking for something more rounded from Nikon, we recommend the D3s, or waiting for a successor, that could be next year.

Contact sheet

Brand	Phone no	Email	Web site
Canon	+91-124-4160000	info@canon.co.in	www.canon.co.in
Nikon	1800-102-7346	nindsales@nikonoa.net	www.nikon.co.in
Olympus	+91-22-61420400	inquiry@olympus.in	www.olympus-imaging.co.in
Sony	1800-103-7799	sonyindia.care@ap.sony.com	www.sony.co.in

Rapture to be a reality!
Peter Thiel, co-founder of PayPal has donated money in a project to build floating city states

Microsoft pwns Linux!
Micorsoft says that Linux is no longer a threat. Apple and Google are bigger threats

Wonder all-rounders

We compare seven all-in-one PCs from Apple, Dell, HP, Lenovo and Zenith to tell you which one deserves a place in your living room

Jayesh Shinde
jayesh.shinde@thinkdigit.com

In our comparison this month, we conclude that the consumer has a decent variety of all-in-one PCs from different manufacturers to choose from, each offering something different, something unique to appeal to a variety of tastes. Here's the gist.

LENOVO IDEACENTRE A320

The IdeaCentre A320 is exactly similar to its predecessor, the IdeaCentre A300, in terms of design — it has a high gloss piano white surface, its base connected to the screen with a rod not at the centre but towards the right of the whole machine; as a result the IdeaCentre A320 has a slightly off-centre centre of gravity. The screen has a steel rim that houses the 21.5-inch LED-backlit display. Unlike the Apple iMac and IdeaCentre B320, the A320 doesn't have an I/O port on the side of its screen in an attempt to keep its design minimal and elegant.

Lenovo IdeaCentre A320

The screen is glossy, the base quite slim and small, and the whole unit is actually pretty compact — it's great for showing off in your living room and can fit snugly on a cramped office table. The all-in-one comes with a variety of connectivity options. Four USB, two HDMI, mic, a headphone, 5-in-1 card reader, ethernet, power and TV-in port. The A320 has a pretty handy media centre remote which lets you manipulate your TV connection through the system — it's great to use and works well within a range of 20-25 feet.

The A320's stand placement is questionable and its on-board speakers aren't great, but apart from that, it's a pretty looking thing good enough for watching movies and basic computing in a posh living room.

LENOVO IDEACENTRE B320

The Lenovo IdeaCentre B320 is in Lenovo's words "an all-in-one for everyone." It isn't as svelte as the IdeaCentre A320, nor as iconic as the Apple iMac, but it sports a functional, working design. The IdeaCentre B320 has a photo-frame shape with an adjustable stand that allows the screen to tilt back (only), nothing more. The all-in-one

PC's plastic stand is sturdy and well-built, no problems whatsoever. The IdeaCentre B320's back panel has a fake wooden finish, lending it a touch of elegance.

The B320 is predominantly black in colour with a 20-inch non-glossy screen – surprising for an all-in-one. The bezel is glossy with a piano black finish, and a prominent grilled extension below the bezel houses the PC's on-board speakers. The speakers are loud and boomy, and clearer at full volume compared to the iMac and A320.

Like the IdeaCentre A320, the

Lenovo IdeaCentre B320

Lenovo IdeaCentre B320 comes equipped with the latest Intel Sandy Bridge platform and adequate hardware to make it one of the fastest machines in this test. It can multitask day-to-day home apps with ease, but don't have high hopes of gaming on this PC as there's only on-board Intel graphics to make do with. The B320 comes with a great set of proprietary software and at its price offers a well performing, space saving all-in-one desktop PC for any home user. Definitely worth considering.

APPLE iMAC (21.5-INCH)

BEST PERFORMER digit SEPTEMBER 2011

Apple's iMac

Apple's iMac continues to set standards that competing all-in-one desktop PC manufacturers try to emulate. The latest 21.5-inch iMac is encased in a unibody aluminium shell, including the screen and stand, lending the iMac unmatched style and elegance. The all-metal shell adds to the iMac's superior build quality as well, compared to other all-in-one PCs in this comparison.

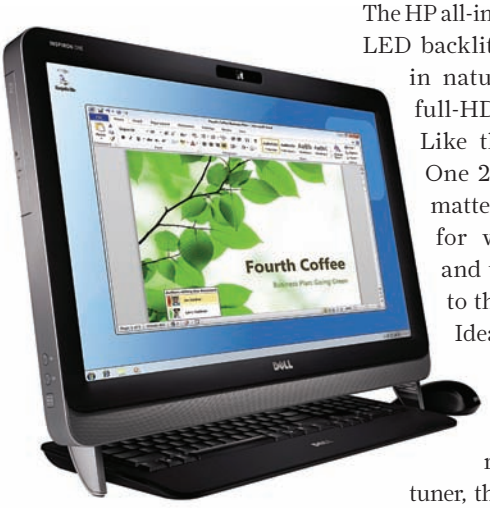
EDITOR'S PICK digit SEPTEMBER 2011

The iMac's full-HD screen has a superior IPS panel, better than any other PC in this test. As a result, watching movies or gaming on the screen is better than the rest at good viewing angles. The iMac's speakers are good overall except for one problem – they're placed below the screen's edge and don't project sound as well as the IdeaCentre B320 or the Dell Inspiron One 2310. Its wireless keyboard doesn't have a number pad but the glass-top mouse supports multi-touch input.

No other all-in-one PC in this comparison comes even close to matching the iMac's internal hardware, which boasts a quad-core Intel Core i5 processor and AMD Radeon HD 6750M graphics. Multitasking isn't a problem and the GPU allows for a decent gaming experience. The iMac is also equipped with a high-speed interface called Thunderbolt, supporting transfer speeds of up to 10 Gbps — supported devices should surface soon. Overall, the iMac is a stylish all-in-one PC for your home, if you have the money to afford it.

DELL INSPIRON ONE 2310

The Dell Inspiron One 2310 is like the IdeaCentre B320 all-in-one PC with a photo-frame design. The all-in-one PC has a polished matte shell with gun-metal grey on the back panel. Its two on-board stereo speakers are placed below the screen bezel. The Inspiron One 2310 comes with wireless keyboard and mouse, doing well to limit cable clutter on the desk – however, connecting its mouse via the Bluetooth USB dongle was less than ideal. The unit is built well overall, apart from its thin plastic stand which looks shaky.



Dell Inspiron One 2310

Apart from a decent (albeit older) hardware set, in terms of processor, RAM and graphics, the Inspiron One 2310 has a 2MP webcam for videochats over the Web which has a useful webcam software to record videos, take photos and upload them on YouTube or Flickr. It comes with a fully-featured media centre remote, like the IdeaCentre A320. The Dell all-in-one PC has a number of connectivity ports, however it lacks an eSATA port.

Watching HD movies and gaming on the Dell Inspiron One 2310 isn't as good as the iMac mainly because of its matte screen. Colours didn't pop out as much and viewing angles were okay. Overall, the Dell PC has a bit of everything but is too costly compared to some others in the test.

HP OMNI 200-5310IN

The Omni 200-5310in is a block of dark, obsidian plastic moulded in a form similar to the Apple iMac's iconic design. The HP all-in-one PC's 21.5-inch LED backlit screen is glossy in nature, supporting a full-HD pixel resolution. Like the Dell Inspiron One 2310, the HP PC's matte screen isn't great for watching movies and videos, compared to the likes of Lenovo IdeaCentre A320 and the Apple iMac.

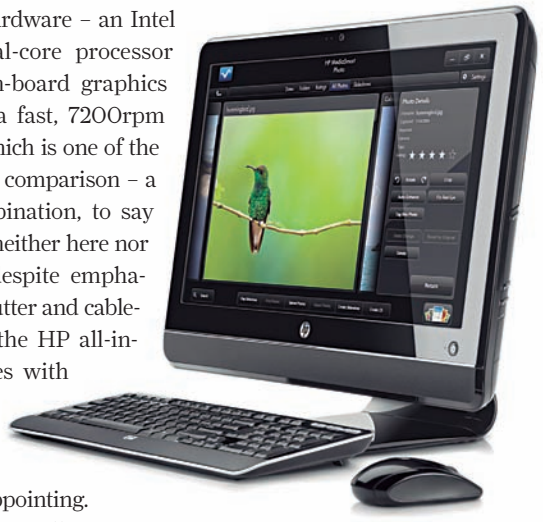
Despite a media centre remote, inbuilt TV tuner, the HP Omni all-in-one PC comes with a mixed set

EDITOR'S PICK digit SEPTEMBER 2011 | BEST PERFORMER digit SEPTEMBER 2011 | BEST BUY digit SEPTEMBER 2011

Brand	Lenovo	Lenovo	Apple	HP	Dell	Zenith	Zenith
Model	**IdeaCentre B320**	**IdeaCentre A320**	**iMac**	**Omni 200 - 5310in**	**Inspiron One 2310**	**Smart Style PC**	**Smart Style ECO PC**
Price (₹)	**29,990**	**50,990**	**64,990**	**40,337**	**52,065**	**18,500**	**22,000**
Features (out of 100)	**57.83**	**69.36**	**61.71**	**66.54**	**74.79**	**39.43**	**40.29**
Overall (out of 100)	**59.11**	**53.72**	**70.02**	**52.35**	**59.72**	**40.05**	**38.81**
Screen size (inches)	20	21.5	21.5	21.5	23	19	18.5
Display resolution	1920 x 1080	1920 x 1080	1920 x 1080	1920 x 1080	1920 x 1080	1366 x 768	1366 x 768
Processor	Intel Core i3-2100	Intel Core i3-2310M	Intel Core i5-2400S	Pentium Dual Core E5800	Intel Core i5-460M	Intel Core i3-550	Intel Core i3-370M
Processor speed (MHz)	3100	2100	2600	3200	2800	3200	2400
RAM	3 GB	3 GB	4 GB	2 GB	4 GB	2 GB	1 GB
Hard drive	1 TB	750 GB	500 GB	500 GB	500 GB	320 GB	320 GB
Graphics	Intel HD 3000	Intel HD 3000	AMD Radeon HD 6750M	Intel GMA X4500	ATI Radeon HD 5470M	Intel HD	Intel HD
Bundled OS	Windows 7 Home Basic	Windows 7 Home Premium	Mac OS X 10.7	Windows 7 Home Premium	Windows 7 Home Premium	-	-
No of ports (USB/Firewire)	7	4	4	7	2	7	2
USB 3.0 (Y/N)	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
Connectivity (LAN / Bluetooth / Wi-Fi)	Y/Y/Y	Y/Y/Y	Y/Y/Y	Y/Y/Y	Y/Y/Y	Y/Y/Y	Y/Y/Y
E-Sata / Thunderbolt (Y/Y)	0	0	Y	0	0	Y	0
Display output (VGA/DVI/HDMI/ Display Port)	N/N/N/N	N/N/Y/N	N/N/N/N	N/N/N/Y	Y/N/Y/N	N/Y/Y/N	Y/N/Y/N
Built-in TV tuner?	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Media centre remote	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N
Headphone/Mic (1/1)	2	2	2	2	2	Only Headphone	2
Wireless keyboard and mouse	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
Memory card reader (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Optical drive (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
In-built webcam (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Webcamera resolution (in megapixels)	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.0	NA	NA
Build & Usability (out of 40)							
Body, Ports, Controls (So 10)	4.00	4.89	6.00	2.89	2.89	3.56	2.89
Keyboard (So 10)	5.33	1.67	2.00	5.00	4.33	4.33	4.33
Mouse (So 10)	6.00	4.00	4.00	6.00	6.00	5.00	5.00
Installed Software (So 10)	8.00	8.00	6.00	4.00	4.00	0.00	0.00
Performance							
PC Mark Vantage	**7423**	**5273**	**8985**	**4774**	**6304**	**4218**	**4096**
Memory score	4563	3319	6041	2947	4109	3218	2686
TV and Movies score	4382	3760	5437	3101	3801	3807	3061
Gaming score	5460	4006	7665	2554	4760	2315	2043
Music score	7436	5036	7080	6199	5806	5731	4640
Communications score	7000	4984	9132	6016	5970	5589	3955
Productivity score	7239	5040	7534	4762	6123	4618	3927
HDD score	4310	3091	4254	3706	4264	3691	2829
3D Mark 2006	**3109**	**2539**	**9611**	**1069**	**3800**	**1513**	**1397**
SM 2.0	1370	1183	3318	340	1299	456	427
HDR/SM 3.0	1549	1438	4139	406	1513	602	556
Cinebench	**2.96**	**2.03**	**4.05**	**1.84**	**2.13**	**2.52**	**1.88**
Real World Tests							
Speaker vol. (at 50 per cent) (So 10)	5	4	6.5	6	6.5	2	4
Clarity (at 100 per cent) (So 10)	6	5	5.5	4.5	5	3	6
HD video playback test (So 10)	6	7	8.5	6.5	6.5	4	5.5
WinRAR 3.9 (Compression / Decompression)	2257	2089	2851	1078	1625	1771	1408
4 GB single file copy (sec)	143	203	149	79.4	109.1	244.2	203.1
4 GB folder files copy (sec)	145	246	156	154	116.4	221.6	248.6
100 MB file conversion (VOB-to-DivX) (secs)	32.6	44.4	27.4	79	41.2	37.9	49.6

NOTE: The Apple iMac was tested and benchmarked on a 64-bit Windows 7 installation through Boot Camp for Mac OS X 10.7.

of internal hardware – an Intel Pentium dual-core processor and weak on-board graphics paired with a fast, 7200rpm hard drive which is one of the fastest in this comparison – a curious combination, to say the least. It's neither here nor there. And despite emphasising on a clutter and cable-free system, the HP all-in-one PC comes with a set of wired keyboard and mouse, which is disappointing.



HP Omni 200-5310in

But the HP all-in-one PC comes with a good HD webcam which is decent for videochats. The PC has good on-board speakers too.

Between the Lenovo IdeaCentre B320 and HP Omni 500, buy the HP PC if you need the bundled TV tuner, but don't forget the Lenovo B320 comes with the latest hardware but at a comparatively lower price.

BEST BUY digit SEPTEMBER 2011

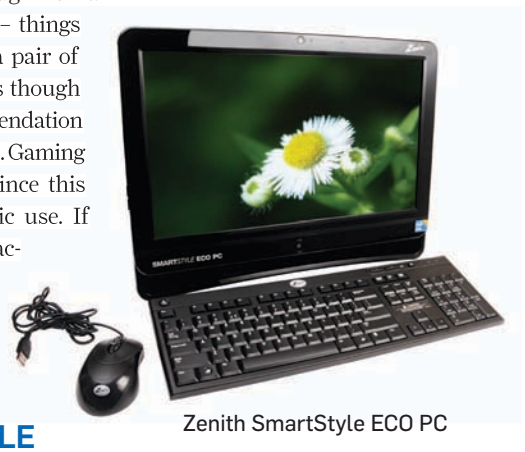
ZENITH SMART-STYLE PC

The Zenith SmartStyle PC has a 19-inch shell made up of plastic but coated with glossy aluminum colour, a spitting image of the Apple iMac. Its stand is similar and speakers are situated below the bezel, just like on the Mac. The SmartStyle PC's on-screen display menu buttons are right below the centre bezel. The power off button is also hidden there. There's no webcam on top.

The Zenith PC has one of the best connectivity features: 7 USB ports, HDMI, DVI, eSATA, SPDIF, ethernet, 7.1 channel surround sound support. All these ports are arranged haphazardly though; like you would find on some monitors, everything has to be inserted upward and not sideways. The bundled pair of wired keyboard and mouse are responsive and quite good to use, especially the keyboard which has dedicated multimedia buttons and a number pad.

Zenith SmartStyle PC

The Zenith all-in-one PC has a glossy screen that's good for watching movies. But the included on-board speakers aren't loud enough for a good experience – things work well with a pair of external speakers though (a strong recommendation for all-in-one PCs). Gaming is not possible since this is solely for basic use. If you need an iMac-lookalike at the lowest price, this is the one.



Zenith SmartStyle ECO PC

ZENITH SMARTSTYLE ECO PC

The Zenith SmartStyle ECO PC is a bit like the IdeaCentre B320 – photo frame design, with adjustable back stand that only allows its screen to tilt back, not front. The all-in-one PC has a big power on button at the centre of the bottom screen bezel. The gauzed speakers are situated below the bezel – they perform surprisingly well for a low-priced all-in-one PC like the Zenith SmartStyle Eco.

The SmartStyle ECO PC's 19-inch screen supports a 1366x768 pixel resolution and is matte in nature, but the black bezel surrounding it has a piano gloss finish. There's a webcam on top which is alright for videochatting. The machine's back panel reveals a telling tale, indeed. You see, the 19-inch Zenith SmartStyle ECO PC has the innards of a laptop. This is because not only are its heat vents and connectivity ports on the side (VGA, USB, HDMI, ethernet on right and two USB ports, headphone, microphone and DVD drive on left), but there's also a fake sliding battery compartment, just like on a laptop. Ingenious or bad design? We let you be the judge.

Performance is good for basic use – speakers, especially – but not comparable with Lenovo B320, Apple iMac and Dell Inspiron One 2310. Watching movies isn't all that great, mainly because of the matte screen finish. But at the asking price of ₹22,000, the Zenith SmartStyle ECO PC is worth a consideration for budget-conscious buyers.

Ching's Secret
Instant, Hakka & Pad Thai Noodles, Soups, Sauces & Miracle Masala
Ching's Khao, Baki Bhool Jao
@ChingsSecret www.facebook.com/ChingsSecret www.youtube.com/ChingsSecret

The birth of Hollywood
Hollywood was formed by a group of film makers wanting to get away from Edison and his patents! **http://bit.ly/qIykv7**

Massless speakers
Plasma speakers are a form of massless speakers where plasma drives the air around you to produce sound. **http://bit.ly/n7IhSf**

Nokia X7

Just great looks, nothing much

Specifications

Platform: Symbian Anna; **Processor:** ARM 11 680MHz with Broadcom BCM2727 GPU; **RAM:** 256 MB; **Display:** 4.0 inches AMOLED capacitive touchscreen, 640x360 pixel resolution; **Memory:** microSD slot up to 32 GB; **Camera:** 8 MP with 720p HD video, dual LED flash; **Battery:** 1200 mAh

Contact

Nokia India
Phone: +91 (city code) 30303838
Email: http://www.nokia.co.in/support/ask-nokia
Price: ₹22,829

6.0/10

Features	6.0
Performance	6.5
Build Quality	7.0
Value for Money	5.5

If you have ₹20k to spend on a touchscreen smartphone, the choices are just endless. A gamut of solid Android phones- Samsung Galaxy S i9003, Samsung Google Nexus S and the LG Optimus Black, are available. Plus, let us not forget that the ageing Apple iPhone 3GS is now available for around ₹19k after the recent price reduction.

The Nokia X7 handset looks superb. It's edgy with the corners angling inwards giving it quite a futuristic look. The sides are also at an angle – curved inwards towards the rear panel. It seems like there are speakers hidden away on all four angled corners, but actually, there are only two – the other two are evidently for uniformity. The mixture of plastic and aluminium does give the phone a classy look.

Carrying forward from the trend set by the Nokia N8, the SIM card slot is on the left side, and so is the microSD card slot. Push them in from one side, and once the other end emerges, pull it out! This mechanism isn't very smooth to operate. What we don't really understand is the point of such a design.

There really is no other way of putting this – the X7 isn't a performance phone at all. A 680MHz processor with 256MB of RAM is a bit of a disappointment. While some may argue that the Anna update has changed things, the reality is that this change has only happened up to a certain extent.

Moving beyond this disappointment, the 4-inch AMOLED display is quite good. Colours are appreciably distinct, but do lack a bit of punch in terms of vividness. The crispness is quite good, and shows in the clarity of the text – reading text on websites, for example is a pretty good experience. The brightness is quite solid, so much so that turning it up too much may lead to the display becoming uncomfortable to use.

The updated web browser is one of the really good things to come out of the Anna update. Web pages render quicker and smoother. Pinch to zoom works in a smoother fashion and the text generally fits well. The good old feeling continues from the Nokia E6!

The X7 does tend to become a bit hot when browsing the web, or while chatting on the phone for a long time. And the metal back does induce some sweat on ones palms.

Battery backup is very good, and full marks to Nokia here. The X7 offers two full days of usage, more than what we bargained for.

Symbian Anna is like a completely new OS, in some respects. The Anna update has gone a long way in bringing it closer to Android. The performance has improved appreciably. However, Nokia's Social app needs a complete overhaul – poor design, literally no configurable features and no integration with the contacts.

The Nokia X7 is quite a unique looking phone, and kudos to Nokia for finally getting aesthetics right, at least for the most part. At 20,000 bucks, it lands slam bang in the hottest price bracket in the smartphone market – and therefore also has to contend with the most competition.

Unfortunately it doesn't stand out in its price segment. Symbian Anna gives the X7 an edge over the N8, (in terms of performance), which while part of a different series could be called a spiritual predecessor. It is strictly for those who find its looks appealing, or Symbian/Nokia aficionados.

Vishal Mathur

BlackBerry PlayBook

All work, no play?

BlackBerry was one major smartphone player missing from the tablet segment. With the PlayBook, BlackBerry has entered the arena of sleek tablets sporting a completely new operating system. So should the tablet market leader face shivers from the PlayBook? Let's find out.

The PlayBook measures 9-inches diagonally, but the effective screen area is 7-inches. There is a prominent bezel around the LCD screen and the device is rounded at the edges. The edges and the rear side have a rubberised finish which gives a very good grip on the device. Build quality is top notch and the thick bezel has its own pros and cons. The top central portion of the tablet has a small round power button, which is a bit too recessed for our liking and you will have to depress it at a right angle.

The BlackBerry PlayBook houses the 1 GHz dual core Texas Instruments OMAP 4430 SoC. The tablet runs on the proprietary BlackBerry tablet OS, based on the QNX Neutrino micro kernel architecture.

You will notice that there are no buttons on the tablet apart from the ones on the top edge ie. no Home button. The bezel forms a touch-sensitive frame.

Multi-tasking is the USP of RIM's BlackBerry PlayBook. Although we have seen multi-tasking on the iPad2 and Android tablets, none of those can come close to what BlackBerry brings to the table with Playbook. You can have an HD video running in one app, have your email on another and play a game on a third app without any slowdown. The 1024x600 pixel WSVGA resolution on the 7-inch LCD screen looks quite sharp and crispy.

PlayBook does not have any native email client, out of the box! You get apps for Gmail, Hotmail, AOL Mail and Yahoo Mail respectively. This brings us to the feature called BlackBerry Bridge. In essence, what the BlackBerry Bridge does is sync your BlackBerry smartphone with the tablet over Bluetooth. Once done and activated, the BlackBerry Bridge will form a separate tab housing apps such as BBM, Mail, Contacts, Tasks, Calender, etc. Remember, these apps will not be stored on the PlayBook, but will just be shared between your BB smartphone and the PlayBook so long as the Bluetooth connection is on. In short, all your mails, contacts etc will still be secure as the Playbook is not storing anything.

The Bluetooth link is 256-bit AES encrypted one, so you can surf the web using your phones data plan or browse through BBM, contacts, calender under a secure environment.

The BlackBerry PlayBook's web browser is based on WebKit and technically it does support tabbed browsing.

Video playback was flawless and it supports a variety of formats such as .AVI, .MOV, .WMV but does not support .MKV which is a bit sad. Quality wise we did not face any issues, there was no framing and rendering and even a 1080p clip was quite smooth.

The PlayBook lasted a good day and a half on moderate usage. If does tend to use a lot of battery while playing back 1080p video or when it is connected to an HDTV via a HDMI out option. It takes quite long to charge.

At ₹27,990 the BlackBerry PlayBook 16 GB WiFi version is ideal for a BlackBerry smartphone user looking for a tablet, mainly due to the BlackBerry Bridge sync option. However, even then we would advise potential buyers to wait it out till there is a respectable apps eco-system. Current apps are nothing to rave about.

Nimish Sawant

Specifications

Operating System: BlackBerry Tablet OS; **SoC:** TI OMAP 4430; **RAM:** 1 GB; **Camera:** 5MP (rear), 3 MP(front facing); **Screen Size:** 7-inch; **Resolution:** 1024x600 WSVGA; **Tethering:** Yes; **WiFi:** Yes; **Weight:** 425g; **Dimensions:** 194x130x10 mm;

Contact

Research in Motion
Phone: 18004253730
Email: tssasiapac@rim.com
Price: ₹27,990

6.0/10

Features	6.0
Performance	6.0
Build Quality	7.5
Value for Money	6.0

Crime fighting on Facebook
Scottish police have implemented a system for reporting crime directly via Facebook.
http://bbc.in/o0aJFI

The Antikythera Mechanism
It was designed by ancient Greeks in 500 B.C. and is considered to be one of the very first analogue computers. **http://bit.ly/p6Gfua**

Acer Aspire 5755

Budget contender

With the new Aspire 5755 range, Acer tries to add more value into laptops targeted at budget-conscious consumers. It sports the newer 2nd generation Intel Core i3-2310M 2.1-GHz processor, exclusive software like Dolby Advanced Audio V2, and a chiclet or isolated keyboard.

It's good to see that Acer's laptops are no longer drab and boring. With the Aspire 5755, Acer's offering customers a choice of five different colours – green, blue, brown, red and black. Although Acer has done a good job to hide the laptop's predominant plastic appearance, its feel isn't as good as the higher-priced Dell Inspiron 15R or Gateway ID59C.

The keys are well spaced and good to type on, having a different feel compared to the keyboards found on the Sony VAIO S, Lenovo IdeaPad U260 or Samsung RC510. Frequently used keys are easy to hit and the tactile feedback is nice. The palmrest is slightly raised – like a VAIO S laptop – to snuggle your wrists better while typing.

Don't expect the Acer Aspire 5755 to offer the moon, it's after all aimed at budget conscious customers. Suffice to say that the Aspire 5755 packs in a basic punch in terms of its internal hardware.

With a PC Mark Vantage score of 5179, the Aspire 5755 outperforms both the Dell Inspiron 15R and Samsung RC510. Watching movies and videos is fine, the laptop can handle both 720p and 1080p HD playback support. Audio from the laptop's onboard speakers isn't exceptional. Taking all things into account, Acer's aggressive pricing of the Aspire 5755 is the key here – it will be hard to get a similar configuration for a laptop sold by Dell, Lenovo, or HP, and with so many features.

Read the full review at: http://goo.gl/sfcpu.

Jayesh Shinde

Specifications

Screen: 15.6-inch glossy, 1366x768 resolution; **CPU:** 2.1-GHz Intel Core i3-2310M; **RAM:** 2GB DDR3; **HDD:** 500GB; **GPU:** Onboard Intel HD 3000; **OS:** Windows 7 Home Basic; **Ports:** 3 x USB, HDMI, VGA, card reader, Ethernet, optical drive, headphone, mic; **Weight:** 2.6-kg

Contact

Acer India Pvt. Ltd.
Phone: 080-25329520 / 21 / 23
Web site: www.acer.co.in
email: ailenquiries@acer.co.in
Price: ₹29,999

6.0/10

Features	6.5
Performance	6.0
Build Quality	5.5
Value for Money	7.0

Asus Eee PC R051PX

Good features, attractive price, what's not to like?

The new Eee PC R051PX is Asus' signal to the world that it isn't letting netbooks die just yet. The 10-inch netbook sports latest dual-core Intel Atom N570 processor, promising improved performance at a low price.

We like the netbook's seashell design, its exterior is pearly white in colour, smooth non-glossy on touch. Prop the screen's lid open to reveal a white keyboard and palmrest, a silver-coloured mouse button below the touchpad and a glossy black screen bezel surrounding a matte screen. The Eee PC R051PX is built well, despite its tiny form factor, hinges securing its screen firmly to the base. The included 0.3MP webcam is ordinary at best, its accompanying webcam software helpful while taking pics.

The 10-inch netbook comes with a pre-Windows quick-boot OS called ExpressGate which takes you to a web browser within seconds of pressing the power on button. It's a useful utility if you just want to browse the Web and prolong the netbook's battery life. The netbook also bundles Asus WebStorage which offers online data backup free for up to a year – the cloud drive is added as a partition in the Computer screen, drag and drop files to get started.

Performance of the netbook is mildly better than most Intel Atom netbooks out there, courtesy a dual-core Atom processor -- but nothing much to get excited. Its battery lasted 3 hours 24 minutes in our synthetic test, better than most netbooks tested in the June issue. We think you can get over 6 hours of browsing the Web over Wi-Fi on a conservative power plan on the Eee PC R051PX. Not bad at all. And the netbook's price is attractive as well.

Jayesh Shinde

Specifications

Screen: 10.1-inch matte, 1024x600 resolution; **CPU:** 1.6-GHz Intel Atom N570; **RAM:** 1GB DDR3; **HDD:** 320GB; **GPU:** Intel GMA 3150; **OS:** Windows 7 Starter; **Ports:** 3 x USB, VGA, 3-in-1 card reader, Ethernet, headphone, mic; **Weight:** 1.25-kg

Contact

Asus India Pvt. Ltd.
Phone: 7498334990
Web site: www.in.asus.com
Email: basil_b@asus.com
Price: ₹15,199

7.0/10

Features	7.0
Performance	6.5
Build Quality	6.0
Value for Money	7.5

Homemade Nuclear Reactor
A Swedish man was arrested for trying to build a nuclear reactor in his basement!
http://bit.ly/p50hLf

Student satellite launched
Kedr, a Russian satellite created by Russian students was launched to commemorate Yuri Gagarin's maiden space flight. **http://bit.ly/oREZZV**

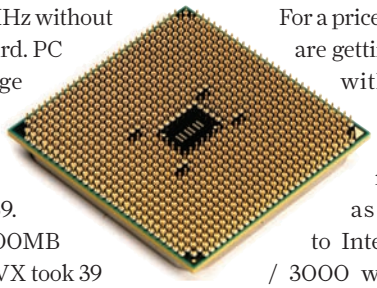
AMD A8-3850 APU

Integrated graphics finally come of age

AMD's answer to the Intel Sandy Bridge processors has arrived with the launch of the Llano APU A8-3850 which is a quad core CPU clocked at 2.9 GHz with HD 6550D integrated graphics on board. The graphics solution has 400 stream processors. Just like the Sandy Bridge processors, AMD has also got the PCIe controllers, memory controllers on the processor die itself. In case of A8 3850, the Turbo Core technology (ability to increase clock rate dynamically) is not supported and the multiplier is locked at 29x.

The integrated graphics on the A8-3850 can be teamed up with discrete graphics and used in the CrossFire mode. Right now only HD 6670, HD 6570, HD 6450 and HD 6350 cards are compatible.

We tested the board on Gigabyte A75M-UD2H board with 2 x 2GB Kingston HyperX DDR3 RAM at 1333MHz without any discrete card. PC Mark Vantage scored 7817 whereas CineBench R11.5 gave 3.39. Encoding a 100MB VOB file to DIVX took 39 secs. Gaming is what impressed us, with Resident Evil 5 (RE 5) giving 44 FPS on 1680x1050, med setting and STALKER COP giving 32.7 FPS on 1280x1024, med setting. Crysis Warhead was not that impressive with 15 FPS at 1280x1024, med setting.



We paired the APU with Powercolor HD 6670 and enabled CrossFire mode. STALKER COP gave 46.8 FPS at 1680x1050, med and RE 5 gave 66 FPS.

For a price of ₹7,000, you are getting a processor with integrated graphics which are really good as compared to Intel's HD 2000 / 3000 when it comes to gaming. Right now the A8-3850 is recommended for those who want decent gaming on integrated graphics or those looking at building an HTPC with a decent gaming option.

Nimish Sawant

Specifications

Clock Speed: 2.9 GHz; **Turbo Core:** No; L2 **Cache:** 4MB; **Integrated Graphics:** HD 6550D; **GPU clock:** 600 MHz; **TDP:** 100W

Contact

AMD India
Email: fusion.india@amd.com
Website: www.amd.com
Price: ₹7,000

7.0/10

Features	7.0
Performance	7.0
Build Quality	NA
Value for Money	7.0

Slingbox PRO-HD

Interesting concept, good implementation

The trapezoidal design gives the Slingbox PRO-HD a pretty big footprint. The very purpose of this device is to stream video content from a device like a DTH set top box or even a DVD player, to your laptop or smartphone. The Slingbox PRO-HD is capable of doing 1080i HD video streaming over a network. What the Slingbox PRO-HD misses out on is HDMI input and wireless LAN capabilities.

You need to go to http://in.slingbox.com/ to setup the PRO-HD. An account needs to be created, and this process is a tad annoying. While this works on Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox, this refused to work on Google Chrome. Post the account sign-up and login, allows the PRO-HD to be detected. We did face the issue that the device wasn't detected the first couple of times. First off, we connected the Tata Sky HD set top box via the Component cable. We were surprised by the quality offered, when we were viewing on a laptop – it's pretty good. Once the video begins, you can also open up the remote for the device connected to it. The Tata Sky HD remote that popped up looked exactly the same as the actual remote! Impressive attention to detail, we must say.

The Slingbox Pro-HD is a very interesting concept and a unique device aimed at what is currently a very niche market, but one that has the potential to grow given its abilities. The streaming from the connected devices (STB, DVD player, etc.) is absolutely flawless, even for HD content assuming your Internet connection is up to the task.

The ability to watch content streamed from somewhere, anywhere is a novel feature, but so is the price tag (₹15000).

Vishal Mathur

Specifications

Media streaming device; works with up to 1080p HD video sources; 1 component, 1 composite and 1 S-video in and 1 each for video out; Coaxial audio pass-through; LAN connectivity; works with Windows and Mac PCs; No monthly rental; Mobile apps for Android, iOS and Windows Phone

Contact

Sling Media Pvt. Ltd.
Email: http://www.slingmedia.com/go/contact
Price: ₹14,999

7.0/10

Features	7.0
Performance	7.5
Build Quality	7.5
Value for Money	6.0

Advanced fingerprinting
Researchers at Sheffield Hallam University have developed a way to capture fingerprints that can identify substances touched, and secretions from a person's body.

Predict Tree Height
Scientists at MIT have developed a mathematical model to estimate the probable height of a tree under various conditions. **http://bit.ly/oz7QRp**

HTC ChaCha

Singing a soothing tone

It is true that the HTC ChaCha sings a completely different tune- mid range Android smartphone offering a touchscreen and physical QWERTY keypad. We have the Samsung Galaxy Pro for the lower end of the market, while the HTC Desire Z caters to the higher end.

Straight off, the looks of the phone will catch your attention. While there is nothing very different, there are these little things that make a difference. The slight banana curve makes typing a lot more comfortable. The little "F" button lets you post on Facebook with just one click.

However, while this phone essentially shows off the social networking capabilities, the real value pack is the touchscreen and physical keypad combo. The dual capabilities will appeal to those who want a touch device, and also to those who want a physical QWERTY keypad for their mails and messages. The ChaCha is built well. Despite the plasticky looks, the phone does feel very solid. No creaks or rough edges anywhere. What is really impressive is the typing experience offered by the keypad. No problems with the key size – they are adequately big and well spaced out. Key-press is quite soft, so much so that even the keypad of the phone you are used to will start feeling a little uncomfortable! The "F" button, for all its hype, lets you only post to Facebook, and not much else. To read the timeline, comment on posts or chat, you will still need to use the official Facebook app.

Call quality offered is okay, but the phone does tend to lose some grunt at high volumes, both for the earpiece and the speaker. No problems with the quality though. The battery life however, is a huge disappointment. With just a few calls, SMS and FB chat running in the background, the ChaCha barely lasts a day. Absolutely no doubt that this phone needs a higher capacity battery.

Vishal Mathur

Specifications

Platform: Android 2.3.3; **Processor:** 800MHz; **RAM:** 512MB; **Display:** 2.6-inch HVGA capacitive touchscreen 480x320 display, pixel resolution; **Keyboard:** Full QWERTY type; **Memory:** microSD slot up to 32GB; **Camera:** 5MP; Battery: 1250 mAh

Contact

HTC India
Phone: 1800-1033566
Web site: www.htc.com/in
Price: ₹15,990

7.0/10

Features	7.0
Performance	6.0
Build Quality	7.5
Value for Money	6.5

Dell Latitude E6320

Elegant business performer

The new 13-inch Latitude E6320 is Dell's Rolls-Royce of a business laptop, combining strong build, elegant design and powerful performance for executives that need a portable, uncompromising laptop. It takes on competing laptops like the Lenovo ThinkPad X1 (http://goo.gl/mvK3l) and Apple's MacBook Air ultraportables.

The Latitude E6320 is built very well, its screen lid is made of anodized aluminum (scratch resistant) fitted in a magnesium alloy frame and secured to the powder-coated plastic chassis with two steel hinges. Dell has spared no expense in ensuring the laptop feels elegant on touch, be its brushed screen lid or smooth palmrest. There isn't a hint of gloss on the E6320, ensuring fingerprint smudges are down to a minimum.

The laptop comes with dual-input keyboard, like the Lenovo ThinkPad X1 – a standard trackpad and additional trackpoint navigation. The rubber-tipped keys are concave and a treat to type on, the pointing stick for navigation is great to use as well. The laptop's matte screen is well lit and good for reading text, not so much for multimedia usage. With the kind of internal hardware present on the Dell Latitude E6320, performance is never going to be a problem. Multitasking with regular office suites, video conferencing, listening to music, and browsing the web is easily taken care of, no problems whatsoever.

The laptop's battery life isn't great though, lasting just over 70 minutes in our synthetic test – expect just about 3 hours (or less) on a conservative power plan. That's about the only blemish on this otherwise stylish ultraportable business laptop which sells at a very high premium.

Jayesh Shinde

Specifications

Screen: 13.3-inch matte, 1366x768 resolution / **CPU:** 2.7-GHz Intel Core i7-2620M / **RAM:** 8GB DDR3 / **HDD:** 128GB SSD / **GPU:** Onboard Intel HD 3000 / **OS:** Windows 7 Ultimate 64-bit / **Ports:** 2 x USB, HDMI, VGA, eSATA, card reader, fingerprint reader, more / **Weight:** 1.7-kg

Contact

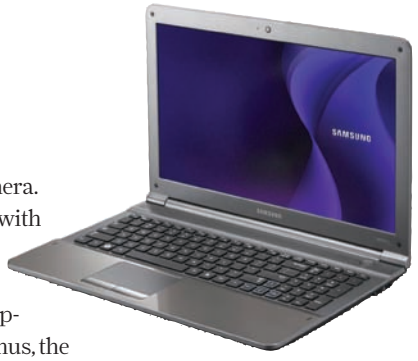
Dell India Pvt. Ltd.
Phone: 1800-425-4002
Web site: www.dell.co.in
Price: ₹1,32,137

8.0/10

Features	8.0
Performance	8.5
Build Quality	8.0
Value for Money	7.0

Samsung RC510

Simply stylish, good build quality



The RC510 is a reasonably slim 15.6-inch notebook with a stylish glossy finish in charcoal grey. The notebook feels well built. The glossy raised palmrest takes stress off ones wrists while getting slick if used with sweaty wrists. The keypad is an isolated type and while key spacing is decent, we found the keys a little small – the keypad is decent. There are no multimedia keys, although a dedicated number pad is provided. The trackpad material feels just right, while its accuracy is good, for precision work a mouse is required. 4 USB ports, an HDMI port and the usual card slot, optical drive and LAN port are mundane nowadays. The display is glossy while above it perches a 1.3MP web camera.

The RC510 is blessed with a shiny new power plant – the Intel Core i3 380M, a dual core with HT support. With NVIDIA Optimus, the RC510 can switch between Intel HD graphics and its dedicated GeForce 315M GPU. This isn't a potent gaming system by any stretch, and will strictly play older games sans framing. It barely managed 24.17 fps in Far Cry 2 at medium setting and a resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels. A GT540M manages over 60 fps at the same settings. The storage system consists of a 500GB HDD, and not a fast one at that. With just 20 and 25MB/s in the non-sequential and sequential transfers respectively. Playback of 1080p content is seamless, and the display while plagued with poor viewing angles has a nice saturated look that gives colour in videos a little more "pop".

From the perspective of someone looking at a desktop replacement, the RC510 performs reasonably well and will easily run more mundane applications, but it is not a performance machine, nor would be expect it to be at a price of ₹39,990. For anyone looking at something to browse on, do a lot of office work as well as play the odd game, the RC510 will deliver.

Michael Browne

Specifications

Specifications: Core i3 380M (2.53 GHz); **RAM:** 3 GB 1066 MHz; **GPU:** NVIDIA GT315M/ Intel HD 3000 graphics; **HDD:** 500 GB, 5,400 rpm; 2.5 kgs

Contact

Samsung India Electronics Pvt. Ltd.
Phone: 0124-4881234
Web site: www.samsung.com/in
Email: ravi.gulati@samsung.com
Price: ₹39,990

6.5/10

Features	6.5
Performance	6.5
Build Quality	7.5
Value for Money	6.5

Zebronics ZEB-Station

Tune in without breaking the bank

The ZEB-Station is meant to be a speaker cum dock for all types of audio interfaces. This simple looking, but well built box houses two 15-watt speakers. The mock dark mahogany finish is nice, but the large cheap-feeling volume knob is not. The front panel has a plethora of buttons for changing input source and multimedia functions. These are small, hard to press and feel clicky. The volume knob also changes sources as well as serves as the tuner for FM Radio. And while on topic, the Station supports FM Radio, RCA input, SD/ MMC cards and USB connects. It lacks a proprietary Apple iPod port.

The ZEB-Station betrays its basic nature by not including a track information display when playing via memory card. All you'll see is track 1. The inclusion of a fully featured remote unit is a plus, it lets you access more functions like changing treble, bass, and selecting a track. The remote operates well from a distance of 6-7 feet although you'll want to sit closer to enjoy the music. There is no auxiliary out, the ZEB-Station relies on its own small speakers.

The volume level isn't much, so no worries about bringing the house down. We found the bass lacking, but this was expected. However, the mid-range is pretty decent, and some vocals sound nice, as do accompanying instruments. The treble is rolled off, but not too harsh. Finer nuances of sound get missed, but the mid-range maintains its sweetness.

When one talks music quality and uses phrases like audiophile, the little ZEB-Station cannot keep up. But that becomes irrelevant when you read the price tag – a mere ₹1,650. Its value for money quotient cannot be denied. The ZEB-Station is sure to be a little cash that's well spent.

Michael Browne

Specifications

Speakers: 2, no subwoofer;
Power output: 15 x 2 watts RMS

Contact

Top Notch Infotronix India Pvt.
Phone: 044-4000-0007
Web site: www.zebronics.net
Email: enquiry@zebronics.info
Price: ₹1,650

7.0/10

Features	7.0
Performance	5.0
Build Quality	7.5
Value for Money	8.5

Alienware m18x

The Alienware m18x has been launched for about $2000, going upto $5500. **http://zd.net/pucqF2**

Bazaar mini

QUICK INSIGHTS FROM INDEPTH TESTS

The Digit Test Centre receives hundreds of products every month. Each of these products is put through a series of tests, and are finally given a verdict. The final score is arrived at after considering a number of factors and evaluating them in terms of features, performance, value for money, build quality, and in the case of software even ease of use.

For better understanding of our ratings, here's a quick guide to our overall score

1.0 - 3.0 - Extremely poor product. Keep away!
3.5 - 5.0 - Strictly OK. Not recommended
5.5 - 6.5 - Decent product. Go for it, but there may be better products.
7.0 - 8.5 - Very good product. Highly recommended.
9.0-10.0 - Ground-breaking product. We've never seen anything like it before. A definite must buy!

MOTHERBOARDS

ZOTAC Z68 ITX-B-E

Price: ₹12,999

ASUS P8Z68-V Pro

Price: ₹13,550

SPECIFICATIONS

Chipset	Intel Z68
UEFI BIOS	No
Display Ports	2 x DVI, 1 x HDMI, 1 x DisplayPort
USB 3.0 ports	2

Chipset	Intel Z68
UEFI BIOS	Yes
Display Ports	1xDVI, 1xHDMI, 1xD-Sub
USB 3.0 ports	2

TEST CENTRE RATINGS (All Scores out of 10)

Features 8.0
It has an onboard NVIDIA GT 430 graphics solution, a WiFi adapter, an mSATA port.

Performance 6.5
PC Mark Vantage (Overall): 12240; Cinebench R11.5: 7.3; Resident Evil 5 (1680x1050, med):54.7FPS; STALKER:COP (1680x1050, med): 35.7 FPS

Build quality 6.0
It has a sturdy build but the layout of the board appears cramped with very little room.

Value for money 5.5
Priced on the higher side for a mini ITX board.

Features 7.0
It supports Lucid Virtu which allows you two switch between IGP and discrete graphics.

Performance 7.0
PC Mark Vantage (Overall): 13970; Cinebench R11.5): 6.83; Resident Evil 5 (1680x1050, med):168.6FPS; STALKER:COP (1680x1050, med): 105.1 FPS

Build quality 7.5
It has an excellent build with good quality heatsinks. Layout of the board is dense but not cramped.

Value for money 6.5
At ₹13,550 this board is decently priced for its features.

WE SAY

6.5

Do not go by the small form factor of this board, it can very well be used as your mainstream system with the Core i7-2600K. It is priced quite high specially when you take into consideration the price you will have to pay for a laptop RAM stick (thanks to the SODIMM slots), which is comparitively pricier than a desktop RAM stick. If you do not want to be limited to GT 430, you can go for the economical Z68 ITX-A-E WiFi board which has everything this board does except the graphics. For ₹10,000 we would recommend the board for someone looking to build a small form factor PC with limited graphics.

7.0

ASUS P8Z68 V Pro is an ideal board for overclockers and it's priced considerably lower than MSI's Z68A GD80 and Gigabyte Z68X UD7. It has the UEFI BIOS and supports Lucid Virtu which allows users to get the best of both integrated and discrete graphics. We did notice a drop of 5-8 frames when using discrete graphics and taking the output via the boards onboard DVI port. Existing P67 users should switch only if they will use Quick Sync for transcoding and plan to use Intel Rapid storage technology. We would still wait for the price to drop though.

10nm process

Intel's roadmap reveals plans to launch processors using a 14nm and 10nm process in 4 years time. **http://bit.ly/rdQwSA**

Online Sketch Pad

Sketchpad is an online HTML5 based web app similar to paint. **http://bit.ly/ocjhu3**

MOBILE SECURITY APP

Norton Mobile Security

Price: ₹599

McAfee Mobile Security

Price: ₹1,350 (approx)

LAPTOP

Acer Aspire 5253

Price : ₹23,500

MP3 PLAYER

Sony NWZ E363

Price : ₹4,990

SPECIFICATIONS

	Norton Mobile Security	McAfee Mobile Security	Acer Aspire 5253	Sony NWZ E363
	OS..... Android 1.6 and above Size.....1.1 MB Version.....2.0.0.214 Type..... Anti-Malware, Security Suite	OS..... Android 2.1 and above Size.....3.5 MB Version..... 1.0.0.31 Type..... Anti-Malware, Security Suite	Screen .....15.6-inch, glossy, 1366x768 CPU .....AMD E-350 1.6-GHz RAM.....2GB, HDD: 500GB, GPU: AMD Radeon HD 6310M	Screen .....2-inch TFT LCD (240 x 320) Audio.....MP3, WMA, AAC-LC Video formats.....WMV 9 Capacity.....4 GB (3.63 usable)

TEST CENTRE RATINGS (All Scores out of 10)

	Norton Mobile Security	McAfee Mobile Security	Acer Aspire 5253	Sony NWZ E363
Features	7.0 This lightweight app has a built-in anti-malware, anti-theft, web protection, and Call, SMS blocking.	7.5 Compared to Norton, McAfee offers different features like remote data backup and restore.	6.0 For an entry-level 15-inch laptop, the Acer Aspire 5253 packs in all the standard connectivity features.	5.0 A basic PMP with features such as FM radio apart from regular audio and video playback.
Interface	7.0 All features are accessible through a single screen, simple and easy to use. There	6.0 The interface is less refined than Norton's suite, it has dull icons that don't appeal instantly.		
Performance	8.0 The tool's extremely quick while scanning for malware. Anti-Theft perform well under different conditions.	6.5 The tool isn't as quick at scanning the device for malware. Issuing commands over the web works.	6.5 For a sub 25k laptop, it offers good basic performance. Battery life's acceptable – not great – so is entertainment and multitasking.	6.0 Audio performance was decent on our reference headphones. Though Video was not as fluid
Build quality			6.0 The exterior is cheap plastic and the laptop doesn't look great. But the screen doesn't shake overtly at the hinge. Textured finish is nice.	7.0 The plastic body has a good finish and the device feels sturdy. No complaints with quality of buttons and overall ergonomics as well.
Value for money	6.5 We definitely liked what we saw, and as far as mobile security suites go, Norton's app is well priced.	5.5 McAfee offers something extra by including a web console with its security suite. Price could've been lower though.	7.5 The Aspire 5253 offers good basic performance at the price. A steal!	5.5 For a 4 GB player the price is a little steep considering there are other feature rich players out there.

WE SAY

7.5

The multi-faceted app's anti-malware scan is lightning fast – faster than offerings by McAfee and Kaspersky, the interface is great as well. Scheduled scans work as promised, no problems. In the Anti-Theft feature, it took under 2 minutes on an average to get replies to SMS SOS – it took slightly longer with GPS off. We think this is pretty good for a lead on your lost phone's whereabouts. Blocking SMS messages and phone calls is easy to setup. Web Protection worked well, blocking access to fraudulent sites. Overall, the app covers all bases in terms offering a fully-featured Android security app.

6.5

The McAfee Mobile Security suite is a fully-featured antivirus software for your Android smartphone – it doesn't support older Donut builds. The tool has a mini tutorial explaining the different aspects of the software – a nice addition – which ends with the user keying in a secure PIN number. The malware scan time, on the same device, was considerably longer compared to the Norton suite. McAfee allows you to backup and restore your phone's SMSes, contacts and call logs. The app's web console is comprehensive. Price is high and on current evidence, the app's interface needs polish – just too many notifications.

7.0

The Acer Aspire 5253 houses AMD's E-series Zacate low-power APU, the E-350 clocked at 1.6-GHz. The laptop definitely is a lot better than any Intel Atom netbook in terms of performance, and it has a DirectX 11-enabled GPU – not quite for gaming. Of course, don't expect stellar build quality either, it's acceptable. We like the laptop's overall matte, non-glossy look. It has a flat-top, closely packed keyboard that works well. Onboard audio is ordinary. The low-powered AMD platform helps keep the price of the 15-inch laptop down, almost makes it a steal. Recommended for home users with basic usage.

5.5

The NWZ E363 has only a few things going for it. The PMP can do audio/video and it throws in an FM player. The UI lets you get around fairly easily, but apart from these basics, there are a lot of factors stacked up against the player. The quality of the bundled earbuds leaves a lot to be desired and the player lacks severely in terms of features. File format is limited and features such as voice recording are missing. We'd recommend going for players such as the Cowon C2 or this player's own superior sibling, NWZ E454, by paying about 30 percent extra for roughly twice the feature set.

HP in trouble!
More than 240000 HP touchpads are lying unsold at BestBuy!.
http://dthin.gs/qDWze6

Full HD?
Want to upgrade to a full HD panel? Read this first.
http://bit.ly/qL6rHa

MOTHERBOARD

Gigabyte A75M-D2H
Price: ₹6,370

SPECIFICATIONS

Chipset.....AMD A75 FCH
PCIe x16 slots.....2
UEFI BIOS Support.....No
SATA 3 ports.....6

TEST CENTRE RATINGS (All Scores out of 10)

Features.....5.0
Six SATA 3 ports but limited connectivity options. There is a Backup BIOS chip onboard for restoring damaged BIOS upgrade.

Performance.....7.5
PC Mark Vantage: 7845; CineBench R11.5 multi CPU rendering: 3.48. Frame Rate on IGP: Resident Evil 5 (1280x1024, med): 53.5; Crysis Warhead (1280x1024, med): 16

Build Quality.....6.0
Strong build quality, pleasant layout. No heatsink over the VRMs.

Value for money.....6.0
Priced the lowest among all the other boards here.

WE SAY

6.0

This is an entry level board for the A8 APU with limitations such as two DIMM slots and minimal connectivity options as compared to the other three boards. SATA ports pointing upwards is not desirable and there is no heat sink beside the CPU region. In terms of performance, it is at par with the others, but there are limited performance tuning options. Pricing is quite decent for those looking at a mid-range motherboard. It makes sense as an HTPC board, thanks to the great graphics performance of the AMD processors it will eventually house.

ASUS F1A75-V Pro
Price : ₹8,250

SPECIFICATIONS

Chipset.....AMD A75 FCH
PCIe x16 slots.....2
UEFI BIOS Support.....Yes
SATA 3 ports.....7

TEST CENTRE RATINGS (All Scores out of 10)

Features.....7.0
This motherboard features a UEFI BIOS, a turbo processing unit (TPU) for voltage control and energy efficiency chip (EPU).

Performance.....7.5
PC Mark Vantage: 7605; CineBench R11.5 multi CPU rendering: 3.45. Frame Rate on IGP: Resident Evil 5 (1280x1024, med): 53.8; Crysis Warhead (1280x1024, med): 15

Build quality.....6.5
Sturdy build. SATA ports point outwards which is good.

Value for money.....5.5
For ₹8250 the ASUS F1A75 V Pro is priced on the higher side.

WE SAY

7.0

ASUS F1A75 V Pro is priced on the higher side when compared to the other three motherboards. On the positive side there are lots of performance tuning options for the overclockers such as the TPU, the UEFI BIOS or the AI Suite II. The motherboard's build is quite sturdy and its performance score was at par with the other three boards. With as many as seven SATA 3 ports, four fan connectors, four USB 2.0 headers, it has more expansion options than any other board alongside. The second PCIe x16 slot runs at x4 speed.

Gigabyte A75M-UD2H
Price : ₹6,591

SPECIFICATIONS

Chipset.....AMD A75 FCH
PCIe x16 slots.....2
UEFI BIOS Support.....No
SATA 3 ports.....6

TEST CENTRE RATINGS (All Scores out of 10)

Features.....6.0
The USB ports have a fuse which protects it from unwanted short circuit damage. Has dual BIOS chips

Performance.....7.5
PC Mark Vantage: 7817; CineBench R11.5 multi CPU rendering: 3.39. Frame Rate on IGP: Resident Evil 5 (1280x1024, med): 53.7; Crysis Warhead (1280x1024, med): 15

Build quality.....6.0
Sturdy build quality with a pleasant layout. SATA ports point upwards.

Value for money.....6.5
Makes sense over the A75M-D2H for an additional ₹300

WE SAY

6.5

This is a better version of the A75M-D2H with great connectivity options and four DIMM slots. It has a DisplayPort out which is not found on the A75M - D2H. Performance wise it isn't different from the other boards. Only in PC Mark Vantage we found this board to be leading over all others, but gaming scores were almost identical. We would like to see a UEFI BIOS on Gigabyte boards as they are feature rich. Makes for a great HTPC board. At just ₹300 over the A75M-D2H, we recommend this ahead of the A75M-D2H board.

Biostar TA75A+
Price : ₹8,500

SPECIFICATIONS

Chipset.....AMD A75 FCH
PCIe x16 slots.....2
UEFI BIOS Support.....Yes
SATA 3 ports.....6

TEST CENTRE RATINGS (All Scores out of 10)

Features.....7.0
It supports the UEFI BIOS. The onboard POST code LED is a nice addition along with power and reset switches.

Performance.....7.5
PC Mark Vantage: 7204; CineBench R11.5 multi CPU rendering: 3.47. Frame Rate on IGP: Resident Evil 5 (1280x1024, med): 53.5; Crysis Warhead (1280x1024, med): 15

Build quality.....6.5
Sturdy build. The SouthBridge heatsink is too small and flimsy.

Value for money.....5.5
Its priced on the higher side for the features and performance.

WE SAY

7.0

Biostar TA75A+ is a feature rich board but we would have liked to see some more USB 3.0 ports, a better heat sink design for the south bridge. Looking at the layout one gets the feel that this board could have been a microATX one as 2 PCI and 2 PCI x1 slots seem a lot. POST debug LED is a great addition. For this high price though we would recommend the ASUS F1A75 board for more features and a better UEFI BIOS Layout than the Biostar TA75A+. If its price were around the ₹7,000 mark, sure this board would be recommendable.

100

A look at Web Intents
Web Intents stand to change the way we interact with web applications

Did you know?
Will Smith turned down the roll of Neo from the Matrix, in favour of the Wild Wild West!

A chat with virus warriors

We spent a day talking with Mark Kanok and John Harrison, Symantec's crusaders against the war on malware.

Mark Kanok
Consumer product management mobile, Symantec

The mobile security market is still in its infancy, when do you think smartphone users would start taking mobile threats as seriously as threats from PC?
Imagine a thousand dollars strapped to your body – our mobile devices have become like that because of the banking capabilities that you have along with other personal information on the device. It's an evolution, primarily because of the things people are doing with their devices mobile security is something which shouldn't be optional any more.

Would we soon see mobile devices shipping with pre loaded security apps?
It's already happening, there are a number of different partners we are working with. People may want to choose their mobile security the way they do with their PC security. There are a lot of vendors that are taking different approaches at this time. People have already started taking mobile security pretty seriously.

Where do you see the tablet market heading in terms of security apps and features?
Tablets are an interesting angle and Norton mobile security works in the tablet mode. We've adjusted the UI to work and accommodate the larger form factor. With tablets you see similar type of activities – people are either browsing on the internet or they are downloading apps to play. So the same security features are applied. Our goal is to make sure people download safe things and also they don't lose their device.

How long does it take before an infected app is discovered on the Android market?
Apps try to go by in a pretty undetectable fashion, but we keep looking at things on constant basis. We have a number of capabilities such as mobile insight capabilites to evaluate and assess hundreds and thousands of different apps. Looking at apps which are malicious is a little bit tougher as there are couple of different types of layers involved. There are permissions that are requested to one's that are actually utilised if there is a submission of personal information somewhere in a disguised fashion. All these things come into play to assess things if they are dangerous or not.

John Harrison Group product manager, Symantec

Whenever there is a virus outbreak what is the first thing that Norton researches do?
There are a variety of outbreaks, what our researches are doing is understanding when new vulnerabilities are announced. We have a team set up that is tearing apart and understanding the implications of a vulnerability in an operating system or a third party plug in. If there is malware that is reaching certain parts of the world, we'll understand and see whether we have protection in place or whether we need to update the existing protection out in the field. We're looking at keeping up and understanding what is the malware actually doing and making sure that we stay ahead of the curve and understand the methods of what we need to do to detect the new malware that's put there.

Can you tell us about the new sonar technology used in Norton products?
The sonar technology is really exciting because rather than focusing on the file finger prints which may change all the time, what it does is that it analyses and looks at behaviour of the malware or programs when they execute. So what we've done is first started with all applications that are running on a system and characterise what good applications do and what bad applications do. Along with this, there's machine learning and analysis to see what good or bad programs do – or do they even open.

John Harrison
Group product manager, Symantec

So how's a typical malware generated?
Malware these days is dynamically generated just for you; it's not been seen by any security vendor so if you rely on waiting and then create protection, that's not going work. We had to create network intrusion program or browser protection, if we see a vulnerability being exploited it could potentially have an outbreak so this is one of those proactive technologies. So the Insight system is based to tackle such dynamically generated threats.

How do engineers at Norton prepare against threats?
Our insight technology not just looks at bad things, we calculate a risk and trust rating for every app executable on consumer and enterprise PCs. We have 2.5 billion files today that we've calculated under a risk or trust rating to provide a reputation score and when you download a new file that pretends to be a video player or a PDF we can look at it and say this has only been seen on one user's desktop. If it isn't from a trusted domain and does some bad things we think it's malware, lets remove it, or we can think this has been seen on millions of user desktops this is a known good version of the applications

Hybrid Choppers!
The Eurocopter X3 is among the earliest of a new breed of high-speed hybrid helicopters **http://bit.ly/pRanUD**

DOTA 2
DOTA 2 is currently under development. Surprisingly, Valve will develop it using the source engine **http://bit.ly/pQ1hl5**

A look at Web Intents – the future of the web ecosystem

Web Intents are the next big thing to come to the open web, and stand to not only change the way we interact with web applications, but also the way web applications interact with each other

Kshitij Sobti
kshitij.sobti@thinkdigit.com

Disconnected islands

It's difficult to refute that the web has made the world a much more connected place. Information is now at our fingertips, no matter where we are, as long as we have any device with internet connectivity.

The irony is that the model of the web has created as much disconnection. No, we're not taking a philosophical stand by saying that we're now less personally connected because we're connected through inhuman machines. Our stand is technical, so let us explain.

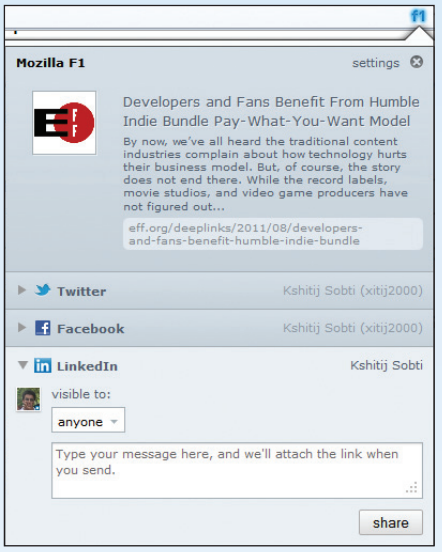
The web used to be an interconnection of documents, and hyperlinks were well suited for the purpose, however now the model of the web has transitioned to that of web applications. Hyperlinks are no longer enough; neither is it enough to simply launch an online social network by clicking on a share link if one wants to share content as well. For this purpose, each social network has its own solutions, but there's no general solution, and links just aren't enough anymore.

The web is quickly encroaching on areas traditionally covered only by native applications. Sure, web-based email clients are old, but today we have everything from advanced photo editors to 3D modeling applications. Many of them connect to social networks, allowing you to easily share your work with friends. Google Docs, for example, lets you share documents, and work with others in real time; web applications like LucidChart do the same for diagrams while Aviary's image and audio editing / processing tools let one create, share and remix photos. But is it really as connected as it appears to be?

The web has turned into small islands of connectivity; within these islands, you might get a seamless experience, but stray outside and things start going downhill. For example, Google Piknik lets you open images from your Picasa, Facebook, Flickr, MySpace or Photobucket accounts and even save back to them; but what if you're using SmugMug? Or something even less mainstream such as Ipernity or Phombo?

The desktop paradigm

Compare this to the non-web alternative; your flash drive will work on your computer regardless of the brand. Motherboards aren't pre-programmed to support a few brands of storage drives, nor are DVD burners programmed for each brand of media. They just work.

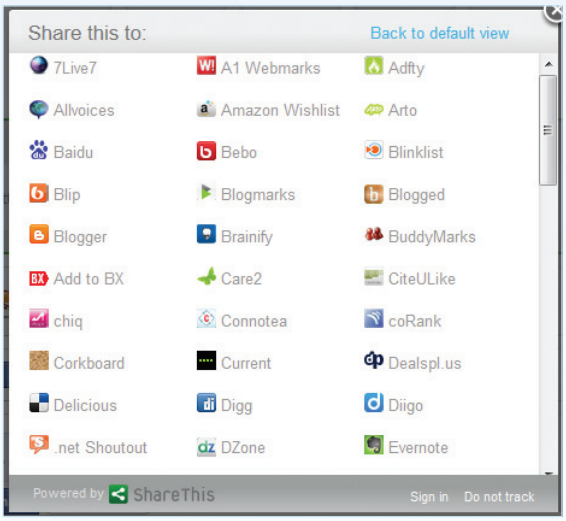


Mozilla F1 is an example of how the new system might work with social networking. Only associated social networks show up here.

If you wanted to use a SmugMug photo in Piknik however, you'd have to first download it to your hard drive (or possibly use a URL pointing to the image), open that image in Piknik, edit it, download the result and re-upload to SmugMug.

There are innumerous combinations of applications and services that are incompatible. For an image editing service it's an insurmountable task to implement support for each storage service – each using different APIs for pretty much the same tasks.

Take another example: sharing on social networks. Here, we see an extreme; either web sites ignore the more obscure social web sites



An overload of buttons. It can be hard to locate the social network you use here.

or clutter the interface by listing nearly all of them. What if the browser managed this and showed only the services you used and cared about?

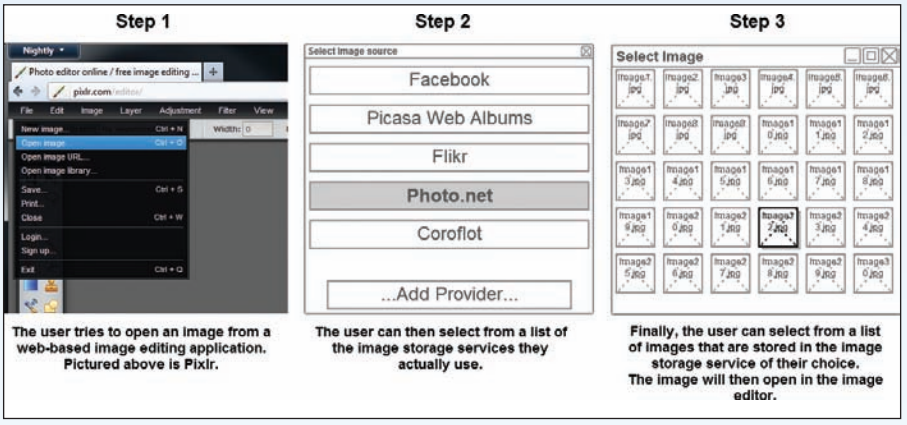
On your desktop, this would be comparable to listing only Photoshop when you use GIMP or listing every application ever created for handling images.

On a similar note, why's it so difficult to associate your image files with web applications? Or to associate emails links with your arbitrary web mail provider?

Services, stores and applications

The Google Chrome Web store already allows installion of web applications on a user's computer, albeit in a non-standard Chrome-specific way. A web store for web apps sounds good but until web applications aren't empowered a lot more; it's just a glorified way of creating bookmarks, nothing more.

Mozilla is working on a cross-platform, cross-browser, web-standard store and applications delivery mechanism but even that is dependant on web apps being a lot more capable.



A rough representation of how this system might work. Note that the UI and interaction might be completely different in actual implementations.

These issues are central to the very concept of web applications, and quite obviously, the likes of Mozilla and Google are on the task, defining new mechanisms to give web applications some of the same powers we're used to in desktop applications. Both are working on a common specification and API for having applications register themselves as service providers, and handle this service in a seamless manner. Web Intents is the term Google prefers to use, since it is similar to the concept of Intents on the Android platform, while Mozilla refers to them as Web Actions, but the concept is quite similar and in the process of being merged.

Web applications need a standard way to expose their capabilities, and to use the capabilities of other applications. For image data to work in your image editor, it will invoke the "image.get" service – this is comparable to a desktop application asking the OS to show the user a file browse dialog. Storage providers can then register themselves as providers for the "image.get" service.

Let's say you use SmugMug and Facebook for your images and have them installed on your browser.Now your online image editor application could simply show a button called "Open Image" or "Get Image" or the like. This button when clicked would show a list of all your installed applications that provide the "image.get" service and browse the files you've saved there. Images there will now open in your image editor. The image editors need not know which image storage solution is being used, nor does the image storage solution need to know where the image is actually going for editing.

This prevents new web applications from reinventing the wheel just to provide basic facilities already being offered by other applications. Your image editor can focus on editing images and rely on other services for social networking, storage etc.

This approach isn't limited and can be extended to other common web activities such as sharing content or shortening URLs. In both cases, the services you use could be registered on your browser as service providers – for example "url.shorten" and "url.share" could be offered as options when you choose to share or shorten a link.

Payment processing, too, can be overhauled with this, as you can add PayPal, Moneybookers, Google Checkout, Amazon Payment, ClickandBuy or <insert your favorite or trusted payment processor here> to make payments for your online purchases. This, however, might be a little more complicated to handle, and might need more time to standardise.

Conclusion

We can go a bit beyond this though, and think of even more applications. Why can't you use Google's Contacts system on other sites? Or use Yahoo's contact management system with Google? You could you one central contact management service that you like, and use it as a source for both, Gmail and Yahoo Mail! No need to enter the data again.

Or why be forces to use PayPal when there are many other, possibly better and cheaper, options out there?

In the end it is data from one service going to another service that needs it. As long as the data is yours, there should be no barriers on how you use it.Not only does this stand to change the way we use the web, but also have a deeper impact on the economy / ecosystem of the web. With such a standard system in place, it will be difficult for Service A and Service B to form a tie-up, at the cost of integration with Service C that you really use.

These standards are still in development, and Mozilla and Google have taken interest. There are sample web sites and applications that let you test these functionalities and get a peek at what the web might be like very soon. Internet speeds are increasing and web standards are evolving, but nothing has been more compelling a case for cloud computing than this.

Zoom in for the kill

Agent 001 goes lens hunting

Agent 001
agent001@thinkdigit.com

It was a cloudy Saturday – a welcome relief from the heat. The weather buoyed my soaring spirits as I quickened my step to the nearby Saket metro station. My mission was to shop for a medium telephoto for my Canon 7D. I'd bought a Canon EF-S 18-135, EF 50 f1.4 and Tamron 17-50 f2.8. I wanted a good quality lens, something that would last me many years of upgrade cycles. My needs were something to shoot close-ups, take basic bird and animal shots, as well as serve as a tight portrait lens. I needed image stabilisation. I also needed something that would focus fast. Since there was also a need for good quality photos, that meant shelling out for one of the higher-end lenses.

Whether you're upgrading from your kit lens or buying another one to compliment it, first decide what focal range you need. Buying an 18-200 lens won't cut it, for I have found that lenses with wider focal ranges offer poorer results – simple laws of physics at work here. For APS-C sensor cameras, anything between 15 mm and 80 mm is good for general shooting, while 100-300 mm can be considered as a telephoto range. Above 300 mm would be a super telephoto – suitable for wildlife and such. Primes are good for shooting in low light owing to their wider apertures and most primes offer better quality than a variable focal range that costs twice as much. The only minus is they lack versatility.

The first thing to do is decide your focal range and fix your budget. Do some research before visiting shops. Google reviews, product details etc. and shortlist one or two models. Then look around your city. There are several places in larger cities where you can pick up good deals on second-hand lenses. Buying a second-hand body is a no-no, but a lens is something that will either work, or not – so there are less chances of getting duped. But don't be cheap – restrict second-hand forays to costlier, higher-end lenses. Cheaper ones like kit lenses aren't built well, and old stuff will wear faster.

Sigma and Tamron are two other popular brands that build lenses for Canon, Nikon and Sony. All these manufacturers will have lenses that compete in similar focal ranges. Obviously prices will vary – Canon and Nikon charge a premium for their lenses. One generic thing to look for is the presence of faster, silent drive systems – Canon calls this its USM, while Nikon calls it SWM but they work pretty much the same with faster focus (a huge boon) and quiet functioning (not so much). The second thing to look for is image stabilisation (IS). Though lens IS systems aren't as good as the ones featured on compact cameras, they do help you maintain at least a 2-stop shutter speed advantage – useful for handheld photography. Both, faster motors and IS will cost you pretty penny, and the cost of these two features could double the price of a lens, but it's worth it. Those who shoot in studios will use tripods and can do without IS.

Nikon AF-S 24-120mm

The best deal for a generic focal range lens I found was the Nikon 16-85 VR, available on the street for ₹36,000. The Canon equivalent, the EF-S 15-85 IS USM is a bit expensive at ₹54,000, and while it's good, if you want quality, the Canon EF-S 17-55 f2.8 IS USM is better, costs marginally more, and has a fast fixed aperture of f2.8. If you want a cheaper fast aperture lens, and can do without IS, look for the Tamron 17-50 f2.8. There are two versions of this lens: an older non-IS version which reportedly gives better quality results at a cost of ₹21,000 or so, while the IS version costs 5,000 bucks more. Nikon also has a 17-55 f2.8, and its lens retails for around ₹73,000.

I visited a Canon lounge, but it doesn't allow trying lenses on one's camera. In areas like Chandni Chowk in Delhi, shopkeepers will carefully open a sealed lens and allow you to test it. A known dealer might also allow you to keep it for a day to decide. I saw Canon's 70-200 f2.8 IS USM available as second-hand for ₹55,000 (₹1,05,000 for brand new) – a great lens, but a bit too heavy for handheld work, plus I wasn't going to shoot much of indoors. Then I saw the 70-200 f4 IS USM and after trying found it perfect – it's light, focuses fast and is really well built. The non-IS model was available for ₹41,000 while the dealer wouldn't budge off ₹54,000 for the IS model. From reviews I read, the IS model is a bit better optically, and this really sealed the deal and my wallet. After an hour of bargaining, he included a nice Hoya 67mm neutral filter and settled for ₹54,000. And my kit was complete.

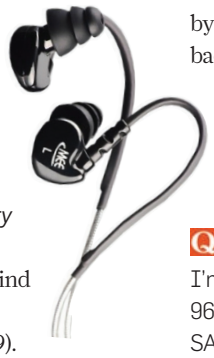
Engineering miracles!
Tal Golesworthy developed an artificial Aorta to replace his own malfunctioning one using MRI scans! **http://bit.ly/mWbwfF**

C/C++ on Chrome
The latest version of Google Chrome now supports C/C++ apps.
http://bit.ly/nL0D2H

Q Earphone woes

I want to buy earphones for my Samsung mPower Txt M369 CDMA handset. My budget is in the range of ₹500 to 1,000. I have seen some Philips, Sennheiser and Skullcandy earphones within this range. I want an in-ear solution. Please suggest me some good earphones within this range. I also want to know whether using any of these earphones will benefit me?

Amaresh Choudhary



Two IEMs that come to mind are: Creative EP630 (₹650) and Sound Magic PL 21 (₹699). If your budget can be extended, the MEElectronics M6 (₹1,200) is a slightly better option.

Q Buy me a computer

I want an Intel processor based PC for gaming and surfing purpose for around ₹65,000.

I'll also want to work on applications such as Maya, 3DS Max and Photoshop on it.

1. Please suggest components along with their street prices.
2. Please also suggest a UPS within this budget.
3. I'm confused about the choice of monitor. Should I buy a touchscreen? Is this within my budget? I'm also unable to decide between LCD or LED.

Ramesh Singh

Since you're looking at a high end multimedia system to use heavy applications such as Photoshop and Maya, here are our suggestions.

Processor: Intel Core i5-2500K – ₹10,700
Motherboard: ASUS P8Z68 V – ₹12,600
RAM: Corsair Vengeance DDR3 4GB ₹2,500
Graphics Card: MSI N550GTX Ti Cyclone – ₹8,150
Monitor: BenQ E2420 – ₹12,900
HDD: Seagate Barracuda 1 TB – ₹2,800
PSU: Cooler Master eXtreme 500 –₹2,900
ATX Cabinet: Cooler Master HAF 912 – ₹5,600
Speaker: Altec Lansing V2621 – ₹1,900
Keyboard: Logitech K100 – ₹260
Mouse: Microsoft P58 – ₹375
UPS: APC BR600CI-IN – ₹2,165
Total – ₹62,850

Touchscreen monitors are just a gimmick and we didn't find their quality to be over the regular monitors. In normal LCD monitors, the backlight for panel is provided by CCFL tubes, whereas in case of LED backlit LCD monitors, the CCFL tubes are replaced by LEDs. What this does is help in making monitors more slimmer. Also the power module is located outside the LED backlit LCD monitors.

Q Power up!

I'm planning to buy a UPS for my Rig (Core i7 960, ASUS Sabertooth, 4 GB Corsair XMS, 2 SATA HDD (Seagate 1 TB each), ZOTAC GTX 460AMP, Sony DVD writer, Dell 24-inch LED, Creative SBS 370, Canon Laserjet, Corsair 650W PSU, with 4 chassis fan in Cooler Master 690. I also want a little future proofing. Kindly suggest some good UPS for that purpose.

I need a good Wi-Fi router on my 512 kbps broadband connection (BSNL) for my home. I'm also in need of a good portable HDD of 1 TB, USB 3.0, preferably Western Digital or Seagate.

Neeraj Shakywal

You can check out APC BR1000IN which is priced around ₹5,500. For the Wi-Fi router, you can try out our Best Performer TPLink TL-MR3420 available for around ₹5,400. As for an external USB 3.0 drive we would suggest WD My Passport Essential SE 1TB for ₹6,499. If you want an economical drive, we suggest going for the ADATA Classic CH11 (1TB) for ₹5,050.

TPLink TL-MR3420

Q To buy or not to buy?

I was planning to buy a Dell XPS15 or HP dv6, but with HP's recent announcement, I'm concerned. I was interested in the dv6 because of the AMD HD 6770M graphics solution. Dell XPS is very good, but NVIDIA 540M is not as powerful as HD 6770M. What should I do?

Can I get a better laptop within ₹60,000? I request you to suggest me some good laptops. I will be playing games such as *Crysis*, *NFS Shift 2*, and *Dirt 3*. Since I am studying, I will also need it for programming and other academic work.

Kausarr Ayub

Just because HP decided to stop production of laptops doesn't mean it won't clear available stocks. HP's still launching computing products in the market. The NVIDIA GT 540M isn't as powerful as AMD Radeon HD 6770M. Acer and Lenovo don't have any high-end gaming specific laptops. ASUS has its G-series gaming laptops (http://in.asus.com/Notebooks/) but they'll be costly. At ₹60,000, it is difficult to get a Core i7 processor-based laptop with adequate graphics. So if you are getting HP dv6 6121tx for around 60k, go for it.

Q Need a tablet

I'm a regular reader of Digit and I need to buy a tablet. I'm constantly on the move and need a tablet to replace my laptop. I need a fully functional office suite. Internet browsing experience similar to a PC (full Adobe Flash support). Should be available in Mumbai

Umesh Mali

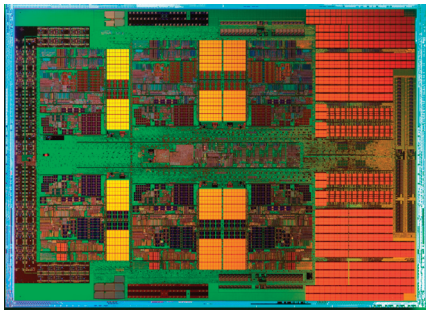
A tablet is not a replacement for your laptop, as there are many things which are just done better with a traditional keyboard and mouse than mere touch. Taking your requirements into consideration, the only tablet that comes to mind is the Acer Iconia Tab A500. You will need the Documents To Go app for using Word, Excel and PowerPoint. It is available in Mumbai for around ₹27,990. It supports tethering. If you can forgo Flash support, then we recommend the iPad2.

If you want a more economical option, check out the just launched Reliance 3G tablet selling for around ₹12,999. Read our preview: http://goo.gl/iQq2q.

digit KILLER RIGS

everything you'll ever need to build your own PC. whatever your budget.

PRIMARY COMPONENTS

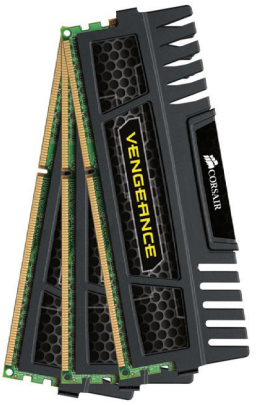


PROCESSOR

- AMD Athlon II X3 440 – ₹3,200
- AMD Athlon II X4 640 – ₹4,600
- AMD Llano A8-3850 – ₹7,000
- Intel Core i5 2500K – ₹10,300
- Intel Core i7 2600K – ₹15,900

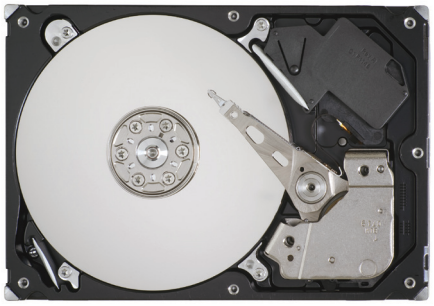
MOTHERBOARD

- Asus M4A78LT-M LE – ₹2,600
- Gigabyte GA-880GA-UD2H – ₹4,300
- Gigabyte GA-A75M-UD2H – ₹6,591
- Asus P8Z68 V – ₹12,600
- Gigabyte GAZ68X-UD3R-B3 – ₹11,200



RAM

- Corsair 2GB DDR3 1333MHz – ₹1,045
- Corsair 2x2GB DDR3 1333 MHz – ₹2,100
- Corsair Vengeance 4GB 1600MHz – ₹2,600
- Corsair Vengeance 4GB 1600MHz – ₹2,600
- 2x4GB Corsair Vengeance 1600 MHz – ₹5,200



GRAPHICS CARD

- None
- MSI R6770-MD1GD5 – ₹6,490
- Sapphire Radeon HD 6850 – ₹9,500
- MSI N570 GTX TwinFrozr II – ₹19,700
- 2 x ZOTAC GeForce GTX 570 – ₹40,600

HARD DRIVE

- Seagate 500GB 7200.12 – ₹1,700
- 500GB WD Caviar Blue – ₹1,700
- WD Caviar Black 1TB – ₹4,400
- Seagate Barracuda 2 TB – ₹4,700
- Seagate Barracuda XT 3TB – ₹14,500

MONITOR

- ViewSonic VA2038wm – ₹5,600
- BenQ G2220 – ₹7,200
- Samsung P2350 – ₹10,800
- BenQ V2410 – ₹14,500
- Dell Ultrasharp U2311H – ₹14,000

- **Basic rig = ₹18,585**
- **High-end Multimedia / Gaming rig = ₹51,386**
- **Ultra high-end PC / Gaming rig = ₹1,41,140**
- **Multimedia cum gaming rig = ₹33,590**
- **High-end gaming PC = ₹79,800**

SECONDARY COMPONENTS

CABINET

- Zebronics Bijili w/o SMPS – ₹1,100
- CM Elite 310 – ₹1,500
- CM Elite 430 – ₹2,620
- NZXT Guardian 921B – ₹3,700
- Cooler Master HAF922 – ₹6,800

POWER SUPPLY

- VIP 350 Watts – ₹800
- Corsair CX400 – ₹2,200
- Cooler Master GX450 – ₹3,500
- Cooler Master GX550 – ₹4,300
- Corsair HX850 – ₹9,800

MOUSE

- Microsoft P58 – ₹375
- Microsoft P58 – ₹375
- Logitech MX518 – ₹1,200
- Logitech MX518 – ₹1,200
- Razer Death Adder – ₹2,100

SPEAKER

- Logitech Z313 – ₹1,000
- Altec Lansing V2621 – ₹1,960
- Altec Lansing V2621 – ₹1,960
- Creative Inspire T6200 – ₹4,250
- Logitech Z506 – ₹4,700

OPTICAL DRIVE

- LG 22x SATA DVD Writer – ₹900
- LG 22x SATA DVD Writer – ₹900
- LG 22x SATA DVD Writer – ₹900
- LG 10x Blu ray RW – ₹9,400

SOUND CARD

- Asus Xonar DX 7.1 / ₹4,740

KEYBOARD

- Logitech K100 – ₹265
- Logitech K100 – ₹265
- Logitech K100 – ₹265
- Microsoft Comfort Curve 2000 – ₹1,000
- Razer Arctosa Gaming Keyboard – ₹2,200

MISCELLANEOUS

HD MEDIA PLAYERS

- Asus O!Play Mini / ₹4,000
- WD Live TV Hub / ₹11,500
- Iomega ScreenPlay 1TB Director / ₹10,200

GAMING HEADSETS

- Platronics Gamecon 367 – ₹1,700
- Alienware TactX Headset – ₹3,500
- Corsair HS1 – ₹4,999

PORTABLE DRIVES

- Seagate Expansion Pocket 250GB – ₹1,950
- WD Passport 500GB – ₹2,950
- Iomega eGo 1 TB USB 3.0 drive – ₹6,500

MOUSEPAD

- Razer Goliathus / ₹450
- Cooler Master Storm CS-M / ₹850
- Razer Goliathus Fragged Control Edition / ₹999

GAMING CONSOLES

- Sony PlayStation 3 Slim (320GB) with Move – ₹19,990
- Xbox 360 (250GB) with Kinect – ₹30,061
- Nintendo 3DS Black – ₹17,490

POWER PROTECTION

- APC (BR600CI-IN) – ₹2,165
- Numeric SB1000 – ₹4,700
- APC (BR-1000IN) – ₹5,500

Pollutant biofuels
Research has shown that biofuels, if not properly produced, can be 6-10 times more polluting than conventional fuels.

Bloom Box
It is a revolutionary new fuel cell that uses a variety of inputs, including biofuels, to produce electricity.

SPEND SMART

Updated prices of top cameras, laptops, HDTVs, smartphones and LCD monitors from Digit Test Labs

GRAPHICS CARDS

Graphics cards	Price (₹)	Memory	Core Clock	Memory Interface	Output Ports
ZOTAC GTX 550Ti AMP! Edition	9,215	1024	1000	192-bit	2xDVI, 1xHDMI, 1xDisplayPort
MSI R6850 Cyclone 1GD5	9,350	1024	775	256-bit	2xDVI, 1xHDMI, 1xDisplayPort
ZOTAC GTX 560Ti AMP! Edition	15,750	1024	950	256-bit	2xDVI, 1xHDMI
Sapphire Radeon HD 6950	13,200	1024	800	256-bit	2xDVI, 1xHDMI, 1xDisplayPort
MSI N570GTX TwinFrozr II	19,700	1280	732	320-bit	2xDVI, 1x mini HDMI
MSI R6970 Lightning	23,100	2048	940	256-bit	2xDVI, 2x mini DisplayPort, 1xHDMI
XFX HD 6970	23,280	2048	880	256-bit	2xDVI, 2x mini DisplayPort, 1xHDMI
ASUS GTX 580	28,900	1536	782	384-bit	2xDVI,1xHDMI, 1xDisplayPort

SMARTPHONES

Smartphone	Price (₹)	Operating System	Processor	Camera (MP)	Screen size	Resolution
Motorola Quench XT5	10,999.00	Android 2.1	600 MHz	5	3.2-inches	320 x 480
Motorola Defy	13,999.00	Android 2.1	800 MHz	5	3.7-inches	480 x 854
Samsung Wave II	15,699.00	Bada OS 1.2	1 GHz	5	3.7-inches	480 x 800
BlackBerry Bold 3	21,700.00	BlackBerry OS 6	624 MHz	5	2.44-inches	480 x 360
Dell Venue Pro	23,999.00	Windows Phone 7	1 GHz	5	4.1-inches	480 x 800
HTC Desire S	22,145.00	Android 2.3	1 GHz	5	3.7-inches	480 x 800
Sony Ericsson Xperia Arc	27,999.00	Android 2.3	1 GHz	8	4.2-inches	480 x 854
HTC Incredible S	24,279.00	Android 2.3	1 GHz	8	4.0-inches	480 x 800
Sony Ericsson Xperia Play	28,849.00	Android 2.3	1 GHz	5	4.0-inches	480 x 854
Nokia E6	15,959.00	Symbian Anna	680 MHz	8	2.46-inches	640 x 480

Powerful Stuff
The steam catapults to launch aircraft from an aircraft carrier can hurl a pickup truck over a mile.

Apple sues Samsung. Again.
Competition between the two is so heated that Apple and Samsung are now suing each other in no less than nine countries.

GAMING LAPTOPS

Gaming Laptops	Price (₹)	Processor	Screen Size (inches)	HDD (GB)	Installed OS
MSI GE 620	59,999.00	Intel Core i5-2410M	15.6	640	Windows 7 Home Premium
Alienware M11x	65,600.00	Intel Core i7-2720QM	11.6	500	Windows 7 Ultimate
MSI GX 660	69,199.00	Intel Core i5-460M	15.6	500	Windows 7 Home Premium
MSI GX 780R	119999	Intel Core i7-2630QM	17.3	1500	Windows 7 Ultimate
MSI GT 680R	199999	Intel Core i7-2630QM	15.6	1000	Windows 7 Home Premium
ASUS G74SX	114839	Intel Core i7-2630QM	17.1	1500	Windows 7 Home Premium
Alienware M17x	159000	Intel Core i7-2630QM	17.3	1500	Windows 7 Ultimate

EXTERNAL HARD DRIVES

External HDD	Price (₹)	Capacity (GB)	Interface	Backup Utility	Cost Per GB (in ₹)
Hitachi Touro Mobile pro	4,400.00	500	USB 3.0 / 2.0	Y	9.44
Silicon Power Diamond D10	3,660.00	750	USB 3.0 / 2.0	Y	5.23
WD My Passport Essential	2,900.00	500	USB 3.0 / 2.0	Y	6.22
ADATA Classic CH11	5,000.00	1000	USB 3.0 / 2.0	N	5.42
WD My Passport Essential SE	5,150.00	1000	USB 3.0 / 2.0	Y	5.53
Seagate FreeAgent GoFlex (1500Gb)	12,500.00	1500	USB 3.0 / 2.0	Y	8.94

DIGITAL CAMERAS

Digital Cameras	Price (₹)	Resolution (MP)	ISO Range	Optical Zoom	Video Resolution
Canon IXUS 130	9,155.00	14.1	80 – 1600	4x	1280 x 720
FujiFilm FinePix JV200	5,999.00	14	100 – 1600	6.7x	1280 x 720
FujiFilm FinePix S3300	13,800.00	10	64 – 1600	26x	1280 x 720
Nikon CoolPix P7000	19,350.00	10.1	100 – 3200	7.1x	1280 x 720
Canon PowerShot S95	25,000.00	10	80 – 3200	3.8x	1280 x 720
Canon PowerShot G12	31,085.00	10	80 – 3200	5x	1280 x 720
Nikon CoolPix S8100	13,100.00	12.1	160 – 3200	10x	1920 x 1080
Canon PowerShot SX30IS	22,500.00	14.1	80 – 1600	35x	1280 x 720

Social Networking apps
The must-have ones for your smart phone
http://bit.ly/qcNL85

Touchscreen Delight
Best touch phones under ₹15k
http://bit.ly/nNBs9x

Fight your own case

What you should know to play your own lawyer in a consumer court

Kapil Rustagi
readersletters@thinkd igit.com

The consumer court gives you a chance to play a two-fold role in real life – that of a litigant and your own advocate in the consumer forum. That is, you can file your case and fight it to the logical end to enforce your consumer rights. The only downside is that if you drop the case, you don't have another person to hold responsible. But, if you win, you can sing your own praises. Though you can employ an advocate to do this, you must educate yourself about important information if you do decide to fight a case on your own.

It's advisable to engage an advocate dealing in consumer protection. Even if you wish to fight for yourself, seek expert help at least for the drafting of the complaint because, very often, the relief sought can be unclear and inadequate.

In the complaint, mention the full name and address of the complainant and the opposite party. Providing detailed information of the deficiency or defect is important to be able to present a good case. Specify the various kinds of relief you want to seek from the court. Generally, seek correction of the deficiency or defect and ask for compensation and costs. Don't forget to attach copies of all relevant papers; say bills, photos, letters, any legal notice sent etc. After this, personally file it at the consumer forum and collect the complaint number. Every complaint has to be filed within two years of the occurrence of deficiency or defect which is called "limitation period". There is a small court fee payable at the consumer forum which differs from state to state. It may take a few days for the first hearing to take place, while it takes several months for a complaint to be disposed of.

If you're dissatisfied with the decision at the consumer forum, you can appeal to the state commission. This should be done within 30 days of the verdict being delivered.

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www.consumermate.com Expert Buying Advice

We can help!
If you're facing a problem with your purchase, write to us at help@consumermate.com

If you're unhappy with the judgment there, you can appeal to the National Commission in Delhi which is the apex forum in the country and finally, you can appeal to the Supreme Court.

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

Mobile Phones

Bad experience with Samsung mobile phone

I had bought Samsung Duos GT-B7722QKAINU from one of outlets at Sohna Road on 18th April. The very next day, there was a software problem, so I went to the service center at sector-31, Gurgaon. They replaced the set but the same problems exist:

Set hangs when deleting messages, non-functioning conference call option and internet, message details appearing in log calls, issues viewing contacts and incompatible Bluetooth headset regardless of the company.

I was to buy Nokia, but only went for Samsung for its dual-SIM feature. I made a big mistake buying it and would advise others not to waste their money on Samsung.

Contacted by: *Vineet Kumar Ahuja*

Answer By Consumermate:

Dear Consumer,

Thanks for sharing your inputs and suggestions regarding the product which would be beneficial in guiding prospective customers. Since your product is under warranty, you can get it repaired free of cost. This appears to be a product with an inherent manufacturing problem. The quality maintained by the company is not good. There are deficiencies in the service on the part of the dealer and the company. You have to take legal action to put them in motion. Do not feel cheated as you can complain in the district consumer forum.

But before that, serve them with a registered letter in the shape of a legal demand notice containing all your details and intimate them, failing which you can file a complaint with the district forum.

Keep a record of all the communication for future reference. I am sure some sense will prevail over them and they will do something about your problems after receiving the notice itself.

Delay in obtaining spares for Nokia C6 mobile

I had approached Nokia Care at Sector 5, Dwarka on 3rd June to repair my mobile. Despite the fact that the order was from Delhi and not a remote village, about 26 days have passed and the offices have failed to either dispatch the spares to the Nokia Care Center or even notify a probable date of supply.

The logistics support of the company definitely needs a relook. Kindly look into the reasons and help me take action at the earliest.

Contacted By: *Raj Singh Chauhan*

Answer By Consumermate:

Dear Consumer,

It is the duty of the company to provide the spare parts for the proper functioning of your product. Any delay in doing so would amount to deficiency in services. They must return the product duly repaired within a reasonable period. Beyond that period, they must arrange for an alternative mobile set.

Of course, this is a serious issue for the company who makes high claims for customer satisfaction. Nevertheless, at this stage we suggest writing a letter containing all the relevant details and problems you're facing to the company and the dealer from where you purchased the product. I hope they would be sensible enough to respond. Keep a record of all the communication exchanged. Thereafter, if the response is not positive you can file a consumer complaint.

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MODULER, APFC

660 WATT
APFC

550 WATT
APFC

500 WATT
PFC

Contact us at: info@entercircle.com

www.palasa.in

What's your Digit quotient?

Team Digit
(with inputs from "The Interns")
readersletters@thinkdigit.com

Ever wished you could [CTRL] + [F] that large text book? Or found yourself rattling off the latest GPU model numbers and prices in your sleep? Take this quiz and find out how much Digit DNA is coursing through your veins.

PART I

1. Local assembler tries to convince you that a higher clock speed is better than having more cores. You say...

a) Not when you have to run multiple virtual machines, to code in Visual Studio, edit an image in Photoshop, defrag your hard drive, rip your Blu-ray movie collection... and all at once! Besides, you need to keep some CPU time free for good causes such as Folding@home.
b) I'll overclock. Thank you.
c) Yes, give me the 4GHz processor

2. How many tabs / windows do you have open at any time?

a) I keep all windows closed. My AC is always on.
b) I have running credit with all my local IT shopkeepers
c) 20 each in Opera, Chrome and Firefox

3 Your friends call you every time:

a) They want to hang out
b) There's a game of *Quake III* scheduled in the evening
c) Their own / uncle's / girlfriend's / neighbour's computer is not working

4 To catch up with friends you:

a) Leave them a Facebook message
b) IM them
c) Meet them every day on IRC and plot to take over the world

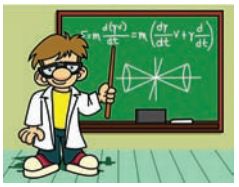
5 CTC to you means...

a) Cost to Company
b) Carbon Tetra Chloride
c) Crack the Code

6 ...and BOINC is?

a) Berkely Open Infrastructure for Network Computing
b) That open source software for donating your computer's resources
c) The sound made when you bash someone over the head for using big words you don't understand

7 You just heard that Windows 8 was leaked, what do you do?



a) Hunt torrent sites to get a copy and run it in a virtual machine. Just to *try* it out, of course *wink wink*
b) Scrounge the web for any kind of information / videos / screenshots
c) Say "Oh cool" and move on

8 You're running Linux but want to run a Windows app / game. What do you do?

a) Run the app using Wine or on a VM
b) Install Windows on the side and dual-boot
c) Get someone to reformat and install Windows; "Why did I bother with Linux anyway?"

9 You booted your PC, and got a horrible ear-splitting noise come out from the cabinet speaker. You:

a) Say, "1 long, two short... Damn, I just bought that GPU!"
b) Try and open the cabinet and shake some components around to hope it will stop
c) Call the local assembler guy... if you do everything yourself, what will happen to the economy?

10 You wish you could customise the way your OS or an application works, but there's no option for it. You:

a) Give up after 15 minutes of searching
b) Google the hell out of it, and go beyond the first page looking for solutions
c) Look at the configuration files and the registry and try out a few things

BONUS

11 Your latest device doesn't work on Linux? You:

a) Write your own driver (of course we're kidding)
b) Find a kernel patch that works for your card and compile a kernel that supports your card
c) Write to Digit asking what went wrong

If your score is between
0 to 30: You need to read Digit 101 more
20 to 60: You're new to geekdom but are slowly and surely catching up
60 and above: You have a high Digit quotient and the reigning geek overlord of your group. Your friends look up to you for knowledge and expert advice.

Score Sheet			
	A	B	C
Q 1	10	5	-5
Q 2	-5	5	10
Q 3	0	5	10
Q 4	0	5	10
Q 5	-5	0	10
Q 6	10	5	5
Q 7	5	10	0
Q 8	10	5	-5
Q 9	10	5	-5
Q10	-5	5	10
Q11	20	10	5

PART II

And now that you know your Digit quotient, find out...
What kind of a <geek/> are you?

1. Which of these catches your eye?

a) 3.14159
b) 42
c) λ
d) 127.0.0.1

2. What does RWJ mean?

a) I know RJ45. Where did the W come from?
b) Ron Hubbard, Wells and Jules?
c) Is that a bigger BFG?
d) Ray William Johnson

3. The big laws are?

a) e=mc2, action=reaction,
b) Disallow: /harming/humans
Disallow: /ignoring/human/
c) The cake is a lie All your base are belong to us
d) Do not talk about /b/
If it exists, there's p*#n for it

4. On a lazy afternoon, which of these would be considered time well spent?

a) Tinkering around with that line-follower robot DIY you'd started last week
b) Watching an old episode of *Star Trek: Voyager* just to oogle at Jeri Ryan

c) Log on to *StarCraft II* for a few rounds. Adun Toridas!
d) Go through 20 pages of FailBlog. LULZ!!!!1!!11!!

5. One really bad thing that could happen?

a) Every gadget you own runs out of power at the same bloody moment!
b) The government decides to cut the space program. All your favourite sci-fi programs now seem a distant reality
c) LAG!!!!
d) All your bookmarks have been rickrolled!

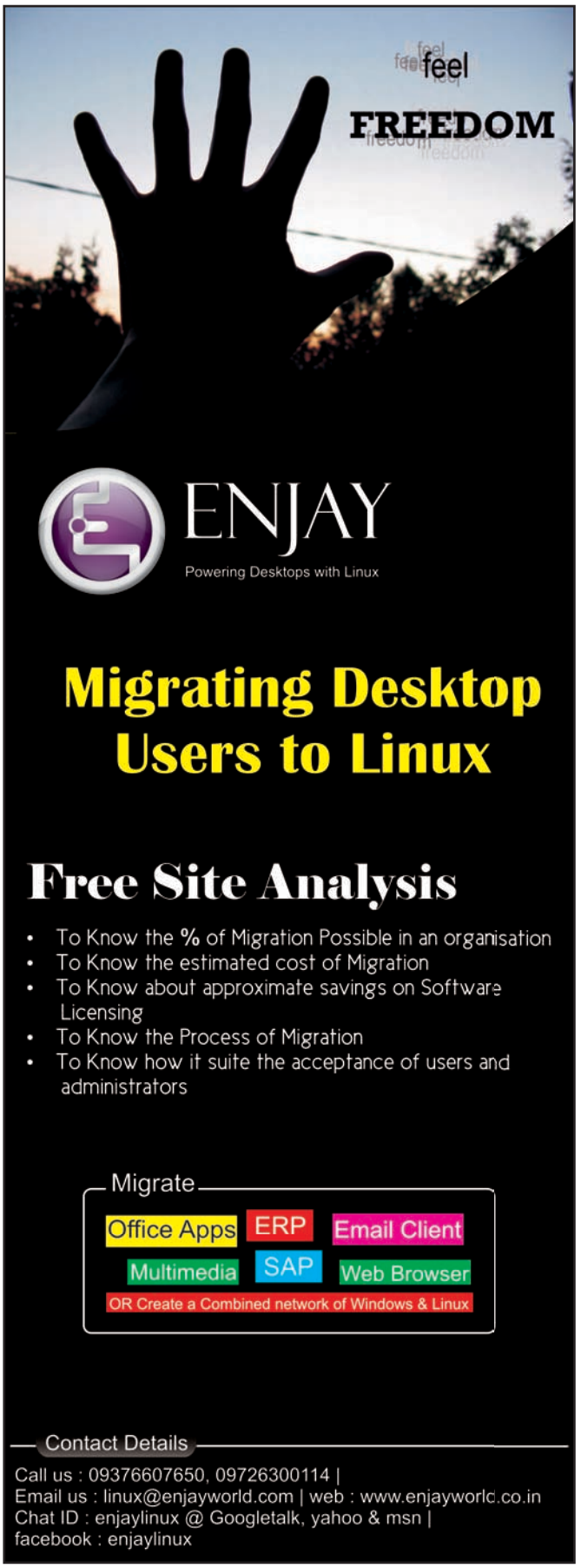
6. A place where you get your fix:

a) Lamington Road and other IT/gadget hubs
b) PhysOrg
c) Anywhere, as long as your PSP is with you
d) /b/

7. Your prized possession!

a) Your smart phone + PMP + tool set glued together like a Swiss Geek Kit
b) A limited edition Luke Skywalker lightsaber
c) Your copy of the *Original Age of Empires:* Collector's Edition
d) Your LastPass account

Answer key:
Mostly As: General Geek - You are the epitome of all things geeky; be it math, technology, science or even puzzles. You like to tinker with things and are emotionally attached to your PC.
Mostly Bs: Sci-fi Geek - You may be a little paranoid and cook up conspiracies of your own, but dreams of space travel and aliens are all that you live by.
Mostly Cs: Gamer Geek - You've probably been gaming since the days esoteric stuff like *Solar Winds* and *Ascendancy*. Now you can't live without your daily dose of high-octane FPS/racing/strategy/action.
Mostly Ds: Internet Geek - You've been online since the time 14.4 kbps modems would squeak that particular note before connecting. And now you spend your time following one meme after another into the dark recesses of the interwebs.



Abhay Ramakrishnan
readersletters@thinkdigit.com

In times when run-n-gun FPS games rule the roost, Limbo comes as a welcome change. This beautifully crafted Indie game offers one of the most interesting gaming experiences, excelling in gameplay, visual and sound design. In fact, we'll go as far as to say that this is one of the best games to come out across any platform over the last 12 months - in fact the PC version launched just a month ago on August 2.

Let us start out by saying that Limbo is not for the faint of heart. Its 'trial and death' styled learning curve force you to see the game's boy protagonist being charred, maimed, decapitated, perforated and impaled to death in the most gruesome fashion imaginable. With no special tools at your disposal and a harsh and unforgiving environment that demands every second of your attention, Limbo gives you no quarter if you slack off.

PLOT

There's no narrative as such. You're a silhouetted boy with bright white eyes who wakes up in the middle of a forest, searching for his missing sister. This forest is full of things, living and non-living, which are most eager to kill you. The controls are dead simple. You use the arrow keys to get around and the control key helps you grab in-game objects.

But don't let the simplicity fool you. This beautiful and eerie platformer-cum-physics puzzle has a lot to offer. It's monochromatic, film-noir environment gives it this unnerving feeling. The background always has something moving in it and even the little blades of grass sway when the boy walks past it.

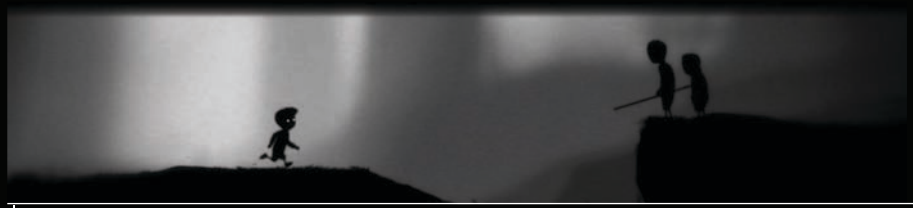
The game relies heavily on ambient sounds to give the player cues which help solve the puzzle. Though music is present at times, it's used to accentuate emotional high-points in the game. In later levels, you must time your moves according to the ticking countdown timer. Failing to do so might get you killed. But, the game is very forgiving that way. Once you die, you're immediately taken back to the last checkpoint. So dying in Limbo really isn't that punishing from a gameplay perspective – thankfully.

Then again, Limbo doesn't trivialise death. In fact, it shows you how fragile this boy protagonist is. Make one wrong move and the boy pays for it. Even though the game's colour schematic is limited to just black and white, the boy's death has much more of an emotional impact on you than any ultra-realistic blood red flesh wound you'd see in triple A games. Just goes to show how simple games crafted with precision can trigger emotions as well or better than photo-realistic graphics.

An average Limbo playthrough will take between 5-6 hours. The puzzles aren't simple or tough-as-nails hard. The difficulty is just right and best of all, there aren't any loading screens! So once you're in Limbo, it's hard to leave it till the very end.

VERDICT

If video games were art, then Limbo would be in the Louvre. Limbo is fun, scary, exciting, well thought out and engrossing. Sure you'll get frustrated when you die repeatedly, but that's what makes Limbo great. Just like life, you have to learn about it the hard way. Download it off Steam right now. d



Genre: Puzzle, Platformer
Developer: Playdead
Publisher: Microsoft Game Studios, Playdead
Price: ₹450 approx (Steam download)

THE SKOAR! 8

HUNTED
THE DEMON'S FORGE

Faiyaz Shaikh
readersletters@thinkdigit.com

Hunted: The Demon's Forge follows the adventures of a mercenary duo of Caddoc and E'lara, whose quest for wealth leads them into the dark and hostile world of Kala Moor. Caddoc is a burly, bald-headed human who prefers responding to hostilities with a sword and a shield in the face; whereas E'Lara, in keeping with long standing Elfish tradition, prefers the bow and arrows. The pair is first provoked into the quest by Caddoc's disturbing nightmare, to be eventually led on by the mysterious Seraphine and prospects of significant wealth. The game's overall plot is pretty thin and is something that we have seen numerou s times in games set in a fantasy world. The world is under threat by an ancient and powerful evil and a pair of unlikely heroes is all that can save the day. This game gets away with such a tired plot because the game-play, although not inspiring, is totally playable and to some degree even engaging.

Despite the game's fantasy setting and character progression system that is generally found in role-playing games, Hunted is essentially an action game. It is played from a third-person perspective and its combat uses a cover-system. Caddoc and E'lara can engage in melee and ranged combat; however, the former's crossbow and latter's sword is meant to be used only in dire situations. Typically, Caddoc will hold the frontlines while E'lara takes pot-shots from behind. The game has been designed as a multiplayer co-op affair, but it works fairly well even in single-player mode with AI controlled partner. The game's set-pieces are designed much like a shooter, wherein waves of cannon fodder class enemies are often followed by a boss fight. Fallen enemies drop items, gold and crystal fragments. These crystals are used to unlock new skills for the two characters and to upgrade existing ones. Magical weapons are strewn across the dungeons of Kala Moor, but these have limited charges and work much like ordinary weapons after the magic in them has been depleted.

Sticking to the main game-plan of countering enemies with Caddoc's melee and E'lara ranged skills will lead the player to the final goal without too much effort or frustration. Once the game has been beaten, you can get more value out of it in a couple of ways. Completing the single-player campaign unlocks the new game+ mode that you could play on the same difficulty level or beat the game on a higher difficulty level, since by now you are likely to have a greater understanding of the game's mechanics and enemies. Hunted ships with a very basic level creator/editor called Crucible, assets for which have to be unlocked by collecting gold in the main game. If you are not the creator type, then downloading Crucible levels created by other players is also an option.

Hunted: The Demon's Forge does not offer anything that is truly memorable, but at the same time it is not a bad game either. This game may not be worthy of full price; however, with a bargain it heeds consideration as a game with decent co-op action.

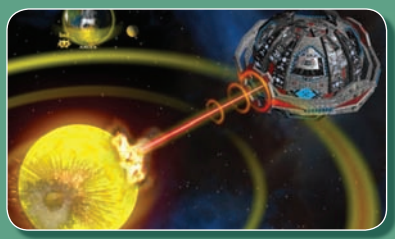
THE SKOAR! 7

Of LEDs and insects
It seems that insects are not attracted to LEDs as most LEDs don't emit UV light

The nicest employees
Mark Malkof managed to bring in a pet goat, order a pizza and have a romantic date, all in an Apple store.

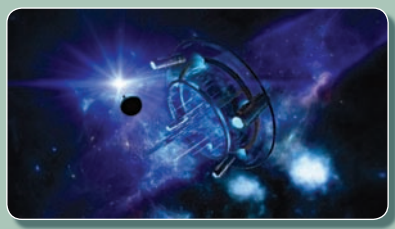
The Kardashev scale: Types of civilisations we might encounter 'out there'

Type I
A Type I civilisation has harnessed all the power of their planet. They control most of the naturally occurring forces such as wind, volcanoes, earthquakes and tides. Humanity is currently Type 0, while Type I civilisations in say Ender's Game are II.



Type II
A Type II civilisation has gone stellar. It has exhausted planetary sources of energy and is actually harnessing its mother star. Every stray photon, last kilojoule is for its taking. Some civilisations in Star Trek are of this type.

Type III
A Type II civilisation controls the power of a whole bunch of suns – an entire galaxy to be precise. Theoretically, such a civilisation is immortal; bending even time and space to escape mortality. The universe depicted in Star Wars is thought to be of a Type III.



The good guys of the gaming world

There's been too much of a fuss lately about video game villains. We thought why not pay homage to the characters we loved to play as.

Master Chief
Master Chief became so popular that he eventually became an iconic figure not just for Halo, but even Xbox. Like some other videogame greats, Master Chief too was a man of few words.

Max Payne
Dark, brooding and troubled; Payne was the anti hero of sorts but still the quintessential good guy. While fighting his internal demons, he did some insane damage to whoever stood in his way.

Cloud Strife
A spikey hairdo, a weapon that's twice his size and striking blue eyes make for a formidable image to trump. This iconic character had a huge uphill battle from the word go.

Gordon Freeman
So what if he never spoke a word? Gordon is the perfect embodiment of the geek fantasy – a gun-slinging Ph.D who kicks some serious ass. And all that after just starting out with a crowbar.

Mario
An Italian plumber in a Japanese game going though multiple worlds and castles while vanquishing tortoises to save a princess named Peach makes perfect sense. Well, maybe not. But still playing as Mario was so much fun.

Bill Rizer and Lance Bean
Names don't sound familiar at all, do they? "Mad Dog" and "Scorpion" ring a bell? No? We thought so. They're the Contra Commandos and how can we forget about the countless hours we spent going though jungles and dodging countless enemies.

Did you know?

Chameleons only change their colour in response to their emotional state, not their surroundings.

The Berglas Effect

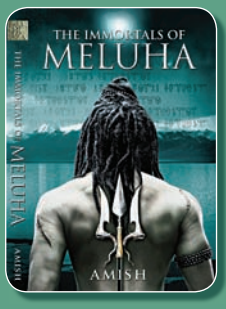
Considered to be the holy grail of card tricks. Check out the video
http://bit.ly/ooL8sg

How we unwind

Angry Birds

This month all of us revisited Angry Birds on Chrome. Three stars on all levels just didn't seem enough, and we started beating high scores for chocolate. The battle began with Sambhav posting a score of 83,620 for level 1-14. The high score now stands at 86,370 and many Bournvilles were won and lost.

The Immortals of Meluha



This is the first part of a fantasy fiction trilogy written by an Indian author. The novel has Shiva saving a particular clan from the imaginary land of Meluha. It has interesting sub-plots, concepts of immortality and a hint of a love story involving Shiva and Parvati.

Grace for drowning

Steven Wilson's new album is eagerly awaited and we're digging the preview on the official site. One of the songs *Remainder the Black Dog* has even found its way to YouTube. It's dark, melancholic (as usual), a little theatrical and heavy hell! Agree with us or not Steven Wilson is fast approaching the status of Rock Legend.

digit DIARY

August began on a bit of a calm note but not until "The Interns" came along. The dynamic duo of Anirudh and Mithun proved to be more than a handful. Infact, collectively they've been giving the team the heebiejeebies since Day One. Here's why: Anirudh, the seemingly quiet one, always has some sort of weird stuff on his screen. The last time someone passed by, they saw pictures of deformed possums! Kids these days, right? What worries us more is that he once told us nonchalantly that he keeps a human skull at home. We kid you not. Mithun, on the other hand, seems outwardly normal, but often goes into a hushed huddle with Anirudh. He was discussing the cover story apparently but we have our own theories. We were a bit concerned but it was nothing a bit of ass kicking in *QIII* couldn't fix. We ended up having one of the most fun sessions we've had in a long time!

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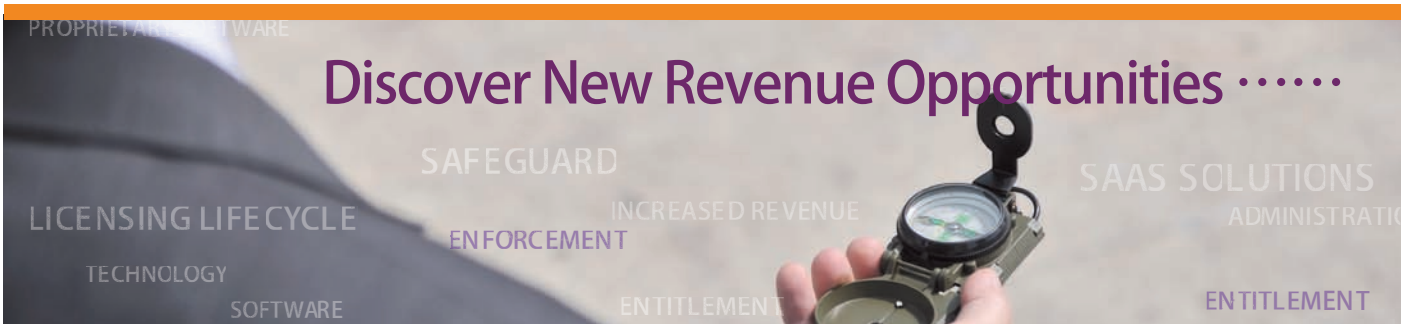

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UC Davis is cutting trees to make way for a Solar powered, car charging station.
http://cnet.co/qdk74A

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Lain Wood was arrested for using data on Facebook to hack into his neighbor's bank accounts.
http://bit.ly/q0CkV8

Head over to www.thinkdigit.com/forum, for some of best discussions, buying advice, and user reviews. Of course, you will meet like minded (and not so like-minded) geeks, leading to some of the most constructive arguments you'll ever have.

Check out this thread below asking for In-ear headphones or IEM recommendations
Lots of reccos and lots of buying suggestions! But it's not all forum war, you'll find some interesting info and much more. Head over to the thread via this shortlink : http://bit.ly/ovP0qW

25-04-2011, 11:59 AM — #1 (permalink)

doomgiver
KABLOOOOIEE!!!!

Join Date: Nov 2010
Location: Ullapool
Posts: 639

need in ear monitors/earphones

which ones are better?
senn cx 180
brainwavz m1/pro alpha/m2
sony mdrex57
soundmagic pl 30/pl 50
klipsch image s2
mee m9/m6
any other?
budget 1.5k-2k
what about using an amp?

Quote

16-05-2011, 01:54 PM — #13 (permalink)

EdoPack
Right Off the Assembly Line

Join Date: May 2011
Location: China
Posts: 3

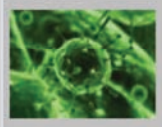
Re: need in ear monitors/earphones

The Soundmagix PL30's do come with a bass control nozzle on the actual earpiece that's suppose to increase/decrease the amount of bass - but in all honesty, the change isn't that noticeable and cranked up to the highest point of 'bass' it's still dwarfed by the bass quality of the M2's (which I own) - which have the strongest bass out of the Brainwavz bunch but is not overpowering in general. P.S, I would recommend not considering the PL50 in regards to what you said you'll be listening to - it uses a balance armature driver - not good for bass at all.

Quote

Yesterday, 11:26 PM — #20 (permalink)

Sarath
Wise Old Owl



Join Date: Apr 2011
Location: Bangalore, Visakhapatnam, Abu Dhabi
Posts: 1,043

Re: need in ear monitors/earphones

I have the exact same query and feel that reviving this dead thread will serve more purpose for me than start afresh.
Well I am looking for alternatives to CX-180 or the same pair themselves. Actually my question is are there any better IEMs than the CX-180 for around the same price?
I recently got a pair of Brainwavz M1 @1800bucks from pristinenote around a week back.
My old pair of CX180 are also with me, but one of the earpieces has distorted, ever so slightly though.
In comparison my old CX sound better than the M1. Infact I was happy with the M1 until I did the comparison. So now I am an unhappy soul. I am contemplating buying the CX180 again since I never had problems with them in the first place and have been tried and tested by me. [I know however that they would die in a year]
So guys what do you suggest? Buy a CX180 again? or what?
No suggestions?

Quote

Today, 12:32 AM — #23 (permalink)

Krow
Crowman

Join Date: Mar 2009
Location: Unwired off-grid Nest
Posts: 3,111

Re: need in ear monitors/earphones

Hmmmm... slightly difficult for me to recommend without trying the CX180. But if you like it, get it. You could do a google on comparisons between CX180 and Soundmagic PL 30.

Quote

The death of the ISS
The International Space Station be sunk in the Pacific ocean by 2020.

Wii design
Nintendo has redesigned its Wii to lie horizontal now.
http://gizmo.do/n7jndU

Digit fan boys

Every once in a while we get mails by our readers who have been subscribers for a number of years. These guys preserve each copy and every DVD that comes with Digit. We are proud of you guys and it's you who keep us motivated to do more every month

(Top) This Digit collection belongs to K. John Sukumar. He's been with us for five years. He has 132 DVDs and 48 Fast Tracks

(Top) These tall Digit DVD towers have been collected and and preserved by Vikram Singh (Right) These DVDs have been collected by Shanks Vulimiri

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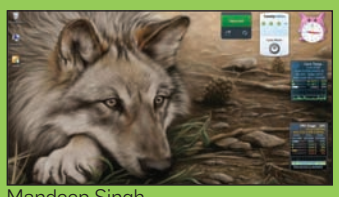
Community of software programmers who enjoy writing code and want to grow their career in software development

Desktops of the month

Here are the top three desktops for this month. Big shout to the guys who created them, congratulations!



Mandeep Singh

Somnath Sengupta

Pulkit Singhal

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Definitive guide to types of dSLR lenses

If you're intending to buy a dSLR camera, you should also ponder over the kind of lens you'll be using along with it. Deciding on the right lens shouldn't be an afterthought, as it's as important a part of the camera as the flash. Camera lenses are mostly on the higher side of the budget but for some people the cost wouldn't matter as long as the lens is right; while for the others, the decision is mostly based on the price. In today's day and age when dSLRs are constantly evolving it's best to invest in a lens as it can be used on different camera bodies. Here's a look at some of the most commonly used lens types. For buying advice, refer to AgentOO1's article on dSLR lenses.

Standard

Most cameras today come with a standard kit lens that covers a focal length range of about 18-55 mm. The standard focal length magnification in lenses today is 35 mm. Standard lenses are capable of offering modest wide angle settings and a modest telephoto effect.

Superzoom

Superzoom lenses cover a wide range of shooting situations. Aimed at a professional user these lenses have a focal length range of about 18-200 mm or 18-250mm. At maximum zoom, you have to have a very steady hand else you will get shaky images.

Prime Lens

These lenses have a fixed focal length with the 'Nifty Fifty' 50 mm lens being the most popular. It is ideal for portraits and due to its wide aperture opening (f2.0, f1.8, etc.) you get a very shallow depth of field in your photographs.

Wideangle

If you want to capture a sweeping landscape that is to fit a wide range of scenery in your focal

range, a wideangle lens helps. The focal length of a wideangle lens is less than 35 mm. The shorter the focal length the more the number of objects you can fit in your range. For example, a 20 mm lens is wide enough to capture an expansive landscape.

Telephoto Zoom

Meant for sports, action and wildlife photography, Telephoto zoom lenses in the range of 200-300 mm are used. Super telephoto lenses are used by professional photographers although such lenses are not widely used due to their high price.

Fisheye

Fisheye lens is a type of wideangle lens which got popular among photographers due to its hemispherical effect. A fisheye lens gives a distorted one-off result in your pictures which can't be obtained from other lenses. These were used by the meteorology department to study the formation of clouds and are also called whole

sky lenses. These are quite popular among enthusiast photographers due to its ability to bend straight looking objects.

The above image shows how much area is covered by a particular lens based on its focal length

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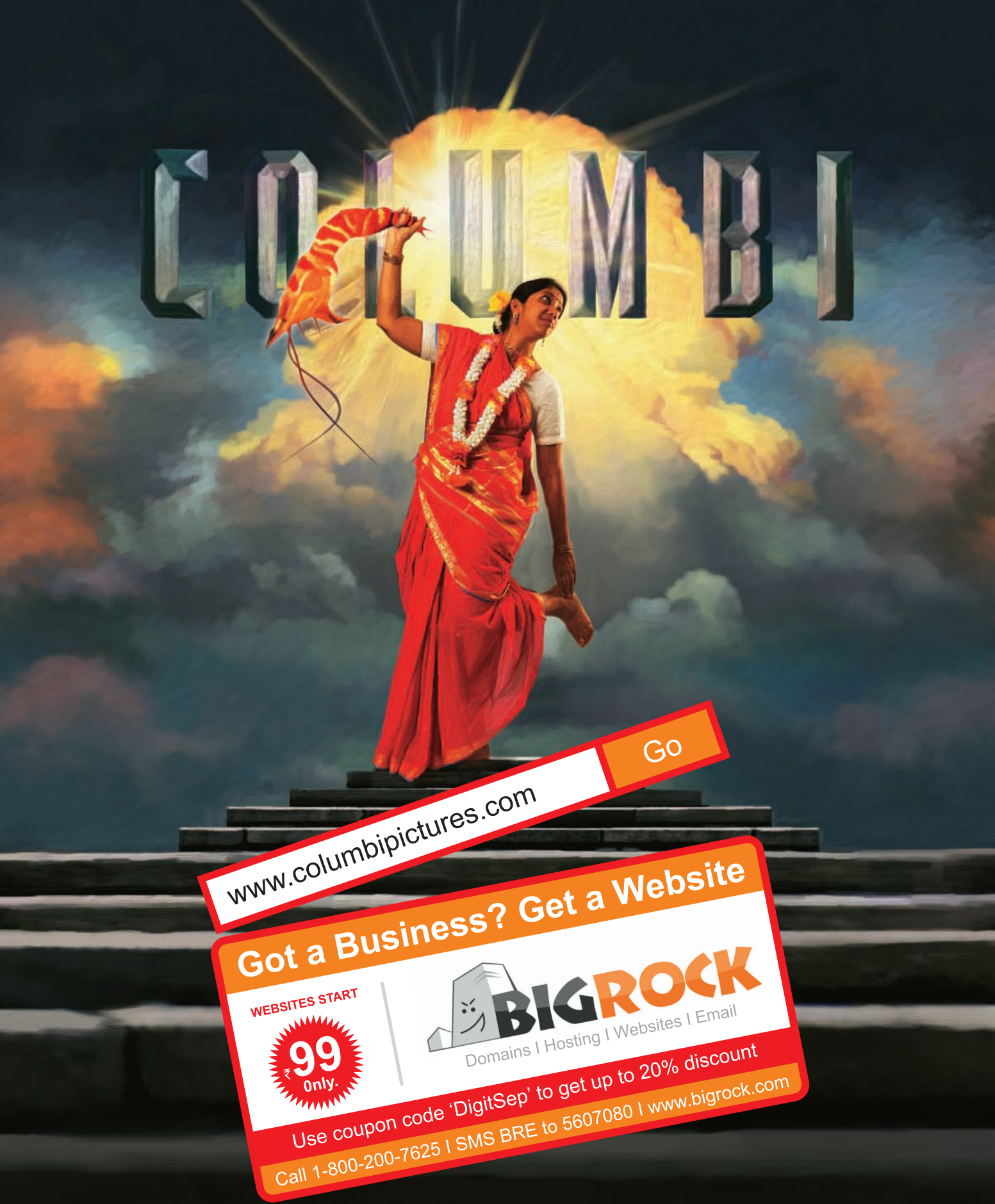

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