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BAZAAR HIGHLIGHTS

Apple iPhone 5

Samsung Galaxy Camera

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HTC Phone 8x

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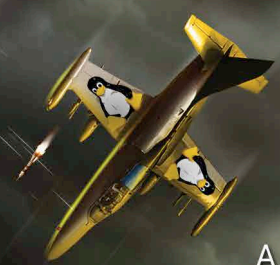
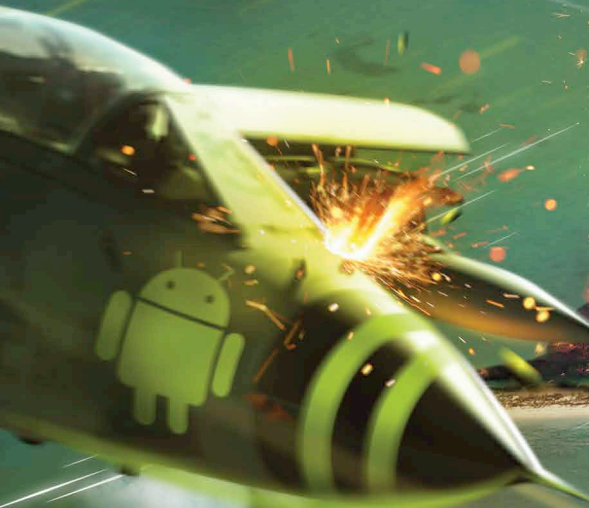
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WORLD WAR III

The battle to be your OS begins!

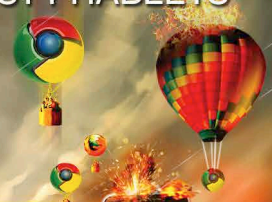
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Anarchy in 2013

Another year, another iPad / iPhone / Android release / new OS / 1000 new smartphone models / a million app updates... is that really all that we can look forward to? There's the hype that surrounds almost everything that's being touted as path-breaking, earth-shattering, all-new, etc. Excuse me while I yawn my head off... and not just because it's 8 AM (which is midnight for me), but out of genuine boredom.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not blaming the millions who work in the IT industry for wasting their time, passing off half-baked products as must-have treats. No, on the contrary, I'm blaming us, the consumers. Companies will make what we buy, just as people will Like on Facebook what everyone else Likes. There's a herd mentality at play, and it has a significant role in making or breaking aforementioned companies. Can you really blame them for jumping on bandwagons?

It's really a risk vs. gain balance sheet for most people and companies. Why risk everything when there are profits to be made? However, thankfully, our herd mentality also brings about monopolies by companies. Yes, you read that correctly, I did say and mean thankfully.

Wintel (Windows+Intel) has ruled the PC segment for a decade, RIM ruled the smartphone market and Nokia ruled the overall phone market, the tablet market now is controlled by a weird coalition of Apple, Samsung and Google... all monopolies of sorts.

The one thing monopolies and dictatorships have in common is that there's always anarchy at some point, and monopolies, like dictatorships, eventually crumble. When this does happen, we see a growth spurt, and in technology terms, we see innovation. That's why I'm thankful.

If Apple, Microsoft and Linux all had near equal shares in the desktop market, would Apple have been able to (or even had the will to) divert enough effort away from desktops to make the iPod / iPhone / iPad? Monopolies force people to innovate, not just with the products at hand, but also sometimes (as Apple did) force them to create an all new product category, and divert our focus away from existing (and monopolised) categories. And they did just that with touch-based devices, despite never really "creating" the technologies or even the basic ideas.

Portable MP3 players had existed for years before the iPod, touch-based input methods years before the iPhone/iPod Touch, and tablets way before the iPad... they were just not implemented

as well by other companies, who were too busy raking in the moolah on desktops and laptops to bother innovating into a new device category.

That's what monopolies do, force currently less relevant companies to innovate, to change the game, re-invent themselves – much like the struggling Nintendo did with the Wii. Can you imagine gaming on a console these days without some form of motion control?


Interestingly, the companies struggling to stay relevant today are not unknown, come-from-nowhere, Mark Zuckerberg types; they're behemoths such as Nokia, Intel, Microsoft, RIM, etc. For me, my real hope for 2013 is that these companies look beyond balance sheets and realise that they are almost playing the role of start-ups in certain vital segments of technology, and innovation is the only way out.

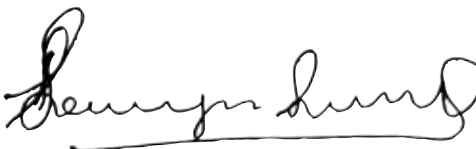
The very first sign of this happening is the spreading of OSes from one platform to another. Just as Linux went from personal PCs and servers and to phones, Windows for the first time properly migrates from PC to phone and tablet, Android's being sneaky and trying to get into the desktop, Chrome and Firefox have offerings... It's an all-out war, and thus had to be our first cover story of the year. You will read more in the pages that follow.

Over the year we will look at more such trends, and look to bring you even more insights into the cutting edge of technology that you will see sometime in the future. Of course we will continue to give you your regular dose of the latest in hardware, gadgets and gizmos, but we will also make sure to help you navigate the exciting but choppy waters that lie ahead.

Although many updates to existing products lie ahead, I'm more excited by the unknown than the latest iPad. Will we soon wear personal area network sensors, see a new human-computer interaction method (brain control anyone?), get smarter gadgets (with the beginnings of AI perhaps?), 3D print parts we need?

I don't know a definitive answer to the question, "What will 2013 be the year of in technology?", which is why I asked Team Digit to write about it this month.

Happy new year everyone, and let's hope 2013 is a great year for innovation. 



Robert Sovereign-Smith
Executive Editor
editor@thinkdigit.com

“That’s what monopolies do, force currently less relevant companies to innovate, to change the game, re-invent themselves”

Liked or hated this column?
Write in to editor@thinkdigit.com and let me know your thoughts.

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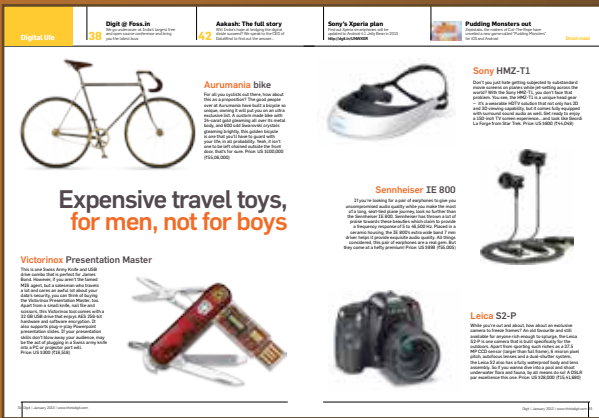
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For every Digit contest, there will be only one winner, unless specified otherwise. In the event of a dispute, the Editor's decision shall be final.

PRODUCTS REVIEWED THIS MONTH

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- Apple iPhone 5
- BYOND mi-book Mi5
- CISCO Linksys EA4500
- Corsair Vengeance C70
- Epson L355
- Eset Smart Security 5
- Foxconn NanoPC AT-5570
- Fujifilm XF-1
- Gigabyte Z77X-UP5TH
- HCL ME Tab G1
- HP HotSpot LaserJet Pro1218nfs MFP
- HTC One X+
- HTC Windows Phone 8x
- IRISNotes 1
- Jabra Solemate
- Karbons 18
- Lenovo ThinkCentre Edge 72z
- Lenovo ThinkPadX1 Carbon
- Nvidia GTX 650Ti
- Panasonic DMP-BDT220
- Samsung Ativ Smart PC Pro
- Samung Galaxy Camera
- Sennheiser HD700
- Sony BDP-S490
- Sony VAIO S-series (SVS15115FNB)
- Sony Xperia SL
- Spice Stellar Craze MI-355
- TP Link TL-MR3040
- Zync Z1000

Mini-ITX Motherboards

- ASRock A75-ITX
- ASRock Z77E-ITX
- ASUS P8H61-I
- ASUS P8H77-I
- ASUS P8Z77-I Deluxe
- Foxconn H61S
- Gigabyte H77N-WiFi
- Intel DH61DL
- Intel DH77DF
- MSI H61I-E35
- Zotac A75-ITXWiFi
- Zotac Z77ITX-A-E

Phablets (5-inch smartphones)

- iBall Andi 5c
- Intex Aqua 5.0
- Lenovo S880
- LG Optimus Vu
- Magicon mNote
- Maicromax Canvas2 A110
- Mercury MagiQ
- Samsung Galaxy Note
- Samsung Galaxy Note II
- Spice Stellar Horizon
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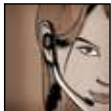
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Windows 8

Here's to better interaction in 2013

It would be an understatement to say technology has changed the way we do simple things these days – but out of all that we do in the course of our lives, for this column, I want to focus on interaction. This aspect of our human side has over the years taken on a completely new meaning. We use status messages, social media tools, and our smartphones as a conduit to have our fair share of interaction with people – often times more so than physically meeting with them in real life. In effect, all the efforts to connect have left us that much more disconnected. And distracted. You won't believe the number of times I got distracted in the course of writing this piece – whether it was by the beep of a WhatsApp message on my phone or the constant desire to check up on that Facebook tab.

Jayesh recently went to a CISCO press conference (conducted over telepresence, no less!) and came back with some startling survey findings on the Indian Gen Y: Only 1 in 5 people spend more time with friends in person. Over 70 per cent compulsively check their smartphones for updates, while 42 per cent said they “would feel anxious, like part of me was missing” if they couldn't check their smartphones constantly. Looks like the human body has got its 207th bone, and it's a smartphone!

So what's with this strange predilection to be connected all the time? I have a theory. It is believed our sentience comes from two sources – the Conscious and the Subconscious. The conscious makes us aware of things that we've allowed ourselves to feel, while the subconscious is made up of our innermost feelings – what ordinarily one would call intuition. When a feeling passes to the conscious, is when we truly realise it. In today's era, I believe technology has given rise to a third layer in our psyche; what I'd like to call the web-conscious. Let me elaborate... Think of a truly momentous or a joyous occasion that recently happened in your life. Only until you put it up as a status message (and garnered a few likes) did you fully relish it. It's not just the big events. Every little minute thought and emotion these days needs to be broadcast before it is validated online and then registered in our conscious. It just goes to show how important our online selves have become to us. The second reason for wanting to be so connected is the principle of random payouts. This is the principle that makes chance based gambling so addictive. The reward comes

only once in awhile. It's the same with updates; every now and then there's one that'll crack you up or one that you truly “like”.

In the coming year I'm looking forward to better online communities, better forms of interaction and our online persona being used to affect some good. (And I don't mean Facebook groups that take up causes). My rationale is simple – if we are spending so much time online we might as well use it to enhance our lives even while interacting. As far as communities go, I see a lot of quality information exchange and interaction happening over at Quora (the startup is what Yahoo! answers could've been had it not been overrun by neanderthals). Now even Google+ has added communities and some of the popular ones (mostly around Android) seem to be worth a look. Recently Qyuki a social network centered around creativity was launched specifically for India. All encouraging stuff. But what about on a personal level?



Siddharth Parwatay
Features Editor
siddharth.parwatay@thinkdigit.com

“It is believed our sentience comes from two sources – the Conscious and the Subconscious... I believe technology has given rise to a third layer in our psyche; what I'd like to call the web-conscious”

Can this obsession to broadcast banalities be put to good use? How about goal-setting via status message? A quick dipstick survey revealed that people are already doing this. They think of a status message that'll attract a lot of likes (kudos, if you will) and work towards that goal. Say you want to post something like “Cracked GMAT with a score of 720” you'd better get cracking and work towards it. Devices in the near future will come hot wired to post to Facebook. Imagine a weighing scale that does just that. Every kilogram drop will motivate you further.

This is just the beginning. In the coming year we'll see many newer forms of interaction online. So here's to a less fruity and more fruitful online life. **■**

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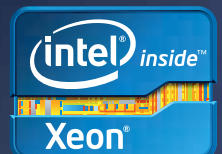
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Improved entertainment

Last Diwali, I was trying very hard to convince myself that it was worth it to shell out many thousands to buy a large-screen HDTV for the living room. I just had to visit an ecommerce web site or a large-format electronic store for the festive buying rush: lucrative deals aplenty, there was no dearth of brands fighting tooth-and-nail for your attention, and budget wasn't a problem. However, value for money was. I didn't buy an HDTV. Something other than the task of convincing my better half to rearrange the furniture held me back.

Low-end or high-end, smart or not, HDTVs are useless if you don't have quality HD content to view on them. Blu-ray discs are still too expensive and even though DTH operators have started adding HD channels into their repertoire, these are few and far between. Videocon's DTH service has the most HD channels compared to its competitors. How many HD channels? Just 22 (broadcasts in 1080i, not the superior 1080p), and they are all pretty expensive if you were to subscribe to them all. So not only do we have to be content with the limited pool of channels, whatever little is offered is charged at premium rates. A double whammy.

For the discerning customer who needs choices, cable digitisation couldn't come soon enough. I have no doubt that cable digitisation will proliferate beyond the metros this year, championing the cause of digital entertainment. Once people start seeing the difference between standard and high-definition content, it's only a matter of time before their demand for an improved entertainment experience rises. Cable digitisation alone won't contribute to a spike in HDTV sales though, not if they can't strike deals with broadcasters and content providers.

Cable digitisation offers benefits to everyone – the government, broadcasters, cable operators get increased revenue and the users get improved services, including HD content, high-speed broadband internet, video-on-demand and interactive television services. All of this, I hope, will finally become a reality this year – and not just in metros. And as the cable operators go on the offensive with the government's digitisation mandate, DTH operators will be hard-pressed to ramp up their services as well, and they will. Most

popular DTH operators in the country are controlled and operated by large telcos such as Airtel, Reliance, Tata, and Videocon, among others, and so is much of the bandwidth in the nation – and they have plenty of it. Although a resurgence of IPTV seems unlikely, innovative entertainment avenues may transpire – one can hope, at least. And this may really push the envelop of improved entertainment to a new level, at least to early-adopters and premium users.

Just think about it for a second. Selective bandwidth boosting techniques by ISPs (re: telcos) can further enhance the HD streaming experience this year – just like YouTube videos enjoy faster speeds than other web sites on some select Indian ISPs. If FDI has its way, and if foreign online entities are allowed to engage in online business in India later this year (and that's a big IF), it's hard not to imagine Hulu and Netflix offering their services soon enough. I know, that may be asking



Jayesh Shinde
Manager - Test Centre
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“Low-end or high-end, smart or not, HDTVs are useless if you don't have quality HD content to view on them”

for too much in one year, but I'm hopeful, and it's about time anyway.

TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India), the government body responsible to enforce digitisation in India, expects the nation to switch to digital entertainment by 2014. Seeing how that's now just one year away, I expect at least 30 to 50 per cent of cable digitisation to roll out by the end of this year. And if every stakeholder works towards meeting that deadline, an improved entertainment experience won't be a luxury that only a few can afford, but the norm.

I'm hopeful that this will all sort itself out over the course of this year, and come Diwali, make it a no-brainer for me to buy an expensive HDTV, quite simply because it will be indisputable value for money for offering a much-improved entertainment experience. **■**

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3G+ Wi-Fi Travel Router (with Built-in Battery)

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The year when smart assistants mature

Cellphone and tablet designs have sort of reached an apex point and going forward we are not going to see a drastic change in design (except maybe if we see bendable/foldable displays). The updated devices may otherwise have more iterative changes or more power-optimised innards. The differentiating factor for smart devices will not be the hardware itself, operating systems may be to an extent, but the major deal-breaker will be services offered on the platform. This year, I believe there will be a fierce battle between personal assistant services. Siri and Google Now (+ Google Voice Search) for now, but who knows which other disruption might happen in this space this year.

Siri, the voice assistant from Apple, was launched along with the iPhone 4S and has had its run for quite a while. It is still in the beta stage though, as it continues to be rolled out in different languages. Flawless speech recognition is still a tough nut to crack, and Siri definitely struggles with Indian accents. Recognising speech is just one part, what follows is processing the speech, putting it in context and giving you the results. It's a novelty factor, which is sure to dip. But Siri understands context better, whereas with Google's Voice Search you will need to frame questions in a particular way to get the response.

Google Now came out in the second half of 2012, and is present only on those handsets and tablets which have Android version 4.1 and up. That is a miniscule number when compared to Apple's Siri users. So one may think the advantage is with Siri. Well so far, in terms of numbers, yes.


When you look at how technologies have evolved over the years, we have always moved from pull to push. That is one major differentiating factor between Siri and Google Now. Siri is pull (you need to ask it a question to get a response) and Google Now is push (cards are pulled without you actively asking for them). There itself, Google has an edge.

Google Now takes into consideration your location, your search habits, your calendar, weather, time of the day and so on to deliver relevant information cards to you. You can get the cards even with Google's voice search, but that is no fun; getting a card telling you the quickest route to your home as you are leaving office, or a card telling you which movie is showing on your way home in your favourite theatre with road directions, is.

As phones get smarter and more powerful, the importance of smart assistants will increase. Siri or Google Now's success will depend in a large part on how they tackle this demand. No one wants to download a gazillion apps for his or her needs. If a smart assistant can do all the work that stand-alone apps can do, then it bypasses active human interaction thereby saving time. More apps = more distraction. Google Now has an advantage in that regard thanks to its Google backend which will allow Google Now to pull in data from Google apps such as Gmail, Maps, Zagat, YouTube and so on. Siri uses Wolfram Alpha for search related queries. Wolfram Alpha as well all know, is no match to Google's search servers when it comes to pop-culture, location-awareness or crowdsourcing. Looking at the way Google Now has increased the number of cards, there will be many more relevant cards added.

Consider a scenario where smart assistants are able to communicate with internet-enabled devices. The Internet of things, a blanket term for connected objects talking to each other over a common network, is the future. Think of a sensor on your body relaying your pulse rate information to your smart assistant, which then decides to send across a mail to your general physician or making a call to the doctor, in case of an emergency. Maybe your smart fridge will send a message to your smart assistant, and you are informed about milk running low at home. Nowhere are you actively checking for anything. With Google Glass expected to come out in the near future, you will have all your cards delivered to you without you even having to remove your phone from your pocket. The possibilities are endless.

Of course, these smart assistants will also raise a lot of questions about privacy but if you want to enjoy these benefits, you will have to compromise on that. No matter what you do, unless you are off the internet, there is a significant amount of your life that is already known by players such as Google, Apple or Facebook. So it's naive to think that these smart assistants will do more harm than good. You can always opt out.

One thing is inevitable: the real stars in keynote addresses will be these smart assistants and their development, as there is only so much you can improve upon hardware design. Maybe we can have something close to Jarvis (Iron Man's personal assistant)? Who knows? 



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“The differentiating factor for smart devices will not be the hardware itself, operating systems may be to an extent, but the major deal-breaker will be services offered on the platforms”

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Buzz

A month of announcements, some that were good and some that weren't all that great

**Update plan for Xperia**

Sony released details about which of its current range of Xperia smartphones will be updated to Android 4.1 Jelly Bean in 2013 <http://dgit.in/UNWXGR>

✉ I'm an Electronics and Communication Engineering graduate, having worked for an IT company for almost a year. Now I'm preparing for MBA. I've been a regular reader of your esteemed tech journal since the past two years.

I feel no library, be it in a school, college or office, is complete without Digit.

I depend a lot on hardware reviews by Digit to make my gadget-buying decisions.

I have two suggestions, rather requests, that I believe will be beneficial for many users like me:

1. A special Fast Track on Education will be highly appreciated. It would be useful to have guides to different competitive exams (both, for higher education such as MBA and off campus jobs like IBPS, IES, ICS, etc.) and free web resources related to them (maybe on the DVD).
2. Another improvement in Digit that I'd like to see is more space in forthcoming issues for software reviews, especially FOSS and mobile apps.
Keep up the good work!

Tiyas Bhaumik

📧 Thank you for your email and suggestions. We will certainly try our best to implement them.

Robert

✉ I was very happy to receive the December issue (The Final Issue?). When I went through it, I found the cover story interesting to read. In fact, it was amazing. I wish to be Digit's fan and regular reader till my dying days.

On another note, I was expecting you to provide the Digit calendar of 2013 along with the December issue.

Ajay Kumar.R

📧 Thank you for your mail. Unfortunately, escalating costs make it harder to provide things such as calendars. We figured you'd prefer the Encyclopedia Technica over a calendar any day :)

Robert

✉ Congratulations for bringing out the first in a series of Encyclopedia Technica. The time for bringing out the Fast Track to Cyber Crime is entirely justified. Digit has been serving its cherished goals by

Feedback for the December 2012 issue of Digit

presenting diverse topics year after year. And the very novel part is that you claim not to be a computer magazine but a "Technology Navigator".

I have a simple suggestion for you to consider. Kindly include a regular feature wherein various types of organisations including more of small businesses – such as hotels, transport operators, construction companies, laundries, etc. – could share their experiences of adopting technology to further their activities. It would make for interesting reading. Technology must reach the lowest rung of society and when that happens it would be motivating to a larger audience if Digit shared their stories.

Secondly, I request you to bring out a special issue on design software relating to various branches of engineering (I'm a Chartered Engineer) such as Civil, Architect, Electrical, etc.

Thanks and wish you and your tech savvy readers a Fabulous New Year 2013.

Sunil Biswal (Sunabeda, Orissa)

📧 We are glad to know that you liked the Encyclopedia Technica and the Fast Track to Cyber Crime. Our Smart Soho feature in the Tech@Work section does try and answer some of these very questions. We will consider having a design special sometime this year.

Nimish

✉ I fall short of words to explain how much I love Digit. I've been reading it since 2006 when I was a 13-year-old kid. I can live for months without talking to another human being thanks to my Digit Collection and can re-read a single Digit countless number of times. I read and finish a magazine right on the day I get it, and till a week no one sees me around (I'm underground lol!!!). I always learn something new each time I re-read it. I'm quite sure your logo has some kind of magic – whenever I see it, I'm full of happiness and I feel content and sheltered from any trouble or negativity. Digit has been with me during the most crucial and trying moments of a typical teenage life – be it girls, addictions such as smoking and drinking or fights among friends.

I haven't been able to renew my Digit subscription since September since I'm out of money. That is when I realised the importance of Digit in my life. Though I managed to come up with money to buy the November issue, I'm not really in a good financial condition. This mail might come across as useless but it's actually full of feelings and I should end the letter now or I'll burst into tears. Love you Digit. And thank you for being my best friend.

Azbar Siddiqui

THE ALL NEW PULSAR 200NS WITH THE WORLD'S FIRST TRIPLE SPARK ENGINE.

Our 4 valve Triple Spark Engine is truly revolutionary. And it delivers optimum performance at all speeds, resulting in greater power and better mileage. The creation of this engine led to a host of other fundamental changes in the new Pulsar. We made a perimeter frame to hold the engine. Brought in a radiator to keep it cool. Changed the suspension to Nitrox mono shocks.

And added Petal disc brakes to the front and rear.

The aggressive naked sports styling is also by design: designed to announce that the bike goes from 0 to 60kmph in just 3.6 secs. There are many other features too, like an underbelly exhaust and 6 speed gears. All of which ensure that the Pulsar continues to be India's No.1 sports bike.

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SSD prices continue to drop

Unlike HDD prices, SSD prices are plunging everywhere worldwide. Most places reported upto a 20 to 30 per cent drop in SSD prices.



Full scale Hobbit Lego Bag End

Lego builders have created a life-sized version of Bag End in honor of "The Hobbit", the movie. It was completed in 3,000 hours by using 2 million lego bricks

LETTER OF THE MONTH

✉ First of all, let me say that this is not a letter of positive feedback. You're the best technology mag in India and that speaks for itself. You also have hundreds of readers complimenting you, so I don't need to repeat what they've already said.

I'm writing in with some constructive feedback. After all, how else will you improve?

- Advertising is okay. It's needed to keep a magazine running, but in the December issue, there was a Dell ad which was 1 cm thick! I was surprised how you could allow such an ad in your magazine. It ruins the pleasure of reading when the ad doesn't even allow the reader to flip to the page he wants. Instead the ad acts as a permanent bookmark. Please disallow such ads.
- You recently failed to cover the most important technology development of the last six months. Windows 8! All there was were a few tips and tricks. Seriously? I expected you to do a big feature on it, if not make it the cover story. Please cover that ASAP.
- Mistakes abound in Digit these days. I think the magazine isn't being proof-read. To tell you what I mean, I'll list the errors:
 - The cover of the November issue mentioned *Resident Evil 6* but you reviewed *PES 2013* instead
 - In the same issue, the price for *Borderlands 2* was only given for PC. Why didn't you provide the XBOX 360 and PS3 prices?
 - Plus, you have had to do two corrigendums in two issues. Why?
- Please include a reader's section where readers can feature their blogs, websites, developments, etc. and review them. It will just take up two pages but will make the magazine more interactive.
- Supply more of Skoar! Several readers have asked this before but you haven't complied.



- Your website seems to have more advertisements per page than content. Please decrease the ads just a little bit.
- The relevance of the Digit articles seem to be going down. Don't get me wrong, they're well written but why include so many pages of Zero1 awards and the apocalypse when you could have covered so many other things more related to tech instead? Like Windows 8, for example.

8. This may be a personal request but I want more Fast Tracks than DVDs. After all, the free stuff and game demos you provide can easily be downloaded from the internet legally.

9. Include a tutorial and how to section on the most confusing things in tech.

Now let me say that Digit is not a bad magazine. Far from it! But the above feedback will make you even better! Wishing you luck on your crazy ride through the world of tech.

Abhishek Pisharody (Bangalore)

✉ Our sales team has no say in what we choose to write about, and we get no say in the ads carried. In fact we rarely interact with them at all. However, I will forward this to the sales manager. Innovations such as that Dell ad are meant to be seen, and be distracting and disrupting, like an ad on TV right when you reach the climax of a movie. Ads are necessary to keep costs down.

For point two, I hope this issue is what you wanted. Totally agree with point three, and we're working on that.

You can already send in submissions to editor@thinkdigit.com. We'll carry what we can. When possible we add in a SKOAR! booklet, otherwise it's a regular feature of the mag.

Your next three points are related to ads and Windows 8 which I've already answered, and a personal preference for FTs over DVDs. I'm not starting that debate again... For point 9: Tips & Tricks!

Robert

✉ Thank you for your mail. We're glad to have such an impact on you, and we hope you'll be able to afford to buy the magazine again soon.

When I was a reader (before joining here in 2003), I used to try and save ₹5 a day (₹5 x 20 = ₹100) by walking everywhere instead of using the bus or autos to afford my monthly dose of Digit. It's a question of choices really.

I am sure you'll find a way if it really means that much to you. Also remember that buying it online is usually cheaper, especially if you pre-book, so watch out for offers from Digit in your email.

Robert

(Update: Just before going to print we found out that Azhar's father gave him a renewed subscription as a birthday gift. Way to go Azhar's dad!)

✉ I like Digit, I love Digit, I admire Digit...to sum it up I'm a biggggggg fan of Digit.

I'd like to mention about the "Funniest Letters" in the November issue - it was fun reading them. I also liked the article in the Gender Bender section, but disagree with the content under "Bargaining power". We girls at least know the difference between purchasing curry leaves and the latest tablets. Please don't humiliate us.

I admire the editorials by Robert. Starting the magazine with those brilliant pieces is a great job. In the December issue, the Zero1 Awards were the best. The Fast Track to Cyber Crime was brilliant. I should make a special mention about September's Fast Track to Going Green; it was an appreciable attempt. A special thanks for the Encyclopedia Technica. I look forward to the next volume.

Lastly, the December issue will not be "The Final Issue", and I will keep on getting my Technology Navigator. If the world ends so be it and if it doesn't then, Happy New Year and Viva la Team Digit.

Azra Sami

✉ Just like you, most of our readers seem to have liked the idea, and we're only too happy it worked. It's good to know you liked our December Special Issue, the team worked really hard on it. Happy New Year and keep reading!

Jayesh

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MS to stop supporting Live Mesh

Come February 13th, Microsoft will end support for its Live Mesh Sync Software attempting to push people to Skydrive instead

**Xolo A800 available online**

Lava Xolo A800 is available online in India for ₹11,999. It's a dual-SIM Android ICS phone powered by a 1GHz processor.

The latest buzz from the technology universe

A month of announcements, some that were great, and some that weren't

Abhinav Lal

abhinav.lal@thinkdigit.com

It's been a busy month with several major launches and announcements being made across a variety of product categories: Valve's confirmation of a Steam Box in 2013, game publisher THQ announcing bankruptcy, Canon launching its entry level full-frame here and more.

Valve confirms Steam Box

Valve has confirmed that it will release a "Steam Box" video game console sometime in 2013. Speaking to Kotaku at the 2012 Video Game Awards, Gabe Newell confirmed that Valve is working on a living room-friendly PC that runs Steam. Newell says that reception



Steam Box prototype

for Steam's new, TV-oriented Big Picture mode has been "stronger than expected," and the company will now work to get Steam for Linux out of beta.

Beyond that, Gaben only gave us one other tidbit about

the Steam Box, stating that "our hardware will be a very controlled environment." In other words, the Steam Box will be a console, rather than some kind of PC that you can upgrade. Curiously, Newell also said that he expects other companies to sell living room PCs that will compete with next-gen consoles from Microsoft, Sony and Nintendo.

Valve in general, and Gabe in particular, seem to be on some kind of heroic mission to bring Steam to the mass market. Newell was one of the first critics of Windows 8, calling it "a catastrophe for everyone in the PC space." As far as we can tell, though, this hatred doesn't stem from the Metro interface; rather, Valve sees the Windows 8 Store as a direct threat to Steam. Valve is worried that the Windows Store will snuff out third-party digital distribution platforms.

What isn't clear, though, is how the Steam Box will actually combat the Windows Store. With Valve's focus on Steam for Linux, the current assumption is that the Steam Box will run Linux — but then the console won't be able to play more than a few dozen games. Valve is also working on a Linux port of its Source game engine, which will certainly help matters, but that isn't going to suddenly make *Skyrim* or *Mass Effect* compatible with Linux.

The other option, of course, is that the Steam Box will run

Windows 7. This would drive the cost of the console up, but it would mean that you could immediately play *Assassin's Creed III* on your TV, with your Valve gamepad.

Ultimately, though, the elephant in the room is the hardware itself. Newell very clearly tells Kotaku that the Steam Box will be a PC, rather than a custom piece of console hardware (such as the Xbox 360 or PS3). In all likelihood, this means the Steam Box will probably just be a small form factor (SFF) x86 PC — and as we know, high-powered SFFs are not cheap (\$600+). By pitching it as a living room PC with more capabilities than a conventional video game console, Valve has some leeway on the pricing — but not that much.

Canon EOS 6D launched in India

Canon has released the Canon EOS 6D, its lightest full-frame camera, into the Indian market. The camera is Canon's third full-frame variant, the first two being the Canon EOS 1Dx for the serious professional and the 5D Mark III designed to appease a larger audience.

The Canon EOS 6D features a magnesium and polycarbonate shell which sits on

an aluminium alloy chassis. Along with the 20 megapixel full-frame sensor, there is also the Digic 5+ image processor, which together allow the camera to range the ISO from ISO 100-25600 along with being able to shoot at 4.5 frames per second. There is also an 11-point auto focus system which provides a wider coverage of the frame, with the center focus point tuned to a sensitivity of -3EV, making the AF system in the 6D the most sensitive to low light.



Canon's lightest full frame EOS 6D

The 6D is also the first full frame camera to feature built-in Wi-Fi and GPS receiver that sits where the pop-up flash would. The downside to this is that the top plate of the 6D is plastic (in order to let the Wi-Fi and GPS signals go through), making the top not as solid as the rest of the body. The final change to the 6D comes with

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Kodak sold its patents

Kodak sold its digital imaging patents for \$525 million to Intellectual Ventures, RPX Corp. These patents were on the wishlist of many technology giants for a long time

Squeakee.com launched

Squeakee.com, an online and offline 'offers and specials' search engine has been launched in its beta version in India.

respect to video, where the 4 GB file size limit has been lifted, though the time limit on recording (29 minutes, 59 seconds) still remains. What's also changed is memory management, with Canon swapping out the standard Compact Flash slot for an SD Card slot.

The Canon EOS 6D is available for purchase at all Canon stores across the country for a price of ₹1,66,995 (kit with 24-105mm f/4 L IS lens).

THQ to file for bankruptcy

THQ, the video game developer and publisher, famous for games such as the *Saint's Row* series, *Homefront* and the *Warhammer 40K* series, has announced that it will be filing for bankruptcy. However, the American company also clarified that it will continue to publish games and will continue work on forthcoming games such as *Homefront 2*, *Metro: Last Light* and *Saints Row 4*.

A statement from THQ explains that it is filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy which entails restructuring of the company and its sale to Clearlake Capital Group, an investment company. With respect to the above games that are still in

the pipeline, and their developers, the THQ statement mentions, "The company remains confident in its existing pipeline of games. THQ maintains relationships with some of the top independent development studios around the globe. As part of the sale, the company is seeking approval to assume the contracts of these studios, and Clearlake will assume these contracts."

THQ was founded in 1989 and has been a recognised name in the video games industry for some time now. However, the last three years haven't been good to the company with its high-profile launches such as *Homefront* and *Darksiders 2* not raking up massive sales numbers. In recent weeks, however, THQ was the subject of some good news when it was revealed that its Humble Bundle compilation of seven games had generated around \$5 million in sales, a news that also helped their stock price jump up by 60 percent.

Office 2013 now available for businesses; users to get it next year

Craving for the next version of Office? Run a large busi-

ness that's got in the Microsoft Partner Program? Then you're in luck as you can grab a copy of Office 2013 right away through the right channels, but if you're a mere common mortal, you must wait till early next year to get your fix of the Windows 8-styled productivity suite.

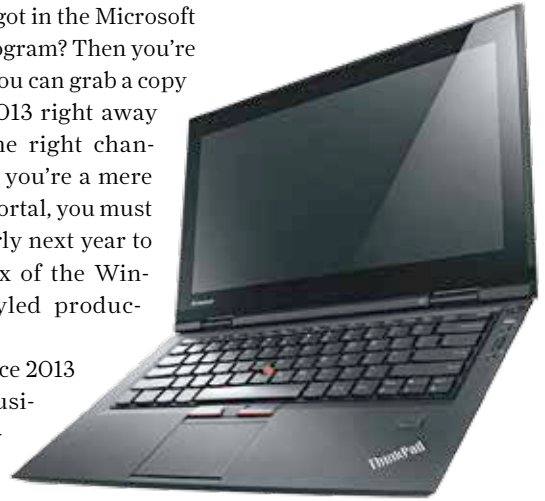
The Office 2013 suite for business is shipping with Exchange Server 2013, Lync Server 2013, SharePoint Server 2013, Project 2013 and Visio 2013, just so you can ensure that you've got everything you need to get things working as smoothly as possible at your workplace.

As far as when the consumers can get their hands on the final version of Office 2013, all we know is that it will come out sometime in the first quarter of 2013, with rumours suggesting the date will be somewhere in the last few days of January.

Along with an extensive visual overhaul, the new version of Office is now optimised for several kinds of input such as keyboard, touch and stylus. This would allow Microsoft to extend the reach of the traditional desktop productivity suite to a host of devices such as phones, tablets and even all-touch based PCs. The Microsoft Surface RT tablet ships with Office RT built-in.

ThinkPad's milestone

Last year marked the 20th anniversary of the iconic ThinkPad laptop brand, first introduced by IBM and now owned by Lenovo. Much adored by notebook enthusiasts around



the globe, the ThinkPad range of laptops from Lenovo are known for their rugged build quality and thoughtful design and customers swear by it.

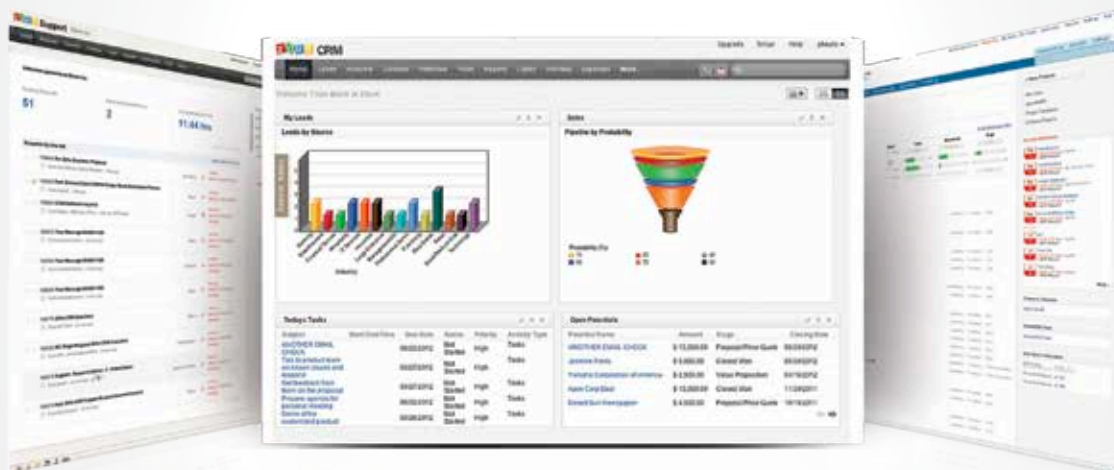
The very first ThinkPad ever built and conceived by IBM back in 1991 was inspired by a Japanese Bento-Bako Box. The shock-absorbing feet found on the ThinkPad notebooks have been inspired by cat's feet. Reason being cat's feet provide a two-way shock absorption. An owl's feather structure inspired the tips of the blade of the internal fan of ThinkPad notebooks which results in quieter and cooler notebooks. We won't recount the multitude of awards ThinkPads have won in the past two decades, but would highlight two in particular: a ThinkPad has been on display in the Museum of Modern Arts collection in New York since 1995 and it's also claimed to be the only laptop preferred by NASA for their space missions.

Continuing in that trend and heritage, Lenovo launched the ThinkPad X1 Carbon late last year to commemorate ThinkPad's milestone, and the company's first business ultrabook with a carbon-fibre screen lid. We have it reviewed in this issue, just flip to page 109.



The THQ Humble Bundle had games selling at insane discounts

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Mobile Watch

The crown sitting tight on Nokia's head was seized by Samsung last year, Sony is on no.3 now and more smartphones-related news covered

App Watch

A lot happened in the app-world last month and we round up the 10 apps from iOS and Android that you must try

Security alerts, IPv6 to fight cyber crime and more...

There was a lot that happened on the security front: DRDO launching an Indian OS; Airtel announcing emergency alert service, Symantec's new secure cloud storage

While no major hacks occurred in December, a

lot of new security services were launched. Some stats such as the total number of Indian websites hacked from January to October 2012, were released.

India also took various steps to ensure that 2013 sees its security frontiers better protected, deploying IPv6 and starting development on a new independent OS.

Bharti Airtel introduces emergency alert service

Bharti Airtel has introduced a 24 X 7 emergency alert service for its customers. The service enables Airtel customers to send an alert with their geographic location to their 10 contacts in an emergency situation.

"During an emergency, Airtel mobile customers can now send an alert with their geographic location to their closest 10 loved ones simultaneously with just a call, facilitating an access to easy and quick help," Airtel says in a statement.

Airtel's Emergency Alert Service is available for Rs. 30 with a validity of 30 days. Users can send the alert even if they don't have minimum balance in their account. To send the alert via SMS, users need to type HELP in the message box and send it to 55100, which will be then sent to all 10 contacts. To send the alert via call, users

need to call at 55100 and the registered contacts will get the voice alerts with location details of the customer.

Airtel hopes its new emergency alert service will see adoption by customers from all segments including, working women, senior citizens, teenagers and migrant workers. Airtel says the service could be really helpful in staying connected with their friends and families in case of natural calamities or disasters such as fire and accidents. According to Airtel, the service will ensure a user can seek help round the clock.

Indigenous OS to ramp up cybersecurity

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is working on an indigenous operating system in a bid to secure the country's cyber network. According to DRDO director-general V K Saraswat, the Indian OS will be ready in couple of years. Saraswat further revealed that about 150 engineers have been working on the OS for the last one and half years.

India mainly depends on imported OSes based on Windows and Linux, which may have security risks, he noted. "To secure our cyber network, our own OS for computers is highly essential," Saraswat said adding the cyber criminals were on the loose, and cyber and network security have become an area of concern.



"The system will ensure that we are independent of what's happening outside and ensure the safety of our own networks," he said. He also stressed the need for indigenous manufacturing of good hardware.

Indian government to deploy IPv6 to combat cybercrime

In a significant step towards fighting cybercrime, the Indian government has stepped up the process of allocation of the newest IP addresses, IPv6. But it's not just the allocation of the new addresses, but also the localisation of the process that's going to further add efficiency to the whole process.

Earlier, allocation of IPv6 was handled by an Australian internet-registrar, Asia Pacific Network Information Center, who did not share their database freely and in a timely fashion in the event of a cybercrime.

However, the government has set up Indian Registry for Internet Names & Numbers (IRINN), a division of the National Internet Exchange

of India (NIXI). "It will now be easier to detect cybercrime as the database of registered internet addresses can be monitored real-time by security agencies," said a top official in the department of electronics & information technology.

The localisation of IPv6 registry has also been subsidized heavily by the government, with an address block costing only ₹21,999 as against the earlier AU\$1180 (roughly ₹68,440). NIXI hopes that a much cheaper price point will help push the adoption of the new IP system much faster.

The current IP address system, IPv4 only allows roughly 4 billion addresses, a number that was exhausted on February 3, 2011. What this has done is that it has allowed the allocation of one address to multiple users, making it very difficult to track the source of an attack. The address book of the IPv6 runs well into trillions, so each device will eventually have a unique IP address, making it very easy to track the source down.

More than 14,000 Indian sites hacked: CERT-In

Cybercriminals have gone on a rampage. According to data revealed by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), more than 14,000 websites were hacked from January to October 2012, a sharp increase of 57 percent from 2009.

Web Watch

Redesigns, future trends and a peek at technology standards that will enable these transformations



Facebook releases Poke

The social networking giant has released a new app called Poke, which enables sending messages, photos and videos which expire in seconds after being sent

Security Watch

The CERT-In data says in 2009 the number of attacks was 9,180, it rose to 14,232 in 2011 and in the first 10 months of this year itself has surpassed the 14,300-mark, 14,392 to be precise.

The CERT-In figures came days after Minister of State for Communications and IT Milind Deora revealed in the Parliament that about 294 websites of various government departments and ministries were attacked by hackers during the period between January-October 2012.

During May-June, 2012, Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks were launched against a number of government websites by various hacker groups.

Symantec Norton Zone beta

Security vendor Symantec finally took the wraps off a secret project we weren't allowed to report from June's Next@Norton event. A secure file-sharing service that takes Dropbox head-on, Symantec's Norton Zone allows users to safely access, sync and share content on several devices through the cloud.

Norton Zone from Symantec lets you share and sync photos, videos and document files from any Windows PC, Apple iMac or MacBook, Android and iOS device. At the beta launch of the file-sharing service, Symantec claimed that Norton Zone protects all files during and after

transfer to its cloud servers through an SSL connection to ensure your shared files remain safe all the time.

Apart from merely letting you share content securely across devices (through the Internet), Norton Zone offers some interesting features. Norton Zone users' shared files are also backed up remotely on Symantec's servers to always have a copy of the file (which can be recovered at any time).

All the files shared through a Norton Zone account are scanned for viruses and malware through its own antivirus engine, claims Symantec.

Symantec also claims that Norton Zone lets you share links of your photos and videos

on Facebook - and disable it any time. Norton Zone users can also control how long or how many times a shared file can be accessed via a secure link. Norton Zone also allows files to be shared between its users, and ensures that files worked on collaboratively are kept up-to-date in all these user accounts, across all devices. The free beta version of Norton Zone keeps track of all file versions for a span of 90 days.

Norton Zone is accessible as a free, limited public beta secure file-sharing service by visiting www.nortonzone.com and registering for a free account with 5GB of storage. The fully featured version of Norton Zone is slated for sometime this year. **d**

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Yuga or Xperia Z?

Sony's next flagship phone – the 5-inch C660X Xperia Yuga – is rumoured to get a more market-friendly name: Xperia Z

Exynos exploit to be fixed

Samsung has confirmed a reported vulnerability in the Exynos kernel code, pointed out that legit apps have no risk and promised to fix it soon

Phone company rankings and new global announcements...

The crown that was sitting tightly on Nokia's head was usurped by Samsung last year and Sony is now firmly placed in third spot... and other stories, of course

For the first time for quite a few months, the Indian mobile consumer has to wait for globally available products. Numerous top-of-the-line devices in the recent past have made their way to Indian shores just days, or weeks after their global launch.

This is not the case for the much-awaited LG Nexus 4 however, or Nokia's Lumia series of Windows Phone 8 devices. Of course, that doesn't mean the Indian market is not near saturated with capable devices across price points.

However, the more discerning consumer however, always waits on his purchase, until he's certain the device in consideration is truly future-proof, and not to be outdone (at least in that price range) almost immediately by another device.

Globally, the anticipation we've been describing in months past has finally died out, but these are interesting times, and by the end of Q1 2012 we'll start seeing smartphone platform adoption numbers which could show us if the smartphone market is still a one horse race, or if WP8 and iOS 6 are showing promising strides in the race of catch-up.

Stumbling RIM is certainly hoping that its BlackBerry 10 OS-based devices (expected in Q1 2013) will manage to gain them a new foothold, and quite a few consumers are expectant, at least in India. BBIO OS seems promising so far, and leaks of new devices such as the London

and Nevada are making their way online, with both full-touch and touch-and-type QWERTY devices rumoured.

Samsung becomes 2012's top mobile manufacturer

With Nokia struggling to cope with the competition, Samsung has emerged as the top phone maker (feature and smartphone) of 2012 – this is the first time since 1998 that Nokia has changed its position – according to new data from IHS iSuppli.

The report finds that Samsung accounted for about 29 percent of global mobile phone shipments, up from 21 percent in 2011 when it had grabbed the no. 2 spot. Nokia, in the meanwhile, has seen its shares dropping from 30 percent to 24 this year.



Samsung Galaxy Grand

According to Wayne Lam, senior analyst for wireless communications at IHS, smartphones have emerged as the fastest-growing segment market as they account almost half of all wireless handset shipments in 2012.

IHS iSuppli points out that Samsung has released a lot of phones in a short span of time, launching dozens of new models each year, which range from high-end to budget devices. Nokia, the research firm notes, has only been "mired" in switching over its smartphones to Windows OS. Sales of Nokia's Symbian-based phones have gone down.

Sony becomes third-largest smartphone manufacturer

In the meanwhile, Sony is now comfortably in the third spot in the smartphone sales rankings. This has been established in the latest research from IDC, which states that in Q3'12, Sony holds a 4.8 per cent market share in the global smartphone market. This puts it in third place, behind Samsung and Apple.

Nokia's quarter on quarter market share dropped from 13.6 per cent to 3.4 per cent, while HTC dropped from 10.3 per cent to 4.7 per cent. RIM's went from 9.6 per cent to 4.2 per cent. For the top two, Samsung saw an increase from 22.7 percent to 31.3 per cent, while Apple improved from 13.8 per cent to 14.6 per cent.

Clearly, Sony's rise is partly because of the interesting Android phones it made this

year, and partly because of the decline of Nokia and HTC. From the figures mentioned earlier, Sony's market share actually fell slightly, but Nokia's and HTC's fell more.

LG Optimus L-series crosses 10 million sales mark

These are good times for LG's smartphone division. Its top-of-the-line Nexus 4 Android smartphone is the phone to buy, currently, and its close cousin – the Optimus G – remains equally coveted. And while LG's premium smartphones are in heavy demand, the company's highlighting the success of its Optimus L-series smartphones, which LG claims has crossed the 10 million mark in global sales.



Sony Xperia E

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Facebook Poke

Facebook announced a new app called Poke which is a message and photo-sharing app similar Snapchat, where the sent post self destructs after the set time



Chrome 25 update

Google announced that Chrome 25 will disable silent extensions installation in Windows by default



LG Optimus L-Series Crosses 10 Million Sales Mark

Apart from selling in 50 markets worldwide and sporting distinctive design elements, LG drew attention to some of the reasons why the Optimus L-series smartphone has been this successful. Apart from offering a range of display sizes, it has proprietary interface features like QuickMemo and QTranslator – the former lets you capture and share a note with other users of the app, while the latter lets you translate words and sentences into 64 foreign languages.

Motorola Mobility shuts down India operations

Motorola Mobility India has announced it is shutting down its India operations. This is a part of Motorola's global down-sizing process. Motorola had made it clear back in August 2012 that it will be streamlining its global operations. The company had said that they will reduce workforce by 30 per cent and shut down a third of its offices globally. The roadmap also included exiting all unprofitable markets, focus on quality and not quantity of phones they sell and exit the budget Android segment completely.

Google acquired Motorola Mobility for \$12.5 billion in May this year, on the back of

heavy losses last year. Motorola Mobility is totally independent from Motorola Solutions. Incidentally, Motorola's plan that it will aggressively compete with the rival Android manufacturers for phones, including the Nexus range, is not turning out as well as it had hoped.

One of the implications of this move would be that we would not see any new handsets from Motorola in the near future, for starters. Whatever handsets are available in the markets will be sold, but no fresh stocks will replenish the shelves. Service centres will remain open "well into the future" according to Motorola.

The company also indefinitely suspended operations at its assembly unit in Chennai. The move will affect 76 employees at the facility. Motorola Mobility Corporate Communications (Asia Pacific) Director William Moss is quoted as saying, "We are now fulfilling customer orders directly from factories, and we have no current or forecast production requirements that would require the continued use of our Chennai facility."

New Global Announcements

Globally, HTC has announced that its mid-range Android

smartphone, the One SV, will be made available in the UK soon. No global pricing or availability of the smartphone was announced however. The ICS-based HTC One SV has a 4.3-inch Super LCD2 capacitive touchscreen with a resolution of 480 x 800 pixels, and Gorilla Glass 2 protection. It has a dual-core 1.2 GHz Snapdragon S4 processor and 1 GB of RAM, coupled with 8 GB built-in storage, a microSD card slot, and 25 GB via Dropbox. It comes with Beats Audio, and supports 4G LTE with HSDPA speeds up to 42 Mbps. It sports



HTC One SV


a 5 MP rear camera 1080p HD video recording, and a front-facing 1.6 MP camera.

Samsung has also announced a new smartphone, the Galaxy Grand, which boasts of dual-SIM capabilities and runs on Android 4.1.2 Jelly Bean. No launch date or price of the smartphone has been revealed. In terms of other specifications under the hood, the Galaxy Grand boasts of a dual-core 1.2 GHz processor and 1 GB of RAM. The rear houses an 8 MP snapper with the ability to shoot HD video and the front has a 2 MP video-calling camera. It

also sports 8 GB built-in storage expandable up to 64 GB via a microSD card. It has a 5-inch display, with a disappointing 480x800 pixel resolution.

Nokia also announced a low cost Windows Phone 7.8 device, the Nokia Lumia 505, which will launch on Mexico's Telcel network in the upcoming weeks. There is no word on the pricing of the smartphone or its availability in any other part of the world. The Lumia 505 bears a 3.7-inch AMOLED display, a single-core 800MHz CPU along with 256MB of RAM. It has an 8 MP rear camera. Built-in storage is just 4 GB with no microSD card slot. Nokia and Microsoft will however provide 7 GB of free SkyDrive storage with the Lumia 505.

Nokia also announced the Lumia 620, currently retailing for \$249 in the U.S., without a contract. A WP8 handset with a 3.8-inch ClearBlack WVGA display, the Lumia 620 is powered by a 1 GHz dual-core processor and 512 MB of RAM. It sports a 5 MP camera, a front-facing VGA camera, a microSD card slot, as well as a 1,300 mAh battery rated to deliver a standby time of 330 hours and talktime of 14.6 hours. No Indian pricing or release date has been mentioned.

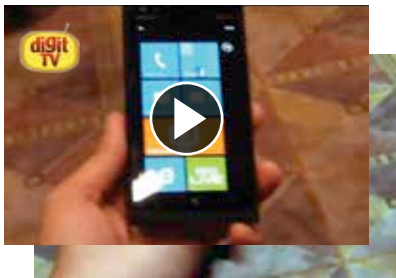
Sony has also added a smartphone to its budget line up, the Xperia E, with Android 4.1 Jelly Bean straight out of the box. The Xperia E is expected to hit store shelves early next year. It has a 3.5-inch HVGA display with a resolution of 480 x 320 pixels, coupled with a 1 GHz single-core Snapdragon S1 processor, 512 MB of RAM and 4 GB built-in storage. It has a 3.2 MP camera, a 1500mAh battery. It is lightweight, at 115 grams, and measures 11mm in thickness. Sony has also announced a dual-SIM version of the Xperia E, called the Xperia E dual. 



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ANDROID PHONES



TABLETS



SMART PHONES

MORE CATEGORIES

SLICK USER INTERFACE

The new site sports an intuitive user interface by incorporating multi-level navigation panes, search filters and tools like product finders to ensure a smooth user experience.

Hardware requirements of Windows 8 tablets revealed

INCLUDED STORES:

- Windows 7-based Dell Latitude ST tablet launched...
- Dell Latitude ST years again, so a 10-inch...
- Microsoft to announce chip and device-maker...

TABLET DataWind's Aakash tablet sold out; UbiSlate 7 up for pre-orders

TABLET Aakash tablet to arrive in the market by January 2012

Tablets

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Latest Stores | Top 10 Tablets

PRODUCT FINDER

PRICE

- Rs. 20,000 - Rs. 40,000
- Rs. 25,000 - Rs. 30,000
- Rs. 30,000 - Rs. 35,000
- Rs. 35,000 - Rs. 40,000
- Rs. 40,000 - Rs. 45,000
- Under Rs. 10,000

MANUFACTURER

- All
- Apple
- Lenovo
- Microsoft
- Sony

FIND

FRESH DESIGN

Sony Cyber-shot DSC-HX100V



Price: ₹23000

Digit Rating: Good

★★★★ 3.5/5

Pros

- Video performance
- Performance in low-light
- Great in macro mode
- Optics are excellent

Cons

- Lack of hot shoe
- Noise Reduction algorithms too aggressive

Features: ★★★★★

Performance: ★★★★★

Value: ★★★★★

Design: ★★★★★

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Which is the best Tablet OS today?

Poll Results

- Google Android OS: 61%
- Apple iOS: 34%
- Microsoft OS: 5%



New Olympus camera

Olympus will release a new type of camera in 2013 which will support both Four Thirds and Micro Thirds types of lenses



eBuddy XMS

XMS is the latest real-time messaging app from eBuddy available on iOS, Android, Blackberry, Nokia s40, Nokia s60 and Windows Phone 7 devices

App news and must-try apps

Lots happened in the app-world last month. We also round up 10 wonderful iOS and Android apps

Abhinav Lal

abhinav.lal@thinkdigit.com

Important App News Google Maps for iOS 6 – an instant hit



Google proudly announced that its Maps app for iOS was downloaded over 10 million times in less than 48 hours after becoming available on Apple's App store.

Apple iTunes store goes live in India



Just days after the rollout of the latest version of iTunes, the iTunes 11, Apple has made the iTunes store live in a few more countries, including India.

Google updates Drive app for Android and iOS



Updates include support for creating, editing and collaborating on spreadsheet; managing upload progress and more.

Google Play Books app gets updated

Google has added such features as Read Aloud, and new gesture



have been added.

controls. Recommendations for books, as well as text editing features

YouTube for iOS updated



The new app adds support for the iPhone 5's display and ability to stream videos over AirPlay to the Apple TV, as well as the specific iPad interface features.

Instagram changes TOS

Instagram has changed its terms of service after the recent outrage regarding the terms of service, which hinted at the sale of user created content.

WhatsApp denies Facebook acquisition rumours



Popular messaging app, WhatsApp has denied rumours that it is in talks with social networking giant, Facebook for a buyout.

BBM Video arriving with BlackBerry 10?

Fresh leaks point to the possible inclusion of video



chats in BlackBerry Messenger with BB10.

Snapseed released for Android



The much welcome free addition to the Google Play Store was accompanied by the iOS version becoming free-of-charge.

Skype app for iOS gets updated, finally



Skype for iOS will now allow users to merge their Microsoft accounts with the contact list of their VoIP account.

Adobe updates Photoshop, Illustrator CS6



The apps have been updated for Retina Display compatibility; this new update from Adobe should bring joy to artists and photographers.

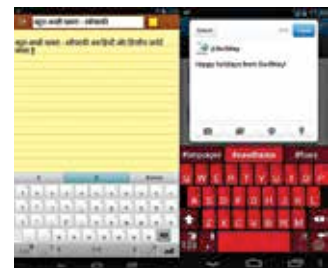
App-controlled toilets, anyone?

A Japanese firm called Lixil has developed a smart toilet that



users can control via a smart-phone app, named 'My Satis.'

SwiftKey v3.1 goes Desi



The new update brings Hindi, Hinglish and split-keyboard support to the popular Android keyboard app.

FB Messenger for Android replaces WhatsApp



Facebook has released an update for FB Messenger allowing users to sign in with their phone number, and chat with friends in their contacts list.

Facebook updates Android app; ditches HTML5

Possibly the only change with these new apps is the switchover

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Google X-Phone?

If rumours are true then Google is reportedly working on a powerful phone called the "X" phone with Motorola. More about it here: <http://dgit.in/WDgRJT>



1 Billion YouTube views

South Korean singer PSY's massive hit - Gangnam Style reached 1 billion views on Youtube making it the first video to hit that mark



from HTML5 to hybrid native code, supposedly making it twice as fast and smooth.

Facebook updates iOS app



The new app loads optimized newsfeeds, for shorter loading times, apart from a stability fix for Timeline for iOS, and the ability to choose an album to upload photos to.

Ten Android Apps You Must Try

1. Grand Theft Auto



Vice City

Welcome back to Vice City. Welcome back to the 1980s. Welcome back to the awarding winning open-world game from Rockstar Games.

2. Modern Combat 4



Zero Hour - The #1 Action FPS game is back on smartphone with a new chapter to push the boundaries of mobile gaming even further.

3. Splice



The award-winning microbial puzzle is an experimental and artistic puzzler, immersing users in a microbial world where they can start splicing!

4. Pocket



Called the best way to save and view articles, videos and more, it

automatically syncs to your phone, tablet or PC so you can view it even without an internet connection.

5. TED



TED's official app presents talks from some of the world's most fascinating mavericks, gurus and legends.

6. SketchBook Pro



Makes drawing on paper seem old-fashioned. Perfect for a quick, casual sketch or a professional artist.

7. FPse for Android



Fastest and most compatible POne emulator for handheld devices (also known as PSX or Playstation 1.)

8. XDA Premium



Premium version of the official XDA-Developers Android app lets you access the world-famous XDA forums, add new threads, manage your PMs, and more.

9. Moon+ Reader Pro



An e-book reader with fantastic reading experience, it offers powerful controls & full functions, and supports all popular formats.

10. Glympse

Safely share your location in real-time via email,



SMS, Facebook, or Twitter. It works anywhere you have GPS and a data connection.

Ten iOS Apps You Must Try

1. Google Maps



If you haven't already downloaded it, this is a gentle reminder to start finding your way again, for free.

2. Walking Dead: The Game



Based on Robert Kirkman's award-winning comic book series: The Walking Dead allows gamers to experience the true horror of the zombie apocalypse.

3. Kick the Boss 2



The Boss is back and ready to make your life a living hell. But you're not the same good guy taking order anymore.

4. Fun Run



This multi-player racer, an online real-time multiplayer race with up to four players simultaneously, playing with friends or random players from around the world!



5. Nike+ Running
The most popular running app on iTunes

just got even more motivating. Now you can add friends and see how you stack up.

6. Zinio



The ultimate app for people who love magazines, with access to thousands of titles, tens of thousands of issues and millions of pages of the world's best digital content.

7. Tango Text, Voice, and Video



With Tango, you can make free video calls, free voice calls, send free text messages and send free video messages and pictures.

8. Gangnam DanceBooth



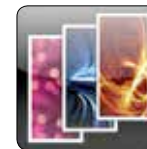
Love Gangnam style? Want to dance like Psy? Want to see your family, friends, or colleagues dance the hilarious Gangnam Style dance? Download this app.


9. Find My iPhone



If you misplace your iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, or Mac, the Find My iPhone app will let you use another iOS device to find it and protect your data.

10. Backgrounds



Over 10,000+ backgrounds from 100+ artists and an inhouse design team, with new backgrounds added daily, including hi-resolution Retina backgrounds. 

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2012 had been a great year for Zebronics. All the hardwork invested by the channel partners has lead to impressive growth & success. It is your support that helped us to stack up awards & honors, and we truly appreciate it.

As 2013 dawns, we anticipate your support, and together scaling up the growth ladder.



Most Visible
Indian Brand
Digital Terminal
2011



Best Cabinets &
Fastest Growing
Computer
Accessories &
Peripherals Brand
Cell IT - 2012



Best
TV Tuner Card
Infriend South
ICT - 2011



Most
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Editor's Choice
NCN - 2011



Channel's Favorite
Cabinet Brand
Cell IT - 2012



Best Designed
Cabinets
Digital Terminal
2010



Best Stylish Indian
Peripherals Brand
NCN - 2010



Outstanding
Partnership
of the Year
MSI - 2011



Best Casing
Editor's Choice
NCN - 2010



Best Speakers
&
Best Headphones
Infriend - 2012



Best MP3 Player
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2010



Best
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Infriend South
ICT - 2011



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Brand in Laptop
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2011



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Always Ahead

2.3 percent in 48 days

Web traffic coming from Windows 8 based systems now constitutes 2.3 percent of the total 48 days after its release

**YouTube native player**

Native player API of YouTube for Android was finally launched by YouTube. This will enable in-app video playback on Android

The latest from the web, straight to print

Redesigns, future trends and a peek at technology standards that will enable these transformations

A story of redesigns

Over the past month or so we've seen a lot of redesigns on the web. And we're not just talking about small feature rollouts by the biggies like Facebook and Twitter. We're talking about websites that are likely to permanent fixtures on your bookmark favourites, completely transforming themselves with the current times. Sites like Mashable, Pandodaily, Readwriteweb, The Next Web, Macworld now look nothing like they used to. So what do these re-designs entail? The Pinterest design philosophy seems to be catching on quite a bit. Most of these websites now look like popular news reader apps such as Pulse, FlipBoard - a mosaic of boxy stories with large pictures.

The web, it seems, is increasingly going towards a magazine style layout. These columns often have independent scroll capabilities in some cases and much of this layout is obviously catering to newer devices accessing the web; you got it - tablets in portrait mode. It's all touch, zoom, and swipe friendly.

What to look forward to on the web in 2013?

The web is all about access and ease of use. Keeping this in mind these are the top four things that you can look forward to in the coming year.

Responsive web design: With the multitude of portable devices available in the market,

responsive wordpress themes already and 2013 will see a lot more of this.

Better Typography: As the web tries to mimic magazine layouts, selection of fonts will be of great importance.

Floating menus: There's no escaping vertical scrolling especially when it comes to smaller screens. To make life easier popular web design will incorporate floating menus so that you needn't go all the way to the top to navigate elsewhere.

Two-way scrolling: While vertical scrolling is here to stay, we'll see a lot of horizontal scrolling for some sections of a web page. For e.g. between text there may be an image gallery which you'll be able to swipe and look through by scrolling horizontally.

More sharing: Who doesn't like to share (read:show off) and the web in 2013 will be geared towards more of it.

And what will enable the seamless deployment of these design philosophies in the coming year? Our next story is encouraging news on this front. Read on...

making improvements based on feedback, but that makes it difficult to have a stable and reliable platform. Different browsers can claim to support HTML5, but target is continually moving, and each browser supports a different range of features, none support all. Part of this problem can be solved by techniques such as feature detection, and progressive enhancement, but it is still nice to have a baseline that can be expected.

That seems like exactly what the W3C is doing. They have taken HTML features that have become de facto standards, pulled them in under the banner of HTML5, and published that as a stable definition. With a stable definition for HTML5, it is possible to say definitively that a browser supports HTML5.

What the W3C has done now is to publish the "complete definition" of HTML5 and Canvas 2D, which includes a wide number of features already in use. W3C will now focus on interoperability of these features across browser and on testing, a stage it calls "Candidate Recommendation". What comes at the end is a W3C Recommendation, which is their equivalent of a standard.

The W3C has also announced the next iteration of web standards, with the release of the first draft of HTML5.1 and Canvas 2D, Level 2. The W3C community has set sights on features such as "responsive images, and adaptive streaming." (More: <http://dvwix.in/ZPCp6L>)



Responsive web design can handle different screen sizes

Panels - a throwback to the old web - are back in style. Most have three panels dividing up the content, but it would be unfair to call them panels because they don't have those ugly scroll bars from yesteryears, they're more like columns; magazine columns.

websites are now increasingly adapting themselves to different screen sizes. To see it in action visit www.polygon.com and re-size the window randomly. Watch as the website intelligently adapts its layout to match the changing window size. There are many

W3C Completes HTML5 Draft

A while back the W3C decided to maintain its own version of HTML5 with the goal of producing a stable definition that can be implemented in a compatible manner.

The current development model for HTML is to continue

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Digit @ Foss.in

We go undercover at India's largest free and open source conference and bring you the latest buzz

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Aakash: The full story

Will India's hope at bridging the digital divide succeed? We speak to the CEO of DataWind to find out the answer...

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Aurumania bike

For all you cyclists out there, how about this as a proposition? The good people over at Aurumania have built a bicycle so unique, owning it will put you on an ultra exclusive list. A custom made bike with 24-carat gold gleaming all over its metal body, and 600 odd Swarovski crystals gleaming brightly, this golden bicycle is one that you'll have to guard with your life, in all probability. Yeah, it isn't one to be left chained outside the front door, that's for sure. Price: US \$100,000 (₹55,06,000)

Expensive travel toys, for men, not for boys

Victorinox Presentation Master

This is one Swiss Army Knife and USB drive combo that is perfect for James Bond. However, if you aren't the famed MI6 agent, but a salesman who travels a lot and cares an awful lot about your data's security, you can think of buying the Victorinox Presentation Master, too. Apart from a small knife, nail file and scissors, this Victorinox tool comes with a 32 GB USB drive that enjoys AES 256-bit hardware and software encryption. It also supports plug-n-play Powerpoint presentation slides. If your presentation skills don't blow away your audience, may be the act of plugging in a Swiss army knife into a PC or projector port will. Price: US \$300 (₹16,518)



Sony's Xperia plan

Find out Xperia smartphones will be updated to Android 4.1 Jelly Bean in 2013
<http://dgit.in/UNWXGR>



Pudding Monsters out

Zeptolabs, the makers of Cut-The-Rope have unveiled a new game called "Pudding Monsters" for iOS and Android

Drool maal



Sony HMZ-T1

Don't you just hate getting subjected to substandard movie screens on planes while jet-setting across the world? With the Sony HMZ-T1, you don't face that problem. You see, the HMZ-T1 is a unique head gear – it's a wearable HDTV solution that not only has 2D and 3D viewing capability, but it comes fully equipped with surround sound audio as well. Get ready to enjoy a 150-inch TV screen experience... and look like Geordi La Forge from Star Trek. Price: US \$800 (₹44,048)

Sennheiser IE 800

If you're looking for a pair of earphones to give you uncompromised audio quality while you make the most of a long, seat-tied plane journey, look no further than the Sennheiser IE 800. Sennheiser has thrown a lot of praise towards these beauties which claim to provide a frequency response of 5 to 46,500 Hz. Placed in a ceramic housing, the IE 800's extra wide band 7 mm driver helps it provide exquisite audio quality. All things considered, this pair of earphones are a real gem. But they come at a hefty premium! Price: US \$999 (₹55,005)



Leica S2-P

While you're out and about, how about an exclusive camera to freeze frames? An old favourite and still available for anyone rich enough to splurge, the Leica S2-P is one camera that is built specifically for the outdoors. Apart from sporting such riches as a 37.5 MP CCD sensor (larger than full frame), 6 micron pixel pitch, autofocus lenses and a dual-shutter system, the Leica S2 also has a fully waterproof body and lens assembly. So if you wanna dive into a pool and shoot underwater flora and fauna, by all means do so! A DSLR par excellence this one. Price: US \$28,000 (₹15,41,680)



Samsung to reveal huge TV

Reports suggest that Samsung may be planning to reveal a monstrous 110-inch Ultra HD TV at CES 2013



Dropbox acquisition

Dropbox has acquired Audio-Galaxy, an online music-streaming service suggesting that a cloud music service may be on the cards.

Towards a FOSW

Abhishek Choudhary
readersletters@thinkdigit.com

For those of you who didn't understand the title, well, it's time that you did. You might have heard the acronym FOSS doing the rounds. If not, for the benefit of the uninitiated – it is supposed to mean Free and Open Source Software. Which is what we were thinking about, when we thought that we should be moving towards a Free and Open Source World. Having been one of the most outspoken supporters of the movement from the very beginning, we thought now was a good time to renew our vows. And what better way than to march up to what is quite possibly India's foremost meetup for the geek crowd – foss.in. What follows is not a step-by-step review of the event but rather our experience at the end of the three days. For a day-by-day account read our post on thinkdigit here: <http://dgigit.in/fossind>

First Impressions

If we were asked to put it in a word, that word would be 'promising'. Everything seemed well organised and ready to take on the anticipated army of geeks to turn up. And turn up they did, because inaugural address was jam-packed. The organisation was top notch, and you could see everything being handled hands-on by the organizers. What was out in plain sight was that a group of highly driven people had taken it upon themselves to hold a high-quality meet for some of the foremost minds in the space of open-source software. From Mozilla to Wikipedia to VLC

to Red Hat, KDE, Gnome and many more, every top-notch open-source association that you can link had good representation.

The who and what

As was repeatedly pointed out by Mr. Chitnis during his talks, the real soul of the event was with the people who really take its philosophy to heart, and 'create' something truly amazing in that very arena. The stage had been set, and all the

Last month, Foss.in, India's largest free and open source conference completed another successful year in the running. Digit was at the conference and what follows is a roundup of the proceedings

busy working away on their college projects, there were teams busy crafting and polishing nifty code bits to make a healthy contribution to the world. Of course, in such matters, the famous (and sometimes infamous) Aakash tablet had to be there. Although the most important thing that it does is that it reminds you that we are still a long way away from being able to create top notch items from scratch – but it also represents that sometimes top-



Computer Club of India Team

necessities had been fulfilled, short of the programmer and his (or her, of course) machine. In addition to food there was unlimited coffee supply all through the event, which is probably all a developer really needs except air. In the 'hacking area' what we saw in the works was indeed very promising. The complete spectrum was in representation, with one section being taken up by college kids who were

notch items are not really what is needed. In order to be an excellent teaching tool, Aakash doesn't really need to match the power (and thankfully) of the iPad. [More thoughts on this in the next article]

Of course, if we were to reminisce about some smaller level hacks and projects, we'd have to talk about the robot that had captured everybody's attention, which was being created right in the

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Last date of applying 08 Jan 2013.

More BB10 buzz

Research In Motion announced that Blackberry 10 will feature edge-to-edge keys, predictive vocabulary and predictive spacing



BitTorrent going legal?

BitTorrent said to looking for ways to distribute content legally through BitTorrent in 2013

centre of the hacking area. The creators, who are friends from various fields of computing (and interestingly, none from a proper robotics background), told us that they'd actually built a very competent model for the previous two days, but the person tasked with keeping the model safe, decided to not show up at all. While the original project was not in attendance, the rest of the Computer Club of India's team – Vijay, Anil, Anant and Chintan, took it upon themselves to build a new one from scratch, and they indeed build one. Also of note was a very interesting piece of software by Mr. Srivats P – a networking professional by day, he decided to pursue his interest in software development, and happily embraced the open source community for that. The result is 'Ostinato', an application that lets you inject any kind of network packet, containing any data that you want, into any network of your choice, provided that you



The event saw some interesting panel discussions

have a stable connection in place. Because the internal are pretty complicated, we'd advise you to check out his manual for the software's use, www.ostinato.org.

We also got to know about a very interesting shift in terms of industry guidelines. We met Mr. Nirbheek Chauhan, who claims to be an open-source warrior, so much so that even the company that he works for, Collabora, only develops open-source material, exclusively. Well done, we say, well done.

All of that was a refreshing change from the technical aspect of the conference, but as the organizers had made a point of emphasizing, the event was about so much more than that. To drive home the point some genuine thought fodder was being doled out with some very interesting talks that were organized. One

such talk that really left an impression was concerned with the moral side of foss – on what open-source really means. Because believe it or not, the question is still in existence. To be specific here, let us ask you a question that will pull you into the loop as well – “Exactly how open-source is your code when the website you host it on, github, is a closed source presentation?”. That is something that we had honestly never thought about, and we're sure few of us have. But it truly goes on to show that the people who are really going all-out in the pursuit of open-source goodness, will not spare the slightest detail to make sure that the entire community is on the same page.

The Conclusive Take

It was painful to see that in India the idea of open source was temporarily put on the back burner, when the conference was put on hold in 2010. From an economy which piggybacks on its IT fame, we expected better. Which is why it was good to know that the organizers decided to go through with the 2012 iteration of FOSS.IN.

Mr. Chitnis resonated with the audience when he said that it is really not difficult to get hold of technological talks



Things kicked off with the welcome note

these days. Heck, even foss.in was available as a live stream over its course. But people get together to be in the presence of other similar souls; to keep our faith that in any and every endeavour that we embark upon, we cannot be alone. To realize first-hand that we really can be more than the sum of our parts, and that as a focussed group, we are capable of bringing about the paradigm shift in software sourcing that the industry so desperately needs, but refuses to accept.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EVENT

- 'Big Data', 'Node.js', 'Cloud Computing' et al were common buzzwords, and the coverage was deep and entertaining. Just goes on to show how fast the industry is evolving, and it is good to see the event is keeping pace.
- The showcased hardware and software were the latest cutting-edge offerings/in-the-works from its creators. KDE showed off their 'MER' operating system for tablets, with a 'Plasma Active' core. They forked the dead 'MeeGo' code from the Nokia-Intel base, and recreated the OS in their own vision. Although the presented version is still a little rough around the edges, we could see good potential in this new OS.
- Wikipedia is thinking about changing its entire structure of operation. 'Wikidata' is a new concept where the actual, minimalistic data will be pulled out of the current Wikipedia entries, and stored centrally. This would help with better implementation of Wikis in other languages, of which there are currently few. This would also open up a world of possibilities with Machine Learning, as the extracted data would actually be more comprehensible for machine input than the current 'essay' form of writing that Wikipedia employs.
- A KDE mini-conference was also organised, which showcased the latest in KDE software development, and showed the path for contributing to the KDE community.

Just when all of this was going through our mind, something happened that really was the perfect representation of the actual state of affairs in the India, concerning this field. One of the attendees decides to question the panel at an open-source conference whether open-source makes any sense at all, because apparently the Joker said that “if you're good at something, never do it for free” – that's when you sympathise with the disappointment that the organizers sometimes refer to. This is not to put down Batman, Joker or anybody else related to the immortally awesome legend that is 'The Dark Knight', but really the laughable context in which it was brought up (we had to confirm for ourselves if that person was serious – he was). That, ladies and gentlemen, is why aliens don't talk to us. 

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Uninor shutting services

The telecom operator Uninor has announced that it will shut down its operations in Kolkatta and West Bengal from January 18, 2013



Soyuz off to space

The Russian Soyuz spacecraft took off for the International Space Station for a two-day flight carrying a crew of three astronauts



Aakash: The complete story

Kul Bhushan

readersletters@thinkdigit.com

The vision behind the Aakash tablet is to bridge the digital divide in the country and help the students from rural and socio-economically weaker sections of the society to have access to modern technology and education.

Though the Aakash appears far away from mainstream tablets, but it is nevertheless important. For a country that has long grappled with a poor education system and no hope for rebuilding of the necessary infrastructure, the Aakash could play a key role in turning things around.

We need to empower our significantly large youth populace – most of them in the rural areas of the country – with quality and modern education. The tablet could very well play a key role in accomplishing it.

From Sakshat to Aakash

It all started back in 2011 when Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Kapil Sibal, announced an

ambitious indigenous low-cost device that would be comparable to the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) initiative. While the OLPC initiative was aimed at rural and underprivileged students, the Indian government's device was initially intended for urban college students.

Still, not many people know that it wasn't the first time a 'Made in India' computer was coined. In early 2000, a prototype Simputer was produced in small numbers. Bangalore-based CPSU and Bharat Electronics Ltd even manufactured around 5,000 Simputers during 2002-07. In 2009, a number of states announced plans to order OLPCs. But then the project never took off.

In July 2010, Kapil Sibal unveiled a prototype tablet, dubbed as the Sakshat. The price of the device showcased was projected at \$35, which would eventually drop to \$20 and ultimately to \$10. After the device was exhibited, OLPC Chairman Nicholas Negroponte offered full access to OLPC technology to the Indian team for free.

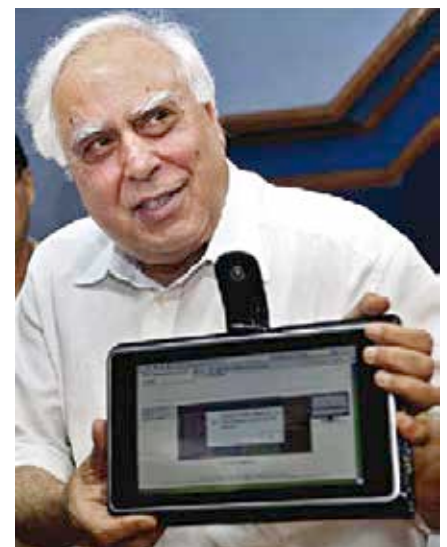
While it seemed the country was set to deliver the world another masterpiece of innovation, the Sakshat project suffered its first blow when the company hired

to build the Sakshat, HCL Infosystems, failed to prove that they had at least Rs. 60 crore in bank guaranteed funds, as mandated by the government. As a result, the government dropped HCL from the project and re-advertised the tender.

The Sakshat tender was then bagged by DataWind, a UK-based manufacturing and marketing company that produces wireless web access products, originally founded in Montreal.

Finally on October 5, 2011, Kapil Sibal unveiled the ultra low-cost tablet, called the Aakash. The device, earlier nicknamed as Sakshat, looked quite different from the prototype flaunted by the minister previous year. Again expectations ran high amid massive buzz in the country and even across the shores. DataWind went on to register pre-orders for the 1.4 million units of the UbiSlate 7 (commercial version of the Aakash) within just two weeks after releasing the device online.

But how many tablets were shipped? One of the first controversies that came to the light was the fall out between the government, DataWind and IIT-Rajasthan. The government was apparently unhappy with DataWind for trying to sell the commercial version of the device before the government releasing the official Aakash tablet. DataWind also drew flak over the 'poor performance' of the device, as reported by IIT-Rajasthan. DataWind in its defence said IIT's test criteria didn't make sense, as it included conditions such



Kapil Sibal unveils the Aakash



HP unveils new range

HP recently updated its Laptop and Ultrabook range with the Envy x2 Hybrid and Envy m6 laptops which will be a part of HP's Windows 8 portfolio



App store for Raspberry Pi

The Raspberry Pi Foundation has released an app store which allows users to share their home-made software for the Pi. <http://dgit.in/12xoNMB>

Feature

as water resistance, where the tablet is kept in a rain chamber supplying rain at a rate of no less than 4 inches per hour. The government asked IIT to withdraw its 'military-level' test criteria and stressed focussing on 'consumer friendly' features. Later, IIT-Rajasthan was pulled out of the project.

Aakash 2.0 replaces the Aakash

On November 11, 2012, President Pranab Mukherjee unveiled the Aakash 2 at an event in New Delhi. DataWind designed, developed and manufactured the Aakash 2.0 whereas the device's platform was developed by IIT Bombay that includes 3D-modelling, C++ programming, remote and collaborative training applications, robotic control and live assessment tools. IIT Bombay partnered with the Center for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), to assist with the hardware testing and logistics.

The Aakash 2.0 specifications include a 7-inch multi-touch 4-point capacitive display with 800 x 480 pixel resolution, Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich OS, 512 MB of RAM, Cortex A8 1 GHz processor, 4GB built-in storage, microSD card slot that supports storage up to 32 GB, micro USB, Wi-Fi b/g/n and a 3,000 mAh battery.

The Aakash 2.0 was showcased at the United Nations on November 28, 2012. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon showered praise on India's efforts to bring modern technology to everyone's door steps. He said, "We know technology is not an end in itself. The key is to empower people to make the most of their own potential. Information and communications technologies are engines of economic growth and development and can help transform people's lives. They are great enablers - helping people communicate across distances, facilitating trade and commerce and providing better access to health care and education."

Aakash 2: A Made in China device?

Days before it was unveiled at the UN, the Aakash 2 ran into another controversy with media reports claiming the device was a Made in China device. Reports said DataWind had procured the tablets off-the-shelf from manufacturers in China for \$42

(Rs. 2,263 then), exactly the price at which they sold these to the Indian government. DataWind, however, denied the allegations. DataWind also put an explanation on its website detailing where the Aakash 2 tablets are made and assembled.

DataWind's CEO Suneet Singh Tuli, however, believes 'Made in India' tag is important. When we contacted Mr. Tuli and he said, "We believe that Made in India is important and specific Indian level value-adds should be a criteria for future tenders. This would create a defined criteria for the 'Made in India' tag, so that there is no controversy." (Full interview: <http://dgit.in/datatuli>)

Tuli is also hopeful India can develop a 'Made in India' tablet on a large scale. "a focussed effort should be made to develop indigenous manu-



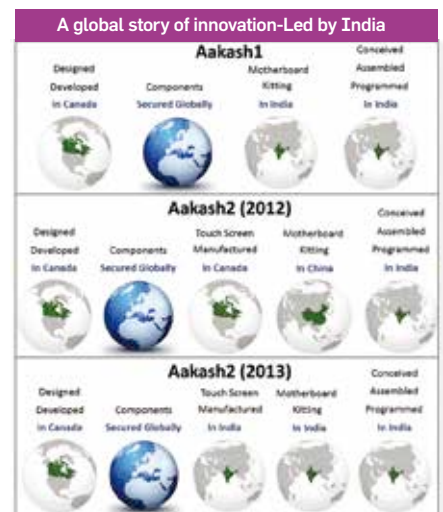
Ban Ki-moon unveiling the Aakash 2

facturing - but with the maturity to understand that components will come from around the world," he added.

Why Aakash can make a difference?

The world's biggest democracy has shown great promise in the past, but it's been held back by education and infrastructure problems. The success of Aakash could completely change this, in fact it could lay foundation for a modern and improved education infrastructure in India - which we've all been dreaming and striving for so long.

That being said, we have to be honest to ourselves. The entire education system cannot rely on tablet hardware for the overhaul it is striving and to deliver the quality knowledge to the students.



Where Aakash 2 is made, assembled and manufactured

The success of the Aakash tablet is just part of a goal, not the ultimate goal.

But that is easier said than done. The government has to create an environment where the tablet and the related benefits are optimally harnessed. It may seem difficult at this stage, but it's definitely not impossible. Moreover, the government has to work on the economics and ensure the subsidy (whopping 50 percent on each unit) does not hurt it in long-term.

Unlike other ongoing state-run projects, the government should try to make it commercially successful, which would set an example for other schemes. A lot of hard work has to be done on awareness. People should know about it. We don't expect the government to run Pulse Polio, free-cycle, Mid-Day meal or Aadhar-like campaign across the country, but there has to be some work and exposure at the ground level.

We feel the Ministry of Human Resource Development's described vision precisely defines why ultra-low-cost tablet or Aakash-like technology is important for India and its large young population. It says on its site: "... [The] young population should be considered as an invaluable asset which if equipped with knowledge and skills, can contribute effectively to the development of the national as well as the global economy. The vision is to realize India's human resource potential to its fullest in the education sector, with equity and inclusion."

Tips and Tricks

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We look at productivity tools such as Pocket, Instapaper, Wunderlist, StayFocusd, Chrome Plugins, Any.do, Virtual Desktops

DIY

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Prevent kids or for that matter anyone at all from accessing erm.. overly sexual content

From tablets that refuse to run to Jelly Bean upgrades and more...

We go through our sos@thinkdigit.com inbox to answer your distress calls

📧 HCL Me Y2 issues

I purchased an HCL Me Y2 tablet last week. The first couple of days it ran smoothly. But on the third day it suddenly restarted automatically. Then I shut it down. But on the next day when I tried to power it on, it failed. It was stuck on the "Me" logo. So I called the customer care and they told me to reset the tablet, but nothing really happened and it restarted and stuck on the same logo. Then I tried to perform a factory reset by pressing power+volume up



HCL ME Y2

key, in the recovery menu it told that "E: failed to mount /sdcard (No such file or directory)"

The customer care instructed me to take my tablet to their service center in Kolkata which is 150 km from my residence. Being a student it is impossible for me to go there. But I have a Dell Inspiron 15 laptop and my friend has a broadband connection. I have a little knowledge of flashing ROM by Odin. So if you help me to fix this myself I will be grateful to you. I will wait for your answer. You are my only hope to fix my tablet.

Specifications of HCL ME Y2 Tablet:

- Processor: 1 GHz Cortex A9
- OS: Android 4.0.3
- Inbuilt 3G HSPDA Sim slot
- Storage: 8 GB internal and expandable upto 32 GB
- I/O ports: Mini HDMI, Mini USB

- Display Type: 7-inch LCD IPS Capacitive Touchscreen with 1024 x 800 pixels
- WiFi: IEEE 802.11 b/g/n
- Graphics CPU: Mali 400

Riju Hazra

A We are indeed sad to hear about the issues with your HCL tablet.

First up, did you try booting into the recovery mode while connected to a PC? If no, then you should connect the tablet to a PC via USB and switch it on with the 'Volume+ and the Power Key' pressed simultaneously. That should allow you to boot into the recovery partition and bring the tablet back to factory settings.

Do the process to reach this menu again, and select the "Wipe data/Factory reset" option. It seems you are selecting the "Reboot the device" option till now. Now, follow down to the third option and select that. Fingers crossed. We genuinely hope the problem is solved.

If that does not work, then we are sorry, but you will have to take it to the service centre for repair. Since this is under warranty, you should push for a replacement unit. You could, in the interim, email HCL tech support on this page: <http://goo.gl/umCrX> and tell them about the issue with travelling so far to once deliver the tablet and then to collect it again.

📧 Clone queries

Please let me know about Chinese replicas of Samsung Note / Galaxy S3 available in Ghaffar Market, Karol Bagh. Are they compatible with GPRS?

SWJ Singh

A Yes, the Chinese manufactured devices that you are talking about are GPRS capable. Some are 3G capable and some are not. The spec sheet may say something, but the only real way of con-

firring is to pop in your SIM card in the device and see if the web services are working. Quite often, with these devices, you end up with specs that in reality are very different from the ones mentioned on the phone.

📧 Waiting for the JB update

I've Samsung GT-S7500 Galaxy Ace Plus. I just want to know, when will my phone get a Jelly Bean update?

Varun

A Good news! Yes, the Galaxy Ace Plus is in the list of smartphones that Samsung will be rolling out the Android Jelly Bean update for. This is a rather recent development, but the fact that Samsung has clearly stated it means the update will arrive, sooner or later. The bad news though is that there is no time-frame set for this update to be sent to users'



Jelly Bean

phones. Since Google has no say in this, it is up to the phone manufacturers to decide which phones get the update and when. After the serious issues that the JB update for the Galaxy S3 created, we can pretty much be resigned to the fact that there will be a slight delay for future roll-outs. But, do expect the new OS on your phone sometime this month (Jan '13).

📧 HDD won't format

My PC Config is as follows:

- CPU: Intel Core 2 Duo E7200 @ 2.53 GHz
- RAM: Transcend 3 GB DDR2
- Chipset: Intel G33/G31 express chipset

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Cheap IC created by IBM

IBM has created the first cheap electronic-photonic IC. This chip integrates both electronic and optical components into one. <http://dgit.in/SWFjLS>



NASA crashes Grail probes

NASA deliberately crashed two space probes in order to end a Lunar interior mission. The crash site will be named after Sally Ride.

- OS- Windows 7 Ultimate
- Motherboard: Gigabyte G31M-S2L
- HDD : Seagate Barracudda 500 GB
- Network Adapter: Realtek RTL 8168C (p)/ 8111c (p) Family PCI-E Gigabit ethernet NIC [NDIS 6.20]

Of late I have been facing quite a few problems with my PC. I've been unable to format my HDD. I tried several times but it shows up an error. After fully formatting the HDD I've been unable to install any OS, because the setup interrupts and says: "SETUP UNABLE TO FORMAT THE DRIVE". Please help me out!

Kshitij Saini

A Try changing the SATA data cables and using a different power cable. If it still refuses to format, you probably have a faulty drive.

If you can connect it to another PC with an OS, try formatting on that and make a partition of about 40 GB in the beginning of the drive, leave it in RAW format, and try and install the OS on the partition that follows. If that doesn't work, try a first partition of 100 GB next and repeat. If even that fails, it looks like you need a new drive.

Warning: even if one of these methods works, you're drive has started getting corrupted / damaged, and it may not last very long, so ensure you backup everything that you store on this drive.

Pen drive only works with set-top box

Since the digitisation of cable TV was ordered, I bought the Dish TV+ with recorder. I tried recording a program, but it is only played in the set top box through their system. But whenever I connect my pen drive to my PC, it asks to format it. I have tried using different OS as well as with different file-systems but the pen drive is unrecognisable. Could you please tell me in which file-system does the DTH

operators code their transmissions. Is any decoder available?

Akshay Puntambekar

A This is done on purpose by the DTH operator in order to ensure that you cannot pirate the recorded content. As per the terms of agreement, you have agreed to this, and cannot bypass this copyright protection.

We cannot give you the solution as it would amount to encouraging piracy, but I am sure there are some enterprising fellows who have done so and posted solutions online.

Be warned though, you will be doing something illegal that could amount to you losing your DTH connection.

Will my board support PCIe 3.0 cards?

I want to know whether my existing motherboard Gigabyte G41MT-ES2L will support cards such as GTX 650?

The card is said to be running on a PCI 3.0 x16. The term 3.0 adds to my confusion as I am now wondering about whether my motherboard supports that technology. Also will my existing board support the card? Will I need to get a new PSU to run it? My existing CPU is rated at 450W.

When I checked the RAM slots, it mentions DDR3 support and my memory is also DDR3, but on the website it shows that the board supports DDR2. Now that is confusing.

Mainak Dev

A So long as your motherboard supports PCIe x16 slots, you will be able to use the NVIDIA GTX 650. The GTX 650 can support PCIe 3.0 speeds, whereas your motherboard is rated at PCIe 2.0. Naturally PCIe 3.0 is rated to run faster than PCIe 2.0, but since you are using an older chipset with an older processor, the card will run with PCIe 2.0 speeds. The GTX 650 is backward compatible with PCIe 2.0 motherboards as well and will run just fine. The GTX 650 will run with PCIe 2.0 speeds which is around 5 Gigatransfers per second (5 GT/s). In the real-world, you will not see any

noticeable performance drop as such. Your PSU should be enough for the GPU as the max TDP for GTX 650 is around 64 W.

Your motherboard supports only DDR3 RAM according to the official website. You should use DDR3 RAM modules on it.

Desktop gadgets acting strange

I have problem regarding my desktop gadgets, which do not display properly. I bought this laptop about a year ago. The configurations are:

- Dell Inspiron N5110
- Intel Core i3-2330M CPU @ 2.20 GHz
- Windows 7 Home Basic
- 3 GB RAM
- 320 GB Harddisk

Niraj Gandhi

A You can go to this link (<http://goo.gl/aTxEA>) and download the Reset_gadgets.bat file. Save this BAT file on the desktop. Right click on it and 'Run as Administrator'. You will notice the Command Prompt window flashing as the BAT file runs. On completion, restart the system to apply the changes. Check if the gadgets are properly visible now. If not, then just uninstall and reinstall the faulty ones.

Another option to try out, which is just a manual method of the one stated above is as follows:

```
Go to Start>All Programs>Accessories and then right click on Command Prompt and select Run as Administrator. Type out the following commands and after each command press Enter and click on OK before going to the next one.
regsvr32 jscript.dll
regsvr32 atl.dll
Regsvr32 "%ProgramFiles%\Windows Sidebar\sbdrop.dll"
Regsvr32 "%ProgramFiles%\Windows Sidebar\wlsrv.dll"
reg delete "HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Internet Settings\Zones" /f
"%ProgramFiles%\Windows Sidebar\sidebar.exe" A
```



Dish+-Setup-Box-A5

POCKET

So you like reading tons of web pages and articles on the web and you just can't think of quitting a web page without completely reading it. But Alas! you don't have time to do it; This is where read later apps like Pocket come to your rescue.

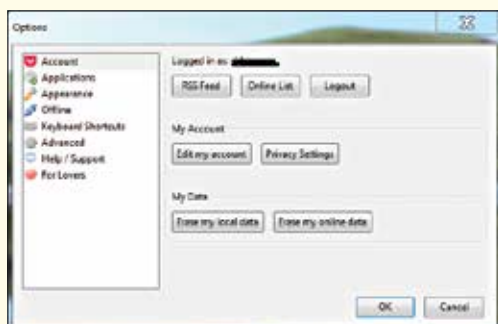
Among the other read later apps and extensions, Pocket (formerly known as "Read It Later") has the most simplistic UI. Pocket focuses more on pages that contain media such as images and videos, filtering them and allowing you to look at the saved pages depending on their content.

Merge reading lists from two accounts

Well for some reason you've managed to create two separate accounts for pocket resulting into two different 'Reading Lists'. Now you may want to merge them together into a single list on a single account.

To do this follow the simplified approach given below:(Please Note that in the steps below the two different accounts are referred to as "Account 1" and "Account 2").

To merge the reading lists In Firefox, Open your 'reading list' (list of saved pages)>Options>Account Tab>Logout>login into Account 1>Open Reading List>Right-click Sync Icon>Full Sync>Repeat the above steps but login to Account 2 instead. To do the same on



Use the Account settings to Log Out of Account 1 and Login back into Account 2



Pocket	01
Instapaper	01
Improve Your Productivity	02
Wunderlist.....	04
Launchy	05
Desktop Customization	06

Tips & Tricks has its own page numbers, and does not follow the rest of the magazine's page numbers. This is done to ensure that you can cut out and save T&T in a separate folder for later reference.

Android and iOS, Launch Pocket App>Options(For Android, Options>Settings)>Log Out>Once you've logged out of 'Account 1', Login to 'Account 2'.

When you're done, the app should have a same but merged list and the contents of Account 1 into Account 2. Now you can abandon Account 1 and start using Account 2.

Including Instapaper reads into Pocket

If you're the ones who signed up for Instapaper but later on when you stumbled onto Pocket thought that Pocket is better and more fun to use than Instapaper, and now you want to include your Instapaper reads into Pocket, then don't worry for there is a simple way to do it.

If you're already logged

in to your Instapaper account then go here "http://dgit.in / QWrxzT ". If not then login first>Account Page>Expand Export Option>Download HTML file>Save the generated HTML file on your computer>In order to import your articles, go here " http://dgit.in/XfsnWR ">Browse the saved Instapaper HTML file>Use the Import Button once you've browsed for the file.

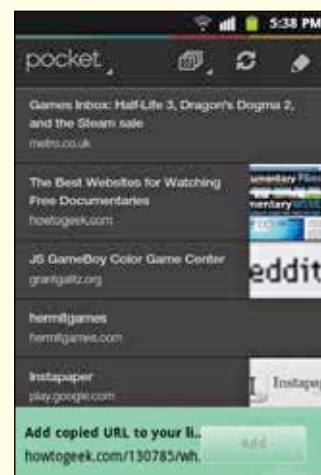
When you're done with this, A new page will open and notify you about the No. of articles imported and Archived.

Saving Clipboard contents to Pocket

If and when a need arises for you to save the contents of your clipboard into Pocket or you need to copy a link from a text document and insert it into your Pocket's reading list, you can do it very easily.If you copy a URL on your Mac, this URL can be saved to Pocket provided you have Pocket for Mac installed.Copy the complete URL (including

http://)>Launch Pocket for Mac>File>Save from Clipboard OR Press Command + S (#s).

Once done, you can see the saved item at the top of your reading list.For iPhone, iPad & Android users, a URL when copied on your device or Mac can be saved to Pocket if you Copy the complete URL (including http://)>Open Pocket app. You will see a green coloured bar appear on the screen, Touch the 'Add' button on the



The Add button appears on a green bar in Pocket

green bar and the copied URL will be added to the Reading List of your Pocket app.

INSTAPAPER

Compared to Pocket which has special features for saving multimedia content based pages, Instapaper has a direct and simple approach in which it displays saved web pages and articles in a stripped down format. Also Instapaper has more features such as Tilt Scrolling, Pagination etc., in iOS than Android.

Searching on Instapaper

So you have a lot of archived articles on Instapaper but due to the sheer number of pages saved, you are unable to find your desired archived article(s). It's just that Insta-



paper currently does not offer a free way to search archived articles unless you are a paid Instapaper subscriber. Nevertheless, there is a workaround for this. Head over to your Instapaper account here "http://bit.ly/HjHy ">Locate the Export option on the page and expand it">Download CSV file">Save the generated file. Locate the downloaded file and open it using any text editor. Now you can easily find your desired archived content by using simple text finding options such as by going to Edit>Find or by using the keyboard combination Ctrl + F.

Enabling automatic updates at specific locations (for iOS Only)

You can make Instapaper on your iOS device update in the background at your preferred locations whenever you enter those locations in particular. This can be easily achieved by launching the Instapaper app>app settings>Tap on Update Locations. A pop-up asking for your permission to allow downloading articles when you enter or leave the area will appear. Just tap "Ok". Now if you want to add your current location, tap the "Add current location" button. You can also clear your added



You can change the update locations option here

locations by tapping the "clear locations button". The best part about this is that you don't necessarily require a Wi-Fi connection at the locations you've added, allowing you to even add places like a bus stop or a particular place anywhere on the map. Thus you no longer have to manually refresh instapaper for syncing your reads.

Increasing productivity using folders in Instapaper



Folders such as the ones above really help save time and increase productivity

Instapaper by default has only two folders i.e., Unread and Archive, but you can add more folders to it. For instance, if you have a knack for reading things say about Technology, then you can create a folder called Technology and move your reads to it. Content based folders make your work easy anyday. You can even add folders for some other Instapaper user's starred item lists provided you know their username. Instapaper also supports creation of RSS Feeds for starred items or for a folder of your choice and then you can subscribe to that feed wherever you want for anyone else to see. Folders can also be created which denote maximum time you may want to spend on

the articles within them for example., folders named as 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes can be used to keep the articles inside them and read them only for the mentioned time altogether this saves your time on unnecessary articles which are on topics which you don't like much.

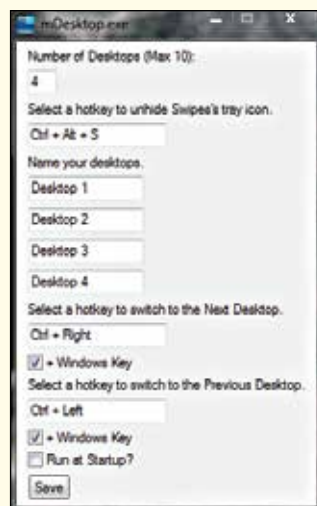
IMPROVE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

Too many distractions can bring down your productivity, but so can boredom, a whole pile of brainless and repetitive tasks and so on and so forth. Here we've compiled a list of apps and Chrome extensions that can help streamline your work as well as take care of those "pesky" distractions.

Managing desktops

Anyone who has used an OS like Ubuntu or OS X will be familiar with the concept of a virtual desktop and how convenient it can be. Windows users need not fret however. Download mdesktop from <http://dgit.in/ULOQKW>

mdesktop is a tiny little app that, once installed, will allow you to manage up to 10 desktops at a time. By default you will be given 4 virtual desktops to work in and you can switch between

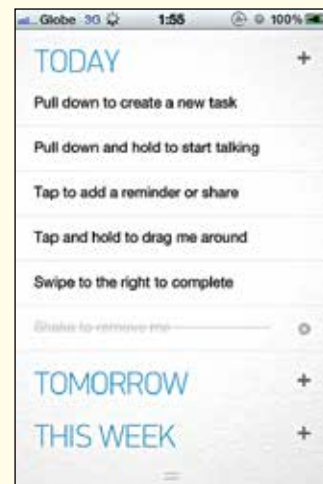


mdesktop settings

them using the ALT+(number) keys; very handy and perfect for managing your work (or ensuring a quick and easy escape route in case your boss happens to come around).

Chrome plug-ins

Google Chrome is now the most popular browser in the world and chances are, most of your work revolves around using this browser and many of Google's myriad services.



AnyDO-Gestures

Any.do

This is a free app that is available on iOS, Android and as a plug-in to Chrome. All you need to do is download it and set it up and it will sync tasks across all your devices. It can sync with Gmail, remind you to call someone back, send a mail and much more. The app will add a bar below your mail (with options for setting reminders) and a "remind me" button near the header to allow you to manage your mail. This is a must-have app/extension for the scatter-brained among us

Split-Screen

Available at <http://dgit.in/SEmypo>, split screen does exactly what the name suggests. It creates a new chrome tab that will let you browse



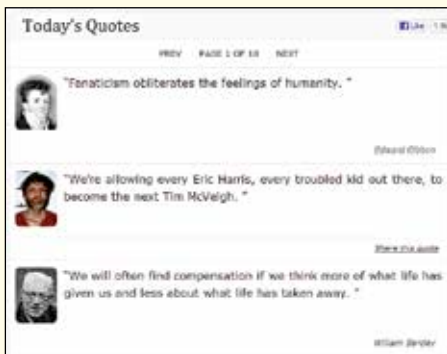
split-screen in action

two different sites at once. If 40 open tabs weren't enough, you can now literally double the number of sites you view simultaneously. Just imagine a boring spreadsheet on one page, YouTube on the other. Work and play at the same time, what more could you ask for?



Quotes Book

Running out of quotes for that epic speech you're preparing?



QuotesBook

This is the app for you. This Chrome App is nothing more than a veritable quotencyclopedia; allowing you to search and pick the ideal quote. Download the app at <http://dgit.in/VLv5IH>



Save to Google Drive

This is one of the most useful productivity enhancing apps that we've come across. Its working is very similar to other site/article archiving utilities like Evernote but with a twist. Just install the plug-in from <http://dgit.in/ZcCTon>

and hit the button. The extension will scroll through the entire webpage that you are viewing and take snapshots, compiling them into one large image that will be saved to your Google drive.



Tab.bz

Not closing your browser because there are too many tabs open and you don't know which ones you want? Want to save a collection of articles for later use? Tab.bz is the ideal tool for you. This handy extension (<http://dgit.in/VLw1GH>) will package all your open tabs into one link that you can share, save or do whatever you want with. There are privacy issues though, where if you accidentally create a tab package with some private tabs, the link is not immediately deleted; so use with caution.



StayFocusd

This extension's sole purpose is to make sure that you're actually working at your PC. You can download the plugin at <http://dgit.in/RzwOdB>. After installation, you will need to setup the plugin. There are a myriad of settings to choose from and they are surprisingly comprehensive. Some of the functions of this plugin are as follows:

- Set a blacklist and whitelist from the sites you regularly visit.
- Allot a fixed amount of time in total for your blacklisted sites, access to which will be

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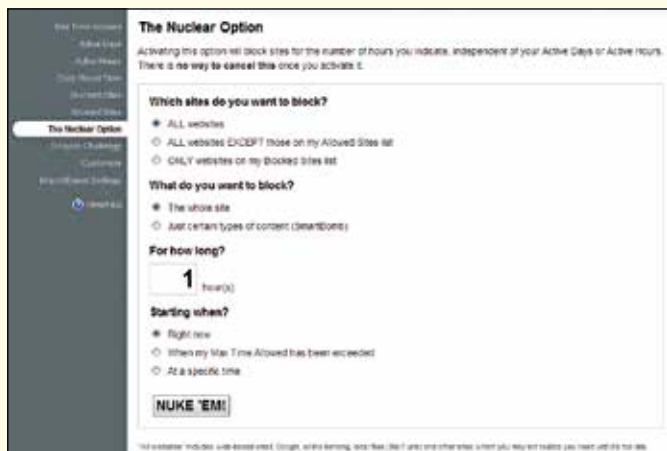
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Nuclear response

- blocked once your allotted time has expired.
- A nuclear mode that will block all sites permanently till the timer is reset for the next day.
- A complicated puzzle needs to be solved to change the settings, making it more of a hassle if you want to sneak in some extra time behind the program's back.
- Hitting the "StayFocused" button in your Chrome browser will automatically add that site to the blacklist.



stayFocusd

- The plugin will warn you when you are AFK for more than a set period of time.

WUNDERLIST

Those of you who are searching for an app to get organised in order to finish your work on time, your search ends here. Wunderlist is one of the best, easy to use and free cross-platform task-management applications one can use to simply get things done on time. Wunderlist shows your tasks in the form of 'Inboxes'. In Wunderlist you can tap on the box displayed

above your list to create a new task and add notes to that task or set reminders or due dates on it. Lets look at some of the tips you can use to make the most out of Wunderlist.

Note: The below tricks only work with Windows and Mac OS application for Wunderlist.

Starring a task faster

To set our tasks by their priority, we can use the "star" functionality of Wunderlist. Instead of clicking the star icon on the task to make it a starred task, you can add an * (Asterisk) at the beginning of the task to directly make it a starred task by default. For Example, If you want to create a task or to-do item called "Complete Physics Homework" and mark it starred, Just write the



Hotkeys for your Browser to perform functions faster

name of the task as "*Complete Physics Homework". This will mark your task as starred by default and make this task appear at the top of your list.

Using Smart Date Recognition

You can add a due date to a task while creating it by typing the date after the task name. To do this you first have to enable "smart date recognition" by going to the Settings tab and selecting "Enable smart date recognition" in the desktop application of Wunderlist and restart the application. Now, If you want to create a task named "Submit Project" with the due date 12th of January, Just type the name of the task followed by the due date like this "Submit Project on 12th January" or like "Submit Project on 12 January". This will



Typing the date with the task will make the date as due date

set the due date for the task to 12/01/2013 by default.

You can also use Smart date recognition to type dates naturally by just typing the following words:

today - adds today as the due date, tomorrow - adds tomorrow as the due date, in 4 days - adds the date in 4 days, in 4 months - adds the date from today in 4 months, in 4 years - adds the date from today in 4 years, on april 20/on april 20th - adds the due date for april 20.

Or you can add dates quickly by adding # (Hash tags) like:-

#td - for Today, #tm - for Tomorrow, #4d - In 4 days, #4m - In 4 months, #4y - In 4 years, #tuesday - adds next



Hotkeys for the desktop application

Tuesday's date, #april20 / #20april - adds April 20.

Merging lists in Wunderlist

If for some reason you want to move your tasks from an existing list to another list, without re-typing every task into the new list, then don't worry as this is relatively simple. In the desktop

version of Wunderlist, simply click and hold a task and move it to your desired list and you're done. You just have to drag a task and drop it into another list to make that task appear in that list.

Emailing to List

When you are working on an email and you want to add a task or to-do to your list based on the message you received, you can email the desired task to your Wunderlist. You just have to simply put your task in the body of the email, type the name of the list you want your task to be added to in the Subject line of the email and send this email to "me@wunderlist.com". When you're done, your task will be

added to your chosen list. It is a very handy and a lesser known feature of Wunderlist.

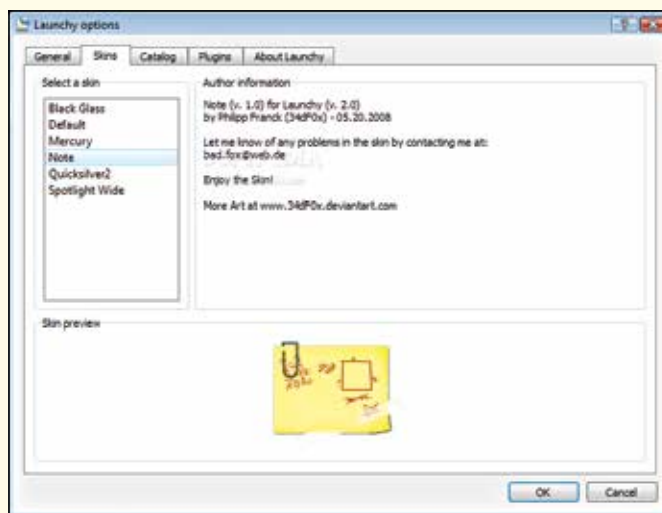
Note: At the time of this issue going into print, Wunderlist released a new version of their app called Wunderlist 2. Some of the tricks mentioned above such as Smart Date and Starring Lists may not work with this version. But Wunderlist will eventually release an updated version of their app thus addressing this issue.

LAUNCHY

Launchy is free software which was initially designed as a start menu alternative. Launchy allows opening of files and folders quickly with just a few keystrokes. It can be easily downloaded via the internet.

Personalized shortcut

Launchy will run in the background and can be brought up



Launchy comes with a selection of skins to choose from

at anytime using the alt+space keys which are the default keys for this action.

When the Launchy interface appears, simply type in the name of the software or folder and Launchy should automatically find and start

that software up or open that folder for you. Just a few letters of the applications name should be enough and the applications icon should immediately appear on Launchy's interface. Launchy also memorizes its searches and shows you the most used

application on future use. For example, if you happen to have two software which start with the letter p, i.e., paint and PowerPoint, you may need to input, "pa" for paint and "po" for PowerPoint. But if you happen to use PowerPoint more often, Launchy automatically shows you PowerPoint the moment you input the letter "p" followed by other relevant suggestions.

The default keys to invoke Launchy can be changed by going to the Options. The Options can be accessed by either right clicking Launchy's interface or simply right clicking the Launchy icon in the system tray at the bottom right.

Configure Launchy

The General tab has options relating to the User Interface, the Visual Effects, System

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Options and how you want suggestions to be seen, i.e., the number of suggestions displayed and whether you wish for the file path to be displayed as well or not etc.

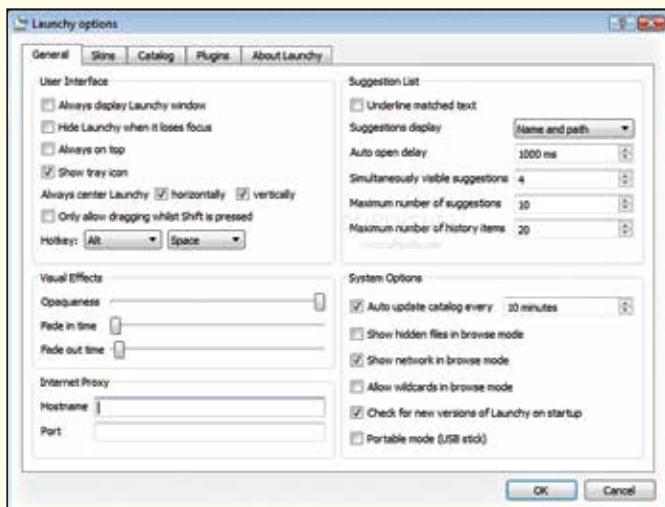
The User Interface focuses on how and where Launchy appears. We suggest not having the first option "Always display Lanchy Window" ticked as always having the Launchy window visible can get in the way of your other actions.

Try different looks

The Skins tab lets you change Launchy's look and there are a number of options to choose from. Skins are constantly being created by users and submitted on various online forums and sites from where they can be downloaded.

Expand your Index

Launchy works by indexing your programs and files. Programs can then be launched by inputting a few keystrokes and show up on a menu according to relevance. Launchy indexes your start menu by default, since everything you install will most likely show up there. But for cases which don't, you can point Launchy to their location. This can be done by once again accessing the Options and going to the Catalog tab. The Catalog tab contains the directories that Launchy uses to launch its applications. By clicking on the + button, you can add your commonly accessed directories. This applies to any kind of file, i.e., music files, image files etc. You can also choose which kind of files you want indexed and which kind you don't want showing. Once you're done adding directories, you can check the Include Executable option, to include .exe files as well. Once you're done adding directories simply click



The portable mode is the last option in System Options

on the Rescan Catalog option and Launchy should now also include the directories you've input as well.

Perform Math Calculations

Launchy is also capable of performing simple mathematical calculations. Simply input the numbers where you would normally type in the application name. The operations are limited to addition (+), subtraction (-), division (/) and multiplication (*).

Use Launchy in portable form

Launchy has a feature which lets you run it from a portable device instead of directly from the computer. This can be anything, like a USB thumb drive or portable hard drive. Simply activate Portable Mode from the System Options in the General tab and move Launchy from its installed location onto the portable device. Launchy then runs directly from the device and future configurations are stored in the device instead.

DESKTOP CUSTOMIZATION

You can't teach an old dog new tricks but you can at least give it a new collar. Here are

a collection of tools and utilities that you can use to breath some new life into your aging system, by giving it the makeover it deserves.

Transform Windows

Download the Windows 8 transformation pack from <http://dgit.in/UfrPBS>. If you're

really seem to be serving any purpose. This transformation pack works on every version of Windows from XP onwards.

For a more complete Windows 8 experience, add on some themes and widgets from rainmeter and Windows Blinds (available at <http://dgit.in/WxOfOT> for rainmeter and <http://dgit.in/URpKdz> for Windows Blinds)

Rainmeter has some very nifty widgets that do a far better job of providing a metro experience than even Windows 8 can. The weather and clock widgets are of particular note and can transform your boring Windows desktop to an oversize live tile.

Transform Ubuntu

Maybe you're a big fan of Apple's Mac OS and just don't want to spend on one of their devices. The solution couldn't be simpler. Just open a terminal in Ubuntu and type




Transform your boring Unity UI to a snazzy Mac look

clamouring for the Windows 8 design, sans the Metro (yes, it's been renamed, but we don't care) madness, this is the pack for you.

It is a very basic pack that adds Windows 8's sharp-edged windows, but keeps the Metro Start screen at bay. You do have the option of installing the charms bar but we would advise against it as it doesn't

```
wget https://downloads.sourceforge.net/project/macbuntu/macbuntu-10.04/v2.0/Macbuntu-10.04.tar.gz -O /tmp/Macbuntu-10.04.tar.gz
tar xzvf /tmp/Macbuntu-10.04.tar.gz -C /tmpcd /tmp/Macbuntu-10.04/ $ ./install.sh
```

Follow the instructions to download and install. 

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Google Image Search

Google updated the Image Search algorithm, making it difficult to find explicit content by mistake in image results <http://dgit.in/UPKjac>

Anonymous defaces BSNL

Striking BSNL's website, Anonymous demanded withdrawal of the Section 66A of the IT Act, 2000, expressing support for activist Aseem Trivedi <http://dgit.in/UPJXjW>

Build a smut proof PC

A 1984'esque computer environment or a '70s era hippie pc, you decide...

Mithun Mohandas

readersletters@thinkdigit.com

Back in the old days, the internet was something very few had access to, a stark contrast to the current situation where it has penetrated into every aspect of our lives. We've been online for long enough to have come across some really messed up things that young ones are best kept away from. However, maintaining a continuous presence is not only unfeasible but will also lead to trust issues between parents and their children. There are plenty of parental control software that do a great deal but are expensive at the same time, we look at ways in Windows 8 which the same or greater level of protection can be achieved at absolutely no cost.

The goal is to keep the smut out, protect your own files and create a klutz-proof environment for kids or brats, all in the cheapest manner possible. If this is to be realised then the personal computer as a system must be redesigned to incorporate certain measures at a hardware level, unfortunately, that's an expensive prospect. Computers these days can be easily exploited, more so when physical access is guaranteed. What I'd like to say at this point is that instead of following through with these measures, building trust should be a priority. Or else this is going to turn into a game of wits in which the person with more technical know-how trumps the other..

1. Lock that BIOS

The first step is to modify BIOS settings. If your computer was assembled then you should have a pretty hefty BIOS with plenty of options to modify. Here, you need

to apply a BIOS password and then disable boot via USB and optical drives. The only option must be the HDD/SSD that has your OS. This will prevent the smart ones from using a live disk to circumvent your entire setup. Then make a separate windows account for the purpose of filtering.

2. Get a digital nanny

Download and install 'Family Safety' which is part of Windows Live Essentials <http://dgit.in/RKyc20>. Also, having another parental control suite to fall back on would be a good idea. K9 Web Protec-



PicBlock - Filter images with ease

tion is a good choice for this purpose. These suites have a plethora of options to tinker with, this can not only limit the time that the person can access the computer but also the applications & games rated by the ESRB. On top of that you can access activity logs from anywhere on the internet via websites or free apps across all platforms.

3. Browsers

Ensure that only one or two browsers are installed for the target account, or use the app restrictions tab in the Parental control software to limit the target account to only one/two browser(s), we'll go with Firefox and/or Chrome. Install web content filter extensions/add-ons such as FoxFilter and ProCon Latte for Chrome and Firefox, respectively. These are pretty good at blocking web sites with vulgar content since it combs through the contents looking for keywords. One hit and the

web site will be blocked, and can't even be bypassed using proxies. Another option is to use a browser designed specifically for this purpose. Check out KidZui, a free browser made just for toddlers starting out with the internet. <http://dgit.in/UY9oz1>

4. Private browsing

Disable private browsing or incognito in both browsers, otherwise your parental control software won't be able to log the activities, this requires a bit of work meddling with the browser configuration files and the registry. These links should help <http://dgit.in/UPwfNX> | <http://dgit.in/RKk74r>. Once that is accomplished, you'll need to lock down these preferences, for Firefox go here - <http://dgit.in/Ueu4p5>. For Chrome, you'll have to lock modifications to the registry, you can Google for it, or wait for us to cover it in tips and tricks.

5. Block or reroute

If you wish to block certain web sites which you've deemed unsafe, but the filters don't catch them you can manually block them by editing the hosts file located at %SystemRoot%\system32\drivers\etc\hosts and redirecting them to 127.0.0.1 The same can be done to proxy websites to get rid of them altogether, there are plenty of pre-configured lists that are just a google search away.

6. Hide your files

If there are files that you need to keep private, using simple software that just hide are useless against Linux distros and uninstalling said software often just reveals everything that had been hidden. TrueCrypt can create an entire volume which is not only hidden but also encrypted. So even if the hard drive were to be physically removed the attacker would have no access to it. Sure you might lose the data if it got into someone else's hands, but it would still be private. Windows comes with it's own built in encryption feature called Bitlocker but it is only present in Windows 7 Ultimate and Windows 8 Pro.



IE Flaw Unpatched

An exploit found in Internet Explorer that tracks mouse movement and certain key presses isn't getting patched by Microsoft <http://dgit.in/UPJUEJ>



Pokki downloaded 500,000 times

Pokki, the app providers for Windows reached 500,000 downloads for their Windows 8 start Button replacement

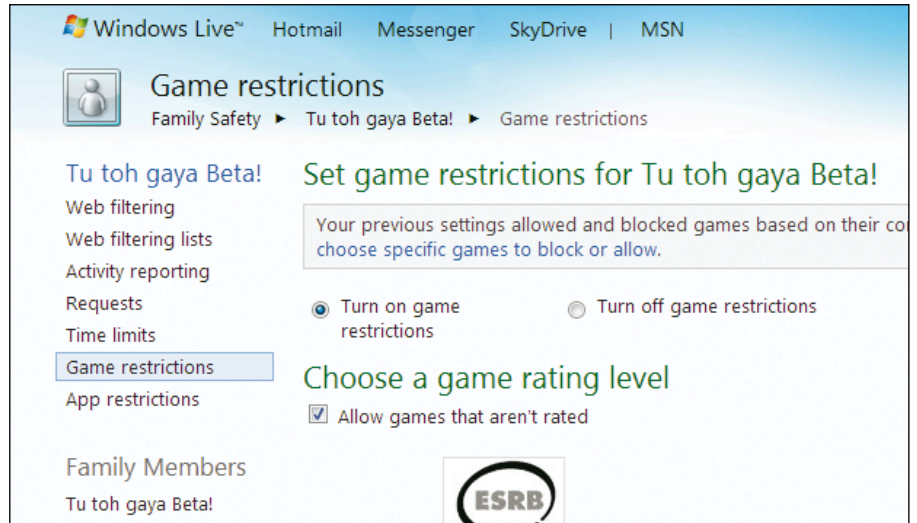
DIY

7. Group policy editor

The group policy editor is a great administrative tool which can change every behaviour of your operating system. You can Switch off USB ports, restrict access to the task manager and other administrative tools, restrict access to the control panel and the registry, even prevent network access to NAS drives, shared folders and computers.

8. An antivirus is a must

A good security suite has most of the features above, they have their own privacy, anti-phishing and content filters. People new to the internet aren't aware of the different techniques used by those with malicious intent, so most of the vulgar content they come across is usually by accident, a good anti-virus software can protect your innocent kids, and also restrict access to the naughty. Remember to secure the antivirus settings with a password as well.



Windows Live Family Safety can be configured on the fly from anywhere

9. Image blocking

Good image filtering software are few and far between, especially when looking for free ones. PicBlock manages to do the job pretty well, it scans images in real time, and filters those which have a lot

of flesh coloured area. But as with most filtering software out there, we found plenty of false positives as well as misses.

If you follow all of the steps above, you should end up with a system that's pretty smut proof, and safe for kids to use.

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More than point-and-shoot

We are coming across a lot of advanced point and shoot cameras that offer a killer feature-set and better image quality than standard cheaper point and shoots

Agent 001

agent001@thinkdigit.com

So you're sick and tired of little cameras that crap out in 5 out of 10 situations (this is an optimistic estimate). You don't want the bulk of a DSLR or the hassle of changing lenses, but you don't want to compromise on quality either. Don't worry. The camera-makers have got you covered. The advanced point and shoot category of point and shoot cameras is designed for people looking for impeccable DSLR like quality, in all kinds of light condition, without the bulk of a DSLR. But these little things cost quite a bit, so choosing the right one becomes important and for that, we've got this nifty guide for you.

- **Wider is Better**

The first and most important feature to look out for on an advanced point and shoot is its aperture number. The smaller the number, the better (f/1.8 is better than f/2.0 and so on). This number essentially means how wide the aperture can open to let in light. The smaller the number, the wider the aperture opens, meaning more light goes in. A smaller number range is better, like f/2.0-4.0 is better than f/2.0-5.6.

- **Bigger is also better**

The second and equally important thing is the size of the sensor. Normally, even advanced point and shoot cameras will have a regular 1/2.3-inch sensor, but some have a bigger ones like the Fujifilm X-10 with its 2/3-inch sensor or the Sony RX100 with its 1-inch sensor. The bigger the sensor, the better the dynamic range, color rendition and contrast range of the image captured.


- **Lighting up the Scene**

Make sure there is a flash on the camera. We especially like the design of the RX100's flash, which when raised can be tilted and swiveled in the event you want to bounce the light onto your subject. Another important aspect is the presence of a hot-shoe, onto which you should be able to attach an external flash if you need to. Not all advanced point and shoot cameras will give you this luxury.

- **Accessorise**

The camera is only one part of the equation. Accessories for the camera can add a lot of amazing functionality to it, like an external mic for better audio recording in movie mode, or a wide/telephoto lens attachment to push the optics beyond what they're capable of. These aren't absolutely essential, but it's good to know that the

camera you're investing in has some scope for expansion in the future.

These are only a handful of things to look out for when purchasing an advanced point and shoot. There is also the issue of how well sized the camera is. The Fujifilm X-10 cannot be pocketed, even if you're trying to fit it into cargo pants. The Sony RX100 on the other hand will slip right into most jeans pockets. There is always some trade-off or the other with most cameras, so it will all break down to what trade-offs you're OK living with. A few other smaller factors to consider are ergonomics (how well the camera feels in your hands), whether it can shoot in RAW or not, and the capacity of the battery. Even though these advanced point and shoots are pretty heavy-duty with respect to features, they often come with measly batteries which will die halfway through a shoot. We recommend giving special consideration to battery life, and therefore picking up a few extra slabs of Li-ions batteries. However, the most important piece of advice is that before you actually buy the camera, go out to a store and use it. Take a memory card with you and shoot off a few test frames which you can examine at home. When you see an image that meets your quality standards, you've found a keeper. 



New Humble Indie Bundle

A new and exciting collection of indie games was released in the Humble Indie Bundle 7. You can get it by paying a minimum amount of \$1 for the entire basic bundle

Agent 001

Laptop customisation

I want to buy the Dell Inspiron 14z. Could you please help me with the customisation. I read your review on the same, but it had a Core i5 processor which comes for around ₹52,490. Could you tell me what components I should add to keep the costs under ₹50,000?

ShubhamAmraotkar

A Dell has made some variations to the Dell Inspiron 14z pricing, to co-incide with the Windows 8 refresh. However, the version that we have reviewed now costs ₹50,990, and not ₹52,490 as you have said.

This has the same specs - Intel Core i5-3317U processor and 4 GB of RAM, with the AMD Radeon HD 7570M (1 GB) graphics. If you search around for the right deals, this could be available for under ₹50,000.

1 TB portable HDD

I am a regular reader and need some advice with buying an external HDD. I am looking for a 1 TB portable HDD. I was looking for something between ₹4k - ₹6k. I want it to have a USB 3.0 interface. I have done some research and have shortlisted the two - Buffalo Ministation and Seagate Backup Plus. I would love to have a good read and write speed. Please help me, as I am running out of space on my PC.

Puneet Singh

A Between the drives you have mentioned, I feel you should opt for the Seagate Backup Plus 1 TB drive as it offers better speeds than the Buffalo MiniStation drive. Real-life sequential speeds on the Seagate Backup Plus easily crossed 100 MB/s whereas the Buffalo drive was around 75 MB/s. Also the Seagate drive offers you the option to backup your online life which is a great value add for the additional ₹600.



Seagate Backup Plus

Budget point and shoot

I am planning to buy a point and shoot camera around a budget of ₹14,000. I need a good zoom, HD video recording and manual functions.

NitishYadav



Canon SX160IS

A For your budget, you could look at the Nikon Coolpix L810 or the Canon SX160 IS. Both are very good cameras for the money, but both of them only shoot 720p video. In fact, in this budget, it would be very difficult to find a camera that records full HD video AND gives you excellent picture quality and good zoom range. Keeping that in mind, I would recommend either of the L810 or the SX160 IS, but if full HD video is an absolute must, you could look at the Panasonic SZ7 too.

Budget ICS tablet

I want a tablet with a price range of ₹5,000 - ₹11,000. The tablet should be running Android ICS 4.0.3. The tablet should have a sim card slot, a USB Port, a gravity sensor and accelerometer and sim card support.

ArkaKarmarkar

A Looking at your budget, you can take a look at the Zync Z1000. It has a 9.7-inch display with 1024 x 768 resolution, 1.5 GHz processor, 1 GB RAM, 8 GB storage expandable up to 32 GB via a micro SD card, 2 MP rear camera and 0.3 video call camera, Wi-Fi, Android 4.0 upgradable to Android 4.1. It also has a SIM card slot for making calls and accessing the internet. The battery on the device too has a good lifespan. If a 9.7-inch display is too big for you, you can take a look at the Zync Z999 Plus.

We'd recommend you get some hands on with the device at your nearest electronic store before making your buying decision. **[i]**



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 Haryana / Himachal - 0124- 225 0478, Indore - 0731- 404 2509,
 Jaipur - 0141- 313 0340, Kolkata - 8017518545,
 New Delhi - 8860080580, Lucknow - 0522- 400 5840,
 Ludhiana - 09316065255, Nagpur - 0712-302 3811,
 Nashik - 98605 39199, Pune - 093723 37752, Patna - 0612- 326 0947,
 Raipur - 0771- 329 3674, Ranchi - 0651- 324 4199,
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3D Electronics Printers

University of Warwick researchers have created an inexpensive conductive plastic composite that can be used to 3D print electronic devices <http://dgit.in/UPFQUU>



Wii Mini Anyone?

Nintendo's Wii Mini console retails at a \$99.99 price point, with RED Wii Remote Plus controller & Nunchuk Accessory. <http://dgit.in/UPG9yZ>

SPEND SMART

Find out the latest prices of smartphones, DSLRs, point and shoot cameras and gaming keyboards



SMARTPHONES

Brand	Model	Operating System	Processor (in Mhz)	Display Size (in inches)	Primary Camera (MP)	Battery Rating (in mAh)	Price (in ₹)
Blackberry	Curve 9360	Blackberry 7 OS	800	2.44	5	1000	17,925
Blackberry	Torch 9860	Blackberry 7 OS	1200	3.7	5	1230	21,499
Blackberry	Bold 9900	Blackberry 7 OS	1200	2.8	5	1230	32,999
HTC	Desire C	Android 4.0	600	3.5	5	1230	12,400
HTC	8X	Windows Phone 8	1500	4.3	8	1800	35,032
HTC	One V	Android 4.0	1000	3.7	5	1500	17,499
HTC	Sensation XE	Android 2.3	1500	4.3	8	1730	22,799
HTC	One S	Android 4.0	1700	4.3	8	1650	24,667
HTC	One X	Android 4.0	1500	4.7	8	1800	34,999
Huawei	Ideos X5 Pro	Android 2.3	1000	3.8	5	1500	9,999
LG	Optimus Hub E510	Android 2.3	800	3.5	5	1500	10,899
LG	Optimus L5 Dual E615	Android 4.0	800	4	5	1500	13,499
LG	Optimus L7 P705	Android 4.0	1000	4.3	5	1700	15,990
LG	Optimus Sol E730	Android 2.3	1000	3.8	5	1500	16,990
LG	Optimus 3D Max P725	Android 2.3	1200	4.3	5	1520	28,990
Motorola	Defy XT	Android 2.3	1000	3.7	5	1650	12,899
Motorola	Atrix 2	Android 2.3	1000	4.3	8	1785	17,999
Motorola	Razr XT910	Android 2.3	1200	4.3	8	1780	23,999
Nokia	603	Symbian Belle OS	1000	3.5	5	1300	12,860
Nokia	Lumia 610	Windows Phone 7.5	800	3.7	5	1300	12,380
Nokia	Lumia 710	Windows Phone 7.5	1400	3.7	5	1300	14,999
Nokia	Lumia 800	Windows Phone 7.5	1400	3.7	8	1450	18,867
Nokia	Lumia 900	Windows Phone 7.5	1400	4.3	8	1830	31,131
Samsung	Galaxy Ace Duos S6802	Android 2.3	832	3.5	5	1300	11,900
Samsung	Omnia M S7530	Windows Phone 7.5	1000	4	5	1500	11,999
Samsung	Galaxy S Duos S7562	Android 4.0	1000	4	5	1500	16,700
Samsung	Galaxy S Advance i9070	Android 2.3	1000	4	5	1500	18,999
Samsung	Galaxy Note N-7000	Android 2.3	1400	5.29	8	2500	29,990
Samsung	Galaxy S III	Android 4.0	1400	4.8	8	2100	35,999
Samsung	Galaxy Note 2 N7100	Android 4.1	1600	5.5	8	3100	36,900
Samsung	Galaxy S 2 i9100	Android 2.3	1200	4.27	8	1650	25,900
Sony	Xperia Go	Android 2.3	1000	3.5	5	1305	17,990
Sony	Xperia Neo L	Android 4.0	1000	4	5	1460	16,490
Sony	Xperia SL	Android 4.0	1700	4.3	12.1	1750	27,990
Sony	Xperia Ion	Android 4.0	1500	4.6	12	1900	29,990
Lava	Xolo X900	Android 2.3	1600	4.03	8	1460	17,500



Windows 8 Adoption

Microsoft claims 40 million Windows 8 licences were sold in little over month since the October 26, 2012 launch <http://dgit.in/UPGFgx>



Facebook Nearby

Facebook added Nearby to its iOS and Android apps, showing users searchable lists of every popular spot in their immediate vicinity <http://dgit.in/UPiUkr>

Price Watch



CAMERAS

DSLR/ILC	Brand	Model	Resolution (MP)	Sensor-Type	Microphone	MMC Slots	Battery Life (Shots)	Price (in ₹)
	Nikon	D800E	36	fx	Mono	2	900	1,94,950
	Nikon	D7000	16	dx	Mono	2	1050	65,550
	Nikon	D5100	16	dx	Mono	1	540	33,950
	Nikon	D3200	24	dx	Mono	1	540	35,365
	Canon	5D Mark III	22	ff	Mono	2	950	2,16,095
	Canon	650D	18	APS-C	Stereo	1	440	55,995
	Canon	EOS 7D	18	APS-C	-	1	NA	85,355
	Sony	SLT-77	24	1.5	Stereo	1	470	69,990
	Sony	SLT-57	16	1.5	Stereo	1	550	45,990
	Olympus	E-PL1	12.3	Four Thirds	-	1	NA	18,999
PnS	Brand	Model	Resolution (MP)	Sensor Type	Optical Zoom	Max ISO	Battery Life (Shots)	Price (in ₹)
	Canon	220HS	12.1	CMOS	14x	3200	210	10,665
	Canon	S100	12.1	CMOS	5x	6400	350	12,560
	Canon	IXUS 310HS	12.1	CMOS	4.4x	3200	180	10,665
	Canon	G1X	14.3	CMOS	4x	12800	210	46,555
	Canon	SX 160 IS	16	CCD	16x	1600	380	12,600
	Sony	RX100	20.2	CMOS	3.6x	12800	330	34,500
	Sony	HX100V	16.2	CMOS	26x	3200	410	21,750
	Fujifilm	HS20EXR	16	BSI CMOS	30x	3200	NA	21,500
	Fuji	X100	12.3	CMOS	1x	12800	300	72999
	Nikon	Coolpix L810	16.1	CCD	26x	1600	350	13532

GAMING KEYBOARDS

Brand	Model	USB Slots	Mechanical (Y/N/Type)	nKRO	Macro Keys (Y/N/No.)	Game Mode	Backlit (Y/N)	Palm Rest (Y/N)	Misc	Price (in ₹)
Corsair	K90	1	Red	20	18	Y	Y	Y	36KB Memory	7,500
Cooler Master	Quick Fire Pro	N	Red	6	N	Y	Y	N	NA	5,500
Cooler Master	CM Storm Quick Fire TK	N	Red	6	N	Y	Y	N	Shortened Keyboard	6,999
Cooler Master	CM Storm Trigger	2	Red	6	5	Y	Y	Y	64KB Memory	7,999
Logitech	G510	1	N	NA	18	Y	Y	Y	Monochrome LCD	5,999
Logitech	G19	2	N	5	12	Y	Y	Y	Colour LCD	12,995
Razer	Black Widow 2013	Y	Blue	10	5	Y	Y	N	NA	6,760
Steelseries	6GV2	N	Black	6	N	N	N	N	NA	8,599
Steelseries	7G Pro	2	Black	Infinite	N	N	N	Y	NA	9999

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BASIC RIG

Processor	Intel Pentium G840	4000
Motherboard	Asus P8H61-M LX3	2810
RAM	Corsair 2GB DDR3 1333MHz	650
HDD	Toshiba 500GB HD 721050DLE630	3350
Monitor	ViewSonic VA2038WM	6499
Graphics Card	None	0
Cabinet	Cooler Master Elite 310	1600
PSU	Seasonic SS-400ES	2700
Speaker (2.1)	Altec Classic Audio BXR1221	1100
Mouse	Zebronics Judwaa 5 (Bundle)	0
Optical Drive	Samsung 22x SATA DVD Writer	950
Keyboard	Zebronics Judwaa 5 (Bundle)	465
Sound Card	None	0
Total		24,124

HTPC

Processor	AMD A6-3650	5900
Motherboard	ASRock A75M	4300
RAM	Kingston 2GB DDR3 1333MHz	750
HDD	Western Digital WD20EARX 2TB	6050
Monitor	None (your TV)	0
Graphics Card	None (HD6530D onboard)	0
Cabinet	Zebronics Tambi	2000
PSU	Bundled (150W)	0
Speaker	None	0
Mouse	MS Wireless laser Combo XVA-00020	2750
Keyboard	Bundled	0
Optical Drive	Samsung 22x SATA DVD Writer	950
Sound Card	None	0
Total		22,700

ENTRY-LEVEL GAMING

Processor	AMD A10-5800K	7000
Motherboard	ASUS F2A85-M Pro	8690
RAM	G-skill F3-10600CL9S-4GBNT	1050
HDD	Seagate 1 TB ST2000DL001	4725
Monitor	BenQ G2222HD	7000
Graphics Card	None	0
Cabinet	Cooler Master Elite 310	1600
PSU	Corsair CX430	2300
Speaker	Altec Lansing V2621	1850
Mouse	Zebronics Judwaa 5 (Bundle)	0
Optical Drive	Samsung 22x SATA DVD Writer	950
Keyboard	Zebronics Judwaa 5 (Bundle)	465
Sound Card	None	0
Total		35,630

MID-RANGE COMPACT SYSTEM

Processor	Intel Core i5-3570K	14200
Motherboard	ZOTAC Z77X-ITX A-E	9999
RAM	Corsair Vengeance 8GB DDR3 1600	2650
HDD	Seagate 2TB Green	5850
Monitor	Your TV	0
Graphics Card	ZOTAC GTX 650Ti AMP (1 GB)	10999
Cabinet	Cooler Master Elite 120 Advanced	2799
PSU	Cooler Master Thunder 500W	3160
Speaker	None	0
Mouse	MS Wireless laser Combo XVA-00020	2750
Keyboard	Bundled	0
Optical Drive	Samsung 22x SATA DVD Writer	950
Sound Card	NA	0
Total		53,357

MID-RANGE GAMING

Processor	Intel Core i5-3450	11500
Motherboard	Gigabyte GA-B75M-D3H	4050
RAM	Corsair Vengeance 4 GB	1450
HDD	Seagate 500GB 7200.12	3650
Monitor	Samsung P2350	10800
Graphics Card	ASUS GTX 650 Ti	11250
Cabinet	Corsair Carbide Series 300R	4300
PSU	Corsair GS 600	4000
Speaker	Altec Lansing V2621	1850
Mouse	Razer Abyssus (bundled)	0
Optical Drive	Samsung 22x SATA DVD Writer	950
Keyboard	Razer Cyclosa (Bundled)	2700
Sound Card	None	0
Total		56,500

ULTRA HIGH-END GAMING

Processor	Intel Core i7-3770K	20000
Motherboard	ASRock Fatal1ty Z77 Professional	15999
RAM	Corsair Vengeance 8GB DDR3 1600	2650
HDD	WD WD30EZR 3TB + Corsair Neutron 120 GB	17000
Monitor	BenQ XL2420T	21000
Graphics Card	ZOTAC GTX 680 2 GB	33500
Cabinet	NZXT Phantom	7869
PSU	Cooler Master Real Power Pro 850W	11044
Speaker	F&D F680	3500
Mouse	Corsair M-60	3920
Optical Drive	LG Blu-ray WH14NS40 RW	7000
Keyboard	Thermaltake eSports Challenger Pro	4399
Sound Card	ASUS Xonar DX 7.1	4700
Total		1,52,581

worldview

OUR PICK OF THE BEST TECH ARTICLES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

(MUST READS)



GAME OF THRONES: THE TECH EDITION

This Economist article draws parallels in the battles between tech giants Apple, Amazon, Google and Facebook to the political and war drama that one sees in the books and TV show 'Game of Thrones' complete with a fictional map of the tech titans' territories.

<http://dgit.in/WDIZHe>

THE BIG BOSS OF SAMSUNG

Since the time Lee Kun-hee has taken over the chairmanship from his deceased father in 1987, the company now earns 39 times times what it used to in 1987. But there is a lot of uncomfortable history to that journey. This article takes a look at Samsung's formative years.

<http://dgit.in/TBfNTU>

BOOKS ARE DEAD?

This PandoDaily article tries to put forth the argument that books as we know them today are dead. We don't completely agree with it specially in the Indian context. But the author presents some interesting points as to how books of the future should give the reader a 360-degree multimedia experience over the static experience that we now have.

<http://dgit.in/12y5B0L>

(ArsTechnica Corner)

THE SMARTPHONE GUIDE



ArsTechnica brings you an in-depth series on the state of smartphones. It starts off the series by comparing eight phones then moves on to social aspects of the smartphones in part II. Music related content is covered in-depth in part III of the series. And there is more to come. A must read over weekends. <http://dgit.in/R4XgiB>



Impact of Google Fiber

Google Fiber has created a lot of buzz for its 1 Gbps internet speed, but in Kansas City, it has also led to the formation of a small startup community. A lot of techies are heading to Kansas to explore their dreams, realty prices are heading northwards an so on.

<http://dgit.in/ZiPg24>



Saving the Enterprise-D bridge

This one will surely bring a smile on the Star Trek fans out there. Huston Huddleston has taken on the ambitious task of re-building the Enterprise-D bridge from Star Trek: The Next Generation and turn it into a not-for-profit museum. This story charts how he plans to go about it.

<http://dgit.in/20Z1Er>



Anon on the run

Commander X, a very popular Anonymous hacktivist, is on the run from the American government. In this profile he speaks about the challenges of being a prominent Anon member and continuing his work in an alien country and severing all online and offline ties.

<http://dgit.in/T7bmHY>

THE WEB WE LOST

The author takes a nostalgic look at some pre-web 2.0, pre-social media heavy days of the internet and enlists some features that the current generation of web users will never know of. It is a good walk down memory lane.
<http://dgit.in/T5WMIL>

VIRAL PHOTO PROJECTS OF 2012



Wired has come up with this wonderful compilation of the most engaging viral photo projects which include the Haunted House series, Sea Creature series and so on. A visual treat!
<http://dgit.in/SMGCpC>

LIFE OF PI EDITOR INTERVIEWED



Here Tim Squires, Life of Pi's film editor talks about the challenges posed while editing 3D films, making the CG tiger look realistic, if digital actors can replace human actors. If you haven't seen the film, please do!
<http://dgit.in/ZghXN8>

THE END?



This series from Verge takes a look at various conspiracy theories and has interviews with renowned theorists who touch upon topics such as the new world order, solar cataclysm, etc., which they say will lead to doomsday.
<http://dgit.in/V6MtF4>

Probing The Matrix: Is our universe simulated, and if so... by who?

- By John Hewitt



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Interpreting the universe as a computer simulation is perhaps the inevitable byproduct of living in the computer age. The question today is not whether we live inside a simulation, but rather — what does it want, and what compromises with regard to the welfare its inhabitants might have been made to get it? The first rudimentary experiments to poke it in the belly and see how it jiggles are just getting underway.

If it's possible to hack the universe, then particle physicists must be its early phone phreakers. Fears, which turned out to exaggerated, were raised few years ago that a black hole might unwittingly be created inside the Large Hadron Collider. Arguably, it is more accurate to say that with the theories that prescribe the existence of subatomic particles that exist nowhere else in the known universe, these folks actually invent them, rather than just discover them. The fact that they then go out and literally create subatomic particles inside of these huge, specially built accelerators, raises a very real question — what is a subatomic particle? Is it the blip on the oscilloscope, or the whole accelerator itself?

THE MATRIX

High-energy astrophysicists study cosmic rays — the most energetic particles naturally produced by the universe, as opposed to high-energy particles in accelerators.

They are believed to come from distant events, like supernova explosions, pulsars, and quasars, and are detected in the vicinity of Earth using satellite- or balloon-borne instruments. Scientists have accumulated a wealth of data about cosmic rays. It is therefore not surprising that a recent proposal entitled Constraints on the Universe as a Numerical Simulation [PDF][<http://googl/OWQAN>] seeks to reveal the structure of the grid underlying the simulated universe, using measurements of the energy distribution of these particles.



After considerable theorizing, the authors determine that the distribution and direction of incoming cosmic rays at the highest energies can be used to derive a limit on the spacing of the grid. That is actually quite a bold statement. Fundamental limits to how small space can be divided have arisen in physics discussions before, particularly in reference to the Planck length, which is quantum mechanical in nature. Here the authors only consider a simulation of a very small region of space, on the order of just a few femtometers, and assume ordinary classical computation comprises

the simulation — which is to say there is no quantum computing necessary.

Before any definite conclusions can be drawn from these observations, more complete measurements of cosmic rays need to be made for the simple reason that astrophysicists have yet to observe a firm upper bound to the cosmic ray energy spectrum — its “tail” dips above a certain energy, but it is still long and of unknown length. In other words, the more we continue to look for cosmic rays, the more we continue to find particles at ever higher energies, making plausible explanations for their existence all the more difficult.

If the universe is a simulation, why is it being simulated in the first place?

One thing to bear in mind is that what constitutes a “proof” under one set of assumptions may not be accepted as such under another. Mathematicians can convincingly show for example, that the square root of two is an irrational number by proving that the opposite idea is false. As Kurt Godel showed in his incompleteness theorem, undecidable statements can and will arise within any finite set of axioms. Depending on our particular axioms, the question of whether we live in a simulation could be provable, disprovable, or neither.

Assuming that an upper limit to cosmic ray energy is found or other methods of verification are uncovered, and the simulation is to some extent quantified, is it possible to ascertain the purpose of the simulation? If it might be said that we are carrying out some kind of computation — what computation? It is no great leap to suppose that any

5 IN 5

In this series of 5 videos, IBM research

scientists speak about the future of cognitive computing pertaining to the five senses and how devices around these senses will revolutionise the way we use technology. Probable applications of such devices are immense. <http://dgit.in/XNAM3Y>

UNDERSTANDING LYTRO

The refocussable images coming

out of the Lytro camera have impressed us. This article goes behind the aesthetics of light field photography and speaks about the pros and cons of the technology.

<http://dgit.in/T9appj>

8K: THE ULTIMATE IN TV SCREENS?

BBC Click team visits Japan, where its leading tech brands are working together on an 8,000 pixel-wide display which they call the Super Hi-vision. According to the presenter, this TV screen is even more immersive than traditional 3D. Consumer 8K TVs are still 7 years away though.

<http://dgit.in/WuVlXI>

SURREAL SELF-PORTRAITS

A photograph of you carrying yourself may make you wonder what we have been smoking, but this tutorial teaches you just how to do that!

<http://dgit.in/Tvkugg>

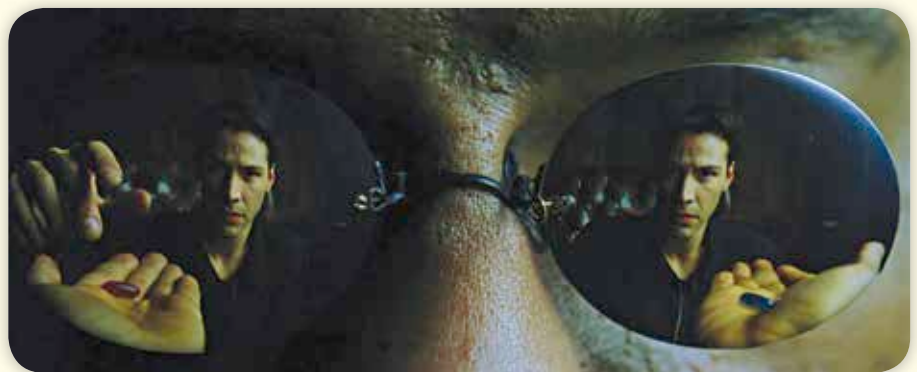
advanced civilization or individual would seek to simulate the unfolding of its own universe, how life came to be in that universe, and how the simulator itself came to be, perhaps even nested within another simulation.

So suppose we suggest our own axiom as follows — “the simulation seeks to maximize the richness of the environment in which minds might develop, interact and probe the constraints of their own simulation while at the same time minimizing the amount of suffering of the unfortunate among those that arise in that simulation.” While the simulators may have had good intentions and respect for life, it is impossible to deny that there is and has been non-negligible suffering in our simulation. Is an axiom such as this compatible with what we can now observe?

One way to view our present simulation in this light is to imagine it set in motion with incomplete knowledge of what would unfold when left to its own devices. Perhaps the simulators cannot, or have chosen not to observe or manipulate the simulation. The original simulators might have long since expired or otherwise become detached from the simulation, having exhausted their own energy supply in an open universe, or having collapsed to a singularity in a closed one, somehow managing to manipulate matter on a scale grand enough to accelerate the simulation beyond collapse.

YOU ARE THE ONE

Another way to examine the simulation is through the calculus of extremes. An appeal to the extreme viewpoint of the solipsist – the belief that the only sure thing in the universe is your own mind — would address the problem of minimization of suffering because it can simply be denied. The only discomfort in existence would be one’s own.



Why then might a simulator even bother with simulating the environment if the most interesting thing to simulate is a mind?

If in fact many solipsistic minds are simulated, each in their own isolated world, the computational complexity of the task would grow enormously, making it desirable to at some point to overlap the environments. We might then ask, where in this kind of arrangement do we fall?

One question a simulation might attempt to answer is what is the optimal number of minds to apply to the major problems of the universe. I.e. how to maximally extend and allocate its finite resources. In other words, do you want a just a few large, hyper-intelligent minds attacking the problem, or rather lots of smaller minds?

To have faith that every water molecule in the ocean is being perfectly simulated at this very moment, in the absence of observation, may be a testament to just how easy it is for our universe to simulate reality. The number of permissible states for an ocean’s atoms would seem near infinite compared to the those for the three-pound mass in our heads, but which is really easier to simulate? The movements of the ocean can easily be captured with principles and even laws which could vastly simplify the task. Per-

haps one day we will find a way to test this kind of hypothesis.

The idea of setting up some kind of “glitch” detector to look for inconsistencies in the simulation has been raised, but it may be difficult to characterize exactly what a glitch would be. People have experiences all the time in the normal operation of their own brains which could just as well be interpreted as as glitch, but typically we do not define them as such. Whereas a seemingly vivid apparition of a long since loved one in the hallway at night may be experienced fully from the incidental stimulus of a few errant sounds, another person would no doubt interpret the situation in an entirely different way.

The question of the degree to which simulations and minds may overlap is a question for another day. We are just beginning to write the experiments that create the conclusions we might draw, in the manner of the particle physicist. Solipsistic inspection is certainly useful as a tool for thought experiments, but as a social strategy it can only be a failure and is largely discounted as such. The viewpoint does offer one subtle abode — there is evidence that other people age and in fact die, but for you, there is only evidence that you get older.

SIXTY SYMBOLS

This is one channel where all you Physics and Astronomy nerds will



feel right at home. With explorations and explanations of topics as zany as the science behind the bubbles in a Guinness pint to discussing the Large Hadron Collider to the phenomenon of double rainbow, this channel has it all. What's more, you can even send in your questions to have them answered.

<http://dgit.in/Y4tHAS>

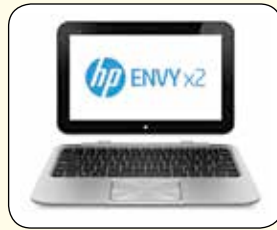
(QR Code)



For a list of all the links from this section, head over to <http://dgit.in/WorldViewJan2013> Or point your phone to the QR code above

(PRODUCT LAUNCHES)

HP ENVY X2



HP's new hybrid, the Envy x2, lets you switch between notebook and tablet modes easily. It sports an 11.6-inch IPS (1366 x 768 pixel) display with multi-touch, has an Intel Atom Z2760 Dual-Core processor at 1.8 Ghz, 2 GB RAM and a 64 GB SSD. This device will be available at ₹59,990.

COOLER MASTER HAF XB



Cooler Master has unveiled it's new non-traditional compact mid-tower which supports ATX, m-ATX and m-ITX boards, a removable motherboard tray, dust-filters and 240mm radiator support for liquid-cooling. Suited for LAN parties, the HAF XB will set you back by USD 99.

SAMSUNG GALAXY GRAND



Samsung announced a new smartphone called the Galaxy Grand. It's a hybrid between the Galaxy S III and the Galaxy Note II. A 5-inch display, dual-SIM support, a dual-core 1.2 GHz pro-cessor, 1 GB RAM, and an 8.0 MP camera are some of its features. Pricing is not available at the moment.

WORDJUMBLE

ABSOLUTE TIMEPASS

D	W	Z	S	U	F	O	R	T	R	A	N	U	Q	R
Q	Q	F	M	F	I	X	U	F	J	F	E	I	P	F
E	L	F	R	T	X	S	V	U	H	A	L	Z	Z	V
M	R	L	E	E	I	F	K	S	F	V	M	A	U	R
L	S	A	A	J	E	J	F	K	E	I	S	G	S	B
Q	M	M	W	W	B	W	Y	E	S	C	L	Y	P	H
D	Z	I	H	M	E	Q	A	R	A	O	I	E	R	K
K	Z	N	C	J	R	R	F	R	O	N	T	E	N	D
P	B	G	Y	B	V	I	I	N	E	M	I	L	N	J
M	S	E	L	A	I	T	F	F	E	C	Q	H	G	O

There are 10 technology terms in this word grid, all starting with the letter F. It's our special sneak peak into the next Encyclopedia Technica edition. Enjoy!

Top 3 YouTube Picks

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



Look at this Instagram

Duration: 02 mins 55 secs

CollegeHumor have come up with this brilliant parody making fun of Instagram users. <http://dgit.in/12r93KE>



The World's first driving dog

Duration: 01 mins 48 secs

So you thought dogs were only good for fetching that frisbee? Well meet Mr. Porter. <http://dgit.in/WdBh8l>



Zeitgeist 2012

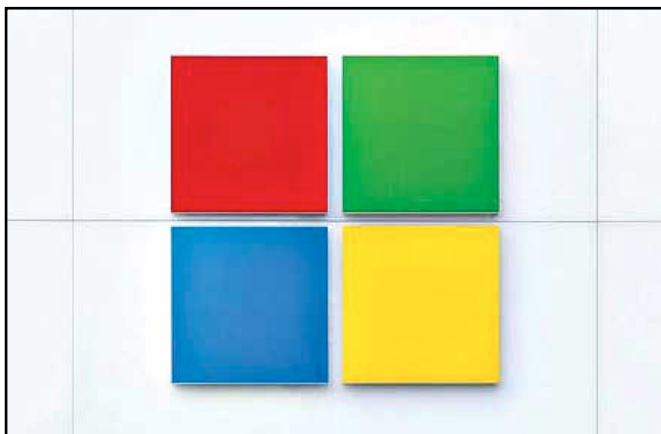
Duration: 02 mins 46 secs

Google brings us Zeitgeist 2012, its annual roundup of the year gone by, in a video form. <http://dgit.in/12raQzj>



Interview with
Paul Burnett, APAC
Evangelist,
Adobe Systems
For the complete interview
visit:
devworx.in

Microsoft launches 14 Innovation Centres in India



Microsoft Corporation (India) Pvt. Ltd. has announced the launch of 14 Microsoft Innovation Centers (MICs) in India, signing MoUs with leading academic institutions across four states. Globally, the company currently has 75 MICs and as part of the worldwide programme, Microsoft aims to launch a total of 100 MICs in India in the next two years.

These MICs will act as innovation hubs at select col-

leges and technology institutes, providing incubation and expert hands-on support on Microsoft technology innovation, research, and software solutions, aiming to create a pool of student technology experts across India. These MICs will impact over 5,00,000 students, certifying 1,00,000 students on Microsoft technologies. The program will also drive innovation and help build a product-based software economy by sup-

porting product development, and over 500 start-ups.

Microsoft said each centre will function as a hub for five other neighbouring colleges and will operate in a hub-spoke model driving employability, innovation, and entrepreneurship in the academic ecosystem around it. The 14 cities that will host the first MICs, opening this week will be Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Rajahmundry, Khammam, Bapatla, Guntur and Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh; Raipur in Chhattisgarh; Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh; and Trichy, Vellore, Coimbatore, Madurai and Salem in Tamil Nadu.

"In particular, MICs will play a crucial role in deepening the relationship between academia and industry, enhancing at a very basic level, employability and education." according to the official statement. >

Read the entire article at <http://dvwx.in/SynbAJ> and share your comments.

*side panel

ValueNotes™
Data to Decisions...

*Impact of collaboration

>>ValueNotes, a research firm conducted a survey commissioned by Mithi Software technologies that studied how collaboration affects enterprise productivity. Read:

<http://dvwx.in/Uq4ef4>

*Google ends Exchange support

>>As part of its 'Winter Cleaning' Google announced it will stop supporting Google Sync, which enabled access to Google Mail, Calendar and Contacts via Exchange ActiveSync protocol. Read:

<http://dvwx.in/SyFMBz>



*Firefox OS Simulator 1.0 out

>>Firefox OS, is a mobile operating system designed for low cost phones built entirely on open web standards. Read:

<http://dvwx.in/ROZBv0>

*footer

A guide to Coding in the Cloud

>>With code already hosted online, being able to edit it online isn't that bad an idea. There are a growing number of services available today that try to provide a complete code editing experience online. Some are simple code editors with basic support for projects, while others are full-fledged IDEs that can compile and deploy your code as well.

<http://dvwx.in/U6748F>



Amy Editor

>>This is one online service that few people may have heard of, and we'd like to rectify that. It is rather impressive considering that it seems to be a one-person project.

<http://dvwx.in/U6b8G6>

Fatal exploit in Exynos-based systems

>>According to a user called *alephzain* on XDA developer forums – who discovered this exploit, it affects devices such as Samsung Galaxy S2, S3, and Galaxy Note 2 which use Exynos processors such as 4210 and 4412. The problem actually occurs because Samsung wanted the camera and maybe other unknown bundled applications to directly access the memory. Read

<http://dvwx.in/R126x8>



For latest news, updates and features, join us on Facebook at facebook.com/devworx.in

Let your apps socialise!

>> Making your apps 'social' can enhance their capabilities at multiple levels. We'll tell you why and how you could tap into your users' social context to build a better user experience >

by **Ketan Singh**

Online social networking is one of the most popular means to stay connected with your friends and family; but by no means does it end at that. While social platforms have been around for some time, they have witnessed tremendous growth both in their capabilities and the number of users using them, and are gradually creeping into other commonly used digital platforms as well. With its growing reach, it has opened up a completely new kind of opportunity that has the potential to reinvent the conventional 'self-sufficient' model of applications.

Now you can port a good part of your users' social networking experience and its associated data into your apps, which can help you enhance your apps' capabilities as well as revenues. With the kind of options made available by the social networking platforms to developers, making your apps truly personalised & 'social' has never been easier.

How do social networking platforms interact with external apps?

The best part about making your apps social is that you don't need to do all the hard work yourself. All you need to do is open up a bit to them!

In addition to usual status updates and tweets, people indirectly generate a lot of useful information when they interact with other entities in their online social networking environment. Every interaction taking place inside a social networking platform, the 'objects' involved and their meta data have IDs associated with them. In some cases, this information is summarised into concise structures or graphs. External agents can interact with these objects and graphs via APIs that are carefully designed to be secure as well as easy-to-use for developers.

For actions that require access to user's private information, the requesting app should be registered with the platform and should be authenticated via protocols such as OAuth by the user in order to publish or access information to or from the social platform.

Social platforms allow you to ask for a huge variety of information about users, such as attributes from their profile, their preference or the list of their friends or followers. However, this doesn't mean you should ask for all of it! There is usually a strong inverse relationship between the amount of information requested and the grant of authorisation by users. Hence, you should carefully assess your app's requirements before finalising the set of information that you'd want your users to authorise. For instance, if your app specialises in job openings, asking for a user's relationship status will almost certainly lead to rejection of authentication by the user!



How does going 'social' make things any better?

Adding a social layer to an app greatly increases user engagement, as there is a certain feeling of assurance and security when your users interact with entities that have a familiar feeling about them. Building great apps is much more than simply delivering services and content to your users. It's about putting your users at the centre and building everything around them. That effectively means building ground up with the user as the base. By placing your users and their social context at the centre of your projects, you intuitively come up with better ways to provide quality content and services to your users, and you formally upgrade your app to the next generation of 'social apps'. Moreover, by making your app social, you render service to your app as well as its users.

Add value to your users

'Social' apps make your users feel like they have an identity. This greatly improves user's willingness to engage with your content. You can personalise your content for each user by harnessing their social context and by making things more relevant to them. In addition, you hand them the opportunity to 'socialise' over your content or app by sharing their feelings with their friends and family, which is what humans fundamentally want to do.

Add value to your app

Making your app social puts it in a position of clear advantage over other 'not-so-social' apps. It adds a sense of seamlessness between

your app and the social networking platforms, which can make your app feel more familiar and trusted. If you add something as simple as a 'like button', it'll let users appreciate your app and its content within their circles. Their friends, in turn, see the recommendation, click through your app, and some of them will 'like' or even 'tweet' (by using the 'tweet button' plugin) the same content. This will gradually snowball into a considerable rise in the number of users, which in turn will improve the overall 'social experience' of your app. Moreover, if your app is built around a business model, the increase in the number of users and higher user engagement will surely map to better revenues for you.

How to make your apps social

Platforms such as Facebook, Google Plus and Twitter have extensive developer sections, which can escort you towards making your apps as social as you want them to be. Apps can be made social in primarily two ways: Either you can use social plugins and channels to give a social layer to your app or you can use the social networking platform of your choice as the base and build your app over it. The two approaches are meant for entirely different kinds of usage, and choosing between the two depends on the nature of your problem that your app solves.

Add a social layer

This is a widely used approach and is suitable for existing web and mobile apps or those that aren't driven primarily by data originating from a social networking platform. Here you can effortlessly choose the social platforms you want to work with, go to their developer pages, build your desired plugins and paste the generated code snippets inside your app. It's really as simple as that! Twitter's 'tweet button' is a great example of a 'build-and-play' social plugin.

If you like it a little more advanced, you can hook your app to their APIs that provide access to the social graph of your users.

Data rendered by social networking APIs are usually high in quality and natively personalised in nature. With consent, you can pull your users' preferences and information from their social graph via the APIs, and logically use that information to personalise the content or components of your app. For example, using the APIs, your app can get to know what artists a user listens to. Then it can compute insights about the user's preference of music and highlight a certain area of your app in response, which would have a high probability being relevant to the user.

In addition to accessing information, you can publish customised notifications to the social platform in response to the actions taken

*pointers

>>Nuggets of cool code at work



*Mobile Web Developer Toolkit

>>Building for mobile web requires a different mindset than desktop web development, and a different set of tools. The tools we're used to using often aren't available or would take up too much screen real estate.

<http://dvwvx.in/Zf1lpd>



*HTML5 faster?

>>After Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg expressed his dissatisfaction over their HTML5 experience, engineers at Sencha decided to prove him wrong, and went ahead and released an HTML5 based app that performs faster than native apps.

<http://dvwvx.in/U5XFks>



*Become a developer

>>Fernando Ferrer shares insight on what it takes to be a software developer, whether you need to be a specialist or a jack-of-all-trades. Software developers are currently the most sought after resources in the US, according to reports.

<http://dvwvx.in/12xrm0J>



*Adobe and Typography

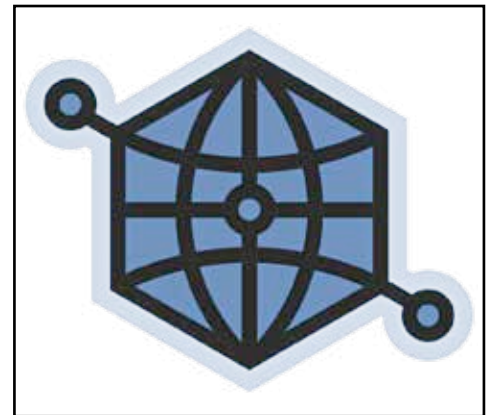
>>At the Create the Web Keynote in San Francisco (September 24th, 2012), Jeffrey Veen gives an overview of Edge Web Fonts.

<http://dvwvx.in/UGTx7Y>

by the users inside your app. Facebook's 'login button', which allows your users to log in using their Facebook credentials or session, is a great example of how useful social plugins can be.

Building your app inside a social platform

Major social platforms such as Facebook and Google+ provide you with resources, free space and deep access to their social graphs, so that you can showcase your creativity by building your apps from within their website. With this approach, you can deeply integrate with the platform's core user experience and core platform technologies will be available for the app to hack into. It is meant for apps that are specifically meant to tap into the power of the targeted social networking platform.



You can build creative apps, even games inside these platforms, while offering full range of social networking capabilities to the users.

So should I let my apps socialise?

It's worth noting that social APIs are highly progressive in nature and you might need to update your apps according to the changes in their policies and protocols every once in a while. Nevertheless, from a developer point of view, it's one of the biggest thing to have happened to apps in recent times. Even giants like Apple have taken the social path, by 'deeply integrating' Facebook into their latest version of iOS. The manner in which social networking features are capable of enhancing your apps' overall user experience and capabilities, it easily surpasses any bottleneck that might come with it. With the power of social networking, you can tap into unexplored networking potential waiting in your apps, while making sure that you add value to your users, your apps and yourself! >

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>>we've spoken to a lot of designers and developers while building these tools >>

>>Paul Burnett, APAC Evangelist, Adobe Systems

Could you tell us a bit about your trip to India?

We've made several announcements during this tour to India. The purpose of this trip and the tour around the globe is to announce the Edge tools and services. Some of you might be aware of these tools in their beta form. What we've now done is we've made 1.0 releases of some of them. We've spoken to a lot of designers and developers while building these tools, and their preference was towards a tool that performed a specific task and one that performed it really well.

What is unique about the animation tool?

While we had Adobe Edge as a tool to handle animation, we now use the name Edge for the whole suite of tools we've announced. So while Edge Animate would be flagship tool of the Edge family, I think its potential is huge. Although it's just a 1.0 product and would go a long way, considering the possibilities its users would adapt it for, I think the sky is the limit. I think we're going to see some amazing stuff.

Are you also doing something in typography?

We acquired Typekit a year ago. Now, we've partnered with Google (Google Web Fonts) and are providing a totally free service called Adobe Edge Web Fonts. The fonts are managed and curated by Adobe and are served through our Adobe Typekit servers. We have Typekit servers around the globe serving thousands of fonts everyday. So as a part of the free service, Google Web fonts, Typekit free fonts, and a whole bunch of free fonts such as Sans Source Pro was designed specifically for the web.>

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*open source



YUI

>>The Yahoo! User Interface Library (YUI) is an open-source JavaScript library for building richly interactive web applications using techniques such as Ajax, DHTML and DOM scripting. YUI includes several core CSS resources.

<http://dwwx.in/RFSYzC>



Prototype

>>Prototype is a JavaScript library and is built to solve real-world problems, it adds useful extensions to the browser scripting environment and provides elegant APIs around the clumsy interfaces of Ajax and the Document Object Model.

<http://dwwx.in/UT5nwW>



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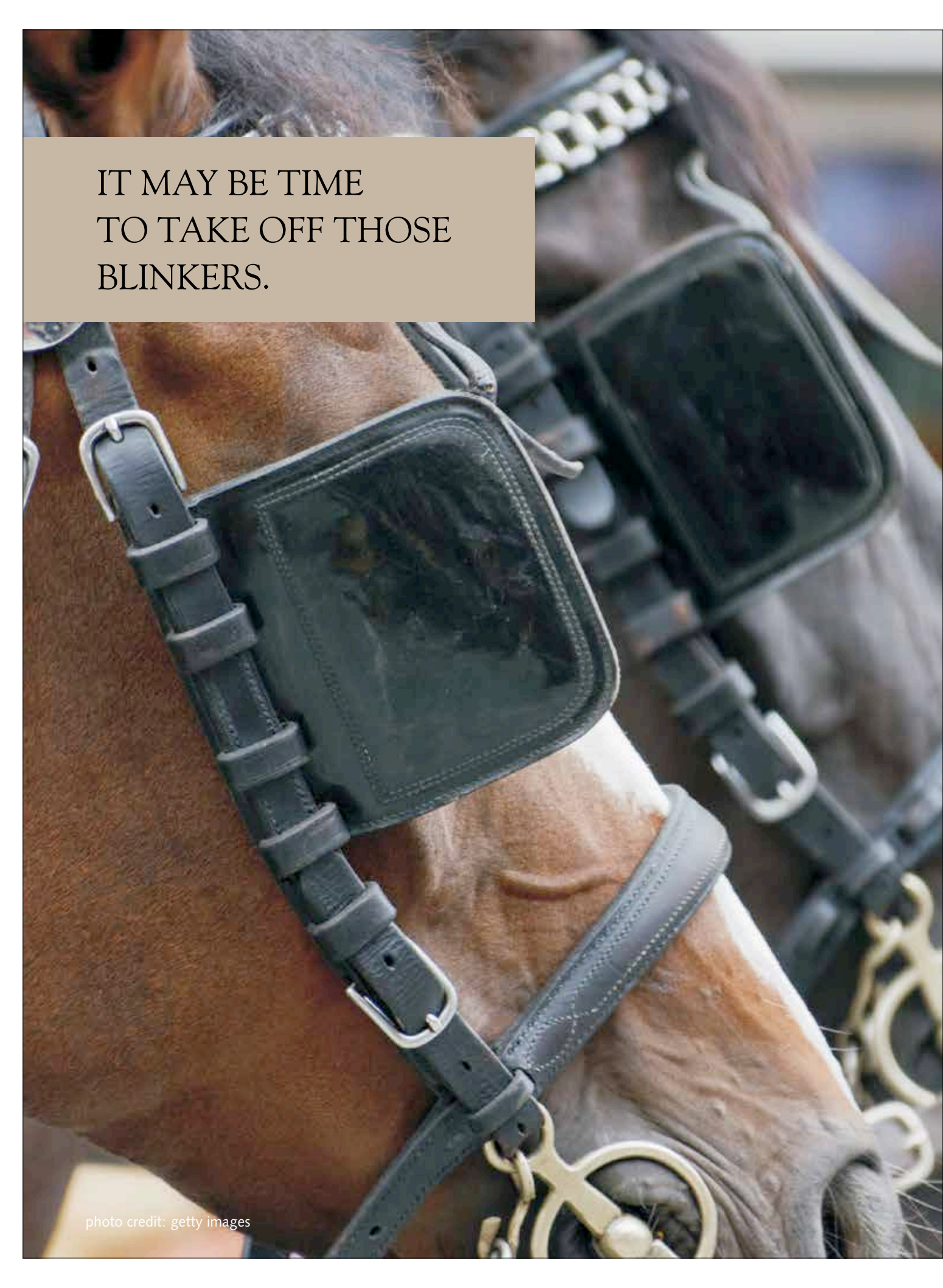
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WINDOWS 8: MICROSOFT'S SILVER BULLET

A lot rides on the success of Microsoft's knight in shining armour. No pressure, eh?

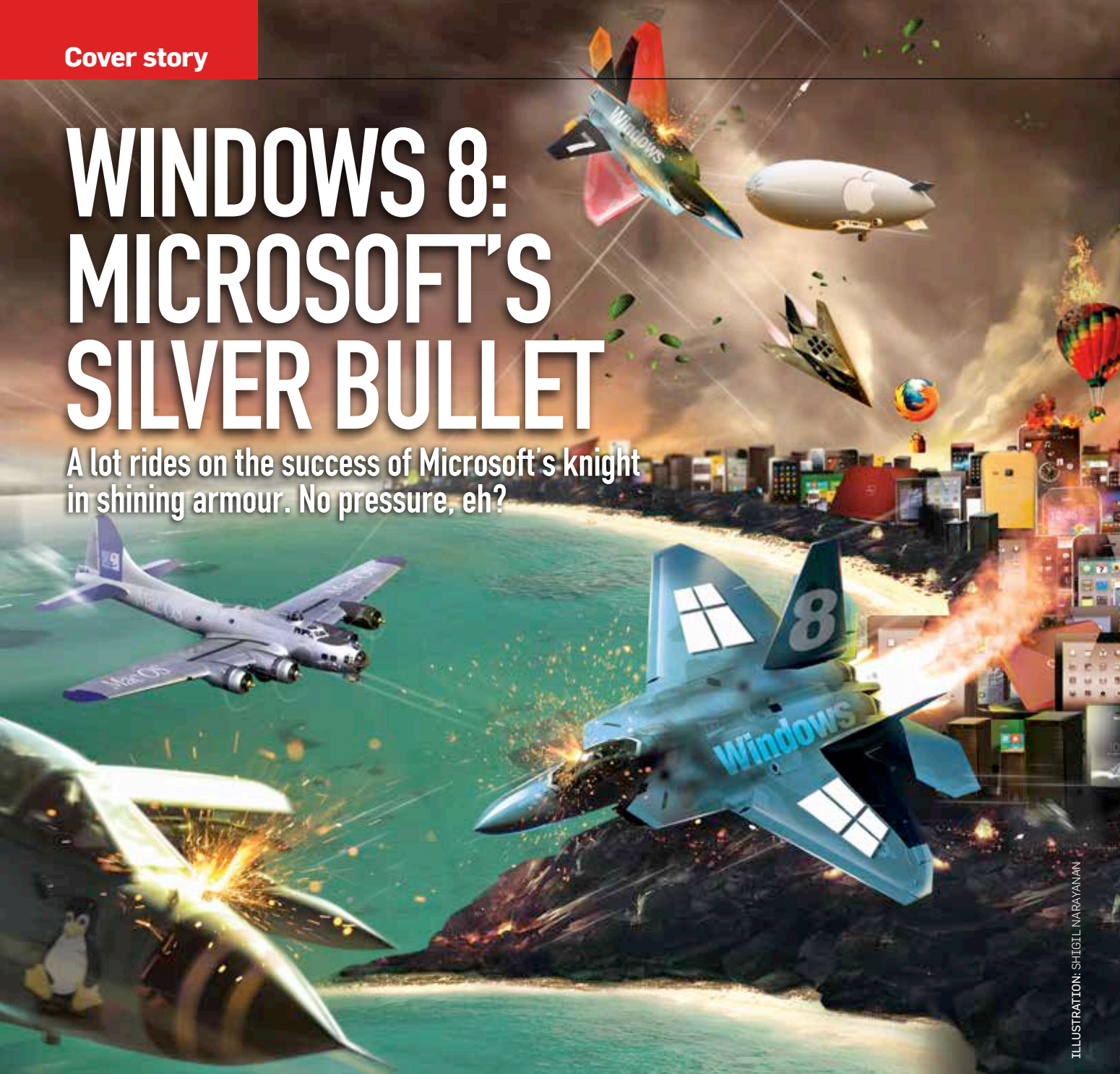


ILLUSTRATION: SHIGIL NARAYANAN

Jayesh Shinde

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Oh, how the mighty have fallen! Ever since the era of personal computing began, Microsoft and its trusted operating system has been ruling the roost. Right until Windows XP, and for close to two decades, the Windows juggernaut has gone from strength to strength, blowing the competition away and getting everyone hooked. A software vendor that had morphed into an endless tech monopoly, exerting control over a global digital marketplace. This was

true up to 2007. For within a decade, how things have changed! More people now buy smartphones and tablets than PCs, and Microsoft's superstar OS – complacent and lacking fresh ideas – is dropped for Apple and Google's spiffy new entrants. Like a rude awakening from a sweet, satisfying teenage dream, Windows realizes that the era of dull and boring boxes hooked to your desks is gone. Prom is over, and victory in past battles count for little, as a new frontier war looms large. At stake is the very essence of personal computing and its new definition. This is a make or break moment in the history of the Redmond giant, a fateful

throw of the dice. With so much at stake, Windows 8 couldn't have picked a more turbulent time to flag off. After this, there's no turning back.

Windows re-imagined

Fresh out of the oven, and garnering steady acclaim worldwide, Microsoft has much to cheer and be cautious about with Windows 8. It is the most ambitious face-lift the operating system has had ever received since Windows 95. Not just cosmetic changes, Windows 8 also carries certain programming traits that differentiate it from previous releases – it has a hybrid kernel and

it's the first Windows flavour to support ARM architecture. There's a whole new Start screen with interactive tiles, Ribbon interface introduced in earlier Office suites finally finds its way into Windows Explorer's panel, and aspects of cloud sync are more tightly integrated into Windows 8 than ever before. The central theme to all this major product overhaul is just one thing – familiarity of the platform across devices. And since most of these devices are going to be tablets, smartphones or hybrids with touch input, according to industry experts, it seems Microsoft's arm has finally been forced to make Windows touch-friendly, easily accessible and receptive to finger gestures (about time, eh?), but it hasn't thrown out the (t)rusty old keyboard and mouse just yet.

Predominantly, Windows 8 juggles between Modern UI and the legacy desktop mode – two separate OSes in themselves – while making a case for multitouch input. Wherever Modern and legacy Windows UI meet, irritation and annoyance occurs. And while covering all of them may not be possible here, you will surely encounter it soon enough in your Windows 8 journey – when you try sending an email through Outlook, try sharing an IE link, saving photos, using Windows' local search, and more. It can make you pull your hair out in frustration, and that's just the beginning.

Microsoft gave the world a sneak preview of what was coming in Windows 8 couple of years back with its revamped phone operating system – Windows Phone. It was an important precursor to Windows 8, largely receiving a positive reception in terms of its fresh, bold, tile-based interface. And when Modern UI finally arrived on Windows 8's Developer Preview, people had their reservations (including us here at Digit), questioning Microsoft's wisdom on things like dropping the Start button and forcing people to get accustomed to the whole new UI.

If nothing else, Windows 8 will be remembered for one thing. At a critical juncture in its history, Windows is trying to embrace the future of personal computing without letting go much of its rich (perhaps outdated?) legacy. It's trying to pack in the familiar old feel of Windows 7 with Modern UI and live tiles borrowed from Windows Phone to appease everyone – both the old and the new. Only time will tell whether it's a successful strategy, but it's the only OS

that has this hybrid feel to it right now. And this may well work in its favour.

Touch me, may be

Microsoft's re-imagining of Windows 8 has somewhat paid off simply because the OS' interface tweaks are actually sympathetic to the limitations of touch input – unlike previous Microsoft attempts to ship Windows XP or Windows 7 on a touch-screen device that bombed spectacularly. After having spent enough frustrating time with Windows 8's beta builds on traditional desktops (without touch-screen displays), interacting with Windows' new bells and whistles through a mouse feels more than a bit dysfunctional, not to mention severely out of fashion. It's most discomfoting to Windows power users, and we completely understand why.



Touch is still painful on a large screen

However, throw in a multi-touch display enabled device in the mix, and Windows 8 starts making more sense. The very first touch-enabled Windows 8 laptop we reviewed, the Acer Aspire S7, made us realize that touch-enabled small screen devices are the ideal starting points for people transitioning onto Windows 8. Because that's the only form factor (under 13-inch) that makes sense for Windows 8 users to make on-screen gestures directly on the display. Anything else, be it a traditional mouse, notebook's trackpad, or a large touch-enabled display for your traditional desktop, and Windows 8's Modern UI, Charms bar and Edge UI feel cumbersome to use – at least initially. May be that's why Microsoft has retained the good old desktop mode for the traditional users.

However, Julie Larson-Green, head of Windows at Microsoft, recently said that it takes users “six weeks” to start using the new UI features of Windows 8, rather than seek out old, familiar Windows desktop features; whereas 90 per cent users find the

Charms menu in their very first session. Microsoft points to their own telemetry data analyzing how users interact with Windows, but doesn't elaborate on the mix of touchscreen and non-touch devices that make up this statistic.

Do it with apps and cloud

With Windows 8, Microsoft is also introducing the concept of apps (as we all know it from the Mac App Store, iTunes App Store, and Google Play's perspective) downloaded and installed from its very own Windows Store. As an end-user you may not appreciate its significance but at the programming level, Microsoft has implemented something called WinRT. Without getting into too much technical detail, WinRT's a whole new approach towards creating and implementing software programs (or apps) in Windows 8, which isn't just more secure than previous Win32 tools found on Windows 7 but also makes life a whole lot easier for developers to code and deploy newer apps than ever before.

Microsoft packs in a lot of native apps on Windows 8 like Mail, Messaging, People (from Windows Phone), Calendar, Games, etc. Bing isn't just a search app but comes with the power of other apps like News, Sports, Weather, Travel, Finance and, of course, Search. There may be a few minor bugs in some of these apps, but their update mechanism through Windows Store means that they'll be fixed and probably updated with newer features pretty soon.

While most of it is still in the realm of speculation, security will be a big concern for Microsoft's Windows 8, and although on the surface it looks to be more secure than Windows 7, hackers and scammers won't shy away from exploiting bugs on such a significant platform – oh no, sir! How apps will be exploited for this purpose remains to be seen.

Cloud sync is deep-rooted into Windows 8's fibre – right from the first login, where you enter your Live ID, to SkyDrive, even a “Sync” option under “PC Settings” that lets you save your personalization, app, browser, and password settings to the cloud and import them on another Windows 8 terminal. Pretty cool, huh?

Versions and hardware galore

Another first in the history of Windows is the presence of not only user-oriented flavours of Windows 8, but Micro-

Benchmarking Windows 8 - by Mithun Mohandas

(Benchmark scores in bold are marginally better)

Test Rig

Processor.....Intel Core i7 - 3960X
 Mobo.....ASRock X79 Extreme6/GB
 RAM.....Kingston HyperX 8GB
 (Dual Channel 1333 MHz)
 SSD.....Kingston KC100 120 GB
 Graphics card.....NVIDIA 650 Ti
 Monitor.....BenQ RL2450H
 SMPS.....CoolerMaster SilentPro 850W
 OS.....Windows 8 Pro
Windows 7 Ultimate

We started off by updating the motherboard BIOS (P2.10) to support Windows 8. Both operating systems were installed on similar Kingston HyperX SSDs with the same firmware (503). The latest drivers were obtained from the motherboard manufacturer's website and all care was taken to create the exact set of programs on both operating systems, and nothing unnecessary was installed. The benchmarks were chosen to bring out the differences in boot times, application performance, memory usage, file transfer, browser and gaming performance.

Gaming

Gamers needn't be worried when shifting to Windows 8. Games performed equally on both OSes, even 3DMark hit the same score during one of the runs. The only game that showed any difference at all was Metro2033, however, the average fps rules that out.

Synthetic

We used two all round testing suites, PC Mark 7 and GeekBench. According to GeekBench, Win 8 was found to be more hands on with memory management compared to Win 7 with nearly twice as much memory allocation instructions processed in the same amount of time. These results were reflected in the PC Mark results as well. Win 8 was also found to be consuming a bit more memory while idling.

File Copy

Writing assorted files onto external drives was slightly faster in Win 8.

Browser performance

Browser benchmarks were consistent on both operating systems as well.

Torture Test

After a fresh install, Windows 8 isn't that ahead of Windows 7 in terms of pure performance. So we had to simulate a few months of use in a short period of time. Fragger did the job of fragmenting the hard-drive wonderfully. In addition we installed 60K+ fonts, by the time all the fonts were installed the response times worsened. Idle memory usage the very first reboot after our "Torture test" showed a huge difference. Win 8 took 11 whole minutes to boot while Win 7 took an extra 6 minutes over Win 8, but after multiple reboots the Win 8 boot time had come down drastically to the earlier 22 second mark and Win 7 came down to about 7 minutes. During normal use after the torture test, the shutdown times for Win 8 were great but Win 7 had slowed down to a crawl.

Benchmark	Windows 7	Windows 8
Synthetic		
PC Mark 7	5139	5529
- Productivity	5078	4676
- Computation	4874	11028
- Storage	5269	5051
GeekBench	16200	16041
Idle memory use	1.6GB / 8GB	1.8GB / 8GB
3D Mark 11	X1448	X1448
- Graphics	1305	1305
- Physics	8186	8221
- Combined	1531	1530
Games		
Crysis 2	34.1	34.4
Metro 2033	14	13.33
SiniperElite V2	9.2	8.7
File Copy Sequential		
- Read	1.33	1.31
- Write	1.31	1.3
File Copy Assorted		
- Read	1.4	1.53
- Write	2.31	1.59
Boot up		
Pre-Torture	31.22 sec	22.15 sec
Post-Torture	16 min 57sec	11 min 57 sec
Average	6 min 48 sec	22.18 sec
Browser		
Octane	16424	16566
Sunspider	140.4ms	139.7ms

soft's crown-jewel has differing avatars depending on the hardware platform of a particular device. Meaning, not only do you pick between Windows 8, Pro or Enterprise on your x86 PC, but if you want an ARM-based tablet or smartphone, you'll have to choose between either Windows RT or Windows Phone 8.

Obviously, there's expected to be a lot of confusion between the merits and demerits of the different Windows 8 flavours, and choosing the one best for you may not be easy. But you won't have to sweat over it too much, for that choice will be done for you by something else - unless you're contemplating between the different x86 versions of Windows 8. Devices will dictate the flavour of Windows you end up using and ultimately get stuck on, and there's no switching back unless you drop the device, flash its ROM or pick up a new one. Some of the devices featuring the different flavours of Windows 8 are quite promising. We've used and interacted with multi-touch dis-

play enabled notebooks, tablets and hybrids from Acer, ASUS, Dell, Fujitsu, HP, Lenovo and Samsung, and they all look promising. And don't forget Microsoft is also entering the hardware arena with its very own Surface RT and Pro tablets, sporting ARM and x86 flavours of Windows 8. We've played a bit with the Surface RT and it is by far the best Windows 8 tablet / slate that's out there at the moment. But expect, smartphone OEMs like Nokia, HTC, LG, Sony, Samsung and others to join the race very soon and offer competing Windows 8 tablets and hybrids. All through this year, you'll have OEMs racing to expand on their Windows 8 device portfolio and offerings.

What's in store

Predicting the future of Windows Vista was easy, even though it had an overhauled UI and some frustrating settings (remember UAC?). Even though Windows 8 may seem like Vista, bringing in a whole new UI, it isn't. It is a more mature

operating system that is taking more than its fair share of risks. There is no doubt that Microsoft is late in the game in terms of coming out with a formidable opponent to take on the likes of iOS and Android. And where it has to appeal to the new, Windows 8 also has to stay relevant to everyone who's only ever used Windows all their life with a mouse and a large screen. The huge burden of legacy and tradition it carries just can't be sidelined. Yes, it isn't perfect for a desktop environment, there's way too much overlap between Modern and classic desktop UI modes. But if you look past the desktop, Windows 8 stands poised to take the world of tablets and hybrids by storm, if things go as per plan. Because in these emerging product segments - multitouch ultrabook, hybrids, slates and tablets - Windows 8 is a pleasure to use and may offer Microsoft more than a fighting chance to save its fortunes after all. The next 18 months hold the key to unlock its future, and we're hopeful. ■

THE END OF WINTEL

Anirudh Regidi

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Microsoft (Windows) and Intel have been defining the computing experience of the world for well over a decade and the word “Wintel” is now synonymous with the PC the way Google is with the internet. There was a time when Wintel commanded over 90 percent of the global PC market, but times have changed and with the rise of the smartphone/phablet/tablet and the promise of portability and power, the true definition of personal computing has been blurred to include all these fancy new “computational devices.” In this new world, it is the AAA that rule, Android, Apple and ARM, with the all-powerful Wintel now being relegated to a more humble 20 percent market share (<http://dgit.in/ULwHN9>). With Microsoft branching out to ARM, and Intel unable to compete in the mobile computing space, is the era of Wintel finally over? What is ARM exactly and why is Intel, the largest chip manufacturer in the world, unable to compete? To understand this we need to understand the way these CPUs process data and why this is so important to us.

Intel chips are based on a CISC (Complex Instruction Set Computing) architecture that essentially allows the CPU to process multiple low-level instructions simultaneously, which also reduces the number of instructions required to complete a task; thus simplifying the programmer’s (and compiler’s) job.

Brainless monkeys

RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computing), an architecture used by ARM, is the exact opposite of CISC where only one instruction is processed at a time, in sequence. This increases the compiler’s workload as each task would have to be split into multiple steps. This would be better explained with a simple analogy; if someone were to tell you to get them some water, you would just go to the water source, fill a glass with water and bring it back to that person. This is CISC where you are the processor and the “someone” is the OS or compiler. In RISC mode, you would need to be given specific instructions; turn 180 degrees, walk 5 metres, turn left 90 degrees, walk 7 metres, and so on. In this situation, you, as a CPU, don’t need to think too much and the instructions can be as easily followed by a person as well as a somewhat well-trained monkey. If



The IBM-PC. The precursor to the Wintel era

Wintel has ruled the PC world for almost a decade now, but seems to have lost its footing. Is it too late for it to scramble back to the top?

the instructions are given at the right time, there wouldn’t even be a time lag between the two methods of operation and there is not much brain power involved (no offence to monkeys). The problem arises when, say, the glass is not there at the location you specified, the monkey would not know what to do next and may not even be able to tell you that. In computing terms what this means is that the program will just get stuck and/or will return an incorrect result. Current processors do have methods to prevent such a thing from happening. The main advantages of RISC can be summed up in the following points:

- A simpler architecture, meaning fewer transistors and it’s hence, cheaper to produce.
- Very high efficiency per clock (if the code is compiled correctly) and per watt, translating to lower operating temperatures.
- Lower power consumption because of fewer “components” and higher efficiency.

The end of geekdom

As can be seen from the advantages of RISC listed above, this architecture is ideal for mobile devices because it provides stellar battery life (compared to CISC processors) and negligible heat (again, only in comparison to CISC). Comparatively, CISC architecture such as Intel’s x86 (except Atom) is leagues ahead of any ARM processor in terms of sheer power. The problem here is that most people don’t need that much power. What does the average per-

son's computing usage involve? Nothing more than Facebook, a bit of YouTube, some instagraming and maybe a bit of mild video editing. Most work is also something that just involves office suites and e-mails. You don't need a quad-core i7 to do that. In fact, you don't even need an i3. An ARM-based tablet or phone can do that much admirably while still giving you portability and stellar battery life. Nowadays building your own computer is almost considered to be the equivalent of building your own table or chair. Computing is such an integral part of our lives that it has just been taken for granted. You might think that this only applies to first world countries but you'd be wrong. More people have smartphones than PCs and internet access is just a SIM card away. Almost everyone knows how to operate a phone, send an email and browse the web. Where is Windows or Intel here? They just don't matter anymore. Internet Explorer 6 was the most popular browser for so long, despite being so flawed and people still used it and not just because they didn't know any better. They didn't know any better but it was more the fact that the prospect of using a PC (and Windows) was such a daunting task that they just preferred to stick to something they knew rather than try something new which might create a whole pile of other unknown issues.

It is this situation that Apple managed to take advantage of when it launched the iPad. People were comfortable with it, they never really felt that they could damage the OS. They got a good device, a good browser, it could access the internet and it seemed way better than the Windows experience that they had been used to for so long. There was no more messing around with settings, no installing scary applications that might install a "virus". Curated content and a curated experience became the norm and it was enough. The geeks did fret and fume about it, but Google lent a hand and Android filled the gap.

Microsoft (and intel), for whatever reason, remained completely oblivious to this space and while they did ultimately

catch on, they were far too late. The products they released just seemed slapped together and while they had the right idea, they were too late and tried too hard to adapt in too short a time period.

A gamer's rant

As far as gaming is concerned there has been a marked shift towards consoles and tablets with PC support being added only as an afterthought. How many big name titles have you seen for the PC that have been specifically developed for it? Granted, there are games that bring even the most powerful of systems to their knees, but they are few and far between and who, other than a few enthusiasts, has the money and patience to keep up with the upgrade race that defined the PC gaming experience? Console graphics are, well, abysmal when you compare them to that of a half-decent PC but so what? When most kids these days haven't experienced PC gaming on anything more powerful than a "gaming" laptop, and a PS3 (RISC architecture power's this beast) is the ultimate in graphics they've seen, they won't know any better. Ignorance is bliss. It isn't just ignorance though. When you take a console you are assured a consistent experience, assuredly sub-par in terms of graphics, but consistent nonetheless. It is easier for developers to code for such platforms and when the hardware

powerful, a little over two years old and already obsolete because it doesn't support DirectX 11.1. This monopolistic control of the entire market by Microsoft was not appreciated by developers or hardware makers, but since Wintel "ruled the roost" they had no option but to comply. It was a race to keep up and it was harsh. Everyone couldn't keep up and there were many that got left behind, and they jumped on to the easier alternative.

The monster in your room

People no longer want power-hungry "monstrosities" cluttering up their house. Few people have the time to maintain them. The face of the PC has changed. It is smaller, more efficient and is idiot-proof and hence, intelligently designed.

Take the current tablets for example, everyone has (or wants) one, they're powerful enough to give you console-level graphics, can output video to a TV wirelessly, let you browse the internet, check your mail, are sleek and portable, give you 10+ hour battery life, support basic photo and video editing; they are the new PC. It won't be long before your workstation becomes nothing more than a large monitor with attached keyboard and mouse and using your tablet or phone working as a thin-client of sorts (Ubuntu mobile for example).

As geeks we would (and do) find this state of affairs to be very sad, but to an average person, things are looking up. The PC is no longer the domain of the geek, there are no complicated settings and everything just works. The devices don't need instruction manuals and even a child can set them up and use them. The power and flexibility of Wintel is currently

unrivalled, but nobody needs it anymore. The Windows OS is currently too heavy to run on low-end PCs and Intel doesn't have the efficiency to compete with ARM. Windows RT and the intel Atom are a step in the right direction but it is a step too small. Windows RT isn't yet fully optimized, has no apps and



The future is mobile

is fixed, so is the game engine; translating into more time that can be spent in creating a better game.

The problem Wintel creates is that of an ever-changing standard (DirectX) that game developers and hardware manufacturers alike have to meet. Take the GTX290 for example, extremely

Some Interesting Facts

Consider the following:

- Intel saw a 1 percent drop in profits
- PC sales have stagnated. Mobile sales overshot PC sales.
- It is estimated that there will be over 600 million smartphones in 2014
- There are currently around 670 million Windows users and only 40 million Windows 8 users
- The gaming industry saw its first decline in nearly 10 years.
- Intel is trying to get into mobile devices with its Atom processors (and failing)
- ARM is trying to compete with x86 and has announced its first 64-bit chips
- AMD plans to produce ARM-based Opeterons over the next few years.
- Rumours abound that Apple will shift to ARM processors for all its devices.
- Microsoft is desperately trying to get its ARM ecosystem up and running.

Deja Vu

The tale of the IBM-PC is a cautionary one, a tale that Wintel needs to revisit if it has to survive, or should have. When the first IBM-PC was launched around 1980, there were a large variety of PCs around and no set platform for developers to work on. Over time, the IBM-PC and its successors, running MS-DOS, became the industry standard as far as PCs went. These were the first, true precursors to the current Wintel devices, featuring a Microsoft OS running on x86 architecture. The success of the design led to the development of IBM-PC compatible clones that were sold by every other manufacturer including HP. These were the heydays of IBM; every PC in the world wanted to be IBM compatible and they were in a position to define and dominate home computing. Not unlike the Wintel that we see today.

Ultimately, IBM ended up sounding its own death knell when it released the IBM-P/S2. The PC was different from all earlier IBM designs and crucially, was not IBM PC compatible. The programs available at the time were mostly incompatible and developers would have again had to compile programs for this new architecture all over again. The sales of this PC declined, clones flourished and IBM's PC died. Microsoft, with its push for the ARM architecture and Windows RT, is doing exactly this. With the release of the RT Microsoft rendered unusable the (possibly) billions of apps that are available for the x86 platform and is forcing the developers to start from scratch all over again. Not a good sign. Why would anyone want to go for a completely new ecosystem with a handful of apps when there is an already existing ecosystem (Apple and Android), that come with hundreds of thousands of them?

ecosystem to speak of and the Atom is too power hungry for the performance on offer. On the other hand, ARM is too slow to support a full-blown desktop OS and while way more efficient, lacks the freedom that x86 offers.

A RISCy future

The only future is some sort of middle ground between these differing architectures and the company that reaches there first, wins. Intel has been too dependent on Microsoft and even though Apple has also switched to Intel

CPUs, there are very persistent rumours floating around that Apple might switch to ARM for all future devices. The PC has been relegated to the state of a true workstation now, for someone who needs that amount of horsepower, such as a gamer, graphic designer, etc. Even AMD is planning a switch to ARM-based Opeterons in the future which, if designed right, might sound the final death knell for x86.

If the future is RISC then both intel and Microsoft need to move really fast to come up with a compatible architecture and OS but the fact remains, that unless something is done soon, both will have lost the initiative and might end up sharing the same fate as Nokia. In this cutthroat market, too-little-too-late is just not going to cut it anymore. People want

complete ecosystems and functional devices that will not disrupt their lives and still provide them with a better experience than they are used to.

Is Wintel dead?

No. The current PC market has received a severe shaking up, the dust is yet to settle and no true winners (there have been losers) have been spotted yet. The current ARM-based Windows RT is disappointing and unfinished; intel's Atom is RISC architecture masquerading as CISC and is woefully underpowered when it comes to graphics. Wintel is not the monopoly that it once was and needs to adapt fast to keep its position.

The current state of Wintel's income and market share has jolted them from their complacency and made them face the fact that the PC has changed, but they need to understand that compromises and arm twisting (pardon the pun) are not acceptable anymore. If Wintel can do that, redefine computing on their terms, provide a compelling experience for users, give them a platform that they can trust and use, they will find themselves back at the top instead of at the bottom desperately trying to play catch up. **d**



The last of its kind?

THE SMARTEST OS?

With the growing number of phones and operating systems (OSes) available, all vying to be the one in your pocket, is it possible to figure out which one's the smartest for you?

Vishal Mathur

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If the kind of queries we receive from readers on a regular basis are any indicator, the plethora of choices in the smart phone market confuse most people. It's becoming increasingly harder to figure out which platform suits us best for our usage scenario. Also, given that all of these OSes and models are being targeted at the masses, is it even possible to get that perfect OS for you? Now we can't give out a hundred options for a hundred different demographics and usage cases, so we decided to look at some common but important tasks for phones these days, look at how the OSes handle things differently (if so), and what that means to you...

The focused approach isn't popular anymore – gone are the days when a BlackBerry was the only phone a business oriented individual would want, or a Sony Ericsson phone would be the choice for those interested in good cameras or music on-the-go, or the Nokia N-series trying to offer both... These days, almost every phone is aimed squarely at almost everyone, and all OSes are trying to do everything, which brings us back to our conundrum – so which is the best? So let's not waste any more time, and get straight into our evaluation:



iOS dialer interface vs the Android dialer interface

Hello!

Among the four platforms – Android, iOS, BlackBerry and Windows – we find Android's method to be the best of the lot. While it is fairly close between Android and iOS, the Android integration and correct switchovers between call logs and potential contacts you may wish to dial is smooth. With Android it could also be a manufacturer customisation, so we checked the same functionality across HTC and Sony phones. iOS, by far, has the best looking on-screen keypad, while BlackBerry depends on the physical QWERTY – its touchscreen phones also offer a well laid out calling interface. We were rather disappointed with Windows Phone, which adds an extra step of having to demand that the number-pad be shown.

Add a buddy

Adding a new contact to the phonebook is usually a task done in a hurry, and a critical aspect for those who use their phone as a phone. First up, Android. Despite different skins and customisation by different smartphone manufacturers, the essence of the process remains the same across Android phones. There are two ways to add a contact on the phone: head to Contacts/People and click the "+" sign there, or go to the phone app, then the complete contacts list, and then add a contact. If you have Google Sync set up on your account, you can also add a contact via the web browser and it'll be synced to the phone. There are also a lot of third-party widgets that can sit on the home screen with your favorite contacts for instant access. However, iOS is just simplicity personified. Tap the phone app, and you will see the number-pad pop up. You will see a key with a person and a "+" sign next to it. Voila! With BlackBerry, it

is fairly simple as well – punch in a number as though you are dialing it, and then press the options key. You will see the "add to contacts" option. Alternatively, go to the phonebook and do this from there. With Windows Phone 8, you have the People app that is essentially the phonebook. Open that, and you see a "+" sign at the bottom of that list. Tap that, and you get to add a contact from here. All platforms seem to have made this simple task as easy to execute as possible. However, iOS and Windows Phone are the most convenient and easy to get used to – even for those who are not very comfortable with technology as a whole. BlackBerry's process isn't very complicated either. However, Android loses out a bit because on most phones, the phonebook is not up front for people to access, and the process of going through the dialer to add a contact can be slightly cumbersome.

Say cheese!

The first thing we do during our smart-phone camera tests is check for a dedicated camera key. But this feature is not unique across smartphones, and we are not considering that here. What we are looking at is how quickly you can get to the camera app and click a picture. With Android, you can have an icon on any of the home-screens. Tap that, and you are straight into the camera. Within that interface, there is a one-tap option of switching between the photo and video modes. The snaps and videos show up in the gallery/album application. With iOS, the process is pretty much the



Android - Camera Interface and iPhone - camera interface

same – the camera icon shows up on one of the home screens. The snaps show up in the Photos app, while the recorded videos show up in Videos. With BlackBerry, there isn't a concept of home screens yet, and you need to access the camera app from within the application list. The OS usually has a Media folder, which hosts the separate folders for the pictures and videos you take. Windows Phone 8 lets you pin the camera as a tile on the first screen. This is indeed very convenient, particularly because you can move the tile around depending on how often you use it. As you can see, it is fairly even across all OSes in this aspect. What makes the difference in the end, is the quality of the camera, and how well you actually use it!

Share

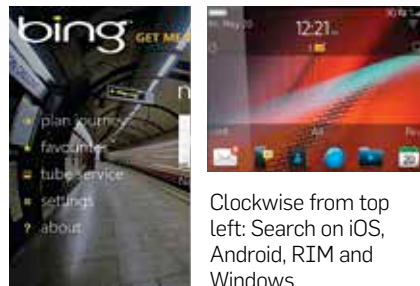
Carrying on from our previous point, we now look at how easy it is to share a picture or update your status on multiple social networks from within the phone. We are considering Twitter, Facebook and Instagram for this comparison. All Android phones that we have tested came with the Facebook app preloaded. Twitter has been preloaded on some phones, while it has been conspicuously missing on others. You will need to download Instagram separately as well.

For iOS, Facebook and Twitter are integrated out of the box. Instagram can be downloaded from the App Store. But with Facebook now the master, expect Instagram to be preloaded the iOS devices and most Android phones as well. BlackBerry OS 7 comes with Facebook and Twitter preloaded – only Facebook for OS 6 devices. There is no Instagram app for the Blackberry platform yet. Neither Facebook nor Twitter are bundled on a Windows Phone device out of the box, and there's no Instagram app for the WP platform. That said, since Microsoft doesn't even load their own Skydrive app on devices, perhaps it's a download only what you want philosophy.

Find it

Some Android phones feature a search button below the display, while some don't. You can always opt for the Search app for the same results. Alternatively, pin a widget on to the home screen.

On Android Jelly Bean, the Google Now service is also available via the Search app. On iOS Swipe left to right on the main screen to open the search screen. However, on iOS, the search feature is fairly limited.



Clockwise from top left: Search on iOS, Android, RIM and Windows

You will probably be better off downloading the Google application. For BB There is the search key on the top right of the screen. Access that by tapping on it (touchscreen devices) or selecting via the trackpad. The results will throw up results from within various data stacks on the device, with the interesting option of "Search Google". With Microsoft keeping a close watch on what manufacturers are doing, the Search key is pretty much mandatory. Bing Search has the most visually appealing UI, but results are just not as good as Google.

Browse

This is pretty much a toss-up between Android and iOS, and we would recommend using the Chrome browser on whichever platform you select, and additionally offer very good experience overall, with lots of sharing options via social networks. BlackBerry's browser is fairly clunky and not worth much bother, honestly. The Internet Explorer on Windows Phone 8 is much better than the predecessor, but same



Chrome on Android and Safari on iOS

web pages take slightly longer to open than on Chrome on Android or iOS.

Typing frenzy

This is open for a lot of debate. But still, nothing beats the combination of BlackBerry's service and the QWERTY keypad for typing out quickly whatever it is that you need to. Gmail and Hotmail have apps for Android, while Gmail is also available for iOS. But, you still cannot sync an Apple iCloud mail address with an Android or a BlackBerry phone! Whatever the fanboys may have to say about this, but a BlackBerry is still the best device for those who need a keypad and primarily use the phone for emails. For those of you who are not very comfortable typing quickly or for long durations on a touchscreen, a QWERTY keypad phone is a must-have for you.

Grooving to the music

They make the iPod! No prizes for guessing that iOS is the best platform for music playback. The critics may say "no drag and drop", but for those who like to consolidate music in one place, update album art and even buy music, iTunes is the best solution. Android is fighting back to a certain extent, particularly with HTC phones offering Beats Audio. RIM's music player on BlackBerry and Microsoft's Windows Phone are clearly also-rans.

Addicted to video

Has to be an Android device. Natively, it can handle quite a few formats, and there are a whole bunch of third party apps that add more. BlackBerry and Windows Phone devices can also handle their fair share of video formats natively. But, in this aspect, iOS takes a major beating, considering the very limited video format support on iTunes and on the devices. It is a pain re-encoding every video just so that it will play back on the iPhone or the iPad.

App-addicted

Your choice is limited to Android and iOS. Between these two, Android has the slight advantage of offering more apps that are free – WhatsApp being a prime example. The application stores on both platforms are bursting to their seams. BlackBerry and Windows Phone have a long way to go before they come close to Android and iOS's sheer numbers and even quality, for the most part. ■

WILL OS X = IOS?

How much of the Jony Ive influence will OS X see in 2013?

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For Apple, 2013 will be big. The advantage of Apple products till now was because of the complete package – the hardware and software is neatly optimised. Some criticised the closed ecosystem, but the tight leash Apple has on both aspects translates to performance. The idea seems to be fairly simple – bring the desktop and the smartphone OS as close to each other as possible. The reason is two-pronged: collaboration and consistency. But with rivals trying even harder, the gap between competitors is surely closing. To be honest, Apple after Steve Jobs just hasn't been able to wow users as they used to be able to, and the Cupertino wizards desperately need something to set the bar high again. They still make good products, but none of them path-breaking.

The future of OS X?

Some say that the best job in the world is to be a Porsche designers. They have 3 models, all of them similar, and they hardly ever change anything noticeable, except under the hood, but that's engineering, not design. Similarly, Apple seems to have taken a similar approach for OSes. "Timeless brilliance", some may say, or "if it's not broken, why fix it?".

The year 2012 saw the Mountain Lion OS X update – Lion's successor. Lion was touted to be a genuine successor to Snow Leopard, however, it seems Mountain Lion is the real successor, as it actually implements the idea of Lion. So what was this idea? Put simply, bring the desktop and the smartphone OS closer.

First up, the Launchpad is the iOS style application menu on the desktop. With Mountain Lion, there is the notification bar, just as you would have on a phone. Facebook and Twitter integration followed, joining the likes of Vimeo and

Flickr on the OS X platform. While this may not look like much, the ability to send a status update or tweet a photograph like you would on a phone just makes the desktop OS feel closer to the sweet spot. Game Centre is another application that made its way over from iOS devices – to create a complete ecosystem of seamless gaming, at least for the titles that support it. Voice commands and typing – Dictation is now available for multiple apps, including the popular office suites.

The biggest update was iCloud, that let you sync contacts, documents, mails etc. between your devices – the Mac, the iPhone and the iPad. The syncing is instant. You can create a document on Pages on your MacBook and edit it on Pages on the iPad on the train ride back home. Scribble a Note for later, and it'll be there on your other devices as well. If you happen to misplace one of the devices, Find My Mac and Find My Phone will do the finding via the iCloud web site.

Not everything is perfect though. One thing that perplexes everyone is that the same operating system update works brilliantly on one MacBook, while others with the exact same generation machine will report slower performance, poor battery life and other compatibility issues. This holds true for the last two OS refreshes – Lion and Mountain Lion – which is worrisome!

It's not just the older generation hardware that faces issues either, but even spanking new Macbooks report the same niggles. Not something one would expect from Apple, especially since their closed and complete control over the hardware and software is what's supposed to make their products good to begin with!



Launchpad brings the OS X closer to the iOS



MacBook Pro – What is the “something really great” we should wait for?

Welcoming 2013

The critical bit – just two words – Jonathan Ive. He is the person responsible for what the iPhone, the iPods, the iPad and the MacBooks have looked like, for quite a few years now. His bio on Apple’s website reads, “In 2003, he was named Designer of the Year by the Design Museum London and awarded the title Royal Designer for Industry by The Royal Society of Arts.” Why we are talking about Jonathan Ive, Senior Vice President, Industrial Design is because he now has taken charge of the software side of things as well. The next version of the desktop and the mobile operating systems will surely bear the hallmark of the man who takes great pains in ensuring that the final offering is visually appealing. It is safe to say that iOS 7 and Mac OS X 10.9 might be significantly different from their current avatars.

Apple’s thinking is straightforward – Jony Ive has been doing a fairly remarkable job churning out one good-looking device after the other. With Forstall’s departure, it only makes sense that the person making the amazing hardware should have a say in how the next versions of the iOS and the OS X look. The feature set will be dictated by various

factors, but when it comes down to the crux of it, presentation will be key. The current look of the OS X has been relatively similar (Porsche-style?) over the last couple of iterations. A major change may not be warranted, but some streamlining and tweaks are necessary. For example,

Launchpad is still not an integral part of the entire experience of using a MacBook. It is all well and good to bring the OS closer, at least visually, but better deployment is needed.

SIRI on the Mac

Dictation and Speech are already a part of OS X Mountain Lion, and it would only be logical for SIRI to arrive next, since this is the expansion of the already prevalent feature. It is a server-based application, and deploying it on another platform will not involve too many complications. While this will excite a lot of Mac users globally, we don’t think it makes any sense for Indian buyers, primarily because SIRI refuses to understand our accent, and also because it isn’t fun screaming at your laptop to get it to undo things that you didn’t ask it to do in the first place!

Maps

Sources seem pretty certain that the Maps will also arrive on the desktop platform in 2013. There will be two ways of doing it – a dedicated Maps app with OS X that will allow access to third party apps as well, and a browser based service much like Google and Bing maps. However, what Apple needs to do (and surely they will admit this internally within the organization) is sort out the maps mess they have managed to create. The current embarrassment cannot continue, and a complete overall needs to be done. Expect important announcements in the first quarter of 2013. What will not see a major change is the overall look and feel of the operating system. Yes, there will be tweaks to make it look better and possibly more functional, but the Jony Ive effect

will probably be more visible on the iOS than on the OS X, at least in the next update.

Don’t forget the hardware!

Talk about what to expect from Apple in 2013, and not talk about the hardware is just wrong! And we would not let you go through that incomplete journey. Here is what we think will happen on the hardware front with the Macs.

Retina Display

First up, the Retina display. This arrived on the MacBook Pro in the latest refresh, and now it is the turn of the MacBook Air. It will be interesting to see if Apple retains the dual range of the MacBook Air – one with the Retina display and one without. This is currently happening with the MacBook Pro range. Pricing will see the new 11-inch and 13-inch non-Retina Air versions to be priced similar to the current prices, with the Retina versions getting the “top of the line” tag.

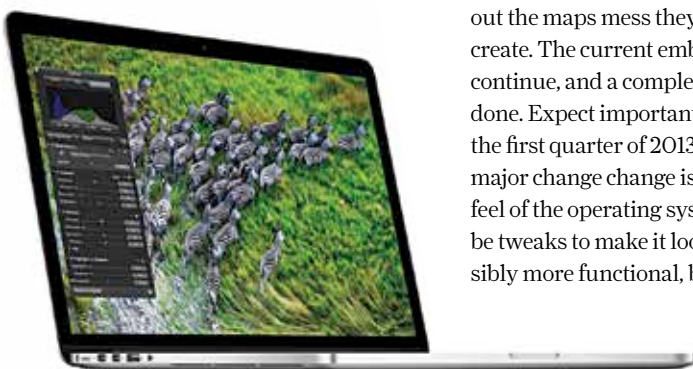
Thinner MacBooks

What is pretty much confirmed is that the next edition of the Air and the Pro will be even thinner than the current one. If you thought that was not possible, particularly in the case of the Air, think again. Apple is working on tweaking the keyboard backlighting to get the desired effect. According to some reports, a thinner set of LEDs is to be deployed. Others suggest that Apple will reduce the amount of backlighting to get the current thickness of 0.40mm down to 0.25mm on the new Air.

Intel Haswell

Intel’s Haswell processors will also make their way into the next generation of MacBooks. While the new range retains the 22nm process seen with the current Ivy Bridge range, a newer architecture will mean better performance. According to the recent leaks, the Haswell range has only one dual core Core i5 processor, while the other entire Core i5 and Core i7 range is quad core. Coupled with more RAM and an SSD in some models, performance will be rather delightful.

Tim Cook had said back in June 2012 that “something really great” is coming for Pro users in 2013. Our ears still ring with those words, as we wait in anticipation and expectation. For the rest of the range, we expect similar great stuff. 



The Retina Display will be heading to the MacBook Air in 2013

THE IDEAL OS

This is indeed the one OS to rule them all. If it were to be built that is...

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The last couple of years have seen some massively disruptive changes in computing, with several new technologies successfully challenging existing ones. This was particularly noticeable in the mobile world, where the shift towards computing on smartphones brought with it the need for specialised mobile platforms.

The different Operating Systems out there offer a lot of diversity in terms of their philosophy, systems design, user interface and third-party application support. Using a mix of existing technologies and some extrapolative reasoning, we've tried to come up with our version of what the ideal OS will be like.

The Ideal Operating System Will Not Exist

The Ideal Operating System (or at least, our version of it) will simply not exist. No we're not pessimists. In our vision the ideal OS will quietly disappear into the background, providing all necessary functions silently and without any outwardly signs. Allow us to elaborate.

Imagine a world, where every single personal computing device, is nothing but a terminal connected to a server. (In some sense, this is true for all internet-enabled devices even today). The device you hold in your hand or the one that's at your desk, will

be nothing but a display, letting you access your apps and multimedia, all stored in the cloud. You sign into a device (any device, it doesn't matter) with your credentials, and it automatically pulls all your data, applications and media, hell, even the OS itself will be streamed to you via this network. Think of it as accessing web mail – when you buy a device and load up the webmail URL in a browser, you know for a fact that your email is going to look exactly the same as on every other device, without having to worry about the hardware manufacturer.

“But this already exists” you might say. It does, to an extent. Windows 8 syncs your device's settings and applications to the cloud via SkyDrive, and it's there for you when you log in. But you can only access this feature from a Windows 8 desktop, or a phone running Windows Phone 8 (yes, all 3 units that've been sold so far). A similar feature exists with the Chromebook, but when was the last time you saw someone using one? (Hint: Never).



Imagine a hardware agnostic OS

Separating the Hardware from the Software

What we'd like to see, is a completely hardware agnostic Operating System (or a generation of Operating Systems, from competing companies) that can be made to run on any device, because after all a device is just a means to connect to a server. You will be able to buy potentially any hardware device off the shelf with specifications as per your need, and use it with any OS of your choice. The device will contain just the bare minimum in terms of software - only the system software and drivers required to interface the various hardware components (display, network stack, power management) with each other. This is analogous to our current BIOS software, but much more sophisticated (not hard to imagine when you look at some of the UEFI BIOS versions out there) allowing any OS to be installed on top of it. Except in this case, “installed” is a term that refers to the act signing in to an account which pulls in all your data for you.

Head in the cloud...

In order to make these devices ubiquitous and low-cost, they will offload all hardware intensive tasks onto the server. All important processing or GPU operations will be carried out by the server itself, and only the output will be streamed back to you. (Think www.onlive.com) In other words, your device's hardware won't be a limiting factor in its performance. You'll be able to enjoy high-res games, HD movies, hell, even transcode audio and video from your portable device, knowing that all the huffing and puffing is being managed remotely. Furthermore, all media content like movies, TV shows

and music (unless created by you) will be streamed to you on-demand at a flat fee, hopefully putting an end to digital piracy. We can almost hear the MPAA and RIAA heave a sigh of relief. Of course, in the midst of all this, we're assuming there's ample bandwidth available.

...But down to earth

But don't fret yet, we're not completely abandoning the concept of locally stored files. We understand that you need important files and folders available to you at all times, in the event of a network outage. However, we'd like to change the way we store files locally. Instead of the current folder-based hierarchy which requires you to memorize the location of your files (not to mention the number of clicks it takes to get to a deeply nested folder), we'd like to adopt a flat-hierarchy, where your files can be retrieved with just a few keystrokes. Maybe even attach tags to your files to aid faster search. This search engine will integrate data from both online and offline sources, similar to Ubuntu's Unity Dash, thus blurring the line between locally stored content and online data. So say you're searching for a particular video; instead of navigating to your Videos folder and traversing a bunch of subfolders, you can just hit a key to bring up the search box, start typing into it, and watch the results intelligently appear from among those on YouTube, Vimeo and other video sharing sites, as well as those stored locally. So if you're searching for a video of a cat, the engine will be able to process the contents of a video, determine that the video features a cat, and display it in the results, even if the actual filename doesn't contain the word 'cat'. Such algorithms exist in a nascent state, examples being Soundhound or Shazam that fingerprint songs, and identify sound clips by comparing this information against a database of known songs.

Happy to help

Another feature we'd like is an OS that doesn't require any maintenance on part of the user, and one that shuts down and boots up instantly. Current OSes can take several minutes to boot up completely, as they require the loading of several daemons, processes or services to manage the various aspects of the system. Another shortcoming of current platforms is the cruft that grows after having used a system for a while, with leftover program files, invalid links, registry

entries or unnecessary services running at boot up. This inevitably requires the (power) user to reinstall the OS almost every year. In an OS that is, at its core, a web browser, not only will leftover files not be an issue, but frequently accessed apps and websites can be cached in memory for faster access. This will mean that performance will actually increase over time as the device learns your browsing habits.

The task of updating the software and applications isn't something the user will have to worry about, since it will be taken care of the server-side. But we would like to see a built-in, system-wide version-control for all changes that a user makes. This will record even the most minute changes made to files and settings, allowing the user to rollback the changes to any previous configuration with ease. This will also erase the archaic practice of having to "save" one's work periodically to prevent data loss, since all changes will be recorded asynchronously, similar to Google Docs. While it may sound lofty have a look at the Zetabyte Filesystem (ZFS) on the Solaris platform. Among other features, ZFS supports automatic and incremental 'snapshots' which are read-only copies of the filesystem's state at a point in time. It allows you to revert to a previous snapshot in case of data loss or corruption, and has a live Disk-Scrubber, which checks for and repairs corrupted blocks. Oh, and we'd also like apps to be able to share

data between each other, just imagine the possibilities with that! Throw in a fair bit of AI and Siri will look like a down syndrome dodo. (Not that Siri is any Pepper Potts clone today, anyway).

Open and shut case

From a developer's perspective, one of the most fundamental questions with software is whether it is Open Source or Closed (Proprietary). This single factor can go a long way in influencing developers to embrace the platform. Open Source software tends to appeal more to developers, as it gives them a lot more freedom to tinker around with the internals of the system. Closed systems don't offer this, and the amount of freedom available is left to the OEM. However, opening up the internals of the system can pose serious threats, exposing the system to malware infections. Furthermore, giving access to system critical files to the layman can pose risks – such a user may accidentally modify some part of the system, rendering it unus-



Beam me data up scotty

A RECENT REPORT BY GOLDMAN SACHS STATES:

Google's Android owns the lion's share of the consumer device market at

42%

Microsoft Windows and Windows Phone at

Apple's iOS and OS X (combined) at

24%

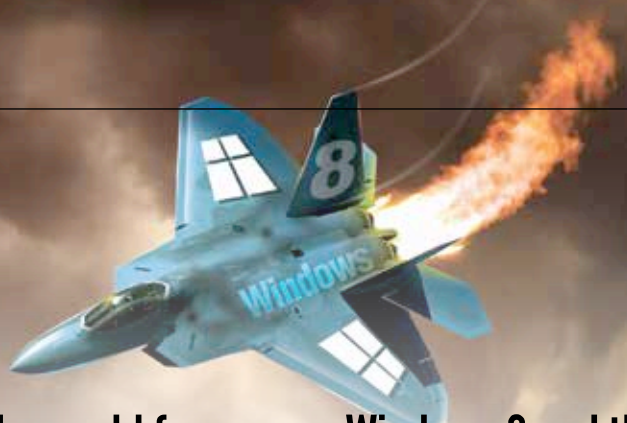
20%

This is in stark contrast to the landscape just five years ago, when Microsoft commanded **42%** of the total market, with Apple at **21%** and Google's Android nowhere in sight. This just goes to show the breakneck speed at which the computing industry has been innovating and reinventing itself these past couple of years. (<http://dgit.in/VQnC4E>)

able. Our ideal Operating System would aim to have the flexibility of Open Source, but with the ease of use offered by a closed one. This could be implemented by means of a software 'switch' that would be off by default, but can be switched 'on' to give access to the entire system. The layperson wouldn't ever have the need to use this switch, and it would be assumed that a developer wanting to unlock a device would be aware of the potential risks.

Our ideal Operating System will enable low-power, portable devices to become ubiquitous, and achieve far greater functionality than today. It will also give users a great deal of freedom and choice in the software they use, instead of tying them into one particular set of services / devices, as open standards compliant hardware and software will replace the current wave of proprietary and restrictive protocols. **4**

THE DARK HORSES



While the world focuses on Windows 8 and the ilk, here are some OSes that might just come up from the rear and surprise you. And how!

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The world of technology is one of constant flux. Technology and its effects can be so unpredictable that the big surprise is that we are ever surprised at all. But it happens, and it will continue to. A number of interesting events lie ahead in the coming year and many of them have great potential to disrupt the world of technology – in a good way.

Firefox OS

It was a dark time in 2011 when Google announced that Android 3.0 wouldn't be open source; everyone felt like the open source world lost its biggest poster child. It's all well now that Android is open source again but the lesson learned was that there needs to be an alternative that isn't under the control of one company. Under these conditions Boot 2 Gecko was born, an open source, web standards-based operating



Firefox OS running in a simulator on Windows

system. The goal wasn't just to have a web-based mobile OS, but also to develop the web standards needed to make such a device viable. The end result is a mobile OS and apps built entirely using HTML, CSS, JavaScript and running on a bare minimum browser instance.

Many a pundit have said that Firefox OS has no chance of competition against the slew of phones running Android and iOS. If you want to make money, you need to make a smartphone that can take on Android and iOS in the first world, but Mozilla, being non-profit, is in the unique position of not worrying about how much money it makes.

Mozilla knows people won't give up their iPhones or Android devices for Firefox OS, but then again, that isn't their audience. They are trying to make a lightweight OS that can run on cheaper phones that Android can't run on. It is a way to bring the smartphone to people who currently can't afford them. This is also why it isn't even launching in the US initially, but Brazil instead.

Firefox OS is one to look out for, even if it might not reach our shores any time soon. But hey, it is opensource and fully hackable! It's possible to run it on a number of Android devices or even the Raspberry Pi.

BlackBerry 10

Everyone knows that BlackBerry hasn't been doing too well, and as is advisable in such situations, RIM is skipping a few version numbers and going straight to BlackBerry 10 or BlackBerry X. Does it have potential though? It just might! It's hard to find a part of the OS that *hasn't* been revamped – or maybe it's easier to say that this is an all new OS. The BlackBerry 10 OS is based on QNX now, features a fresh new UI that has been redesigned from the ground up for better multitasking and

extensive touch and gesture support. The multitasking support on the OS is far ahead of the competition, and more along the lines of webOS and Maemo. Of course it still brings the good old features of BlackBerry (BBM for example), but adds on stuff like audio and video chat for BBM, a social



Leaked screenshot of BlackBerry 10

media hub, an innovative predictive on-screen keyboard, amongst other things.

What's equally important is that BlackBerry 10 also supports many routes of development for app developers. The device supports Qt for its native development path, but also allows packaged web (HTML5) applications, Adobe AIR-based applications and even supports Android applications (such apps need to be repackaged for BlackBerry though). The more paths developers have means more apps for users.

KDE Plasma Active

If you've used Linux there is a strong chance you have heard of KDE. The history of the KDE brand is confusing, while it used to stand for K Desktop Environment, its current avatar – KDE – represents the community that makes the software. The KDE Software Compilation is the product of the KDE community and is an alternative to Gnome and Ubuntu's Unity.

KDE Plasma Active is a project by the KDE community that aims to bring their software to tablets and they have taken a very unique approach in doing so.

Gnome and Unity decided to make a single UI that is somewhat touch friendly while still being passable on desktops. KDE developers on the other hand decided that each form factor needs its own optimised



Plasma Active welcome screen

UI. As such they have a traditional desktop-like UI, a netbook UI for smaller screen devices, and Plasma Active for tablet devices – they may add a mobile version in the future as well.

Plasma Active also has a unique concept called activities, that changes the way you work with tablets. Activities let you group together related files / data and applications and settings. So if you switch to your “Work” activity, you’d have work-related items on your desktop, work-related bookmarks and contacts, and also work related applications and shortcuts.

Chrome OS

Chrome OS hasn’t died yet? We kid! The fact of the matter is that Chrome OS, and in turn Google’s Chromebooks have a very compelling use case. When Chrome OS and Chromebooks were announced a common reaction was, “An OS / computer that can only be used to browse the web? Meh!”

The idea isn’t as absurd as it might seem to some people. Putting it in perspective, gaming consoles (such as the XBOX 360/PS3) are computers designed specifically for games. Thus, just as a small percentage of people are willing to buy a device just to game, perhaps another small percentage would buy a device just to surf. If even 1 per cent of a billion people online would be willing to buy such a device, that’s sales of 10 million devices!

However, consoles are viable because the maker takes a cut from video game developers, and this keeps them afford-

able. Google already dominates the internet advertisement space. Also, consoles need amazing hardware specifications, while devices meant solely for web browsing can be low-powered, longer battery-life devices – and these are cheaper. All Chromebooks need to do is make Google a net profit with ads. For us consumers, it’s a device that starts quickly, runs a wide variety of applications, and with the addition of Native Client, can even run games and heavy video / audio editing apps.

Linux on Desktops

Every year is the year of the Linux desktop; that is until every December 31st. The number of Linux users still hovers below 5 per cent. People stick to Windows for their favourite applications, and makers of those favourite applications don’t port for Linux citing a lack of user base.

The Achilles heel of Linux, gaming, had a good year in 2012, and 2013 is set to be even better. 2012 saw a number of Humble Bundles that resulted in numerous games becoming available for Linux, and it would be remiss of us to not mention Humble Indie Bundle V that brought critically acclaimed games such as Bastion, Limbo and Psychonauts to Linux. Even the Humble THQ Bundle despite controversy for using Steam and being Window-only, compelled the THQ management to consider Linux support for future titles. Desura, a game store that sells games for Windows, Linux and Mac OS X, expanded from its Linux launch selection of around 60 titles to 200. The year also saw the release of the Unity 4.0 game engine, the first version to support Linux. Dozens of KickStarters launched, and many promised Linux support from the get-go.

This year also saw the announcement of and release of Steam for Linux. It has gone through a closed beta phase and is now widely available. Steam for Linux will have dozens of games that already support Linux, and most Valve titles are also expected to be available on the platform.

Another point of note with Steam and Linux is that Valve is working on a PC-based console, and in all likelihood that console too will run Linux.

Steam also announced support for software titles this year which could also be released for Linux. Dell introduced a powerful Linux-based laptop for developers that actually showcased software, rather than just drivers and a re-skin. The first profes-




Steam running on Ubuntu Linux

sional-grade, award-winning, non-linear video editor “Lightworks” might finally be released for Linux in 2013. 2013 the year of the Linux desktop? Don’t hold your breath, but anything’s possible.

Ponies

Tizen! What can we say about this OS that is steeped in so much confusion. In short, Nokia makes Maemo Linux for mobile, Intel makes Moblin Linux for mobile, they have a bouncing baby called MeeGo. Nokia has an affair with Microsoft with little care for its bundle of joy. Meanwhile Intel starts courting Samsung and decides to abandon its child for a new one instead. That child is Tizen, and sadly it has a confused childhood (not to mention daddy issues). Samsung plans to merge its own bada OS with Tizen and adopt Tizen for some of its phones – in addition to Android and Windows Phone. Samsung is a powerful force in the mobile world, but Tizen 1.0 has come and gone without a commercial device running it and now Tizen 2.0 nears...

Two other dead projects have been on the path to resuscitation, webOS and MeeGo. While HP has open sourced webOS with no clear plans for a future product, exactly such a product might come from an external company called Phoenix International Communications. Likewise Jolla is set to revive MeeGo on its own set of devices, coming out in 2013.

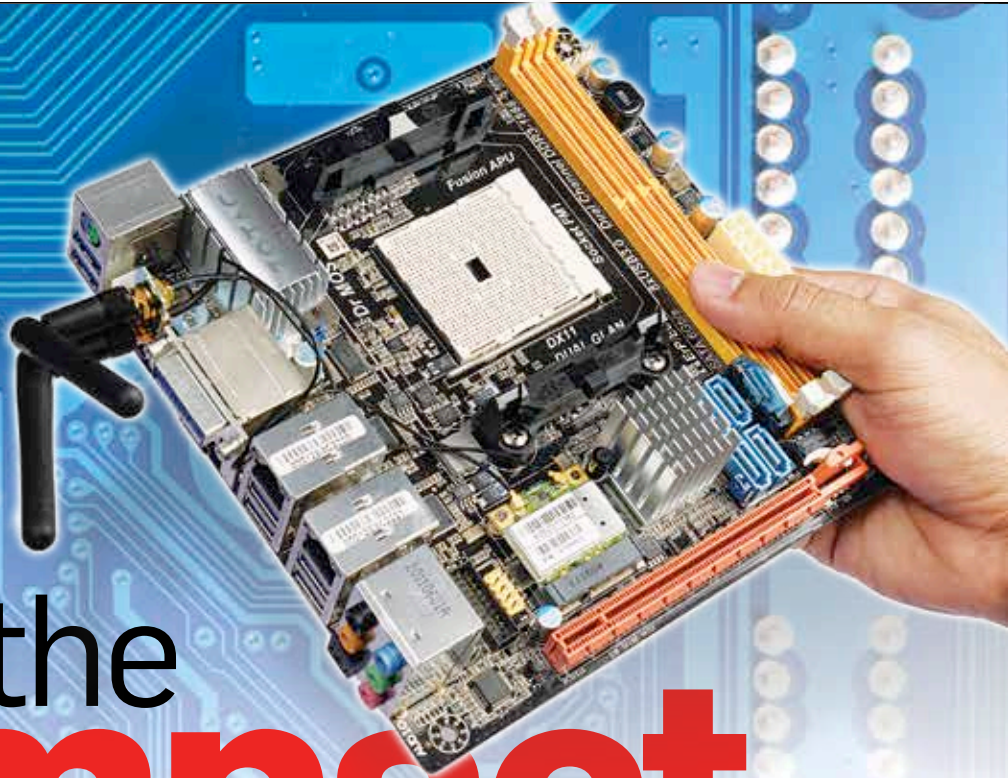
The biggest surprise we hope would be if people actually realised that competition is good for all, and that there is no “winning” OS. In fact it would be terrible for one OS to win, as monopoly hurts the consumer. With a number of small companies trying to enter the smartphone market, there could be nothing better than said small companies offering a wide variety of devices, keeping the goliaths on their toes, and making sure we consumers get what we pay our hard earned money for. 

Phablet test

94 This month we look into the new phenomenon of Phone & Tablet hybrids - Phablets. Check out who won this round

Bazaar

103 We've tested plenty of new products including a printer that houses a router



For the **Compact** system builder...

Want a powerful system, but don't have enough space for a mid-tower cabinet? With a mini-ITX board, you can have a rig which does much more than a mere HTPC. We feature 13 boards in this shoot-out using top Intel and AMD processors

Nimish Sawant
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In the November 2012 issue, we had tested mini-ITX boards with on-board processors and had promised to cover the non-processor sporting boards soon. This month we have covered the other end of the mini-ITX board spectrum. This segment is slowly but surely catching on, what with a lot of motherboard makers having a healthy

number of mini-ITX boards without processors in their portfolio. It makes sense specially in a country like ours, where not everyone has ample space to house a mid-tower or full-tower cabinet.

The main idea behind building a mini-ITX rig is to save on space, but at the same time get a powerful PC. Also with processors these days coming with a lower TDP than their predecessors around three-years back, it makes for a power-efficient system. With

mini-ITX boards sporting a Z77 chipset, it is not hard to make a decently powerful PC if you use the right components. For the purists who already have a power hungry high-end rig, but want more than a basic HTPC to complement their flat-screen TV, the mini-ITX boards with chipsets such as A75, H77 & H61 come to the rescue. Although in our test, we have used a 620W power supply, you do not really need a PSU rated that high if you are looking at a mainstream system build.

The Z77 boards

We got three Z77 boards, namely ASUS P8Z77-I Deluxe, ASRock Z77E-ITX and ZOTAC Z77-ITX. All three boards look quite different from each other thanks to different colour themes and board layouts.

The ASUS board layout is markedly different from the ASRock and ZOTAC boards. While on the former you have the chipset located between the PCIe x16 slot and the CPU socket, on the latter boards it is the CPU socket which lies between the

BB 10 to integrate Evernote

Reports suggest that Evernote – the online notes service – will be deeply integrated in the upcoming Blackberry 10 OS



Modders rejoice!

Budding PC modders, check out the list of Top 10 tools used for case modding <http://dgit.in/UTDg2J>

HOW WE TESTED

We called for mini-ITX boards, as we were looking at boards that will not only make for a good home-theatre PC, but can actually be used as a proper system for performing your everyday tasks as well. The common components used were as follows:

Processor: Intel Core i7-3770K (for most Intel Z77/H77/H61 boards); AMD A8-3850 (for A75 boards) and Intel Core i5-2500K (for Intel DH61DL)

RAM: 2x4GB Kingston HyperX DDR3 for DIMM slots; 4GB Kingston RAM for SO-DIMM slots

SSD: Kingston HyperX 120GB

Graphics Card: None

Monitor: Dell S2750L

Power Supply Unit: Corsair HX 620W

Operating System: Windows 7 Ultimate (64-bit)

We put a lot of stress on the features offered by the boards as we feel the board's prowess is a function of its components. We were looking at boards that can be used for making your mainstream systems. Boards with USB 3.0 and on-board Wi-Fi got more points. Similarly boards which had better heat-sinks around VRM modules and better options to overclock got a slight edge over the others. Bundled accessories were also taken into consideration.

The layout of the board was scored, we checked if there was enough spacing around the CPU region to comfortably attach the CPU cooler and which way the SATA ports were pointing (those pointing up got a lesser score). Spacing between the RAM slots and the graphics card was checked. For build quality we noted the sturdiness of the heat sinks around

the VRM regions and the PCH. Motherboards lacking a heatsink around the VRM region got lesser score. Board with all solid state capacitors got a higher score. Back panel I/O ports were noted and also the option to expand USB ports. Fan connectors and SATA connections were noted.

We ran the boards through our standard set of benchmark tests. As with most of our motherboard tests, these tests are only run to give you an indication and we do not give any weightage to these scores in our final evaluation of the boards, as we notice that for similar chipsets, the variation in scores is miniscule.

We did a thorough checking and testing (wherever applicable) of the feature set offered by a motherboard and based on the price have decided on the winners.

chipset and the PCIe x16 slot. This is thanks to the extra PCB – the daughterboard – which houses the Digi+ VRM (voltage regulator module) circuitry. The idea to add in another PCB on top of the ITX board was to get rid of the space-constraints of the mini-ITX form factor, and at the same time give the user a power-packed board. The daughterboard is 4.2 cm in height, rising at a right angle to the P8Z77-I board. Not only does it house the solid state capacitors but also a passive heatsink. It is an intelligent layout as by taking the VRM circuitry on the daughter-board, there is enough space around the CPU socket for adding in a fan. On the lower side of the boards, things are pretty dense, with a PCIe 3.0 slot running at x16 speeds, packed very close to the chipset which has four SATA ports (2xSATA 2 and 2xSATA 3) on the right and the Wi-Fi and bluetooth card on the left-hand side.

When it comes to heat-sinks, all the three Z77 boards are impressive. The heat-sink on the ZOTAC board is quite good, with the VRM heatsink

connected to the chipset heat-sink via a heat pipe helping in quicker heat dissipation. The ASRock heat-sink is not as elaborate as the ones seen on ZOTAC & ASUS but is decent enough. All the three boards have the SATA ports pointing upwards, with a 2x2 arrangement on ZOTAC and ASRock boards and a 1x4 arrangement on the ASUS board. There are two USB 2.0 headers and a USB 3.0 header on all boards. All the boards come with on-board Wi-Fi card which fits in the mini PCIe slot. Out of the box, the wire management of the WiFi card was the best on ASUS and ASRock boards where it was nicely manoeuvred through the components on the board. The ZOTAC board's wire was found to be dangling. These are little



Gigabyte H77N-WIFI

things, but it shows the attention to detail by the board makers.

The ZOTAC board was the only one which had dedicated power and reset buttons on board along with a POST error-code readout LED. These are desirable features in a board. The ASUS P8Z77-I offers the MemOK button which helps to check on faulty memory modules, and on the back I/O panel it features the clear CMOS and BIOS flash buttons. The region around the

CPU was the best in the ASUS board followed by ASRock and ZOTAC boards. The 8-pin CPU power connector found on all three boards is placed most strategically on the ASUS board. The back I/O panels on all the boards are quite well represented. Both ASUS and ASRock offer four USB 3.0 ports and sport a DVI, HDMI and a DisplayPort each whereas the ZOTAC board sports two HDMI ports along with one mini-DisplayPort. It

Petition to build Death Star ?!

A ridiculous White House petition to build an actual Death Star has received more than 25,000 signatures: <http://dgit.in/UGYaPk>



Youtube Capture for iOS

Youtube Capture, a new video recording and sharing service by Google for iOS will enable recording and sharing videos faster

CHIPSET DETAILS

Chipset	Intel H77	Intel H61	Intel Z77	AMD A75
SATA 2 ports	6	4	6	0
SATA 3 ports	2	0	2	6
USB 2.0 ports	14	10	14	10
USB 3.0 ports	4	0	4	4
PCIe	1 x16 Gen 3	1 x16 Gen 2	1 x16 or 2 x8 Gen 3	1 x16 or 2 x8 Gen 2
RAID	Y	N	Y	Y
Smart Response Technology	Y	N	Y	N
CPU Overclocking	N	N	Y	Y

has two LAN ports as opposed to one each on the ASUS and ASRock boards.

The UEFI BIOS is present on all the boards, but ASUS's implementation is really good. It also offers shortcuts within the BIOS to quickly navigate to the option you want to tweak. The number of overclocking options offered by the ASUS board was more than ASRock or ZOTAC. We were able to overclock the Intel

Core i7-3770K on the ASUS P8Z77-I Deluxe to 4.4 GHz whereas the other two boards could only manage 4.1 GHz on the stock cooler. This is courtesy the daughterboard which gives the ASUS board enough headroom to overclock. Ease of overclocking was decent on all the boards in this segment. When it came to utilities, again the ASUS offerings were way better than the other two.

The A75 boards

AMD processors have been quite impressive when it comes to their on-board gaming performance, but it seems that motherboard makers aren't very enthusiastic about expanding that portfolio. We were expecting some FM2 socket based AMD

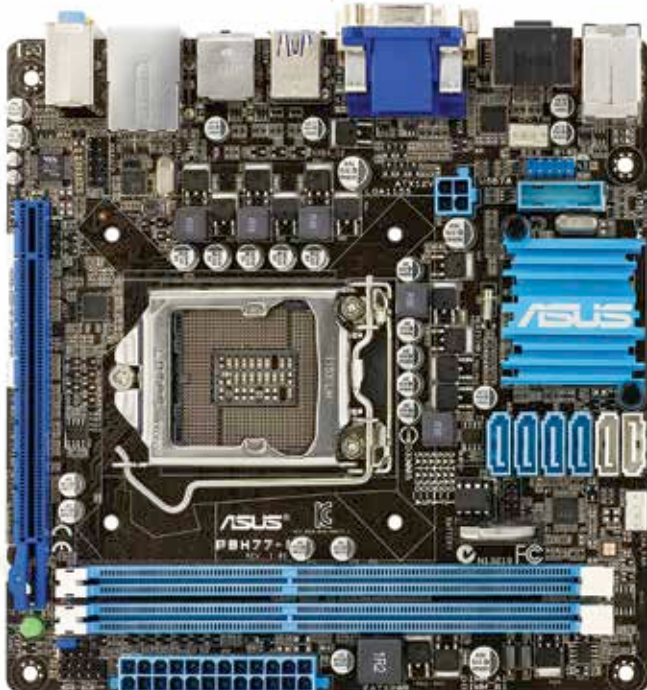
the power port on the ASRock A75M-ITX. The heatsinks on the ZOTAC boards are quite better than the one on ASRock. Thanks to the A75 chipset, all the four SATA ports are SATA 6 Gbps. One striking omission from the ASRock A75M-ITX is a USB 3.0 header, whereas the ZOTAC board has one despite having six USB3.0 ports (as opposed to four on ASRock A75M-ITX) on the back panel IO. Another advantage that the ZOTAC board has over



Foxconn H61S

boards so that we could try out the latest AMD A10-5800K APU which gives a brilliant gaming performance along with mid-range CPU performance. We got only two boards with the AMD A75 chipset, namely ZOTAC A75-ITX and ASRock A75M-ITX, both sporting the older FM1 socket for which we used an AMD A8-3850 APU. The layout on both the boards is quite different with the ZOTAC board appearing rather cramped as compared to the ASRock board. The placement of the 4-pin power module on the ZOTAC board is quite strange, lodged as it is between the Wi-Fi antenna out and the USB 3.0 ports on the back panel IO as compared to the more mainstream placement of

the ASRock board is the presence of a dedicated Wi-Fi card in the mini PCIe slot. But as was seen on the Z77-ITX board, the wire coming out of the Wi-Fi card is just dangling and not managed well along the components. Due to the absence of a heatsink around the VRM, the A75M-ITX board has more space around the CPU socket than the ZOTAC board which has taller heatsinks on both the VRM as well as the chipset. Back panel I/O ports on the ZOTAC board are quite varied thanks to the presence of on-board Wi-Fi and an extra LAN port. The ASRock board lacks a dedicated DVI port, which may be attributed to its layout which allots a significant portion along the back panel I/O to accommodate



ASUS P8H77-I

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- 4 DDR3 2200(O.C)
- QUAD CROSSFIREX SUPPORT
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- B-GH, ALC892, THX TRUSTUDIO
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Software Monitor



Data Backup & Restore



USB Blocker

PRODUCTIVITY



Energy Saver



PC Health Center



B75 Pro3



B75 Pro3-M



B75M R2.0



B75M-GL R2.0



B75M-ITX



B75M-DGS

QR Code for ASRock B75 Series



National Distributor



Online Retail Stores



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FBI + Facebook?

FBI teamed up with Facebook to bust an international crime ring which made the use of a botnet to steal \$850 million

WP8 issue fixed

Microsoft addressed a reboot issue with their Windows Phone 8 Operating System. The issue made the smartphones like HTC 8X reboot randomly



	A75 boards			H61 boards			H77 boards		
Brand	ASRock	ZOTAC	MSI	Intel	Foxconn	ASUS	ASUS	Gigabyte	Intel
Model Name	A75M-ITX	A75-ITX WiFi	H61I-E35	DH61DL	H61S	P8H61-I	P8H77-I	H77N-WiFi	DH77DF
Price	₹5,790	₹6,900	₹3,900	₹4,292	₹2,950	₹4,750	₹6,950	₹9,400	₹6,902
Features and Specs (Out of 75)	25.05	30.15	14.7	12.45	13.65	21.9	28.58	31.2	24.6
Board Layout (Out of 20)	11.9	13.7	11.9	11.9	12.3	11.8	11.8	11.8	11
Package Bundle (Out of 5)	1.8	1.95	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Grand Total (Out of 100)	38.75	45.8	28.4	26.15	27.75	35.5	42.18	44.8	37.4
Features and Specs									
Memory Slots / Type	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3
Maximum Memory support (GB)	16	8	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Chipset	A75	A75	H61	H61	H61S	H61	H77	H77	H77
No. of SATA 2 / SATA 3 ports	0 / 4	0 / 4	4 / 0	3 / 0	2 / 0	4 / 0	4 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2
No. of PCIe x16 slots	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
No. of USB 2.0 / USB 3.0 ports	2 / 4	0 / 6	4 / 0	2 / 2	6 / 0	4 / 2	6 / 2	4 / 2	4 / 2
No. of LAN ports	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
No. of eSATA ports	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Optical S/PDIF port	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
On-board WiFi (Y/N)	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N
All Solid state caps	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Clear CMOS button	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Power / Reset button	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Graphical UEFI BIOS (Y/N)	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N
USB 2.0 / USB 3.0 header	2 / 0	2 / 1	2 / 0	3 / 0	2 / 0	2 / 0	1 / 1	2 / 1	2 / 1
POST error code LED	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
HDMI/DVI/D-SUB/DisplayPort	1/0/1/0	1/1/0/0	1/0/1/0	0/1/1/0	0/1/1/0	1/1/1/0	1/1/1/0	1/1/0/1	1/1/0/1
Parallel Port	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
USB Charger	Y	N	Y	N	N	0	N	N	N
Bluetooth	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
No of Fan Connectors	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Board Layout (Out of 10)									
Region around the CPU	8	8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7
Location of SATA ports	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Placement of Memory modules	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
VRM Heatsink Quality	NA	6	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Southbridge heatsink quality	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	5
Package Bundle									
No of SATA cables	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
I/O Shield	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
USB 3 Bracket	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
eSATA Bracket	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
CrossFire / SLI Bridge	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Performance (for reference only)									
Unigine Heave 2.5 (1280x1024, low settings)									
Score	306	312	325	230	324	325	323	329	318
FPS	12.1	12.4	12.9	9.1	12.9	12.9	12.8	13.1	12.4
CineBench R11.5									
Open GL	26.07	26.33	21.26	11.01	20.96	21.02	20.88	20.77	19.24
Multicore	3.43	3.32	7.45	5.42	5.93	7.51	7.31	7.48	7.22
WinRAR file compression/decompression (KB/s)	1809	1834	3245	3189	3213	3447	3226	3286	3128
USB data transfer (MB/s)									
4 GB Sequential Write	73.24	78.04	27.74	75.85	27.19	76.77	74.9	77.38	74.54
4 GB Assorted Write	36.17	33.45	18.6	40.34	18.41	37.19	36.91	41.34	38.54
4 GB Sequential Read	120.32	120.29	34.42	120.23	33.43	123.43	124.27	123.55	120.12
4 GB Assorted Read	87.34	85.03	30.14	92.12	30.54	97.7	99.17	94.16	94.54
Apple iTunes encoding (in secs)	91.37	90.83	50.37	56.41	49.67	49.97	49.35	49.7	50.1
ArcSoft Media Converter (100 MB VOB to AVI conversion) (in secs)	13	15	14	16	13	14	14	13	14
Resident Evil 5 (1920x1080, Low, DX10)	41.4	41.4	41.3	30.1	40.6	41	40.9	41.1	4.01
STALKER: COP (1920x1080, Low, DX11)	26.8	27.4	26.3	16.4	25.5	26.7	26.5	25.5	26.5



Nvidia teams up with IIT-D

Nvidia has joined hands with the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi to for establishing a research lab in India to propel exascale computing

Gadget airbags?!

Amazon won a patent for a gadget-airbag suggesting that tiny airbags can be used to protect gadgets from accidents

Motherboard Test



Z77 boards

ASUS	ASRock	ZOTAC
P8Z77-I Deluxe	Z77E-ITX	Z77ITX-A-E
₹11,950	₹11,750	₹9,999
36.9	34.2	32.55
14.3	11.7	14
2.1	1.8	3.6
53.3	47.7	50.15
2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3	2 / DDR3
16	16	16
Z77	Z77	Z77
2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2
1	1	1
4 / 4	2 / 4	4 / 2
1	1	2
2	1	0
1	1	1
Y	Y	Y
Y	Y	Y
Y	Y	N
N	N	Y
Y	Y	N
2 / 1	2 / 1	2 / 1
N	N	Y
1/1/0/1	1/1/0/1	2/0/0/1
0	0	0
N	N	N
Y	N	Y
2	2	2
8	7	8
5	5	5
8	7	8
8	NA	7
6	8	6
4	2	4
Y	Y	Y
N	N	Y
N	N	N
N	N	N
330	325	321
13.1	12.9	13.2
20.88	20.89	20.88
7.53	7.35	7.25
3510	3512	3542
76.96	74.34	75.54
38.66	38.34	37.85
124.83	122.54	123.24
96.39	97.89	95.56
49.78	49.44	48.84
13	13	14
40.8	40.2	41.2
26.5	25.5	25.5



Gigabyte H77N-WIFI

the edge of the DIMM slots, two capacitors and the fan connectors. As expected, there are no on-board dedicated power/reset or other buttons. Only the Z75-ITX A-E has a clear CMOS button on the back I/O panel, just under the two Wi-Fi antenna outs. The BIOS on the ZOTAC board is quite boring so to speak, offering mouse functionality whereas the one on ASRock board is quite good looking thanks to the graphical UEFI BIOS. Overclocking isn't really the strong point of these boards though.

The H77 boards

These boards are targeted at mainstream users, for whom overclocking matters little. It is identical to Z77 chipset in all aspects other than overclocking and PCI express graphics: Z77 has support for 1x PCIe x16 or 2x PCIe x8 whereas H77 supports only a single PCIe x16 slot. Splitting of PCIe lanes is pointless as far as mini ITX form factor boards is concerned, as

most of the boards will have only one PCIe x16 slot. As far as the mini-ITX boards are concerned the only advantage Z77 chipset-based boards have over H77-chipset boards is support for overclocking. You can overclock a processor on an H77 chipset only to a certain extent by changing the base clock, but multiplier is locked. Gains by overclocking on an H77 board aren't much as compared to that on the Z77 board.

We got three boards: ASUS P8H77-I, Intel DH77DF and Gigabyte H77N-WiFi in this category. Layout-wise the Gigabyte board looks similar to the Intel board. ASUS P8H77-I has a slightly different layout with the DIMM slots located slightly on the inner side as the 24-pin ATX power connector occupies the space on the edge. Although, the CPU socket region is surrounded by the DIMM slots on the left and PCIe slot on the right, it may be an issue if you are using a large CPU cooler,

Google Currents updated

Google recently updated its news-reading app Google Currents by adding new features. The app is a direct competitor of Flipboard

Tasered for buying many iPhones

In another one of those iDevice related news, a Chinese woman got tasered after wanting to purchase too many iPhones at a mall in New Hampshire, England

CONTACT DETAILS

Brand	CONTACT	Phone	Email	Website
ASRock	Mediaman Infotech	NA	info@asrock.co.tw	www.asrock.com
ASUS	ASUS Technology Pvt Ltd	1800 209 0365	reachus@asus.com	www.asus.in
Foxconn	Foxconn Technology	91 22 2384 2200	webadmin@foxconn.com	www.foxconn.com
Gigabyte	Gigabyte Technology India Pvt Ltd	91 22 4063 3222	sales@gigabyte.in	www.gigabyte.in
Intel	Intel India	NA	NA	www.intel.in
MSI	MSI Computer India Pvt Ltd	1800 103 6262	salesindia@msi.com	www.msi.com
ZOTAC	Aditya Infotech Ltd.	120 4555 666	sales@adityagroup.com	www.zotac.com

but considering most users looking at an H77 rig will not be indulging in overclocking, the stock cooler will fit just fine. You may have to insert the memory sticks after installing the cooler though.

All the boards lack a heat-sink over the VRM indicating its lower power profile but the chipsets have a passive heat-sink. Thanks to the absence of a heatsink around the VRM circuitry, there is ample room around the CPU socket. We did not like the placement of all the headers and fan connec-

tors along the PCIe slot on the Intel DH77DF. The Gigabyte board was the best in terms of layout, with ASUS being the second best. ASUS does manage to pack in six SATA ports (2xSATA 3 and 4xSATA 2) which is impressive. As expected, all SATA ports are pointing upwards. The presence of a Wi-Fi adapter on the Gigabyte H77N board differentiates it from the other two boards. The Intel board does have a mini-PCIe slot to add in a Wi-Fi card though. Coming to the backpanel IO, all three

boards provided quite a variety. The Gigabyte board sports two LAN ports, a Wi-Fi antenna, two USB 3.0 ports along with three display outs (2xHDMI, 1xDVI). Intel shows some variety in terms of an eSATA port, a FireWire port and three display outs (DVI, HDMI, DisplayPort). Finally, ASUS has the standard set of ports including two USB 3.0, six USB 2.0 and three display outs (DVI, D-Sub and DisplayPort). The graphical BIOSes on the Gigabyte and the ASUS boards is quite impressive as compared to the regular BIOS on the Intel DH77DF.

x16 slot and instead have a PCIe x1 slot. The ASUS and Foxconn board each have a PCIe x16 slot (Gen 2). Clearance around the CPU region in the Intel, MSI and Foxconn board is much better than that on the ASUS board. But this again will matter only if you are using a large CPU cooler, which is pointless

on such a board as you will not be doing any overclocking. None of the boards have any heatsinks around the VRM circuitry. Heat-sinks on the chipset are present on all boards with the Foxconn and ASUS ones being slightly better off than the rest. The Foxconn board has just two SATA 2 ports, whereas MSI and ASUS boards have twice that. All the ports point upward, but their alignment is different on all the boards. While ASUS sticks to the more standard way of arranging them in a line, MSI has them arranged one beside the other in a horizontal manner which may seem strange, but it does give room for the SATA cables. Also it can afford to do that as it has a PCIe x1 slot.

Coming to the backpanel ports, there isn't much happening really as compared to the Z77 and H77 boards. The Intel board sports a parallel port, making it an ideal board to be used for office work, but it is good to see two USB 3.0 ports, a D-Sub and a DVI port as well. The USB 3.0 port on the Intel board is thanks to the Renesas NEC chip. ASUS is the only other H61 board that sports two USB 3.0 ports thanks to the Asmedia controller chip. Since the DH61DL board does not support the Intel Core i7-3770K, we had called in for an Core i5-3540S. Despite updating the BIOS, we were facing a lot of issues so we had to use a second

The H61 boards

The H61 boards are the lower end of the Intel chipset spectrum. The H61 chipset is ideally meant for lower-budget builds and meant for those who will use it for an HTPC build or office work. With the lack of native USB 3.0 support and no support for SATA 3 speeds, this board has its limits. There are board manufacturers who add a separate chip to allow USB 3.0 ports on the backpanel IO, but that's about it. It also lacks RAID support and SSD caching. We got around four boards in this segment namely: Intel DH61DL, MSI H61I-E35, ASUS P8H61-I and Foxconn H61S. Of these four boards, you can forget gaming on the MSI H61I-E35 and Intel DH61DL as they lack a dedicated PCIe



ASUS P8Z77-I Deluxe



Most searched in 2012

Sunny Leone the actress cum adult star was the most searched person on Google in India in 2012. She was also the third most searched 'topic'

Download the tweets

After a long wait, Twitter rolls out options to enable downloading tweets or the complete post history as an archive

Motherboard Test



ASRock A75M-ITX

generation Core i5-2500K for the benchmarks. Naturally, its scores will be lower as compared to 3rd gen processors. Other H61 boards worked fine with the Core i7-3770K after a BIOS update.

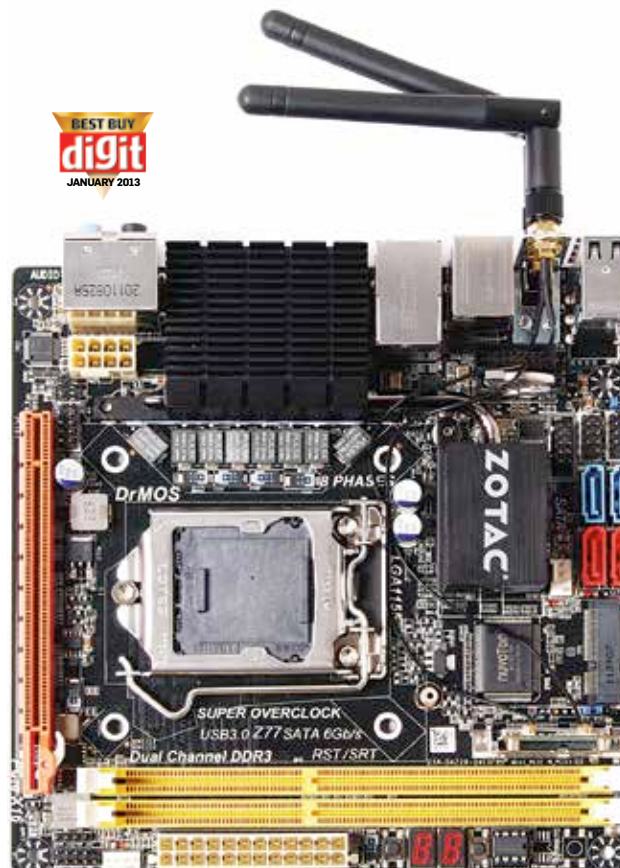
Verdict

We decided to divide the boards according to the chipsets on which they were based to be fair to all participants. Among the A75 boards, there was a close fight in terms of value for money between the two boards. The ZOTAC A75-ITX has a huge advantage in the form of an on-board Wi-Fi connector, but its available for ₹1,200 more than the ASRock A75M-ITX. Thousand rupees is a huge price gap when you are considering buying mini ITX boards. Hence, the **ASRock A75M-ITX** was awarded the **Best Buy**.

The H61 boards had a close fight between Intel, MSI and Foxconn but **Foxconn H61S** was awarded the **Best Buy**

award for its economical pricing. For an H61 board, the

Foxconn board provides ample features including a PCIe x16 slot which was lacking in the MSI and Intel boards. The



ZOTAC Z77ITX-A-E

Media Boards

We also got two Media boards from Intel, namely DH61AG and DQ77KB which are different from the other boards in the sense that these media boards come with a unique 1x2-pin power connector on the board and there is a power connector on the back panel I/O that will take 19 Volts from a power adapter. Both the boards have a very slim form factor with the backpanel I/O under 2cm height. Of course finding a cooler that slim is an arduous task. Both the boards come with a full-size and half-size mini PCI express connectors for adding a Wi-Fi card or an mSATA SSD. They have SO-DIMM slots and one PCIe x4 slot. As far as backpanel I/O ports go, the DH61AG supports DVI, HDMI, two USB 3.0 ports, two USB 2.0 ports (which can also be used for device charging) and a single LAN port. The DQ77KB includes an HDMI and a DisplayPort alongwith two LAN ports and four USB ports. The DQ77KB is the more feature rich of the two and is priced accordingly at ₹7,888 whereas the DH61AG comes for ₹6,670. These boards are ideal for those looking to build a slim HTPC, but it will depend a lot on availability of a compatible mini ITX case, the 19V power supply and a slim cooler.

ASUS board has the larger overall score, but it is also priced the highest.

Among the H77 boards, Gigabyte and ASUS had a close fight with the overall score difference of just over two points. Gigabyte has an advantage with the on-board Wi-Fi module, but the pricing is way off the charts. At almost ₹2,500 over the ASUS board, it just makes **ASUS P8H77-I** the **Best Buy**.

Finally, in the high-end mini ITX category, we had three wonderful boards battling it out. **ASUS P8Z77-I Deluxe** bagged the **Editor's Pick** award for its highest overall score, a killer feature set and an innovation that was not seen on any other mini-ITX board we have tested to date. The overclocking prowess of the ASUS board is way better than that of the ASRock and ZOTAC Z77 boards. **ZOTAC Z77-ITX A-E** was awarded the **Best Buy** for its bang-for-the-buck offerings and a very sweet pricing.



EA out of NASDAQ-100

EA the popular video game publisher has been removed from NASDAQ-100 which features top 100 non-financial stocks lists.



Steam Box rumours true

Gabe Newell, CEO of Valve, has confirmed that the company is working on a hardware device to compete with next-gen consoles.



Phabulous Devices

The gadget in my pocket is bigger than yours!

Sameer Mitha
sameer.mitha@thinkdigit.com

When Dell launched the Streak, it was a great product but launched way ahead of its time and wasn't well accepted in the market. Fast-forward to 2011 and Samsung took a bold step and launched the Samsung Galaxy Note. It was quite a good product with great power under the hood, a skin that complemented the Android OS and a stylus that could be

used for a whole lot more than just navigating.

Given the popularity of the Note, every manufacturer wanted a taste of the phablet pie. So what is a phablet? Well, it is technically the sweet spot between a really large phone (larger than 4.5-inches) and a small sized tablet (around 7-inches).

We got around 13 phablets this month, ranging from under ₹10,000 all the way up to the Samsung Galaxy Note II, which is the most expensive at ₹37,599.

Most of the products are homogenous, which is to say

that 9 out of 10 of their features are the same. But some of them do bring some interesting distinctions to the crowd.

Phones under ₹10,000

This price bracket can be considered as testing waters for those that want to know what it feels like to own a tablet/smartphone hybrid. These devices have a 5-inch display but the resolution, at 480x800, isn't the best. Surprisingly, the processors of the phones are 1 GHz dual-core except the Zync Cloud Z5 that

has a single core processor. All these devices compromise on the RAM, which is 512 MB making heavy-duty multi-tasking a bit of a problem. All of them run on Android 4.0 ICS. They have a standard set of specifications such as a front and rear-facing camera, access to the Play store for apps and expandable memory.

Build and usability

The Magicion mNote has a design that is very reminiscent of the Samsung Galaxy SIII, from the one physical and two



2 million iPhone 5 sold

Apple has recorded a sales figure of 2 million iPhone 5 in the first weekend of launch in China <http://dgit.in/ZIKMRu>



Devil May Cry launch date

Devil May Cry creator Capcom has announced that the new version will release on January 25, 2013 as a digital download

HOW WE TESTED

We have seen quite a large number of manufacturers tap into the 5-inch smartphone/tablet hybrid space. The price tag of these devices ranges from under ₹10,000 all the way up to ₹37,500. So, to keep things fair, we divided the 13 phablets into three price brackets – up to ₹10,000, ₹10,001 to ₹20,000 and ₹20,001 and above. The street price of the devices was used to place them into the categories and not the MRP's printed on the box.

Since all the phablets run on Android 4.0 or higher, getting them on an even ground to perform the test was simple. We synced our Google account with them and performed the software update. Apart from the pre-installed apps, none of these devices needed any major

update. After the update, we ran a bunch of benchmarks on all the devices to see how the raw hardware performs. This not only helps us in determining the final best performer but also tells us, which of two homogenous products has better raw performance.

After the performance we tested to see how the smartphone works as a multimedia device. For this we played some MP3 songs and a bunch of videos. We didn't install a third party video player, as we wanted to see what formats would play natively on the phablets. We ran HD and SD videos of a variety of formats such as .MOV, .MKV, .AVI, and .MP4.

We also downloaded a few apps and games from the Play Store to see how they would

perform. These are apps you use on a daily basis such as Facebook, Angry Birds Star Wars, Temple Run and more.

We assessed the build quality and comfort of the devices on the basis of materials used, placement of hardware buttons and connectivity options.

Last, but not least, the ability of the phablets to make calls. Yes, the device may be your multimedia, entertainment and work buddy, but above all things it needs to be able to make a phone call and send a text message. We moved around to see how the phablets would perform under various network conditions and also to judge the quality and volume of the voice during the calls.

capacitive buttons to the rear panel and the placement of the camera. You wouldn't recognize that this is a budget phone if you saw it from a distance. On its right, it has the power button and the left has the volume rocker, which are really slim and may be inconvenient to use without looking at them. The phone even comes with a Samsung Galaxy Note style flap

cover. The device feels heavy but is comfortable for use with one hand.

The Zync Cloud Z5 has a design that is very reminiscent of the Samsung Galaxy Note. From the glossy front to the textured back, from a distance it's easy to mistake this device as the first generation Note. Just like the Note, it is very comfortable for single as well as two-hand use. It has the power switch on the left and the volume rocker on the right. These buttons have a slight bulge to them, which makes it easy to identify without looking.

The Micromax Canvas 2 A110 has a Samsung Galaxy Nexus style curved design and it has mimicked this design element quite well. We wish it had copied the slimness of Nexus device too, but the A110 isn't thicker than its peers. It's surprisingly a lot more comfortable to hold than the other devices in this category. The textured back adds to the grip and the bulgy volume rocker and



Intex AQUA



Micromax Canvas 2 A110

The Intex Aqua 5 on the other hand looks like a brick and a bigger version of the Intex Aqua 4. The display has a square design to it rather than the rectangular look we are familiar with. This isn't a bad thing for regular use but makes typing in the landscape mode a bit uncomfortable. It is the lightest phone in its category on paper but in usage it feels heavier. Where other phones have only three buttons below the display – back, home and menu, the Intex Aqua 5 adds the long lost search button, which we have missed on devices. In its overall design however, it is the least comfortable phablet to use.

Features and Performance

So the budget phablets have done quite a good job at mimicking the looks of some premium devices. But do they perform as well? The Magicon mNote has a stock Android experience and that is a very good thing. On paper, its raw hardware performance is the best in its

power button are way more conveniently placed that the Cloud Z5. At the bottom of the display are the three capacitive navigation buttons. The device isn't the lightest in its class, but it is easy to use with single as well as both hands. It has the best design in this segment though.

power button are way more conveniently placed that the Cloud Z5. At the bottom of the display are the three capacitive navigation buttons. The device isn't the lightest in its class, but it is easy to use with single as well as both hands. It has the best design in this segment though.

GSM subscriber base

After a steady period of growth, India's telecom subscriber base registered a 2.5 million decline, in the month of October 2012 <http://dgit.in/UPGUbe>

**BlackBerry Z10**

Z10 is expected to be the first BB10 OS device, a full-touch offering. The QWERTY smartphones are expected to follow <http://dgit.in/UPI9XZ>



	Below Rs. 10,000				Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 20,000				
Brand	Zync	Intex	Magicon	Micromax	Wickedleak	iBall	Spice	Mercury	Lenovo
Model	Cloud Z5	Aqua 5.0	mNote	Canvas 2 A110	Wammy Note	Andi 5c	Stellar Horizon	MagiQ	S880
Price	8,990	9,690	9,999	9,999	11,000	11,999	12,499	12,700	18,999
Performance	18.9	20.7	21.3	20.5	19.9	19.7	23.1	19.3	20.1
Features	16.6	16.1	16.7	17.0	14.2	15.0	16.8	16.6	16.4
Design and Build	16.9	16.4	16.0	17.1	16.7	16.5	17.3	14.8	17.0
Total Score	52.5	53.1	54.0	54.5	50.7	51.1	57.1	50.6	53.6
Power package									
Processor max clock speed (GHz)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Processor cores	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1
RAM	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Display (in inches)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Display resolution	480x800	480x800	480x800	480x800	480x800	480x800	480x800	480x800	480x800
Camera									
Camera Resolution (in MP)	8	5	8	8	8	5	5	12	5
HDR	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Image Stabilization	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Video Stabilization	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3D Panorama shot	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Other hardware									
Dual-SIM	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Expandable Memory (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Wi-Fi (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
GPS	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
OS	Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.0
UI Skin/ wrapper	N.A.	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Battery rating (mAh)	2500	2000	2000	2000	2500	2300	2400	2200	2250
Weight (in gms)	165	198.9	160	168	192	200	205	140	196
Test/benchmark scores									
Rightware Browsermark score	1320	1584	1501	1546	1421	1589	1346	1389	1287
Quadrant	2540	2779	2872	2493	2619	2273	2482	2317	2207
AnTuTu	3869	6579	7042	6263	6288	3864	6763	4512	4632
LinPack Benchmark (single thread) MFLOPS	37.509	30.992	34.57	31.234	32.824	36.86	37.359	28.505	35.659
LinPack Benchmark (multi thread) MFLOPS	35	57.156	58.708	52.009	53.545	32.27	50.972	29.01	32.694
GLBenchmark Egypt Standard Classic (Frames)	2544	2745	2841	2615	2448	2553	2868	2404	2501
SmartBench 2012	1123	2088	2295	2036	2087	1686	2009	1157	1230
NenaMark2 (FPS)	22.9	25.7	27.4	25.6	22.1	23.9	28.1	21.6	22.4



Twitter updates BB app

Twitter's update adds the "Connect" and "Discover" tabs, as well as some navigation changes on the BB app <http://dgit.in/UPI19J>



Facebook Snapchat?

Facebook is reportedly working on an in-house photo-sharing app that will compete against Snapchat <http://dgit.in/UPJzSz>

Smartphones Test



Rs. 20,001 and above				
Lenovo	Samsung	LG	Samsung	
K860	Galaxy Note	Optimus Vu	Galaxy Note II	
28,499	29,990	34,500	37,599	
27.9	24.1	26.9	29.4	
18.4	17.1	17.5	24.3	
18.9	19.9	18.8	23.0	
65.2	61.1	63.2	76.7	
1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	
4	2	2	4	
1	1	1	2	
5	5.3	5	5.5	
1280x720	1280x800	1024x760	1280x720	
8	8	8	8	
N	N	N	Y	
Y	Y	Y	Y	
N	N	Y	Y	
N	N	N	N	
Y	Y	Y	Y	
Y	Y	Y	Y	
Y	Y	Y	Y	
Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.0	Android 4.1	
Y	Y	Y	Y	
2250	2500	2080	3100	
193.5	178	168	183	
2298	N.A.	54739	165717	
5067	3726	4781	5981	
15823	5854	12131	13649	
53.602	59.8	50.68	65.03	
100.516	98	92.92	190.15	
6516	2900	6154	6521	
4276	N.A.	4523	4727	
52.3	N.A.	48.7	58	

category but not by much. It's slightly faster than the competition and a user will not be able to tell the difference in the real world. It also boasts of dual-SIM capabilities just like the rest of the devices in this category. It has an 8 MP rear camera. All the games and apps we threw at the device ran quite well, but the 512 MB RAM fell a bit short while multi-tasking. It doesn't come with any premium-preloaded apps or cloud storage support. The video playback on the device wasn't the best. The only format it recognized was AVI and the video played back at a slow frame rate. The audio too wasn't the best.

The Zync Cloud Z5 however did a better job with the AVI files, but refused to play any other formats. The audio while watching videos wasn't loud from the speakers nor was it the best with music, but it was quite loud when we played games or ran some apps. It's a dual-SIM phone as well. We had a better experience of browsing the web on the Zync. The resolution of the display may be low, but its large display made it easy for us to read text. Being the cheapest



Spice Stellar Horizon

phone in its bracket, it really does a good job with the overall performance. The display however is cumbersome to use under direct sunlight.

The Micromax Canvas 2 A110 is a really good performer. If you have used a Funbook tablet, or any other Micromax Android smartphone, you will feel right at home with the UI. Android is skinned but not to an extent that we dislike. You are greeted with very gaudy wallpaper and very childish icons when you power up the device but that can change with any Android theme available on the Play store. One feature that distinguishes the A110 from the rest is that apart from the Play store it also gives you access a lot of local content such as Bollywood news, cricket, news, astrology, devotional content and more via the M!Zone and M!Store. It also comes preloaded with the M!Buddy chat app. It has an IPS LCD panel, which adds to the viewing angles and a pleasant smartphone experi-



LG Optimus Vu-White

Tegra 4 details leaked

A slide containing details of the upcoming Tegra 4 architecture codenamed "Wayne" has been leaked which shows it having a 72-core GPU.

Nokia to produce tablets?

According to reports, Nokia is thinking of getting into the Tablet market with a Windows RT- based, Surface like 10 inch-tablet.



Lenovo-S880

ence. The Intex Aqua 5 too comes with stock Android. Its biggest drawback is that it has a 5 MP rear camera where the rest of its peers have an 8 MP camera. Interestingly, the Aqua 5 comes with an app called the Intex Zone that let's you record calls as well as track your phone. It also links to certain useful Intex Mobile websites. Its extra features aren't as extensive as the one available on the Micromax A110. Other preloaded apps include Flipkart, NQ Mobile security and IRCTC. Overall, it's quite homogenous to its peers but doesn't have any features that make it stand out.

Verdict

The **Micromax Canvas 2 A110** was awarded the **Best Buy**. Not only is it a good-looking phone but it is a great performer as well. It has power under the hood to run apps, a good display and a

very comfortable user experience. The UI may be a bit cartoonish for some but that can be rectified. It also offers quite a bit of local content. Despite being big, the device is quite comfortable when held up against one's ear for making calls.

₹10,001 to ₹20,000

This price bracket can be considered for those who know what they want from a 5-inch smartphone/tablet hybrid but can't afford to shell out the

premium price tag. Surprisingly, the specifications on paper as well as the benchmark score aren't dramatically different than the budget devices. The specifications under the hood too are quite homogenous. The display is 5-inch with a resolution of 480x800 (same as the budget), front and rear camera and 512 MB of RAM. The surprising factor is that more of the budget phablets had a dual-core processor when compared to the mid-range phablets. All the phablets of this category run on Android 4.0.3 or 4.0.4. The processor too is clocked at 1 GHz. They have a standard set of specifications and access to the Play store for apps and expandable memory. So what is the distinguishing factor of the phablets in this category when compared to the rest? Better performance? Better touchscreen response? Read on to find out.

Build and usability

Wickedleak Wammy Note takes its design cues from the Samsung Galaxy Note. It has a rectangular shape that is quite sharp and at times can get uncomfortable to use. The rear has a textured panel very reminiscent of the Note again. It has a standard volume rocker on the right but houses two-power buttons. The one on the top works as a regular power button and no matter what we tried, the power button on the left didn't do anything. Present for show perhaps? The bottom of the device (the place where the Galaxy Note houses the stylus) we have an antenna that can be used for analogue TV. The device also boasts of dual-SIM capabilities. The iBall Andi 5c on first glance looks very similar to

the Note and feels quite heavy in one's hands. The Andi 5c has an edge-to-edge glass screen with the standard one button in the center surrounded by the contextual menu and back softkeys around it. The microUSB port is at the top, which is a little different than what we are used to. On the left hand side you have the volume rocker and on the right hand side there is the power switch / stand-by button. The speaker section is present on the lower right hand side. The iBall Andi 5c is definitely on the heavier side of things when compared with the Note. Even though this isn't the case, the display feels a lot wider than the competing devices.

The Spice Stellar Horizon has tried to make a place for itself with its design. It has



Mercury MagiQ

Steam for Linux for all

Steam for Linux Beta has been launched for everyone. Linux users waiting for this can now rejoice as it now has a growing no. of Linux supported games.

New Privacy tools on Facebook

Facebook recently began to roll-out new options or tools for managing Privacy on Facebook. It also added a tutorial to explain users about their Privacy settings.

Smartphones Test

a clean front with the three touch capacitive buttons at the bottom. It too has the microUSB charging port at the top. The downside to the design is that the volume rocker and the power button are too close to the bezel of the device and it may be a tad difficult to access them with your eyes closed. The bezel of the screen has sharp edges that may not appeal to some. Especially if you are one who presses your phone to your ear quite hard. The rear has a matte white finish, which is nice. The phone also boasts of dual-SIM capabilities.

The Mercury MagiQ is another device that has a rear panel like the Note but the front is a different story. Sure it houses the same 5-inch display but it has five capacitive buttons at the bottom – call, menu, home, back and search. The design of these buttons too is different from what we are used to seeing. A noticeable hardware bump when compared to the competition is that the rear of the phablet houses a 12 MP camera. Don't be fooled by the megapixel count, as the performance of the camera isn't great.

The Lenovo S880 falls into the same homogenous look and feel like its brethren. Some distinguishing factors though differentiate this device from the crowd and not all of them are good. To start with the rear camera isn't supported with a flash, which is a downer. Also, the touch sensitive capacitive buttons are a part of the display just like the Galaxy Nexus rather than being below the display like all the other phablets.

This isn't a bad thing, but it is a waste of display real estate. While watching videos, these buttons do disappear giving you utility of the complete screen.

Features and Performance

Switch on the Wickedleak Wammy Note and you'll be greeted by a wallpaper that has been taken straight from the Samsung Galaxy Note. The interface is stock Android, bringing nothing new to the table. Multimedia and apps run quite well on the device even though the audio output, especially for videos is a tad disappointing. Under the hood it has a 2500 mAh battery, which is a lot, and in the box you get a spare battery as well. Call quality from the device was good. It played the AVI



Lenovo K860

files without any hiccups but refused to recognize MKV, MOV and MP4 videos.

The iBall Andi 5c has a 5 MP camera whereas the other phones in this range that have 8 MP and 12 MP cameras, but the output from the Andi 5c was quite good and in fact a tad better than most. The interface on the device is stock Android and it does come pre-loaded with a bunch of apps such as CricketNews, Money Control, RTI India and Zomato. The device also has a wireless keyboard app that lets you connect a wireless keyboard to it. The Spice Stellar Horizon has a display that has better viewing angles than its brethren even though it isn't the best one under direct sunlight. Its interface too is way smoother than the others in its category. It also comes preloaded with apps

such as NQ Mobile Security, Dhingana, Documents to go, Nimbuzz and Vault to name a few. The addition of the security apps is a nice touch, especially if you are paranoid about your content. The call quality from the device is loud and clear and the 2400 mAh battery will last more than a day and a half.

The Mercury MagiQ has a slight skin on the interface but it isn't anything dramatic like TouchWiz or Sense UI. Its call quality is good and it also boasts of dual-SIM capabilities. One downside to MagiQ is that the keyboard though stock Android isn't the most comfortable to use, the inconvenience coming from the spacebar. The rest of the keyboard responds well, but the spacebar seems to be frozen. Despite having a single-core processor, the device performs quite smooth.

The Lenovo S880 has a skin overlaying the OS. The UI gives users a clover widget, which gives shortcut access to any four apps with the Play store resting in the middle. The icons of the UI are very round and look a little too cartoonish for out taste. The S880 doesn't come with any preloaded apps. However, in its overall appeal, it does feel



Samsung Galaxy Note II

Star Trek fans rejoice

Game publishers Namco Bandai and Paramount Pictures announced recently that Star Trek: The Video Game will be released on April 23, 2013.

John McAfee arrested

John McAfee, the founder of McAfee who was on the run after being identified as a "person of interest" in a murder trial was finally arrested in Guatemala.



Zync Z5

superior to the competition. The camera on this device is really good for daylight shooting.

Verdict

The Best Buy was awarded to Spice Stellar Horizon. It hasn't gone the copycat route and the device has its own unique look and feel. The 5 MP camera takes good photos and the overall look and feel of the device is nice. Its stock Android for the most part with tweaks that don't really hamper the user experience. In terms of raw performance too it is better than its competitors. The addition of on-board security apps is a good welcome and the only drawback to the device is that its pointy edges may not appeal to all.

₹20,000 and above

This is the category where companies bring out their big guns, their flagship devices.

You get what you pay for and that is clearly evident with the contenders in this category. A person buying one of these devices clearly knows what he's getting into. The competition is stiff.

Build and Usability

The Samsung Galaxy Note is still available in the market and it's still priced at a premium at ₹29,990 (at launch it was priced at ₹33,690). It was the device to start the phablet revolution and is still a worthy contender in this competition. It has a larger 5.3-inch display with a resolution of 1280x800. Under the hood it has a dual-core 1.4 GHz processor and 1 GB of RAM. In its benchmark scores today, it comes last on the list but the device ahead of it doesn't have that big a lead. It's still a good phablet to look at and has the S-Pen whose compatibility app

library has expanded since its debut. Though plasticky, its overall build is still quite good.

Taking an already successful product and improving upon it gives us the Samsung Galaxy Note II. It is a little bigger than its predecessor with a 5.5-inch display and the design of the phablet has a lot more curves adding to the elegance as well as the style. The device does have a glossy plastic finish to it that reduces the grip. The S-Pen makes an appearance here as well – it's bigger, more comfortable and packs in more utility. It is really slim as well and you can't help but say "wow!" when you hold the device for the first time.

Next in line we have the LG Optimus VU. The first thing you will notice about the device is that it has a very squarish design thanks to the 4:3 aspect ratio and this isn't a good thing at all. It makes typing a pain, it's uncomfortable to hold and one hand operation is just frustrating. This is the only device on our entire list that doesn't give users access to the battery and you have a SIM card slot that rests on the side of the device similar to the iPhone. The placement of the camera too is in a corner making it east to cover with your finger if you hold it in landscape mode. The design of the VU is the least appealing of them all. Last but not least, we have the Lenovo K860. This device puts the phrase; don't judge a book by its cover to the test. It looks like a simple rectangular candy bar but is very comfortable to hold

and has the best one-handed operation in this premium list. The power button and the volume rocker buttons are a tad smaller than we'd like though. The screen is 5-inches and feels just about right. It isn't a beast like the Note II nor is it all over the place like the Optimus VU. The simple look may not appeal to all, but we think in this case, simplicity is the best.

Features and Performance

Being a first generation device, the Samsung Galaxy Note can be upgraded to Android 4.0 bringing it up to speed with the competition. The S-Pen is its most outstanding feature apart from the fact that the device is really smooth. The S-Pen is really useful especially if you are a creative person who likes to draw or paint or simply annotate images. Some of its features may seem out-dated when compared to its successor but that doesn't discount the fact that it is a great Android



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Portable Routers



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Nano

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Meant for Android tablets

The extremely popular news reading app, Flipboard now has a version specific for Android tablets available for download on the Google Play Store.

Android 4.1 spreading steadily

Google's Android OS version 4.1 called Jelly Bean is now powering about 6.7 % of the total Android market share.

Brand	CONTACT	Phone	Email	Website
iBall	iBall	1800 300 42255	sales@iball.co.in	www.iballmobiles.co.in
Intex	Intex Technologies	1800 103 8822	info@intextechnologies.com	www.intextechnologies.com
Lenovo	Lenovo India	NA	NA	www.lenovomobile.com/en
LG	LG India	1800 180 9999	http://goo.gl/3TPr8	www.lg.com/in
Magicon	Magicon Impex Pvt. Ltd.	1800 11 7576	info@magicon.co.in	www.magicon.co.in
Mercury	Mercury Mobiles	+91 80 3243 0234	NA	www.mercurystyle.com
Micromax	Micromax	+91 124 4811 000	info@micromaxinfo.com	www.micromaxinfo.com
Samsung	Samsung India	1800 3000 8282	http://goo.gl/NhEqs	ww.samsung.com
Spice	S Mobility Ltd.	1800 300 77423	customercare@smobility.in	www.si2imobility.com
Wickedleak	-	+91 22 6501 7532	NA	www.wickedleak.org
Zync	Zync Global Pvt. Ltd.	+91 120 4821 1999	info@zync.in	www.zync.in

phablet. It would be a steal if Samsung priced it close to the ₹25,000 mark. All the apps from the Play store work like a charm.

Put simply, the Samsung Galaxy Note II is the best phablet available in the market that money can buy. That's it. It improves upon its predecessor in every way. With the quad-core processor and 2 GB RAM, you have the ability to run two apps simultaneously in split screen. You have a plethora of customisable options making it the best-customised Android experience out there. The S-Pen too has been improved with added features such as Air View. To sum it up, if you want the ideal phablet experience, the Note II is the device for you.

The LG Optimus VU has some things going for it. It has a fantastic display which is extremely bright which makes the apps and the interface look extremely good. The representation of colours too is fantastic. The power under the hood is good enough. Typing in portrait mode is a tad uncomfortable because of the width of the device. You also have the quick memo/note-taking app, which we saw on the LG Optimus 4X HD. The VU comes with a stylus as well, but its function-

ality doesn't come close to that of the S-Pen. The stylus is nice but doesn't match the volume of things you can do with the S-Pen. The Android OS is skinned but nothing too radical. Playing games and apps on the device is good due to the 4:3 aspect ratio of the display. This ratio however becomes a disadvantage if you are one who likes to consume video content, as you will get really thick black bars at the top and bottom and that isn't a good thing. The Lenovo K860 is one device that surprised us with its performance. To start with, its raw benchmark performance scores were better than that of the original Note and the LG Optimus VU but behind the Note II. Its user interface is the same as its sibling, the S880, and this isn't one of the best skins out there. The UI has a clover widget, which gives users a



Samsung Galaxy Note

shortcut access to any four apps with the Play store resting in the middle. The touch sensitive capacitive buttons are a part of the display just like the Galaxy Nexus rather than being below the display like the plethora of other tablets. It doesn't bring anything new to the table like the S-Pen or the Quick Note but as a 5-inch phablet, it is a very

good performer. Did we mention the display is fantastic for consuming media content as well?

Winner

The Best Performer was awarded to the Samsung Galaxy Note II. Lets face it; the device has defined the phablet genre and boasts of features no other phablet in the market can match. It runs Android 4.1 straight out of the box, the S-Pen is a great accessory and with its added features, novice users too have a need for it. There are many apps available to use on the large screen device and if you love watching multimedia content, this is the device for you. All in all, it is the worthy king of the phablets. The Lenovo K860 was awarded the Editor's Pick. We always give special credit to the underdog especially if they offer users a great experience. To start with, the power under the hood of the device is fantastic and ranks second in its category. It is smooth at multi-tasking. The call quality is good and it doesn't feel like you are holding a brick to your face. The aspect ratio is great for consuming media content as well as gaming. If you want a premium 5-inch phablet without the skin and excess she-nanigan, we'd suggest you take a look at this device.

Bazaar

THE LATEST PRODUCTS
REVIEWED FOR YOU

The Digit Test Centre receives hundreds of products every month. Each of these products is put through a series of tests and is finally given a score. 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

- 
Extremely poor product.
Keep away!
- 
Strictly OK.
Not recommended
- 
Decent product.
Go for it, but there may be better products out there.
- 
Very good product.
Highly recommended.
- 
Ground-breaking product.
We've never seen anything like it before.
A definite must buy!

▶ Page **105**
Apple iPhone 5



▶ Page **109**
Samsung
Galaxy
Camera



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Lenovo
ThinkPad X1
Carbon



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Epson L355



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HTC OneX+



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Fujifilm XF-1

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& MORE...



Intel Haswell details leaked

A chart containing details about the next wave of Intel Desktop Processors will be launched in Q2 2013. <http://dgit.in/SKYPnB>



AMD readying 8000M GPUs

Come CES 2013, AMD will reveal details about its upcoming Radeon HD 8000M GPUs for Notebooks codenamed "Solar System" in detail

Sony Xperia SL

A minor upgrade to the Xperia S, a good deal overall

Possibly the best thing about the Xperia SL is that it carries forward the exact same build as the Xperia S and we had praised that phone for its eye-catching looks, sophisticated and premium design.

The Xperia SL's 4.3-inch screen is impressive. Colours are fairly rich. Text has no noise around it. The display isn't technically matte, but it is thankfully not very reflective.

The Xperia SL is slightly quicker than the Xperia S. The benchmark scores reflect a very slight difference - the Xperia SL got a Quadrant score of 3,398 while the Xperia S had scored 3,055. In terms of real life usage experience, quite honestly,



Price ₹32,549

we did not feel any major difference when it came to apps response and things were quite fluid while swiping screens.

With the antenna placed inside the visible transparent strip, both the S and the SL hold mobile network signal better in poor reception areas. Call clarity is impressive, and the earpiece does tend to drown out ambient noise rather well.

With the 1750 mAh battery, the Xperia S lasts a day when used as a primary phone. There is slightly more power, and backup time doesn't change drastically. It will get you through one full working day on medium usage.

The Xperia SL is retailing for around ₹28,000, and is a very good deal. Alternatively, consider the Xperia S, which will cost some ₹3k-4k less.

Vishal Mathur



Features	70
Performance	75
Build Quality	85
Value for money	70

Specifications

Platform: Android 4.0.4; **Processor:** Qualcomm MSM8260 Snapdragon 1.7GHz dual core, 1GB RAM; **Display:** 4.3-inch LED, 1280 x 720 pixels; **Storage:** 32GB on board; **Camera:** 12MP with 1080p videos; **Battery:** 1750mAh

Contact

Sony Mobile India
Phone: 1800-3000-2800
Email: <https://www.sony.co.in/section/contactus>
Website: www.sony.co.in

NVIDIA GTX 650Ti

Decent sub-10k GTX 600 series card



Price ₹9,399

This lower-end GTX 600 series card is ideal for those looking at a sub-₹10,000 card. It is a stock GTX 650Ti clocked at 925MHz and it lacks the GPU Boost clock seen in GTX 660 and higher cards. Performance-wise it gave playable rates for most games at full HD settings, but the scores were lower than the ZOTAC GTX 650Ti AMP! edition cards. Temperature delta was also around 35 degrees Celcius which is decent. At ₹9399 it is priced quite well for its performance.



Features	65
Performance	50
Build Quality	60
Value for money	70

Specifications

GPU: GK106; **CUDA Cores:** 768; **Core clock:** 925 MHz; **Boost clock:** NA; **Memory bus:** 128-bit; **Memory:** 1024 MB; **Raster Operators:** 16; **Display ports:** 2x DVI, 1x mini-HDMI

Contact

NVIDIA Graphics Pvt Ltd
Email: NA
Phone: +91 22 4376 4567
Website: www.nvidia.com

Jabra SOLEMATE

Good performance, excellent build quality



Price ₹10,990

The rubber treaded base has an intricate design. The build quality is fantastic, and feels very premium. The SOLEMATE can be used for music playback as well as phone calls. We used it for calls, and the clarity was very good. Music playback was good. Vocals are clear, bass has adequate thump and clarity is excellent up to 70 per cent volume. Bluetooth range is impressive. Its battery level is displayed on the iPod. We got 6 hours of music playback on a single charge, which is quite good. A very neat offering.



Features	70
Performance	73
Build Quality	82
Value for money	65

Specifications

Type: Bluetooth speaker; **Connectivity:** Bluetooth & 3.5mm; **Bluetooth version:** 3.0; **Frequency Response:** Wideband; **Sound pressure level:** 112 dB; **Weight:** 610gms; **Dimensions:** 172 mm (L) x 64 mm (W) x 70 mm (H)

Contact

TRedington India
Email: asarraf@jabra.com



Toshiba launches new 4Tb HDDs

Toshiba added 4 new drives to its MG Series of Enterprise HDDs of capacity 4Tb. It includes both SATA and SAS models

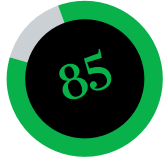
GeForce Experience Beta

Nvidia revealed a cloud based service called GeForce Experience Beta which analyzes hardware and adjusts in-game settings optimally. <http://dgit.in/V4U1bq>

Bazaar

Apple iPhone 5

A very good phone, made even better



- Features 85
- Performance..... 90
- Build Quality 95
- Value for money 65

Specifications

Processor: Apple A6 dual core 1.2GHz; **RAM:** 1GB; **Display:** 4-inch (1136 x 640 pixels); **Graphics:** PowerVR SGX543MP3; **Storage:** 16GB; **Camera:** 8MP; **Battery:** 1440mAh; **Platform:** Apple iOS 6

Contact

Apple India
Phone: (91) 1800-4250-744
Email: apple.com/in/support

The iPhone 5's basic design remains pretty much like the iPhone 4S, with the slightly elongated form factor and is considerably lighter at 112 grams (iPhone 4S was 140 gm). The iPhone 5 is thinner too at just 7.6mm thickness.

It sports a 4-inch display with a resolution of 1136 x 640 pixels. The colour looks more vivid, the blacks look deeper and brighter overall on the iPhone 5. With the pure 16:9 aspect ratio, the new iPhone is better for multimedia consumption.

The more powerful processor means the speed increase on the iPhone 5 is noticeable. And that includes gaming performance with the faster graphics. Games load faster, and while even the iPhone 4S never stuttered or lagged while gaming, the iPhone 5 just makes that experience smoother. Call quality is fairly good and the phone



Price ₹45,500

holds 3G signals well in areas where some rival phones struggle. Earpiece audio is very soft and even at loud volumes, does not hurt the ear.

The 8 MP iSight camera is better than the iPhone 4S when shooting in low light. For all other shots, colours seem a lot more vivid on the iPhone 5 and the focus area is more detailed.

With 3G connected all the time and under medium usage scenario – 3G connected throughout and 1.5 hours of voice calling – the phone easily lasted for a day.

Is the iPhone 5 an excellent phone? It is. Is it worth ₹45,500? Not if you are an iPhone 4S user. We believe the performance improvement isn't enough to justify spending again. However, for anyone looking to switch over to iOS, this is the device to spend on.

Vishal Mathur

Samsung Ativ Smart PC Pro

Your desktop in a tablet

The Samsung Ativ Smart PC Pro has 4 GB of RAM and a 128 GB SSD. On board Wi-Fi is customary, but 3G/4G connectivity are optional. A keyboard dock is part of the package, along with a power cord and that pretty much sums up the contents of the box. For ₹75,490, we'd have expected an additional 64 GB microSD card or a free copy of Microsoft Office or something.

The Samsung Ativ Smart PC Pro does impress with its 11.6-inch screen and solid build. However, for a tablet, it feels a little too big, especially in the portrait orientation. In landscape mode, the Start Screen of Windows 8 looks absolutely gorgeous, and the display is legible under direct sunlight as well, but it's a finger-print magnet.

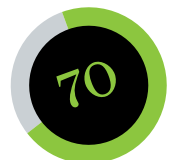


Price ₹75,490

As a Win 8 Tablet, the Ativ Pro is sort of a mixed bag. IE10 is amazingly well optimised to be used in either of the two orientations, but not Office. The keyboard dock is a must if you plan to use Microsoft Office on the tablet. Thanks to the built-in Wacom digitizer tech, the Samsung S-Pen works beautifully with the tablet, but does take a little getting used to.

Overall, the Ativ Smart PC Pro is a highly functional tablet and the keyboard dock does turn it into an ultrabook. While the tablet itself is solid, the keyboard dock is very light plastic. Using it on an uneven surface, like our lap, caused the tablet to tip over. Apart from this flaw, the Samsung Ativ Smart PC Pro is actually quite an amazing tablet, especially for the price.

Swapnil Mathur



- Features 70
- Performance..... 80
- Build Quality 60
- Value for money 70

Specifications

Processor: Intel Core i5 1.7GHz; **RAM:** 4GB DDR3; **Storage:** 128GB SSD; **Display:** 11.6 inch, 1920x1080; **Battery:** 49Wh (8 hours); **OS:** Windows 8 Pro

Contact

Samsung India Pvt Ltd
Phone: 1800 3000 8282
Email: <http://goo.gl/NhEqs>
Website: www.samsung.com



\$99 Nexus 7

A rumoured \$99 device is being called the Nexus 7 but the name is not confirmed. It may be released in 2013 by ASUS



Karbonn's new A30 phablet

Karbonn Mobiles has introduced a cheaper alternative to Samsung Galaxy Note 2, called the A30. It comes with a 5.9 inch display

Foxconn NanoPC AT-5570

Average performing HTPC but priced quite high

We had seen a lot of nano PCs last year, a majority of them from ZOTAC which had them in a variety of form factors. This year started with the Foxconn produced NanoPC coming to our labs. It sports an AMD C70 dual-core APU which is clocked at 1 GHz which is lower than the 1.6 GHz seen on the E350 and 1.65 GHz seen on the E450. The C70 houses Radeon HD 7290 internal graphics. All the components are housed in a black-coloured brush-metal finish, small form-factor cabinet. On the front-face you have the audio and microphone jacks, an SD card reader, two USB 3.0 ports and the power button whereas on the rear side you have four USB 2.0 ports, a DVI port, an HDMI port, a LAN port, WiFi

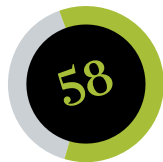


extender port and a power port. The NanoPC comes with a stand to hold the cabinet vertically.

Performance wise it did not give scores higher than the E350 or E450 thanks to the slower processor housed within. Rendering was painfully slow with CineBench R10 giving 1,420 which is quite low. PC Mark Vantage gave an overall score of 1,886 which is the lowest we have seen among Nano PCs. It was great at playing video, the reason it will primarily be considered for. The CPU usage was under 15 per cent while watching 1080p videos which is quite decent for this low power device.

It is priced at ₹22,500 which we think is a high price to pay for an HTPC and for doing regular computing work. ZOTAC has better alternatives.

Nimish Sawant



Features	75
Performance.....	50
Build Quality	65
Value for money.....	40

Specifications

Processor: AMD C70 @ 1GHz;
Chipset: AMD A45; **Memory:** 2 GB;
HDD: 250; **USB ports:** 2x USB 3.0, 4xUSB 2.0; **Display ports:** 1xDVI, 1xHDMI

Contact

Foxconn
Email: sam@foxconn.ae
Phone: +971504766729
Website: www.foxconnchannel.com

Spice Stellar Craze MI-335

A well-built budget ICS smartphone



For a phone that is priced at the ₹7,000 price point the Spice Stellar Craze MI-335 is decent and gets the basics right with some minor hiccups. The battery life is good at one and a half days and it runs most of the apps from the Play store. On the down side, the keyboard of the device could have been better. Its form factor is very reminiscent of the iPhone. If you are in the market to pick up a dual-SIM budget Android smartphone then you can take a look at this device along with the Intex Aqua 4.0



Features	50
Performance.....	60
Design	60
Value for money.....	70

Specifications

Operating System: Android 2.3 Gingerbread; **Processor:** 800MHz;
RAM: 512MB; **Display:** 3.5-inch, 480 x 320 pixels; **Storage:** 512MB storage, with microSD slot up to 32GB; **Camera:** 5MP; **Battery:** 1420mAh

Contact

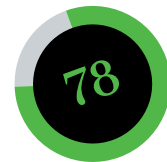
Spice Mobile
Phone: (120) 4363600 4363800
Email: customercare@smobility.in
Website: www.spice-mobile.com

Karbonn A18

The ideal budget Android ICS phone



If you have a budget of ₹10,000 and are looking to buy a smartphone, pick up the Karbonn A18 with your eyes closed. It is a very good performer and has stock Android ICS straight out of the box. The 1500mAh battery lasts for two days with ease. The 5 MP shooter is average but boasts of an HDR mode. The IPS panel is good to use but scratches easily. The call quality from the phone is loud and clear. The only down side, and we are nitpicking here, is the plastic nature of the rear panel and the low built-in storage.



Features	75
Performance.....	75
Design	75
Value for money.....	90

Specifications

Platform: Android 4.0; **Processor:** 1. GHz; **RAM:** 512MB; **Display:** 4.3-inch IPS, 480x800 pixels; **Storage:** 2.55GB storage (503MB user available), with microSD slot up to 32GB; **Camera:** 5MP; **Battery:** 1500 mAh

Contact

Karbonn Mobiles
E-mail: info@karbonnmobiles.com
Phone: 080 40894888

No ban on Samsung phones

Apple has been denied a permanent ban on Samsung phones by a judge in U.S. This comes after 4 months when a jury found patent infringement



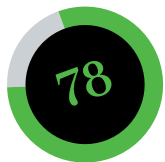
Instagram to sell user photos?

After 16th January a new intellectual property policy will allow Instagram to sell photos without notifying or paying its users. <http://digit.in/TtXHRM>

Bazaar

HTC Windows Phone 8X

Pricey, but the best Windows Phone OS experience



Features 75
Performance 80
Build Quality 85
Value for money 75

Specifications

Processor: Qualcomm S4 dual core 1.5GHz; **RAM:** 1GB; **Graphics:** Adreno 225; **Display:** 4.3-inch S-LCD2 (1280 x 720 pixels); **Storage:** 16GB internal; **Camera:** 8MP; **Battery:** 1800mAh; **Platform:** Windows 8 Phone

Contact

HTC India
Phone: 18002663566
Email: N.A.

The rubberised polycarbonate finish of the 8X feels fairly premium to hold. Its curves and edges blend well. The volume rocker and camera key are a tad too depressed though. The spec sheet says this weighs 130 grams, but in reality, it feels rather light. The unibody design lends it that extra bit of solidity, but the trade-offs include the inability to change the battery and no expandable memory slot.

The display is impressive and has good black levels. The S-LCD2 isn't the most vivid in terms of colour handling, but does make the overall screen sharper and crisper. The on-screen keypad does have its faults – keys are thin and spacing isn't optimum. But once you get used to it, the precision is a delight.

The benchmark scores were expected to be better than the Lumia 900, but the sheer



Price
₹35,023

advantage surprised us. For example, the Lumia 900 scored 1.94 in the WP Bench test, while the 8X clocked 4.89 in the same test. Camera is surprisingly not as good as we hoped. Very good shots outdoors in sunlight, but noisy shots in low light conditions.

Call quality is good, when you are in a good reception area. It does lose signal in elevators though, where the Xperia S, for example, doesn't. The battery will last one day with medium usage, 3G connected throughout and a couple of hours in total of voice calling.

Windows Phone 8 OS, for all its good points, will not appeal to everyone. Some call it simple and efficient, and some just say it gets boring after a while. If you aren't convinced about Windows Phone OS, consider the Galaxy SIII in the same price bracket.

Vishal Mathur

Acer Aspire M5 Touch

You pay a premium for the touchscreen

Acer Timeline Ultra M5 has fairly basic looks. The build quality is acceptable despite the use of materials that don't feel very premium when touched. The onboard fan tends to be slightly noisy when the machine is stressed, but with the vents at the back, you will not feel the draft of uncomfortably warm air, which is nice.

The display is slightly brighter on the Timeline Ultra M5 than the HP Envy 4 and colour vividness is better than its elder sibling, the Acer Aspire S3. The display hinge is not the strongest around and every time you use the touchscreen, it rocks back. It has a comfortable keyboard layout and a fairly generous touchpad size.

Performance is a bit of a mixed bag. The Core i3 processor has its limitations. The benchmark scores prove that and even in real

life, this machine will not be the fastest one around. Gaming performance does impress. It wouldn't gloss over the fact that the Core i3 does limit this machine significantly, but this one is in the league of the HP

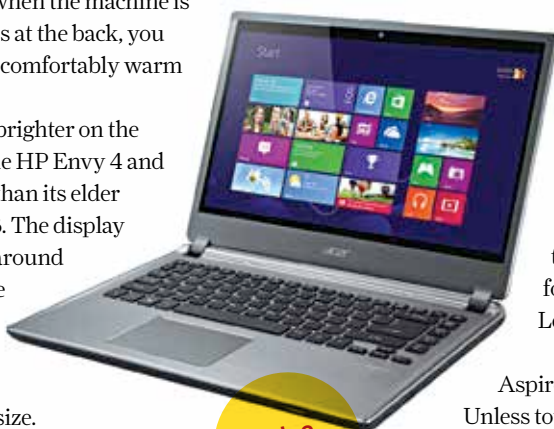
Envy 4, Samsung Series 5 and the Dell XPS 14.

The 3D Mark O6 score of 8,336 is beaten only by the 8,577 on the Dell XPS 14. The tested battery life of 266 minutes is pretty much beating the best out there – 246 minutes each for Samsung Series 9 and the Lenovo ThinkPad X1 Carbon

The clear issue with the Aspire M5 Touch is its price.

Unless touchscreen is an absolute necessity for you, the HP Spectre XT makes more sense for this much money.

Vishal Mathur



Price
₹62,999



Features 75
Performance 60
Build Quality 60
Value for money 50

Specifications

Processor: Intel Core i3 – 3217U @ 1.8GHz; **RAM:** 4GB; **Display:** 14-inch (1366 x 768 pixel) touchscreen; **Graphics:** Nvidia GeForce GT640M (2GB) and Intel HD 4000; **Storage:** 500GB HDD + 24GB mSATA SSD; **Connectivity:** 1 USB 3.0, 2 USB 2.0, HDMI out, Ethernet; **OS:** Windows 8

Contact

Acer India
Phone: 0120-3807200
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Game Guides feature on Steam

"Games Guides", a new feature in Steam Community Beta will now enable users to Create and Publish guides on Steam Games

Zuckerberg donates \$500 mn

The Silicon Valley Community Foundation got a charity of 18 Million company shares from Zuckerberg and his Wife Priscilla Chan, worth \$500 million.

Zync Z1000

The budget iPad replacement

Placed next to an iPad, the length and breadth of the Zync Z1000 appears to be the same to the naked eye. It is however thicker than the iPad. The front of the tablet is clean with no physical buttons. All the ports are neatly laid out on one side. A SIM card slot rests behind the HDMI port. The tablet weighs around 650 gm putting it on the heavier side of things.

Straight out of the box, the Zync Z1000 runs on Android 4.0.4 ICS. The official product website claims that it can be upgraded to 4.1 Jelly Bean.

The resolution of the display is better than the Funbook Pro at 1024x768. The representation of colours was nice and we were quite happy watching movies on the device. Having said that, the device is very reflective



Price
₹10,990

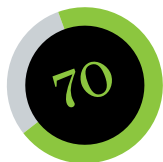
and susceptible to a lot of glare. The viewing angles aren't the best either. All video file formats ran well on it. Since it has a 4:3 aspect ratio, there is a lot of screen real estate that is wasted because of the black bars.

The audio output from the device was surprisingly good. At full volume, there was little distortion and the audio is quite decently clear.

Games on the Z1000 were fun and the device ran all the games we installed from the Play store. Games such as *Angry Birds Star Wars* make good use of the screen's real estate. Browsing the web on the large display too is nice. A whopping 7000mAh battery powers the tablet and it lasts for about 6 hours in continuous video playback.

There are a lot of 7-inch tablets available in the market that perform better than the Zync Z1000 and are cheaper as well. But if a large display is your requirement, then you can consider this device.

Sameer Mitha



Features	60
Performance.....	80
Build quality	60
Value for money.....	80

Specifications

Processor: 1.5Ghz processor; **RAM:** 1GB; **Display:** 9.7-inch display (1024 x 768 pixel); **Storage:** 8GB expandable up to 32GB via MicroSD card; **OS:** Android 4.0; Camera 2MP

Contact

Zync
PH: +91 85869233-40-41-42-43-44
Email: support@zync.in

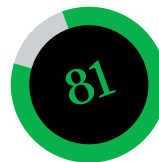
Panasonic DMP-BDT220

The 2D to 3D up-conversion makes this a must-have



Price
₹11,990

Panasonic DMP-BDT220 is the latest Blu-ray player that has a unique offering of upscaling from 2D to 3D. Looks fairly basic but the metal chassis makes this strong enough. The interface is not the most eye catching. Navigation and selection by using the direction keys on the remote takes some getting used to. In terms of performance, the BDT220 is brilliant. It scores very highly in the HQV tests run across all rivals and pips even the Samsung BD-E6500 in terms of sharpness. Upscaling of Blu-rays from 2D to 3D works very well - very good depth, no ghosting and on the fly up-conversion. The BDT220 is a great option anyone who wants a Blu-ray player and already owns a 3D TV.



Features	75
Performance.....	90
Build Quality	75
Value for money.....	85

Specifications

Type: Blu-ray player; **3D playback:** Yes; **Up-convert from 2D to 3D:** Yes; **Ports:** HDMI-out, optical audio, USB port; **Connectivity:** Built-in Wi-Fi

Contact

Panasonic India
Phone: 1800-103-1333
Email: helpline@in.panasonic.com

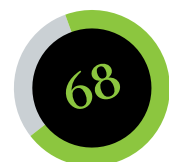
Sony BDP-S490

Lack of integrated Wi-Fi is confusing



Price
₹13,990

Sony updated its Blu-ray player range recently and have made more codecs compatible with the devices. When we had tested the BDP-S380 earlier, this was the biggest issue we faced - quite a few popular video formats would refuse to play. This one played back all formats we threw at it - be it off a DVD or a USB drive. It's very well built and the materials used are premium. The test scores lagged a bit because the S490 showed up some loss of clarity during some fast motion shots, but the sharpness and colour handling is very impressive. The performance is okay to justify the price tag, but the lack of integrated Wi-Fi is very surprising. Consider the Panasonic BD220 or the Philips BDP5200.



Features	65
Performance.....	75
Build Quality.....	80
Value for money.....	55

Specifications

Type: Blu-ray player; **3D playback:** Yes; **Ports:** HDMI-out, optical audio, USB port; **Connectivity:** Ethernet, with optional Wi-Fi dongle

Contact

Sony India
Phone: 1800-3000-2800
Email: <https://www.sony.co.in/section/contactus>



Hacker sentenced for 10 years

Hacker Christopher Chaney who stole the private information of more than 50 celebrities has been sent behind bars for 10 years in the U.S.



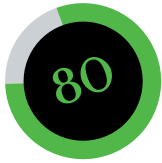
Flexible display demos at CES

Samsung is readying to give a demo of a 5.5-inch flexible screen for phones at CES this year. Flexible screens in phones will allow innovative new designs

Bazaar

Samsung Galaxy Camera

A hybrid that works



- Features 80
- Performance..... 80
- Build Quality 85
- Value for money..... 75

Specifications

Sensor: 16 megapixels, Back Side Illuminated; **Lens:** 23-481mm (21x) f/2.8-5.9; **Maximum burst:** 4fps; **Movie Resolution:** 1920x1080 at 30fps

Contact

Samsung India Pvt Ltd
Phone: 1800 3000 8282
Email: <http://goo.gl/NhEqs>
Website: www.samsung.com

Samsung's Galaxy Camera is essentially the Galaxy S3 strapped to a full-fledged camera. At first, the whole idea seems absurd, however, after having played with the camera extensively, we have somewhat different opinions.

The camera packs quite a decent specification set. A 16 MP BSI-sensor along with a 23-481mm lens with a starting aperture of f/2.8. The screen on the back is a 4.8 inch HD Super Clear Touch Display, essentially the same as the Galaxy S3. There's also the S3's 1.4GHz quad-core processor along with the 1 GB of RAM and Android 4.1 Jelly Bean OS.

The images out of this camera are rich in detail, free from any JPEG compression artefacts. The camera has no dials, but the touch interface allows



Price ₹29,990

quick access to the PASM modes along with the option to choose any one of the many Smart modes that makes shooting certain specific conditions a lot easier. The Macro mode is our favourite, getting us incredibly close to the subject.

The Samsung Galaxy Camera is a truly connected camera, shipping with built-in

Wi-Fi and 3G/4G radios. This combines the best of both worlds thanks to 3G connectivity and the Android OS, which allow instant shooting, editing and posting without a hitch. We ran Instagram, Facebook and 360 panorama on the camera and were impressed.

Samsung has definitely shown that not only can it be done, but it can be done right.

Swarnil Mathur

Lenovo ThinkPad X1 Carbon

Follows ThinkPad's legacy of excellence



The minimalistic and solid design of the X1 Carbon immediately catches attention. At 1.36 kg, this machine is only slightly heavier than the likes of the Samsung Series 9. The carbon fiber chassis with the additional layer of a roll-cage means it can handle a fair amount of jerks and accidental snicks better than most.

You can use the X1 Carbon in a brightly-lit office environment, and the 14-inch display will reflect very little ambient lighting. Disappointingly, text has noise framing each single alphabet, and colour depth isn't the best.

The keyboard retains the look of past ThinkPads. The spacing is adequate, and the inward curved design on each key

makes finger detection easier, with excellent travel and feedback. The trackpoint is still around, in addition to the good touchpad.

The X1 Carbon's PC Mark Vantage score of 9,641 is lesser than the Samsung Series 9 (12,972) and the HP Spectre XT (12,176). The Fujitsu LifeBook U772 with the same processor scores a relatively similar 9,651. These scores are indicative of fairly speedy performance, but definitely not the fastest around. Battery life is impressive. The tested battery life of 246 minutes is exactly the same as the Samsung Series 9 and is excellent. The Lenovo



Price ₹1,26,400

ThinkPad X1 Carbon is an expensive business ultra-book, but the ThinkPad badge

brings with it a history of reliability. The Samsung Series 9, that is available for around ₹1,00,000, is another option to consider.

Visbal Mathur

- Features 75
- Performance..... 80
- Build Quality 85
- Value for money..... 65

Specifications

Processor: Intel Core i5-3427U @ 1.8GHz; **RAM:** 4GB; **Display:** 14-inch (1600 x 900 pixels); **Graphics:** Intel HD 4000; **Storage:** 128GB SSD; **Connectivity:** 2 USB ports, memory card reader, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, Display port; **OS:** Windows 7 Professional (64-bit)

Contact

Lenovo India
Phone: 1800-3000-9990
Email: customer@lenovocare.in



Ideapad Yoga launched

Lenovo officially announced the Ideapad Yoga series which include the Ideapad Yoga 11 hybrid and Ideapad Yoga 13 Ultrabook <http://dgit.in/TbuGvD>



Canon launches EOS 6D

Canon's lightest full-frame camera, the DSLR - EOS 6D is now available in India. It can be your's for ₹1,66,995

Epson L355

A high-yield good-quality but slow printer



Price ₹14,199

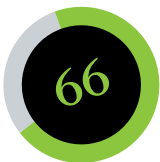
Epson L series' MFD line-up has ink tanks as the ink source. The Epson L355 is built quite well with a dedicated cuboidal section outside the main MFD body which houses the four ink-tanks. While pouring ink into the tanks, they need to be in a horizontal orientation, after which they should be capped and kept in the vertical orientation for printing. There is a notch that needs to be pointing upwards to allow the ink to travel from the tanks via

the pipes on to the paper. It comes with two extra ink tanks for black ink. There isn't much in terms of an operational panel. You just have the power button, a WiFi button along with buttons to give scan and copy commands. The ink tank takes around 20 to charge the ink, the first time you power up the printer.

When it came to quality of prints, we noticed that the economy prints were completely washed out and not really usable, but high quality prints had a lot of detailing. Glossy photo print was quite vivid. With high quality prints, the printer took 114 secs for a mixed document print and 32.5 secs for a high quality text print. Glossy photo prints took over six minutes. So it is safe to say that speed is not really the strong point of the L355.

Yield figures for the L355 are brilliant though: for black ink its 4000 pages and for colour tanks (C+M+Y) its 6500 pages. This drastically brings down the cost of operation after factoring in the ₹14,199 price tag of the MFD when compared to other inkjet printers. Ideal for SOHO setups and for someone who prints quite a lot of pages daily. We would have liked ethernet connectivity though.

Nimish Sawant



Features	60
Performance.....	55
Build Quality	73
Value for money	75

Specifications

Maximum Resolution: 5760x1440 dpi; **Connectivity:** USB 2.0, Epson iPrint, IEEE 802.11b/g/n; No. of ink-tanks: 4; **Colours:** C,M,Y,K; **Automatic duplex printing:** No; **Weight:** 4.4 kg; **Dimensions (WxDxH in mm):** 472x145x30

Contact

Epson India Pvt Ltd.
Phone: 1800 425 0011
Email: NA
Website: www.epson.co.in

Sennheiser HD 700

For the purists only



Price ₹54,990

Its build is mostly of good quality plastic, with metal thrown around lightly on the mesh grille on the ear-cups. The HD 700 are not meant for use with the iPod or any other MP3 player as the drivers need a lot more power to reproduce the goodness they are capable of – something that a good high definition sound card on the PC or an amplifier can offer. The drivers are further away from your ear, than with most headphones. Sound is rich as there are more elements audible on same tracks over other headphones. The HD 700 is unbelievably good with vocals. Bass is not adequate in most cases. It's quite expensive, but sound will appeal to purists.



Features	85
Performance.....	85
Build Quality	80
Value for money	50

Specifications

Frequency response: 10-42,000 Hz; **Sound Pressure level:** 105dB; **Connector:** 6.3mm (3.5mm adapter); **Cable length:** 2.8m; **Weight:** 1.58kg

Contact

Sennheiser India
Phone: 0124-4187800
Email: info@sennheiserindia.com

HCL MeTab G1

Decent performance but no Play store access



Price ₹14,999

The G1 has one big drawback – no access to the Google Play store. If you are cool with side-loading apps via the .APK installer, then you can consider this device, as the power under the hood is really good. The device is very smooth and didn't lag during multitasking. Watching videos on the display is nice but it is very reflective making usage under direct light a problem. The 7000mAh battery on the device lasted for just over three hours during continuous video playback. The build of the device is good. It lacks a SIM card slot.



Features	50
Performance.....	70
Design	60
Value for money.....	60

Specifications

Display: 9.7-inch IPS with 1024 x 768 resolution; **Processor:** 1.2Ghz dual-core; **RAM:** 1GB; **Storage:** 8 GB expandable up to 32GB via a micro SD card; **Camera:** 2MP rear camera & 0.3 video call camera; **OS:** Android 4.0

Contact

HCL
Phone: 1860-1800-425
E-mail: hcltouch.reg@hcl.com
Website: <http://www.hclsupportservice.in/cntct-us.htm>



Karbonn's Jelly Bean Tab

Priced at ₹10,490, the Karbonn Cosmic Smart Tab 10 with Android Jelly Bean 4.1 in the Indian Market. <http://dgit.in/ZnB6gk>



Sapphire 7870 XT announced

Sapphire's latest AMD graphics card called the Sapphire Dual-Fan HD 7870 XT with the Dual-X cooler technology and "Sapphire Boost"

Bazaar

HTC One X+

The most powerful Android phone



- Features 85
- Performance..... 90
- Build Quality 85
- Value for money 60

Specifications

Platform: Android 4.1; **Processor:** Nvidia Tegra 3 1.7GHz quad core; **Graphics:** ULP GeForce 2; **Display:** 4.7-inches SLCD2 (1280 x 720 pixels); **Storage:** 64GB; **Camera:** 8MP; **Battery:** 2100mAh

Contact

HTC India
Phone: 1800-266-3566
Email: <http://www.htc.com/in/contact/email/>

In the season of refreshes, the One X+ is HTC's second attempt at trouncing the Galaxy SIII. It carries forward the same polycarbonate unibody design as the One X, except for red colour markings on the touch keys.

The One X+ has a higher performance score than the Samsung Galaxy SIII. The One X+ has a Quadrant score of 7,356 while the Galaxy SIII scored 5,596. In the real life usage comparison between the One X+ feels pretty much at par with the Galaxy SIII under the same application load.

Galaxy SIII has a slight advantage in terms of the display quality, with the Super AMOLED offering brighter colours than the S-LCD2. On screen keyboard has a



Price ₹40,190

good layout. Call quality is good, and exactly the same as the One X, and on par with the Galaxy SIII.

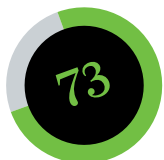
Graphics is where the Tegra 3 on the One X+ is at a slight disadvantage when compared to the Mali-400MP on the Galaxy SIII. The GL Benchmark score of 5,948 for the One X+ is lower than the 6,633 the Galaxy SIII scored. Battery life is good enough to last a day. HTC has bumped up the battery to 2100 mAh, to cater to the extra power.

Well, everything is right apart from the pricing. At this price, you would really have to love the One X+ to buy it. Else, go for the tried and tested Galaxy SIII (₹35,500 approx.) or even the One X (₹33k approx), that isn't much inferior either.

Vishal Mathur

Sony Vaio S-series (SVS15115FNB)

Good performer, decent feature-set and a full HD IPS display

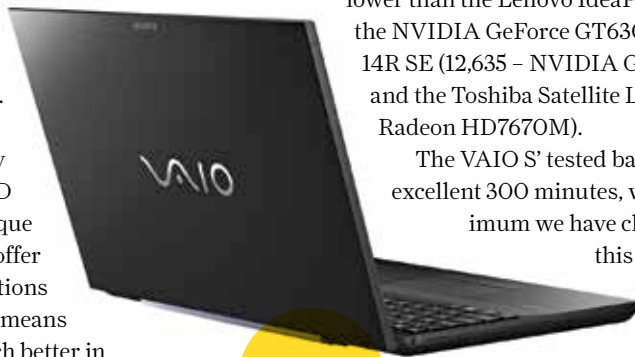


The matte black finish on the Vaio S looks sophisticated and doesn't catch fingerprints like glossy surfaces do. The VAIO S' form factor is

undeniably slim, but the carbon fiber lid does seem a bit too thin.

Its 15.5-inch display is the proverbial cherry on the cake. The full HD resolution is fairly unique considering the rivals offer 1366 x 768 pixel resolutions usually. The IPS panel means the display will be much better in the overall quality - colour reproduction, wider viewing angles and sharpness.

The Core i5 offers fairly speedy performance and scores that are pretty much in the range of laptops with the same processor. The PC Mark 7 score of 2,589 is pipped only by the HP



Price ₹69,990

Envy m6 that scored 2,689. With NVIDIA GeForce GT640M graphics on board, it is a surprise that the 3D Mark 06 score of 8,577 is considerably lower than the Lenovo IdeaPad Z580 (9,335 with the NVIDIA GeForce GT630M), Dell Inspiron 14R SE (12,635 - NVIDIA GeForce GT640M) and the Toshiba Satellite L850 (10,498 - AMD Radeon HD7670M).

The VAIO S' tested battery life was an excellent 300 minutes, which is the maximum we have clocked on any laptop this year.

But the real reason you should buy this laptop is for its 15.5-inch Full HD IPS display - something that is a rather unique proposition. For those who want raw performance, the Lenovo Z580 should be considered, which comes with Core i7 processor and 8GB RAM.

Vishal Mathur

- Features 75
- Performance..... 75
- Build Quality 70
- Value for money 65

Specifications

Processor: Intel Core i5-3210M @ 2.5GHz; **RAM:** 4GB; **Storage:** 640GB; **Display:** 15.5-inch IPS LED (1920 x 1080 pixels); **Graphics:** Nvidia GeForce GT640M (2GB); **Connectivity:** 3 USB, HDMI, optical drive; **OS:** Windows 7 Home Premium (64-bit)

Contact

Sony India
Phone: 1800-103-7799
Email: <https://www.sony.co.in/section/contactus>



Cooler Master K380 out
Cooler Master unveiled an entry-level gaming chassis called the Cooler Master K380 for ₹4,399. <http://dgit.in/VeB5CF>



Micromax A68 Smarty
A new ICS-based phone has been added by Micromax to its Indian Portfolio called the A68 Smarty. It comes with a 4-inch screen at a price of ₹6,500

HP LaserJet Pro M1218nfs

A multi-functional device with a router inside



Price
₹18,306

With the HotSpot M1218nfs monochrome laser MFD, HP has introduced an additional feature in this category – the presence of a full fledged router within an MFD to utilize it as a hotspot.

It comes with the Smart Install option which allows you to install the drivers (which are present in the printer memory itself) as soon as you connect the MFD to your system

with the USB drive or via the HotSpot, thereby reducing the reliance on driver CDs. You can connect upto eight devices to the M1218nfs. It will be seen as a wireless network to which you connect via your laptop or smartphones. You can connect your ethernet LAN cable to the MFD to still continue using the internet, while using the hotspot network. With Apple devices, you can use AirPrint which doesn't require any setup. Android users will need to download HP ePrint Home and Biz app.

High quality text print come out in 10.15 secs and a high quality mixed document print took 11.8 secs. You can adjust the darkness from the control panel of the MFD. A backlit screen would've been nice. Scanning at 300dpi from the flatbed scanner and the ADF printer took under a minute.

This MFD is ideal for a small office/home office (SOHO) or small and medium business (SMB) setup. It will not really make sense for home use. Its toner is priced at ₹4,018 with a yield of 1800 pages.

Nimish Sawant



Features	80
Performance.....	70
Build Quality	70
Value for money	65

Specifications

Resolution: 600x600 dpi;
Functions: Print, Copy, Scan, Fax, Hotspot; **Display:** 2-line LCD; **Input tray capacity:** 100 pages; **Print Memory:** 64MB; **Connectivity:** USB 2.0, IEEE 802.11 b/g/n, Ethernet port; **Weight:** 8.3 kg

Contact

Hewlett Packard India Pvt. Ltd.
Phone: 1800 425 4999
Email: NA
Website: www.hp.com

IRISNotes 1 for smartphones

Take notes, annotate, attach and mail



Price
₹8,999

This is a cool gadget for those who always take down a lot of notes and want to instantly transfer them via their smartphones. Using a digital pen and a receiver unit (which records information every time the pen presses on the paper to activate a switch) your written notes can be stored as JPEG files in the receiver unit and be transferred via bluetooth to your smartphone. You can connect the receiver unit to your computer and convert written text to digital text, and even edit it. At ₹8,999, it is surely targeted at professionals.



Features	75
Performance.....	70
Build Quality	70
Value for Money	60

Specifications

Coverage Area: A4 / Letter size; **Storage Capacity:** 100 A4 pages; **Receiver unit power:** 8 hours continuous writing; **OS supported:** BlackBerry OS and Android OS

Contact

Netspider Infortech India Pvt Ltd
Phone: NA
Email: mumbai.sales@niil.in

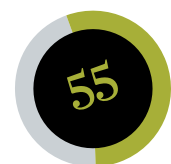
Byond mi-book Mi5

Average performance, lacklustre display



Price
₹7,299

In its benchmark scores, the Byond mi-book Mi5 performed well considering the hardware under the hood but in real world usage it lagged a bit, especially if there were a few apps running in the background, thanks to the low RAM. It ran all video formats natively except MOV. HD videos ran smoothly. The battery lasts for a little over 2.5 hours in the continuous video playback test which is lesser than competition. The Mi5 also has the ability to house a SIM card and make calls.



Features	60
Performance.....	60
Build quality	50
Value for money	50

Specifications

Display: 7-inch with 480 x 800 resolution; **Processor:** 1.2Ghz; **RAM:** 512MB; **Storage:** 8 GB expandable up to 32G; **Camera:** 0.3 video call camera; **OS:** Android 4.0.4; **SIM card slot:** **Battery:** 3000mAh

Contact

Byond
Phone: 18001032375
E-mail: customersupport@byondtech.com
Website: www.byondmibook.com



Zen's UltraTab A700 3G

Another 7-inch tablet entered the Indian market from Zen Mobiles called the UltraTab A700 3G for ₹9,499 in India



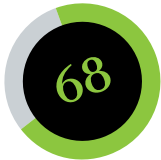
New iMac, Macbook out

Apple recently unveiled the 21.5-inch iMac and Macbook for the Indian market, with their latest price. <http://dgit.in/ZnG10B>

Bazaar

Corsair Vengeance C70

Anyone ordered an Ammo Box?!



- Features 50
- Performance..... 75
- Build quality 85
- Value for money..... 60

Specifications

Type: Mid-Tower; **Material:** Steel; **Dimensions:**501(H)x232(W)x533(L); **Weight:**8.6 kg; **Fans:** 3 (Optional:8); **PSU Location:** Bottom; **3.5in/2.5in bays:** 6; **USB 3.0 Ports:** 2, **Expansion Slots:** 8; **Warranty:** 2 Years

Contact

Corsair
Phone: NA
Email: Indiaservice@corsair.com
Website: www.corsair.com

We got the Vengeance C70 (a mid-tower) this month. After unwrapping it, you'll notice that the case looks like an ammunition box complete with military cred. The build quality of the C70 seems solid and you can carry it around by using two spring-loaded handles at the top. The front features two USB 3.0 ports along with the usual mic / headphone jack. The power and reset buttons accentuate its military design - there's a safety flap that you need to flip open to access the reset button.

Clips on the side-panel, instead of regular screws, make opening the panel easy. A slightly tinted side-panel window lets you keep your bragging rights intact for your precious components. Everything is tool-less inside this case. There



Price ₹11,999

is enough space to accommodate lengthy graphics cards. The 3.5-inch drive cages are removable, adding more room. There's space for dual 240mm radiators for liquid cooling enthusiasts. As for cable management, the C70 not only has enough rubber grommets for routing power cables but also features smart clips at the back of the motherboard. An internal USB 3.0 header along with a USB 2.0 conversion adaptor is a nice addition to this case.

The idle temperatures while testing were steady at 35 C (at 30 C room temp) and the temperatures under full load didn't exceed 39 - which is quite good.

Despite its military looks and features, this is still just a mid-tower and hence pricey. You'll get some full towers in the same price range.

Siddhant Sharma

Cisco Linksys EA4500

Stay connected, no matter what

Out of all the routers we've received for testing, this one had the best signal strength we've seen. There was sufficient strength for us to see no drops in any of our test zones and we could comfortably download files with no hiccups. The router can be setup with the bundled CD and the bundled tool does an excellent job of helping a layman set up a network.

This was also one of the easiest routers to setup a USB drive on and read speeds were stellar, topping 14MBps, something that we haven't seen on other routers either. There isn't any wizard or something for setting up the drive, it's just that the whole process was much simpler than on competing devices.



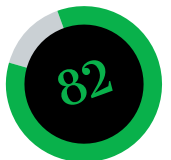
Price ₹14,999

One very nifty feature on this device was the option to setup a guest network, i.e., a WiFi network that requires users to logon via a browser.

One of the major issues we noticed with this router was that it was getting extremely hot within an hour of heavy use (file transfer tests and streaming) despite being positioned right next to our air-conditioner. We didn't notice any performance drops due to the heat over time,

but the amount of heat was worrying. At ₹14,999, this is one of the most expensive routers we've tested but considering the features and performance on offer, for someone who needs them, the price is justified. This is a bit more expensive than the ASUS RT-N66U but we think the price difference is justified.

Anirudh Regidi



- Features 83
- Performance..... 90
- Build Quality 75
- Value for Money 80

Specifications

Bandwidth: N900; **Dual-Band:** Yes; **Guest Access:** Yes; **Warranty:** 2 years

Contact

Cisco
Ph. No. 1800 419 8899
Email: consumersales-india@ciseco.com



iBall Andi 4.5H launched

iBall's new dual-SIM ICS smartphone boasts of a 1Ghz Processor and 1GB RAM and is available for ₹12,490. Interested?



HTC WP 8S available online

HTC's new Windows Phone 8 based smartphone called the HTC 8S is available online in India for ₹19,350

Fujifilm XF-1

The fashionable Point and Shoot

The Fujifilm X-series has been all about making a statement, setting these niche products aside from the competition. Unlike the two bigger brethren, the XF-1 is part of the advanced compact camera category and comes in a very slim chic package. The camera is thin, good enough to slip into almost any pocket and features a synthetic leather finish for a unique feel.



Price ₹33,989

the XF-1's f/1.8 aperture lens to be quite a treat. Shooting indoors is incredibly easy now, thanks to the fast lens. Zooming is still done by twisting the ring around the lens, and there is a little horizontal dial at the back that makes adjusting the PASM settings a breeze. The ergonomics of the camera are actually pretty interesting, given the position of the zoom ring, the shutter button and the dial at the back, which makes shooting super quick, as long as the camera is already turned on.

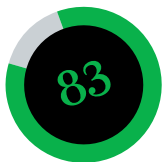
The pseudo-leather isn't the only unique thing about this little shooter. The on-off mechanism is quite novel too. The lens must first be pulled out and then twisted before the camera whirrs to life. We weren't too happy about the X10's "twist-to-turn-on" mechanism, so an added step of pulling and twisting is just a little too convoluted for us.

Moving past the on-off mechanism though, we find

The images out of the XF-1 are simply stunning. The fujinon lens is extremely sharp, even at f/1.8, but what we liked even more was that there was hardly any shutter lag. We love that this little thing can shoot RAW and even supports in-camera RAW editing along with recording full HD video, which is augmented by stereo microphones. The slightly bigger 2/3 inch sensor is also quite helpful in increasing the dynamic range and giving better color depth when compared to other point and shoots.

All in all, the Fujifilm XF-1 is a solid performer.

Swapanil Mathur



Features	80
Performance.....	85
Build Quality	85
Value for money.....	80

Specifications

Sensor: 12 megapixels, EXR-CMOS;
Lens: 25-100mm, f/1.8-4.9; **Maximum burst:** 10, 7, 5, 3 fps; **Movie Resolution:** 1920x1080 at 30fps

Contact

FUJIFILM India
 Website: <http://www.fujifilmcameras.in>

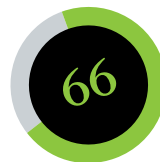
ESET Smart Security 5

Smart, but not that smart



Price ₹1,644

ESET Smart Security 5 is a good enough suite for someone looking for decent internet protection and simple parental controls. The parental controls are not as fully-featured as we've seen on other suites, but they allow you to block websites by category or your kid's age, etc. This is a very handy option for parents, but the lack of time restrictions are an issue. Another problem was the SysInspector tool, which would highlight obviously benign programs and files as potential threats. It is a little on the expensive side, but a decent AV suite nonetheless; the UI and AV tools are quite robust as well.



Features	65
Usability.....	70
Internet Security	75
Value for money.....	55

Specifications

ESET Live Grid; Parental Control; AV; Firewall; Antispam, Optimized Startup; Gamer mode; Advanced Heuristics

Contact

ESET India
 Email: support@esetindia.com
 Ph. No.: 1800 209 1999

TP-Link MR-3040

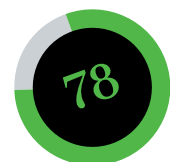
Very handy



Price ₹2,800

This router comes with the same performance and ease of use that we have now come to expect from TP-LINK. Once setup, the router performed admirably with read speeds topping 9.7 MB/s in our assorted file read tests. Signal strength was quite bad, with Zone 2 being the limit, but that's to be expected from a pocket router and we can't really expect more from such a device.

The interface for setting it up is exactly the same as any TP-LINK device that we've tested and while it isn't the most n00b-friendly, it is very functional. This is a good router for someone who transfers a lot of data, but for just internet access, there are cheaper alternatives available.



Features	70
Performance.....	85
Build Quality	85
Value for Money	70

Specifications

Bandwidth: N150p; **Dual-Band:** No; **Battery:** 2000mAh; **Warranty:** 2 years

Contact

TP-LINK India Pvt. Ltd.
 Ph. No. 1800 209 4168
 Email: sales.in@tp-link.com



Kingston Wi-Drive 128GB
Kingston unveiled its 128GB Wi-Drive for iOS and Android devices, allowing data sharing and storage over Wi-Fi <http://dgit.in/XTrh3h>



Roccat's \$100 Isku FX
Roccat's new multi-color gaming keyboard called the Isku FX will launch soon for \$100

Bazaar

Gigabyte Z77X-UP5TH

A high-end Thunderbolt port sporting feature-rich board



- Features 80
- Overclocking..... 65
- Build Quality 80
- Value for money 60

Specifications

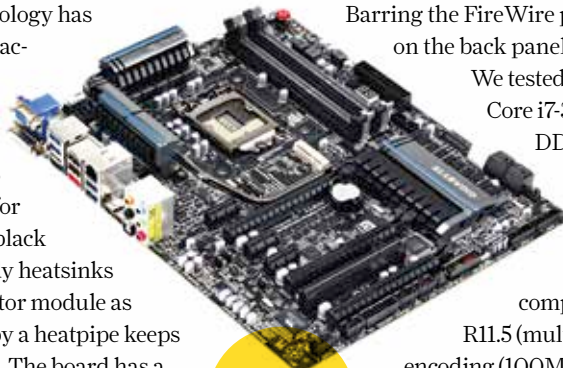
Socket: LGA 1155; **Chipset:** Z77; **PCIe x16 slots:** 3; **USB 3.0 ports:** 4; **Thunderbolt:** Yes; **WiFi:** Yes; **SATA 2/ SATA 3 ports:** 4 / 2; **Audio:** Realtek ALC 898 and SoundBlaster X-Fi; **Display Ports:** 1xHDMI, 1xD-Sub, 1xDVI

Contact

Gigabyte India
Email: anilkumarr@gigabyte.in
Website: www.gigabyte.in

Thunderbolt technology has still to get some traction, but from a future-proofing perspective it makes sense. Gigabyte Z77X-UP5TH offers a lot of features for a high-end board. The all-black body with extremely sturdy heatsinks over the the voltage regulator module as well as the chipset joined by a heatpipe keeps temperatures under check. The board has a dedicated mSATA port to add in an mSATA SSD for caching purpose. It sports two Thunderbolt ports but lacks the cable which you will have to buy separately. It bundles in a WiFi and Bluetooth card which fits in the PCIe x1 slot.

The board is wonderfully laid out with enough space around the CPU region. The PCIe x16 slots are spaced out well, SATA ports point outwards. There are dedicated power, reset and CMOS clear buttons.



Price ₹19,750

Barring the FireWire port it has all other ports on the back panel IO.

We tested the board using the Intel Core i7-3770K along with 8 GB of DDR3 RAM along with Kingston HyperX 120GB SSD and AMD HD 6850. Scores were similar to those observed of competing boards. CineBench R11.5 (multicore CPU): 6.57; Video encoding (100MB VOB to DIVX conversion): 18.23 secs; WinRAR compression/decompression: 3,477 KB/s. We could overclock it to 4.3GHz on the stock cooler giving a 16 per cent boost in Cinebench readings.

At ₹19,750 it is clearly meant for the enthusiasts as well as content creators who need the Thunderbolt port. If you do not need the Thunderbolt port, the Z77X-UD5H WiFi still makes for a good buy.

Nimish Sawant

Lenovo ThinkCentre Edge 72z

A worthwhile office all-in-one PC

The Lenovo ThinkCentre Edge 72z has a black plastic enclosure that fits a business or corporate setting perfectly. It has a standard photo-frame design, with a metallic stand that lets it tilt back. Fitted with a metal frame inside its chassis, the unit is quite sturdy – the Kensington lock slot is fitted directly into its metal frame. The whole setup feels nice and sturdy, and its designed thoughtfully – its keyboard fits perfectly between the unit's two front stands, letting it slide under and save further desk space. The system comes packed with connectivity features.

The only negatives here for the Edge 72z are it doesn't score highly in terms of pure performance and multimedia usage – onboard speakers aren't very loud and while the matte screen may be great for reading text, it

doesn't do a great job displaying cinematic video. However, this isn't a big concern, as the Lenovo

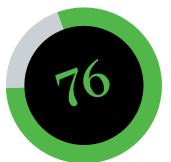
AIO comes equipped with features and utilities that help in day-to-day work and the system's maintenance. It's VOIP features are pretty nifty, the system's energy efficient and intelligent – its webcam senses and lock the system if no one's sitting in front. The ThinkCentre's screen is good, bundled wireless keyboard and mouse even better.

Overall, the Lenovo ThinkCentre Edge 72z all-in-one desktop PC is one system that makes a strong case for your office desk, if you desire a sleek, space-saving, wire-free desktop.

Jayesh Shinde



Price ₹46,300



- Features 80
- Performance..... 65
- Design 85
- Value for Money 75

Specifications

Screen: 20-inch, 1600x900 res; **CPU:** Intel Core i5-3470S 2.9-GHz; **RAM:** 4GB DDR3; **HDD:** 500GB, 7200 RPM; **OS:** 64-bit Windows 7 Professional; **DVD Writer:** Yes; **Ports:** USB x 6, Ethernet, VGA, DisplayPort, mic, headset; **Wi-Fi:** Yes

Contact

Lenovo India Pvt Ltd
Phone: 1800 3000 9990
Website: lenovo.com/in

Industry Connect

We talk to representatives from McAfee and HP to try and access the bigger picture

**Office coming to iOS ?**

The news is rife with rumors about Microsoft finally releasing Office for iOS in 2013



Messaging Matters

Choosing the right email messaging suite to help keep your business on top

Jayesh Shinde

jayesh.shinde@thinkdigit.com

The Post-PC era is unfolding right as you read this, and these are times when accessing your email is no longer limited to a PC terminal fixed to your desk in office or at home. You want email access on your smartphone, tablet and laptop, as you cycle through them at different points of time on any given day. Your employees will have similar needs and habits, wanting to bring those devices to work, the ones they're comfortable using and boost productivity. It's the reality and it's happening all around us.

Deploying a Microsoft Exchange Server is too cumbersome, especially if you don't have enough people in your organization

– for a SOHO setup, an Exchange Server is overkill, anyways. And relying on free email services like Gmail, Yahoo or Rediff doesn't bode well as far as brand impression goes – imagine trying to send a mail through a prospective client through Gmail, trying to convince them to take you seriously as a business outfit? It's a losing battle. First things first, you need to buy a domain and fire your own email solution on it.

Everyone's favourite free email and collaboration suite just became paid – yes, Google Apps for businesses is no longer available as a free service. What's more, its paid avatar is quite expensive – US \$50 per user per year or US \$5 per user per month. If yours is a small business set up, or you work out of your home, Google Apps may no longer be an economical option.

Time to look for other options.

Hosted email

Large-scale domain registrars like GoDaddy and BigRock offer certain number of free email addresses while you signup for a web hosting plan. While they may look very attractive on the surface, most of them have a catch. Email addresses promised while buying server space is often shared, meaning if you're getting 10 free email addresses on your hosting plan, chances are that they will all have to share a storage space of 100MB to 1GB – not individually, but as a group. With just a few megabytes for each account, you'll be frustrated and pulling your hair out in no time – not a good situation to be in if you're running an online business.

Alternatively, what you should explore are dedicated email solutions that companies like BigRock and GoDaddy offer. BigRock, especially, lets you fire up an online email account for a custom domain of your choice for as little as ₹39 per month if you sign up for 10 years at once. For that you get 10 email accounts with 2GB of storage space for each account, and features like POP3 and IMAP, besides the ability to login and check your email through a web browser. You can configure the email on Outlook or Thunderbird, be assured that spam and virus filtering is in place, basically enjoy the benefits of a full-fledged modern email and messaging system that is accessible on mobile devices like Blackberry and iPhone.

You will enjoy similar benefits on a GoDaddy email plan, but it will only cost a lot more – ₹119 per month (for 5 years) for 5 email addresses with 2GB of storage each. Another difference we found between the two email solution providers is that GoDaddy offers added features like text mail support, 256-bit encryption for emails, and a desktop notifier – features that BigRock doesn't highlight on its website. So GoDaddy, in a way, tries to justify its cost by giving you bonus features; however, how important they may be to your business environment is something only you can decide and act upon.

Both BigRock and GoDaddy are trusted names in the field of domain registration and web hosting, and we have no hesitation in recommending them as avenues worth exploring. A typical process for signing up



Facebook buying Whatsapp?

Social media giant Facebook is reportedly in talks to buy Whatsapp, the popular instant messaging app for smartphones



Ultra-Thin cooler developed

General Electric has revealed an extremely thin and high performance silent cooler for notebooks and tablets <http://digit.in/TQqjN0>

Smart SoHo

Secure Email Hosting
Get your own branded email today!

Key Features:

- ▶ Unlimited Webmail/POP3/IMAP/SMTP Access
- ▶ Outlook, Thunderbird & Windows Mail compatible
- ▶ Advanced Virus and Spam Protection
- ▶ Blackberry, iPhone & PDA compatible
- ▶ Rs. 2500* Google Adwords Credit



Premium Plan	Deluxe Plan	Economy Plan	Essential Plan
Starts from Rs. 159.00 /month	Starts from Rs. 109.00 /month	Starts from Rs. 89.00 /month	Starts from Rs. 39.00 /month
Unlimited Email Accounts with 2 GB space each	50 Email Accounts with 2 GB space each	25 Email Accounts with 2 GB space each	10 Email Accounts with 2 GB space each
Select Duration: 3 years at Rs. 229.00/month	Select Duration: 3 years at Rs. 169.00/month	Select Duration: 3 years at Rs. 149.00/month	Select Duration: 3 years at Rs. 99.00/month
Add this Plan	Add this Plan	Add this Plan	Add this Plan

BigRock's hosted email plans are quite economical, if you pledge a longterm allegiance

with them involves choosing an email plan, entering your domain name, creating an account and checking out. You will either have to go through some domain verification step and further tweak your domain's MX records (under DNS management) to start using the brand new email account.

Enter Zimbra

If you are of the tinkerer and tweeker type, and you get your kick out of deploying software solutions your way, then Zimbra Collaboration Server (ZCS) Open Source Edition is just what the doctor ordered. Zimbra's open source edition offers an email solution with rich interface and


contact management. It also lets you access IMAP email through a mobile web browser, irrespective of the device. There's group calendar management, administration console which is easy to navigate and understand, and the choice of using a dedicated desktop client to pull your emails.

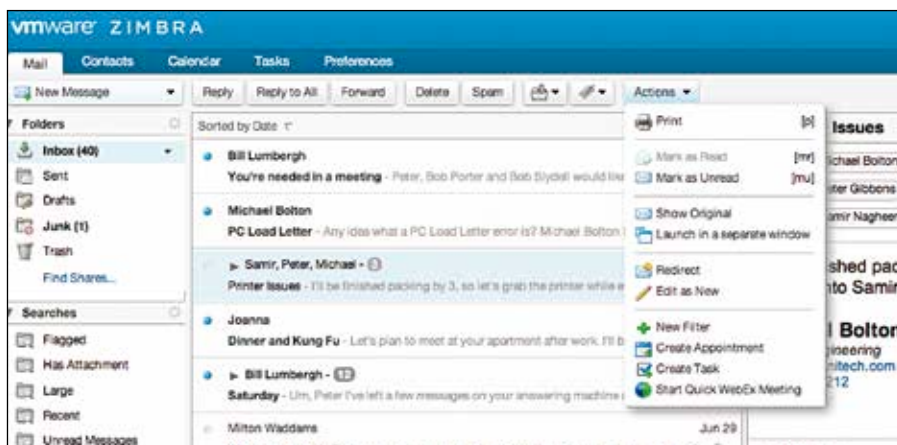
Zimbra is quite a popular email solution among IT administrators who have to manage resources and scale. Zimbra is known to be reliably configured, deployed and work smoothly on a low-powered server with average traffic load – so if you're wondering which email server to deploy on a 5-year old PC (used as a server) to cover your small office of about 5 to

20 people, Zimbra is a good option to go with. Another thing network admins like about Zimbra Collaboration Server that it has a free edition (open source) which can be downloaded and installed without spending a rupee. All you need is a copy of Linux (CentOS is a favourite for servers) and ZCS downloaded from the web, and you're good to go.

Another feature of Zimbra's email solution is that you can opt for either a local deployment of the email server – a scenario where you manage IT, control costs, features and scale of deployment – or use a hosted email option (similar to BigRock and GoDaddy's service). In the hosted email option (which is generally for larger companies), Zimbra lets you partner with a solution provider who lets you procure online space and deploy the email system in a cloud setup. Obviously, in a hosted email scenario for Zimbra, all you have to do is loosen your purse, while the IT headache is outsourced to someone else. Its cloud deployment also lets ZCS access features like advanced apps and unified communications features like voicemail and chat-out-of-the-box from Cisco, etc., but all these features are too advanced for a small business setup, we feel.

After being acquired by VMware, the Zimbra email suite recently had an update, adding new features to its ever-growing repertoire. Zimbra's spokesperson confirmed that among its several happy clients, the Indian Institute of Technology ranks one of them which uses and deploys ZCS on its premises. If you needed a vote of confidence, the IIT isn't bad to help you decide on going for Zimbra for your email needs, eh?

Zimbra also has a free cross-platform desktop email client to access your emails on a PC called Zimbra Desktop, and it's packed with features to rival those offered by the likes of Microsoft Outlook and Mozilla Thunderbird. Not only does it work in offline mode, but it also lets you access your tweets, Facebook timeline and other social media feeds directly inside its window. How cool is that? Obviously, Zimbra Desktop works like a charm with ZCS and we recommend using it if you're looking for a fresh, new desktop email client. 



The free version of Zimbra Collaboration Server is popular among email solution providers



Google Maps back on iOS

After Apple removed Google Maps a few months back and faced embarrassment, it's back again on the App Store

'Nearby' feature updated

The 'Nearby' feature for Facebook's apps for iOS and Android has been included with discover and share features for finding places easily

Securing Self

We speak with McAfee on the future of security, its acquisition by Intel and more...

Nimish Sawant

nimish.sawant@thinkdigit.com

Q Intel as we all know is a hardware company and it has acquired McAfee, a software player. What has changed since Intel's acquisition of McAfee in terms of work culture, roadmaps, etc.?

On a higher level, Intel has a history of solving computing's biggest challenges. They've been focused on energy-efficient performance, connectivity, and now security. For Intel, Security is their "third pillar of computing." Unless we can solve the problem of keeping computers secure, we'll never live up to the Internet's full potential. If we can solve it, it will be an enabler to growth in the computing industry and will allow Intel to achieve its goals related to transparent computing and the compute continuum.

Q Considering Intel is into chip making and hardware, is McAfee designing any products in collaboration with Intel?

The Intel and McAfee integration falls into two main areas: 1) co-design efforts, and 2) go-to-market efforts. McAfee Deep Defender and McAfee ePO Deep Command are both co-design efforts, and there are many areas that we can point to where those efforts continue. Security on Ultrabooks is an example of a go-to-market effort. McAfee is working to improve performance of security on Ultrabooks by leveraging the graphics processor and in-built encryption provided within the Intel hardware and producing dramatic results in the area of performance for example. On machines that run the i5+ processors, Intel and McAfee have partnered to release an Ultrafast, UltraSecure Anti-theft solution that will allow customers to remotely control and retrieve data and device – something that no one else in the industry can do today.

Q Which platforms drive the sales of your security offerings for mobile? Effectively,



Steve Petracca, Sr. VP and GM for Consumer and Mobile Business, McAfee

Q does that imply that they are less secure, or simply popular?

At this point it does seem that Android is driving a significant portion of what we sell. The reasons are due to the higher adoption and the opportunities for hackers on an operating system that is open. Cyber crime is all about opportunity in proportion to volumes. It is a volume game. The more you are able to target the higher the chances of getting your victims.

Q Are security offerings relevant anymore? Do mobile users need such offerings if app stores have stringent policies to safeguard their users?

Indeed they are. There is enough evidence that seems to suggest that whatever app stores do to control the quality of the applications they host, the sheer numbers of applications that get hosted and updated is so high it is very difficult for them to have a system that guarantees zero threat. There have been many instances of malicious apps getting downloaded from these stores and it's days before they are discovered and plugged.

Additionally there are other stores that host copies of the applications of the major players like Google and customers downloading from those links are vulnerable. So in this situation, one needs to be vigilant and not blindly trust any application they download – regardless of the Store reputation.

Q Could you tell us something about McAfee All Access 2013. I think this is a first of its kind product which offers protection across all platforms - PCs, Macs, smartphones, tablets and so on with one product. How and why did McAfee come up with such a product? What advantages does it offer over stand-alone security suites for each of these platforms?

McAfee All Access (MAA) is a cross platform offering to users to protect multiple devices that they might own. We were first in the market with a product offering that protects multiple devices with a single SKU. We noticed that with the explosion of devices in the market a typical home no longer had a desktop or a PC – but had many devices that stored/manipulated electronic data including smartphones and tablets. It is not unusual for a home to have as many as 15-20 devices today. This clearly brought about a need to be able to service multiple devices from a Security standpoint seamlessly and with the least hassle to the user. This resulted in the evolution of McAfee All Access. This product provides a single SKU provides license to use the products McAfee offers on the various platforms and helps manage the various devices as well thought an integrated console on our the users account on our home.mcafee.com website. **Q**

READ MORE AT: digit.in/mcafee_d0113

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YOUR TECHNOLOGY NAVIGATOR

Google Play Store 3.9.16

The new Play store has features like remove items from all app list, Jelly Bean expanded notification system and more



Flickr rewards faithful users

Yahoo's "Flickr" has rewarded its long time loyal users with a 3-month Pro subscription, unlimited storage, unlimited viewing and posting photos in 60 groups

Industry Connect

What's up, HP?

Vinay Awasthi, Sr. Director, HP India, talks about their latest Envy X2 hybrid PC, delayed India product launches and other prickly issues

Siddharth Parwatay

siddharth.parwatay@thinkdigit.com

How has HP been innovating from a personal systems standpoint?

HP has a huge history of innovation in a variety of products. From the printing side most of the innovations in ink and laser is proprietary HP. On the commercial side we have thin-clients that draw power over Ethernet cable and many other innovations. We have also put a lot of effort in coming up with some new technology based on the Intel roadmap.

What are the innovations on the Envy X2?

With the X2, we have put batteries in both the base unit as well as the screen and when you operate without a power connection, the base unit battery is used first. So even after using it for 7-8 hours, when you remove the screen portion and use it as a tablet, it still has another 8 hours of battery life. So together you have 17 to 18 hours of battery life.

Is the Envy X2 a mass market device or is it a geeky product – something that only enthusiasts or early adopters would go for?

Any product of this nature starts off with a high price. Even Ultrabooks started off with a high price point, right? As the usage of such products grow, the cost will come down.

Since X2 is like a tablet as well, will HP bundle any cloud storage utility with it?

At this moment we're not bundling anything per se. As of now the X2 has enough storage. If I look at my laptop I can say that I don't need cloud storage because there is enough space in the hard drive itself.

With Microsoft's Surface devices, has it affected their relation with players like HP?

I haven't seen Surface to be honest, and from whatever I've heard, I don't think it has impacted anything between HP and Microsoft. It's just one of the devices that's been introduced. I think it's going to be an interesting time for Microsoft to get into the hardware business.

You don't see it eating into the PC pie?

I don't think so. I hope it does well for them because it will only help establish the overall category. One product doesn't on its own succeed. Usually, there are two, three successful stories and it grows a category far bigger. I don't feel threatened by it all. In fact Microsoft will try to put in a huge amount of effort to create awareness for the category which will benefit everyone involved.

Coming back to the Envy X2 who is HP targeting exactly with this product?

If I look at it two or three years down the line, I believe these products will become mainstream products. But initially people considering a tablet and a notebook at the upper-end of the consumer notebook spectrum will go for this. And in the corporate sales we believe the CXO domain will definitely want these kinds of products strong reasons: it's Windows and easier to integrate into the corporate environment, it's a notebook for work and tablet as a consumption device.

We've seen a couple of devices that were radically innovative but remained proof of concept devices because of a critical flaw. Do you have a comment on this?

I'll let you judge the Envy X2 from your own perspective.

Worldwide launches have started to catch on. So why is it that products get launched in the U.S. but in the Indian market it gets launched a month later or



Vinay Awasthi Sr. Director - Product Category, Printing and Personal Systems Group, HP India

so? What do you say to customers who don't like waiting for products?

When you look at it, one month here and there is not a big deal.

As the traditional digital divide or information gap reduces, people here know about the products that are being launched abroad. They are going to want to get their hands on them and these thought leaders are the first to purchase these products but they never get to. And a lot of brands have started launching simultaneously. So why is HP lagging here?

India is now one of the top few countries in the world in terms of product launches. Sequencing of launches happens for a variety of reasons because the versions required to adapt it to specific countries whether it is the power cord, whether it is software, whether it is language... they do require work.

Does HP have some kind of policy of not participating in comparison tests? If so why is that?

I will have to find out more about this. I am not completely up to speed on this issue. Let me take that as a follow up item. **d**

The gadgets we take for granted

We've been going on and on about the changing face of the PC, but what about the gadgets that haven't changed so much? The ones that we have come to accept as so much a part of our lives that we've taken them for granted.



An alarming picture

If only the alarm clock hadn't been invented, we would still be waking up to a cock-a-doodle-doo. Or not at all come to think of it. Either way, this device is the bane of our existence. Ensuring that even the laziest of us have no excuse. It's always there, watching, waiting, ready to ring just when you're at the deepest point of your sleep cycle.

Light up your life

Where would you be without this invention? Those long nights spent reading books under the sheets or those terrifying childhood nightmares gifted to you by a torch wielding friend or uncle. Imagine a time where people would dread to look under their beds. Imagine a world where Doom 3 didn't have a flashlight! The horror!



A spray of hope

A smudge on your screen? Spray that screen cleaner. Mosquitoes! Where's that Hit? No bath? There must be a deo nearby. The aerosol spray has been part and parcel of our lives since well before the great war. Build a shrine to the magnificence of this invention. Homage must be paid to this deliverer of liquid particles.



A sticky situation

The solution to almost every problem can be found in some application of duct tape. Anything that's broken can be fixed, it just needs a generous helping of tape. Maybe not broken hearts, but everything else, yes. Hell, duct tape has even been used to fix broken bones. A truly remarkable and underrated invention indeed.

Control your life

Starting its life as a concept in the early 1900s, the first, modern remote was seen in the early 1930s. The world has never been the same since. The ideal tool for the compulsive channel-switchers, what an invention this was. All those people complaining about having to walk 5 feet to the TV had to just shut up and swallow their words.



Power up

The battery, a very simple device that is present in almost every single electronic device in existence. We do not truly appreciate the true power of this device. Everything from your wristwatch to nuclear submarines, cars, rockets and satellites are dependant on these. We would all be living in a steampunk era if it weren't for this invention.



A 6.1-inch smartphone ?!

Huawei intentionally leaked out some pictures of its "Ascent Mate" smartphone. It plans to unveil this massive 6.1-inch touchscreen phone at CES this year



ZTE's Grand S leaked

Phone manufacturer ZTE's upcoming 5-inch full HD smartphone called the "Grand S" has been leaked online ahead of its CES launch

Unwind

How we unwind



Mosquitoes Everywhere

Mosquitoes have become a regular nuisance in our office and we've taken to keeping those anti-mosquito rackets with us. Fed up to the back teeth with the ever-buzzing menace, Mithun went on a rampage one night, zapping every bug he could find and collecting their remains in a small plastic pouch. Yes, you read that right, a pouch. We shudder to think of what comes next.

Nimish Mk.2

Nimish is probably the nicest member of our team, but also the most trol-able. We have taken it upon ourselves to train him into a more wholesome (by our standards) individual and to that effect, we have decided to embark on a training program involving positive and negative reinforcement. With time and patience, we hope to succeed. He is a very self-willed young lad though.



The Hobbit

We've got many LOTR fans in our office, but none bigger than our Big Daddy. His excitement was infectious and it was a very interesting few days with Dwarven war cries and LOTR lore filling the air. We trudged off to the nearest theatre the day the movie was released, and while the movie was a little disappointing, we had a whale of a time.

digit DIARY

This was a month of special events. We survived the apocalypse. A "yay" must be in order but we couldn't be bothered. Siddharth was quite disappointed with the turn of events though. His heart was set on a wild night of chaos, terror and destruction and as he stared at the night sky, looking for a sign, we couldn't help but feel sorry for the poor soul.

The apocalypse didn't arrive but there was some cheer in the form of Mithun, who returned to the fold after a long sabbatical. His return was met with some wild cheering and applause from the whole team. Everyone was happy and none more so than Anirudh and both were quick to get back to their inaudible mutterings, oblivious to the world around them.

The next event was the arrival of The Hobbit in theatres here and you must have already read about it in the box above. Jayesh, the biggest LOTR fan among our team, was the most chuffed up about the movie and started fantasizing about himself as a dwarf (which makes Siddharth the resident hobbit) and the whole event was, overall, a lot of fun for the whole team.

Speaking of fun, the Steam Holiday sales were on again and this time Jayesh and Anirudh went berserk, Purchasing games left and right and now they've got over a 100 GB of

games to download over the next few months. We managed to force a copy of Borderlands on a very reluctant Nimish and we're hoping to have a nice, 4 player team game over LAN. Which reminds us, if any of you guys are interested, look for anirudh_regidi, jshinde and staticsid on Steam to partake in some multiplayer madness once in a while.

The other events include Mithun's gaming rig, which he finally purchased after almost 10 years (big cheers); SLI, i7, 850W PSU, the works. Jayesh, taking inspiration from this, decided that it was high time he built a rig for himself as well and is currently scrounging around the marketplace looking for just the right deal (he does have his entire Steam collection to get through after all).

More weird stuff. Robert's amp went up in smoke and our editor's been mightily ticked off about it. The arrival of Paanini and his guitar and amp did manage to bring a sad twinkle to his eye though. He spent a couple of days subjecting us to his guitar playing skills and while we pretended to "enjoy" the music, we were absolutely terrified that we wouldn't recognize the tune he was playing and would be chewed out for our lack of "musical" knowledge and taste. A very wierd month this. But par for the course by our standards.



Resized Google TVs

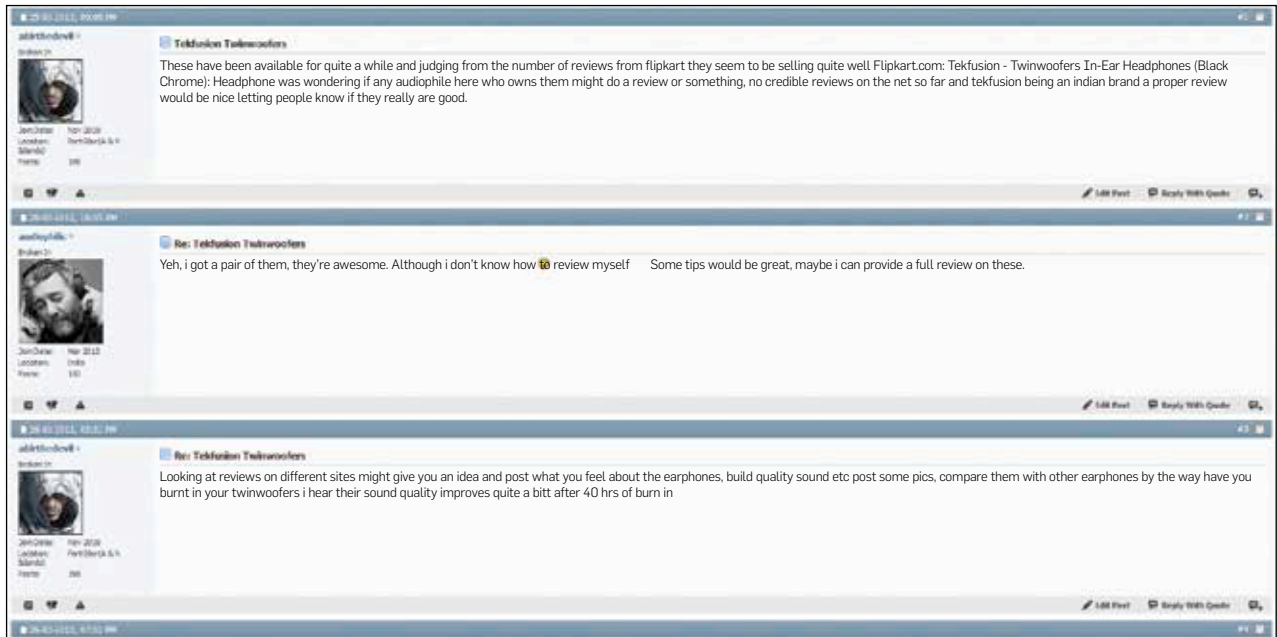
LG announced plans to release newer designs and more sizes of its Google TV models in 2013 which will support OnLive as well



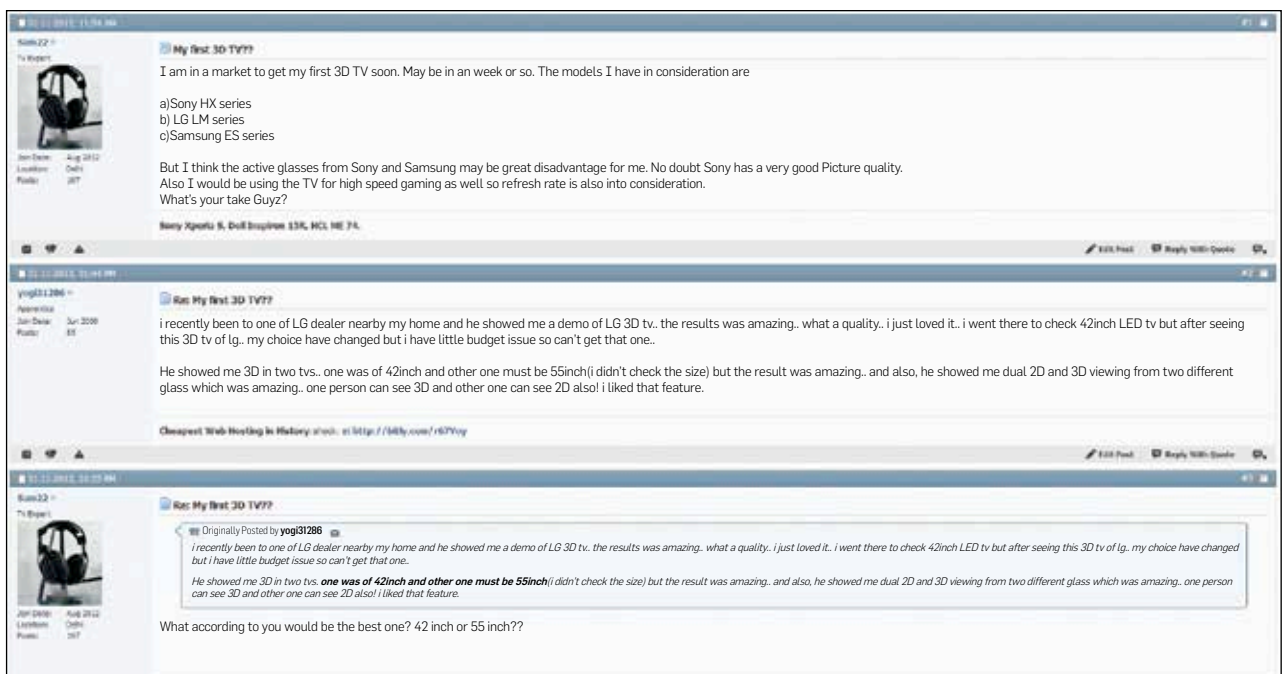
“Action Plan” to fight piracy

The U.S. and Russia have teamed up to prepare an “action plan” to fight piracy, their main focus is the protection of intellectual property

Head over to **online communities** for some of the best discussions, buying advice and user reviews. Of course, you'll meet like-minded (and not-so-like-minded) geeks and of course, get help when you're stuck.



In the market for a TV? 3D or HD only? What size? Our forums are the place to find out. There are plenty of helpful geeks who will line up to flood you with their advice.





Chrome 25 news

Chrome 25 will disable silent extension deployment by default thus not allowing extensions to be installed silently



Peel-and-stick Solar Cells

Researchers at Stanford University have created thin-film solar cells which can be applied to any surface <http://dgit.in/UimutA>

Community

Need some gaming advice? What's the right mouse for you? That new game not running on your PC? Check out the post below, and also some of the other discussions taking place at www.thinkdigit.com/facebook.

Samar Headshot Rawat

I am looking for a good gaming mouse upto Rs. 4000. I have zeroed down to the Corsair Vengeance M60 and the Razer Deathadder, and now I am really confused.....i play slow paced games like Counter-Strike, CallOfDuty and also really fast-paced games like Quake 3, I basically play FPS games. Plz. suggest

Like · Comment · 9 hours ago near New Delhi, Delhi

Vikrant Mehra call of duty is SLOW???

9 hours ago · Like

Samar Headshot Rawat yeah man...compare it with q3, ut

9 hours ago · Like

Anirudh Regidi I haven't used the Deathadder but I've heard it's a good mouse. The Corsair M60 is an excellent mouse and very well-built and has adjustable weights. It is a bit wide though, so keep that in mind before purchase. I personally prefer the M90 to any other mouse I've tested. A bit on the heavy side though.

8 hours ago · Like

Ajit Singha Roy cooler master spawn/CM storm recon,

8 hours ago · Like

Thakur Anurag Anand i hve deathadder . . n itz jus osm trust me . . it adjusts automatically to da game u play lyk it ws made for dat game nlyy . . itz syd buttonz r so much helpful . . dey on b used to scroll dwn through weaponz . . or zoom in or out . . or perform diff types f attacks vn playin arcade games . itz da best . . trust me

7 hours ago via mobile · Like

Write a comment...

Prince Tomar

I'VE INSTALLED NFS MW 2012 ON MY WINDOWS 7 PC WITH 2GB RAM AND 1.77GHZ INTEL ATOM PROCESSOR IT IS VERY SLOW PLEASE HELP ME

Like · Comment · 19 December at 17:43

Prince Tomar like this.

Ajit Singha Roy increase ram and change cpu

19 December at 19:16 · Like

Samar Headshot Rawat Lower the geaphics from video options, turn off anti-aliasing and reduce screen refresh rate

19 December at 19:50 via mobile · Like · 1

Samar Headshot Rawat Lower the geaphics from video options, turn off anti-aliasing and reduce screen refresh rate

19 December at 19:51 via mobile · Like · 1

Prince Tomar i've all in one pc so i cannot change cpu but can increase ram

20 December at 16:53 via mobile · Like · 1

Anmeet Borah Your whole setup is weak, it cant be helped

Friday at 09:38 via mobile · Like · 1

Subhankar Das The Atom isn't meant for gaming, its performance will be disappointing. Can't really be helped much

Friday at 09:40 · Like

Prince Tomar Ok thks !!!!!

Friday at 17:34 · Like · 1

Want to setup parental controls? Help is at hand.

Royal Gopal

i want my little brother to study at the time of study. So, i want to lock my computer for a period of time say for 2 hours a day. Is there any program or apps to help me in that case?

Like · Comment · 16 hours ago near Lalitpur, Nepal

View all 3 comments

Ajit Singha Roy You can restrict computer access at a particular time of the day by changing the settings on your computer. Restricting access prevents individuals from using the computer and Internet connections during that time of the day. This can be helpful for people who have children and need to limit their computer use

8 hours ago · Like

Ajit Singha Roy follow

Turn on your computer and wait until the desktop loads. Go to the "Start" menu, click "Control Panel" and click on "User Accounts and Family Safety". Find "Parental Controls" and click on "Set up parental controls for any user."

Double-click the user to whom you wish to restrict computer access at certain time periods during the day. Under the user account, click "On, enforce current settings" to turn on Parental Controls.

Scroll down and click "Time limits" under "Window Settings." Click and drag the hours on the calendar that you want to block or allow. Click on "OK" when you are finished. Check under "Current Settings" to make sure "Time limits" shows "On" status. Click "Ok" on the "User Controls" tab to close the window.

8 hours ago · Like

Write a comment...

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SKOAR!

FARCRY3

Deadly paradise adventure

Jayesh "Big Daddy" Shinde
feedback@skoar.com

Far Cry 3 is a potent and heady mixture. You escape from Vaas (for now) and are left to piece together your course of action, alone and out of your comfort zone. Whatever Jason has to do, the (in-game) universe couldn't have picked a more picturesque location for him in. If there's one thing in Far Cry 3 that really shines in all its splendour it has to be the environment you play the game in. Not only full of steep mountains, decked with rivers and waterfalls, Rook Island is abuzz with all kinds of life – exotic plants and animals, both on land and in water. It's really hard not to get lost in this lush, green paradise, and explore it all. You never know what you'll encounter, at least for the first few hours of gameplay, and that's the beauty of Far Cry 3's sandbox environment.

As far as gameplay is concerned, Far Cry 3 juggles various core elements pretty well. First-person shooting is standard stuff, but elements of RPG help unlock new skill sets for Jason – extended breath underwater to taking down two enemies at once. Stealth mechanics of the game are almost exactly same as those in Assassin's Creed III – a meter starts filling if you're directly within an enemy's field of vision and range – hiding

wipes it clean, while the meter fills if the enemy's discovered your location. It's great fun alternating between a sneaky assassin that kills in stealth or meeting a small army headlong with explosive armaments, both style of gameplay are rewarding.

Capturing enemy outposts is a large chunk of Far Cry 3's non-linear mini game offering, and while each outpost is different from another, the act of capturing them quickly loses its draw and just becomes a bit of "going through the motions". Far Cry 3 also requires you to locate and climb atop radio towers strewn across the island to unlock them on the map (and score other bonuses), which can also get a bit too repetitive.

Far Cry 3 has an iconic villain in the form of Vaas, who's totally nuts, and his now popular monologue on "the definition of insanity" promises to be a cult hit. Keeping you immersed in the game is a very good soundtrack of jungle beats, quick tempo tracks and suspense-filled tunes that start and end at just the right time, always true to the mood of the game – there's plenty of silence in there, too – it's brilliant.

AI is quite intelligent in Far Cry 3, whether it's human or beast and we didn't encounter any bugs while playing this game on a PS3. Competitive multiplayer mode isn't as absorbing as Far Cry 3's single-player campaign. However, what

you will spend hours playing is undoubtedly its multiplayer map editor mode. ★

Verdict

Far Cry 3 is one wild and crazy ride through a tropical paradise hiding a dark and sinister story. Combining themes like exploration and survival, the game proceeds at a great pace, heightening the amount of fun before multiple climaxes that bring the ride to an abrupt (and untimely) end. Whether you're a fan of the franchise or not, this game is definitely worth playing!

MOAR!

- » **Genre:** FPS, action, open-world adventure
- » **Developer:** Ubisoft Montreal
- » **Publisher:** Ubisoft
- » **Price:** PS3, Xbox 360 (₹2,799); PC (₹999)



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SKOAR!

The Most Wanted Arcade racer

Anirudh "Mad Zombie" Regidi
feedback@skoar.com

Let's get one thing straight, despite anything else that we might say further on, Most Wanted is probably the most fun racing gaming we've played in a long time. Criterion have, at the very least, done one thing right and have managed to do exactly what is expected from any game studio, create a game that is an absolute blast to play. What Criterion have done is that they've taken every NFS title since the original Most Wanted, stripped them of (almost) all their shortcomings, taken the best features of every game, and cohesively merged and enhanced them into one game to create Most Wanted.

The game has no narrative or story and doesn't even pretend to have one. You're given a car, given 10 targets, and then let loose on the road to have fun, race, wreak havoc; whatever takes your fancy. There are over a hundred cars scattered throughout the world and you can drive up to any one of them and take them for a spin. You're not restricted to

any car and if you find it, it's yours. There is no more of that hierarchy where you go from bad cars to better cars to superlative cars. Each car has about six races specifically tailored for its type and you can have fun, competitive racing with any car you like and find. This focus on pure arcade-style fun even extends to the cut-scenes; every race has an intro that is, from an aesthetic and design stand-point, really cool. They're not realistic, you'll see cars floating in the air, or emerging like a growing crystals and it just looks fantastic.

There is a lot to do in this world. Racing past speed cams chalks your name up on a leader board that you and your friends can see and compete against, the same goes for the hoardings that you smash. What sets this game apart from the previous game is the socializing that goes into it. Seeing your friends smash one of your speed records would want you to pick yourself up and take back what's yours.

In fact, multiplayer is where this game shines. This is a game needs to be experienced online and while the single-player is fun, it just isn't what this game is all about. *

Verdict

The game is not pretending to be something it isn't and Criterion have done a superb job in polishing this title and making sure that the game is fun. Most Wanted is bucket loads of fun. It is a very polished game that looks gorgeous and plays well. There are very few games that can fulfil your need for speed the way this game does.

MOAR!

- » Genre: Racing
- » Developer: Criterion Games
- » Publisher: Electronic Arts
- » Price: PS3, Xbox 360 (NA); PC (₹1,499)



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SKOAR!

LEGO

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Middle-earth magic rekindled

Jayesh "Big Daddy" Shinde
feedback@skoar.com

With The Lord of the Rings game, the LEGO franchise breaks new ground. It does a fine balancing act to keep both young and older fans of the epic fantasy engrossed without trivializing the gameplay elements overmuch, and retain all characteristics of a classic LEGO adventure.

At first, cramming the entire Tolkien trilogy in one game seems complex, downright ridiculous, but the game developers solve the riddle efficiently. Peter Jackson's motion pictures on Tolkien's books form the basis of this LEGO game adaptation, where all the major parts of Frodo and Sam's journey from Hobbiton to Mount Doom are relived in a world made up of plastic blocks. While photorealistic CGI may be the order of AAA games these days, but for the LEGO Lord of the Rings (which isn't really a AAA title so to speak) cartoony, amusing characters are just what the doctor ordered. And this works surprisingly in favour of the game and its underlying narrative.

The game starts with the motion picture prologue, sporting Cate Blanchett's narrative voice-over, with the epic battle of Dagorlad depicted by dotted lines of Elves, Men and Orcs of the second age – you see glimpses of cute animated LEGO models of Elrond, Isildur, Elendil and Sauron, in

some of the close-ups. This and other cut-scenes (like Frodo and Sam bumping into Merry and Pippin in Farmer Maggot's fields, the Council of Elrond, etc.) are recreated exactly as they were shown in Peter Jackson's movies, albeit with slight comic relief, which works beautifully for the game.

Gameplay is fairly simple on LEGO The Lord of the Rings. You start off from Hobbiton with Frodo and Sam in cue and eventually meet and unlock more characters as you advance in the narrative. You are choose to play as any character, with the game letting you cycle through characters in real-time, and levels include puzzle-solving elements and other objectives. Combat is light and comical at times, and even if you die you revive almost instantly, losing only a fraction of the LEGO studs you collect in the game. People you encounter in the game also have quests to offer, this helps break the monotony of the main storyline and keep things fresh.

While playing the alone isn't necessarily bad, but the LEGO Lord of the Rings truly shines when you have someone playing with you. The fun factor just goes through the roof! Iconic boss battles are nice and cute in the game, and so are the general sights and sounds. The plastic models of all the characters are distinct enough to recognize on the screen (even they all look the same at times), and their individual power and skills help you conquer any given level in fun and unique ways. There are no real negatives to

this game apart from the fact that it can get a little boring for mature audiences, but only the ones who haven't dived into Tolkien's universe or appreciated Peter Jackson's adaptations. *

Verdict

TT Games and LEGO have done a good job re-adapting a highly acclaimed adaptation of Tolkien's epic. Not only is the game and story familiar, they've freshened things up by creating exploration-friendly levels and polishing tried-and-tested gameplay mechanics to ensure the game shines – more so in a co-op environment. Whether or not you're a Tolkien fan, you need to try this game or introduce it to a junior.

MOAR!

- » **Developer:** Traveller's Tales
- » **Genre:** Action, adventure, open-world
- » **Publisher:** Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment
- » **Price:** PS3, Xbox 360 (₹1,999); PC (₹699)



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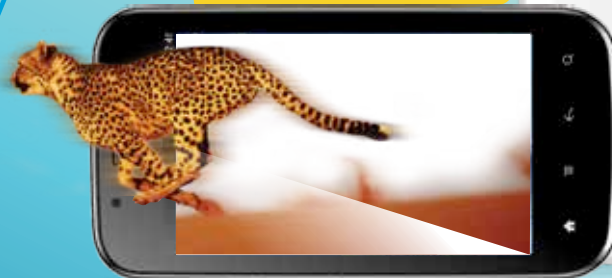
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