

Here's to the disrupters

2013 marks TechSmart's tenth year of existence, so we've been around the block a few times. We've seen trends come and go, tech companies rise and fall (or hold on for dear life), social networks boom then bust, and a number of shiny new gadgets lose their gloss after a few months.

Like our previous January issues, we've tried our best to predict the tech trends for 2013. While there are a few we can be fairly certain of, it's those trends we don't have a clue about that have us excited. It's these completely new concepts, the disrupters, the unknown forces, that bring progress. So for 2013, let's hope for more game changers like the internet, cellphones, Google, apps, iPads, Facebook and Twitter. And, not to ask for too much, but may one of these come from SA.

Enjoy the issue, Mike (michael@techsmart.co.za)



Always there for you

PRICES VALID 1 DECEMBER - 31 JANUARY 2012 AT SELECTED PICK N PAY HYPERS AND SELECTED PICK N PAY SUPERMARKETS

EXCLUDING BOTSWANA, NAMIBIA, SWAZILAND, LESOTHO, EXPRESS AND DAILY STORES. smart shopper points will still apply in Express and Daily Stores.

Pick n Pay endeavours to meet the demand for these promotional items, but stocks are limited. Some stores may not stock some of these products. Please check availability: 0800 11 22 88 (toll free landline only. Cellphone rates apply), we strive to ensure all printed information is correct, but will not be liable for any print errors that may oct Advertised prices are inclusive of VAT where applicable. We reserve the right to limit quantities, smart shopper terms and conditions apply. Certain products are excluded from the smart shopper programme, please see in store or go online for med etails.



Flying cars, vacations on Mars and telepathic communication? Well, not yet, but here are the tech trends to keep an eye on in 2013.

10 Lenovo Yoga

Lenovo's latest Yoga ultrabook is as practical as it is novel, providing new meaning to bending over backwards...

14 Hyundai i30

Easy on the eye and luxurious to the touch – we spend a few days on the road, tripping in Hyundai's elegant new i30 hatchback.

33 Top games for 2013

If you are a gamer, 2013 looks set to be a thrilling ride on all fronts. Here are our picks for the top games for 2013. Well, at least for the first quarter.



Need your Tech fix faster? Join us now on

Twitter: @techsmartmag

Facebook: facebook.com/techsmartmag

To receive our newsletter:

http://techsmart.co.za/user registration

Copyright © 2012. All rights reserved. No material, text or photographs may be reproduced, copied or in any other way transmitted without the written consent of the publisher. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher or of the editor. We recognise all trademarks and logos as the sole property of their respective owners. TechSmart shall not be liable for any errors or for any actions in reliance thereon. All prices were correct at time of going to print.

TechSmart

Editor print & online

Mike Joubert > 083-290-2889

michael@techsmart.co.za

Advertising / Agencies

Karien Steenkamp > 083-748-3413

karien@smartpublishing.co.za

Contributors

Mike Joubert [MJ], Hanleigh Daniels [HD], Ryan Noik [RN], Linda Pretorius [LP], Ismail Fadal [IF]

Designer Brett Wilson

Accounts & subscriptions

Ronel Keet > 012-342-5141

accounts@techsmart.co.za

Distribution queries

marlien@smartpublishing.co.za

Smart Publishing

General manager

Anneke Claassen > 083-301-9134 anneke@smartpublishing.co.za

Business manager

George Grobler

george@smartpublishing.co.za

Print media manager Suzanne van Niekerk

suzanne@smartpublishing.co.za



73 275 average copies per month Consumer: Male [Jul – Sep] 2012



Published by:



Tel: 012-342-5141 977 Francis Baard Street, Arcadia, PTA www.smartpublishing.co.za

Top Tech Titbits



UN internet regulation: No way

The latest attempts at regulating the internet - this time by the United Nations - hit the equivalent of a brick wall. This was after the US, Canada and the UK refused to sign a treaty which would have given

the international body broader regulatory control over content. Apparently, the main spanner in the UN's plans came from the concern that the amendment would make the internet more vulnerable to censorship, and apprehension that oppressive regimes would use it to the detriment of their citizens' freedoms.



Local iTunes Store announced

Coinciding with the SA launch of the iPhone 5, iPad fourth generation and iPad mini, came more good news for South

African iOS users, as Apple announced the local rollout of its iTunes Music and

Video Store. This makes some 20 million songs, from both local and international artists, available to South African iTunes users. Music costs between R7 and R9 per track, or between R70 and R90 for full albums. Additionally, local users can similarly choose to buy, or rent movies from the iTunes store, with prices ranging from R20 to R40 for renting, and R40 to R140 if you prefer to own movies.



Paraplegic woman masters thought controlled robotic arm

In a technological and medical breakthrough, science fiction became astounding fact, as a paraplegic woman demonstrated her skill controlling a robotic arm using her thoughts. The 52 year

old patient, Jan Scheuermann, who lost her mobility due to a degenerative spinal disease, stunned doctors by mastering the ability a mere two days after having been connected to a programme which translates brain activity into commands sent to the robotic arm. The patient's ease at using the technology sparked great excitement amongst doctors and professors at the University of Pittsburgh, where the test was conducted. View the video here: bit.ly/robotmind



Google Maps returns to iOS

In the wake of the Apple Maps debacle, Google Maps made a welcome return to the iOS platform, combining the comprehensiveness of Google Maps that many Android users know and love, with an intuitive interface for iPhones and iPod Touch devices. Now iPhone users are also privy to voiceguided, turn-by-turn navigation and live traffic conditions via 2D or 3D views. It came as little surprise that the company has also included a raft of search-friendly features into the app, offering useful information on user's destination as well. *

Hot New Products



Although BMW's 4 Series is currently just a concept car, it will be replacing the 3 Series Coupe models, upon whose chassis it is based, during 2013. The design of the 4 Series Coupe basically boils down to a sportier, eye-catching 3 Series in two door form. Its muscular-looking frame is also a bit bigger than the current 3 Series Coupe, coming in at 50 mm longer, 45 mm wider at the front as well as 80 mm wider at the rear, and 16 mm lower. Expect to see it in final form at the Detroit Motor Show in March.

Beats Pro on-ear headset

Beats' top-of-the-line, professional grade Pro headset is constructed from lightweight aluminium instead of flimsy plastic, and at R4 000 is the most expensive headphones to sport the famous red b-logo. Ideal for sound-engineers and recording artist, it offers the purest sound without relying on amplification or noise cancellation circuitry.



Casio G-Shock Bluetooth watch

Casio are renowned for their tough-as-nails G-Shock watches. Beyond its life-proof credentials, including 200 meters water resistance, this Casio also features Bluetooth 4.0. It enables the watch to pair wirelessly with an iPhone 5 and 4S (the only devices currently supported), in order to alert the wearer to incoming calls and received emails. Additionally, you can also activate a sound alert on your iPhone by simply pressing a button on the watch - handy when it goes missing. Retails from WantItAll.co.za for R4 235.



YotaPhone by Yota Devices

Smartphone screens are great, but cannot quite match the excellent read you get on an electronic paper display of a dedicated e-book reader. So why not have two in one? That's the opinion of Russian company Yota Devices, whose new YotaPhone boasts a conventional 4.3" LCD (720 x 1280), along with a second 4.3" (200 dpi) e-Ink display at the back of the smartphone. Powered by a dual-core 1.5 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon S4 CPU, the YotaPhone also packs in 2

GB of RAM and LTE connectivity, all in a 10 mm thin frame. The Android 4.2 (Jelly Bean) running smartphone should launch in Russia during Q3 2013 and internationally soon after. 3

Issue 112 | January 2013

TOP 5

Best small premium cars

The latest luxury petite hatchbacks might be fitted with smallish fuel-efficient motors, but that doesn't mean they won't put a big smile on your face when on the road. Here are our top 5 choices.



Fiat 500 MY12 1.4 Lounge

The nostalgic, highly stylised design of the Fiat 500 shows that the Italians still have it, and certainly looks chic in a matte black paint finish on the limited edition version (pictured above). The Lounge's 1.4 litre engine produces 74 kW of power and 131 Nm of torque, which is enough to rocket this fashionable ride to 100 km/h in just over ten seconds, on to a top end of 182 km/h. Fuel usage is kept down to an economical 6.1 litres per 100 km.

Besides a radio with CD, MP3 player, as well as four speakers and two tweeters, the Lounge also sports a Blue&Me handsfree system that works via Bluetooth technology. Once this system has paired with your smartphone, it will enable you to make and receive calls and wirelessly stream music. The cost of kissing this Italian model is a cool R185 000.



Citroen DS3 VTi 120 Style

At R216 400, the DS3 costs a substantial amount more than the Fiat 500, but you do get a lot more car for your money. Besides stylish looks and a good bit of extra head- and legroom for the rear passengers, it also packs a spacey 285 litre boot that offers an additional 100 litres of storage.

Since the DS3 is powered by a larger (1598 cc) four cylinder engine compared to the 500's 1.4 litre powerplant, it churns out more (88 kW) power and torque (160 Nm). This allows this French mademoiselle to propel her 1075 kg derriere from standstill to 100 km/h in less than nine seconds on to a top end of 190 km/h.

The DS3 is kitted to the hilt with tech that includes LED day running lights and a stereo radio/MP3 compatible CD player with steering mounted controls, but no standard Bluetooth connectivity.



Alfa Romeo MiTo 1.4 TBi Distinctive

nother eye catcher from Italy is the MiTo, which features the performance bite to back up its stylish bark, courtesy of a 1.4 litre. four cylinder turbocharged motor. The powerplant delivers 100 kW of power and 190 Nm at 4250 RPM in normal driving mode, up to 206 Nm at a low 1750 RPM in dynamic mode. This makes the MiTo the most powerful vehicle in this comparison and also the fastest, allowing drivers to rocket to a top speed of 207 km/h. More sensible owners should keep fuel usage down to 5.6 I/100 km.

Alfa recently updated the MiTo, adding auto start/stop technology as standard, 16" alloy wheels, electric power steering, LED rear lights, air-conditioning and a six speaker MP3-compatible CD audio system. All this tech will cost you though, to the tune of R243 650.



Mini Cooper

The Mini created the small premium car category and remains the benchmark for the vehicles in this class. Its Bavarian powerplant produces 90 kW of power at a symphonic 6000 RPM and 160 Nm of torque at 4250 RPM. It propels the car from standstill to 100 km/h in around nine seconds, on to an illegal terminal top-end of 203 km/h.

This power output compliments its wide track, long wheelbase, and low centre of gravity, equating to the Mini's biggest selling factor (well, besides the appeal of the brand of course), namely best in class handling. Out of all these cars, the Mini is the one we would pick for a day out on Kyalami.

Although the Mini is big on sportiness, it loses out in terms of practicality, since it features the smallest boot (160 litres) and the second smallest fuel tank capacity here at 40 litres. RRP: R227 500.

Audi A1 1.4T Attraction



Ingolstadt's smallest and most accessible Audi, the A1, is arguably the Mini's closest rival, as it features an equally appealing badge, best-in-class

crafted interior and head-turning design. Its sporty 1.4 TFSI engine cranks out 90 kW of power and 200 Nm of torque at a low 1500 RPM, enabling the A1 to a terminal velocity of 203 km/h, whilst keeping fuel usage below six



litres per 100 km (but not at the same time).

At a recommended retail price of R235 000, this baby isn't cheap, but even worse is that you have to fork out for a lot of the options that most of the other vehicles include as standard. For example, the Audi Sound System with Bose speakers goes for an additional R3 200 whilst the Bluetooth wireless audio kit adds another R4 200 to the RRP.

Despite this, the Mini Cooper might be our choice for track day, but for every other occasion the A1 is the one to have. [HD] \ref{log}

2 | techsmart.co.za January 2013 | Issue 112





Print more of what matters. All with brilliant HP quality.

HP Deskjet Ink Advantage

The new generation of affordable printing.

hp.co.za/printmoreforless

TECHSMART TOP TECH TRENDS

OF 2013

As expected we all survived 2012, luckily with our iPads and ultrabooks intact. Hopefully 2013 will provide us with even more intriguing rumours, exciting announcements and actual useful products (light on the environment and pocket of course). Here are a few of the trends we see on the technological front in 2013.



This year, we expect the boundaries to continue to blur between ultrabook and tablet, particularly as manufacturers roll out their Windows 8 offerings and explore the hybrid forms made possible by touchscreens.

Not only should we see more units with detachable keyboards, but also new ultrabook forms, much like Lenovo's Yoga ultrabook (see p10), which twists and turns itself into several configurations to function as a slate-like device one moment, and a conventional notebook the next. In essence, ultrabooks, rather than going quietly into that tablet blackened night, will continue to fight back to remain relevant, which means we should see manufacturers take the gloves off and show just how innovative they can be.



King Apple loses its crown

Apple redefined the smartphone market with the first iPhone in 2007. Since then, every incarnation was a hit,

with the iPad also creating a whole new segment in consumer electronics in 2010. But the Android competition has been catching up, as Samsung's S3 in particular made the iPhone 5 look a little dated, and dare we say, somewhat of a laggard by comparison. On the software front, Google's Android operating system matured considerably last year with the launch of Jelly Bean, and we expect Apple to remain a little humbled by the Apple Maps debacle last year, or at least to double check and then triple check everything in future before it releases iOS 7.

Cameras:

It used to be that full-frame cameras (an image sensor size of 36 x 24 mm) were almost

exclusively the domain of the professional photographer, as they were roundly considered the cream of the DSLR crop, and had the price tag to match. That began changing last year, as Canon released its entry-level full-frame DSLR, the EOS 6D (R20 000), followed closely by the Nikon D600 (R23 000). In fact, Sony went so far as to cram a full-frame sensor in a compact body (albeit with fixed lens) with their RX1. So can we expect this full-frame revolution to continue this year? With both Canon and Nikon committed to their latest offerings for a sales cycle, it might just be up to the smaller companies to push full-frame (as we saw with mirrorless) into even more affordable, prosumer products

The implications of bringing your own device to work

It's no secret that employees have their own smartphone and tablet devices and want to use them at their workplace, and expect, and even demand, that their employers' comply. So popular is this trend that there is a name, and an

acronym for it – Bring Your Own Device (BYOD). This year, we expect BYOD to grow as a trend, as both smartphone and tablet usage are only likely to increase.

This means that enterprises in particular will have to seriously come to grips with the security challenges encapsulated by the trend; thus expect to see more talk around security protocols and procedures, as well as concrete, measurable proof of productivity for those organisations that can cater to BYOD. Additionally, more enterprise and business focused tablets (HP's ElitePad for example) should be released that aim to address BYOD and mitigate, if not eliminate, the associated hassles and security headaches for organisations.

Small gets big as mirrorless carves out its niche

While
Nikon and
Canon
were
carving up
the DSLR



market, smaller manufacturers such as Sony, Olympus and Samsung, were setting their sights on mirrorless cameras, also called compact system cameras (CSC). These are characterised by a small, almost compact body size, with the versatility of interchangeable lenses. While relatively new to the photographic world, mirrorless is gaining momentum with users who find compacts too limiting and DSLRs too bulky, and is especially big in Japan, grabbing close to 50% of the interchangeable lens market. Now, with both Nikon and Canon in the mirrorless game, expect this segment to grow as more people view CSC as being valid (and more stylish) DSLR replacements.



Phablets find their footing

A little more than a year ago, phablets (devices which are larger than 4.8" smartphones but smaller than 7" tablets) were considered a novelty, as the 5.3" Galaxy Note was hounded by questions such as: Is it too big to use as a phone? Will anyone actually use it? Last year's release of the even bigger 5.5" Galaxy Note II put these questions mostly to rest, as users answered no, and yes, respectively, as the phablet was quickly snapped up both abroad and locally. This year, expect to see more competition in the phablet space coming from manufacturers such as LG, HTC and even potentially a whopping 6" offering from Huawei.



Are the Xbox 720 and **PS4** coming?

With Nintendo rolling out its latest console, the Wii U (see p34), at the tailend of 2012, this year we expect to see much more substantial news about the Xbox 360's successor (roundly dubbed

the Xbox 720) if not an outright launch in time for the holiday season at the end of the year. If the information leaks are correct, then we could see Microsoft's next-gen console boasting a Blu-ray drive, video acceleration, native 3D support and the second generation of Microsoft's motion control technology, Kinect. The grand unveiling could either happen at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in June or at any point during the course of the year at a dedicated event. Less easy to call is the launch of the PlayStation 4, as Sony has shot down rumours of a replacement for its PS3 as they have arisen, which means that a PS4's features, as well as its debut, would come as a welcome surprise. The PS3 was launched a year after the Xbox 360 in November 2006, so it might be that Sony wants to get some extra mileage out of it.



Cybercrime has become big business, and few destinations can now claim the same appeal as the mobile OS, with Kaspersky Lab detecting 35 000 malicious Android programmes for last



year, which is about six times more than in 2011. This year, we expect this trend to do anything but taper off, and in fact would not be at all surprised to see reports of more malicious viruses affecting not just the Android OS (99% of all mobile OS malware targeted Android last year), but making inroads into iOS and Windows Phone as well. Thus, all the security software companies will likely pay particular attention to enabling users to secure their mobile devices, leading to antivirus and protection software on one's phone becoming an essential must-have. Look out for this to be increasingly offered on a service provider level too. (See p21 for more.)





The rebirth of portable gaming

While 2012 was an eventful year for portable gaming, with the release of the Nintendo 3DS XL and the PlayStation Vita, it wasn't the easiest one, particularly as the latter tried and struggled to find its



footing. This year, we believe that portable gaming on a variety of devices will come to the fore.

This we suspect, will be aided by not just a growing library, but by the likes of the Google Nexus 7 and the iPad mini, which provide for a more ergonomic and portable handheld Android and iOS gaming experience than offered by their larger 10.1" and 9.7" counterparts. Additionally, if rumours are correct, 2013 may well be the year we see that portable Xbox we have been wishing for, since an 7" Xbox Surface is rumoured to be in the works. From all of the participants, expect more dual screen features, such as the Xbox SmartGlass app, which will probably 'play nice' with a larger HDTV and console.

LTE is here, and burgeoning

Long term evolution (LTE) is a next generation network that boasts the ability to operate at speeds of up to three times faster than 3G technology. Last year



Vodacom and MTN commercially launched their LTE services within Johannesburg and other major cities including Cape Town, Pretoria, and Durban, whilst 8ta and Cell C each launched a trial service. These operators also made a number of LTE-enabled devices available for purchase the likes of the Nokia Lumia 920 and an LTE version of the Galaxy S3, along with USB modem dongles.

As 2013 progress we'll see all the networks moving to LTE, with more base-stations leading to an increase in coverage area. But while lightning quick downloads are awesome (no more waiting for YouTube videos), paving through your nose for all the MB you sniff up isn't, so we can only hope for further drops in data prices. 4





What we want in 2013

Major improvements on Windows 8

We haven't had the most pleasant experience with Windows 8 here in the TechSmart office. While we won't go as far as to call it half-baked (well, sometimes), there's certainly much room for improvement. So please Microsoft, reconsider your position on the Start menu; give us an intuitive touch keyboard; make it easier to touch control items in desktop mode; don't throw a full screen at us when selecting a Charms Bar option; etc...

Cheaper associated ADSL costs

We're all for cheaper internet costs, and while the price of broadband has come down drastically, the cost associated with renting your line and services from Telkom hasn't improved much. R130 pm to rent a telephone line, plus a further cost involved in the monthly rental of the DSL service (before you pay your ISP) make fast internet still a luxury for most.

A Netflix-like service for SA

DStv's BoxOffice service has been a hit, and for R30, renting the latest movies has never been easier. But, we don't always want to watch blockbusters, and while the introduction of the iTunes Store in SA is a welcome addition, R40 to stream a movie is expensive. We can only hope to see a streaming service such as Netflix becoming available, asking a fixed monthly fee (hopefully decently priced) to stream as many movies as you want.

iPad mini with Retina Display, greater capacity iPads

Admittedly, the 7.9" iPad mini captured a fair share of our attention in the office last year, but the non-Retina display is already looking long in the tooth, especially next to the fourth generation

in the tooth, especially next to the fourth generation iPad and even the third gen version. A mini with the same luscious display, and of course battery life, would make it that much easier to take the plunge. Also, it really is time for the iPad to move beyond the silly 64 GB limit.

Great games and deals on the PS Vita

We have been valiantly defending Sony's portable, the PS Vita for some time now, but this year, the excellent hardware really needs a



good shot in the arm on the software side. PlayStation Plus last year – and some great free titles for PS Plus members – was a step in the right direction; now the console is practically begging for a bigger games library, and titles which are not only alluring, but are also made available at a competitive price.

Bluetooth audio streaming in cars

It's 2013, so why are more cars not able to stream music or calls from your phone to the infotainment system? Luckily, more car manufacturers are picking up on this idea, including



Ford who introduced its voice-enabled Sync system to local buyers within the Focus during 2012 (see p14). The Blue Oval will now also bring this system to nearly all of its passenger cars this year starting with the all-new Fiesta in Q1 2013.

Our predictions for 2012: How we fared



The rise of the ultrabook

The majority of notebooks we reviewed in 2012 were ultrabooks, but sales were slower than expected, mainly due to price and the wait for Windows 8. Still, at the end of last year, ABI Research indicated that 21 million units shipped during 2012.

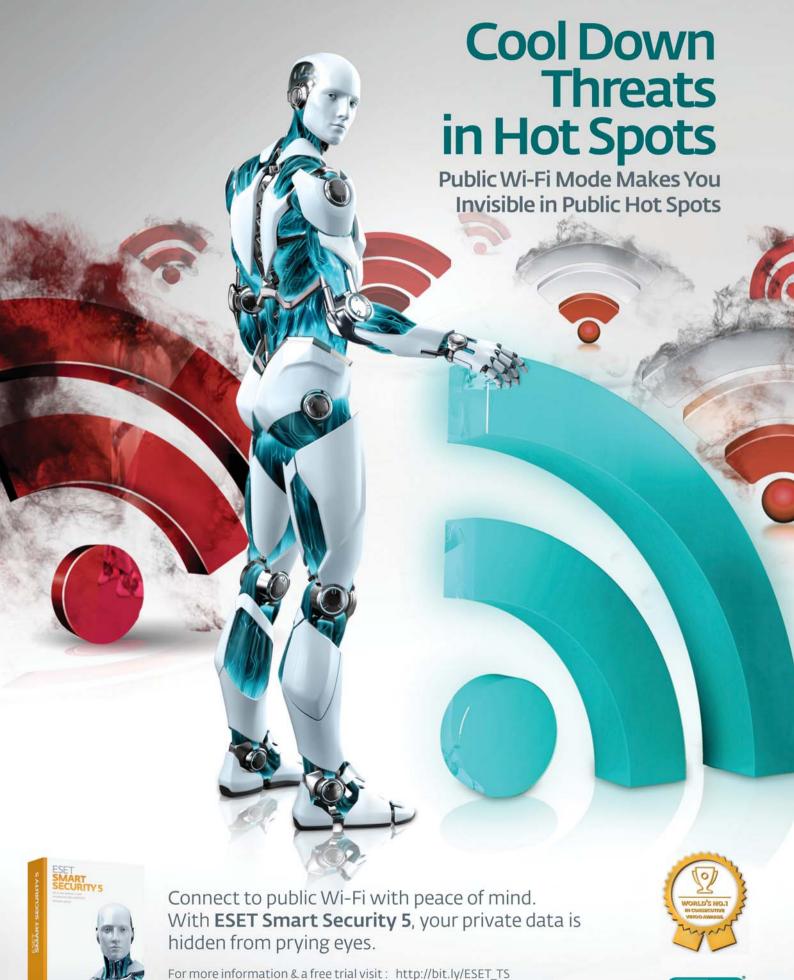


Bigger screen sizes

We might not have ended the year with 5" screens on the latest smartphones, but with the 4.8" Samsung S3 and 4.7" HTC One X, it certainly came close. Oh wait, then there's the iPhone 5... (see p12).

Near Field Communication (NFC) payments

While we saw more phones coming equipped with NFC this year (with Sony's SmartTags actually providing nice use for it), NFC payment methods are still few and far between. The fact that the new iPhone doesn't include a NFC chip further led Juniper Research to scale back predictions on future point-of-sale roll-outs. &



www.eset.co.za



The manner in which it accomplishes this is both simple, and ingenious. Instead of boasting one screen which is revealed when the notebook's cover is lifted, the TaiChi has two – both an outer screen where the lid would be, and the conventional inner display as found on most ultrabooks and notebooks. Handily, each full HD IPS screen can operate independently of each other, or together – more about this a little later.

'The TaiChi's design, and its ability for both screens to operate together, makes it quite easy to go from creating content to consuming content.'

As we have consistently come to expect from Asus, build quality was top notch: the smartly attired TaiChi looks and feels like it is made of solid components, with no creak or flex being evident anywhere on the frame. Gently rounded corners and smoothed-off edges further meant that no part of the device felt like it cut into our palms, a small consideration that nonetheless makes a big difference for devices that are intended to be held in one's hands for significant periods. At 1.2 kg, we can't say that we felt overburdened or uncomfortable holding the TaiChi for long periods either.

Twice the display

On both fronts (pun intended) the displays looked beautiful – clear and crisp, with details rendering sharply, thanks in no small part due to the 1920 x 1080 resolutions across both screens. The 'outer' screen, which has its own capacitive Windows key beneath the screen, is touch sensitive, and is ideal for painting apps or scribbling notes. Additionally, we found it to be particularly responsive to touch, which made swiping across Windows 8's tile interface fast and smooth.

To its credit, holding it as one would a slate or tablet was similarly no problem, thanks to the presence of a decent sized bezel around the edges.

Looking within

Moving to the more conventional inner 11.6" screen, used when the TaiChi is opened like a normal notebook, we couldn't find fault here either. This

display is not touch sensitive, which to be frank is not a feature we missed at all. It does however, give the excellent and comfortable chiclet keyboard its chance to shine – quite literally, as the keyboard has some very nice backlighting. Once again, we found the keys struck a great balance between depth and springiness, which translated into a very comfortable typing experience. No less important was the generously sized trackpad, which was responsive from one edge to the other, while the integrated mouse buttons had some nice and noticeable press of their own.

With regards to specifications, the TaiChi boasts our favourite processor right now, the efficient but budget friendly Intel*Core i5-3317U, clocked at 1.7 GHz. Also onboard are 4 GB of memory and a 128 GB SSD drive (94.2 GB of which usable). Graphics are taken care of by Intel's Integrated Graphics 4000, while ports wise, users will find two USB 3.0 ports, one Micro HDMI and a Mini VGA port. You can also expect in the region of five hours of battery life, not at all bad for a device that offers not one, but two screens for one's pleasure.

Keeping the Chi flowing

The TaiChi's design, and its ability for both screens to operate together, makes it quite easy to go from creating content (in the conventional configuration) to consuming content. As you may have already gathered, watching movies and consuming media on the TaiChi was a pleasure. Although the sound is not the loudest, it was nonetheless crisp and clear, with no sign of distortion being evident, even when cranked up to maximum. In our case we found a likely scenario would be to search for a video on the internet using the TaiChi with the keyboard, and then simply snap it closed and watch the movie on the outer screen, as one would with a slate or tablet.

Our biggest concern about having a screen on the outside of our notebook though, would be its vulnerability to scratches. It's a good thing, therefore, that Asus includes a very nice – and slim – cover that protects the entire device.

To the point

Barring the few Windows 8 idiosyncrasies that have characterised the OS, the TaiChi is a very capable, elegant addition to the Windows 8 lineup in its own right, whose beauty lies in the graceful execution of serving as both laudable notebook and Windows 8 slate. It retails for R17 000 for the Core i5 version and R18 000 for the Core i7. [RN] •

8 | techsmart.co.za January 2013 | Issue 112





IN SEARCH OF INCREDIBLE FOR ALL OF US WHO DARE TO DO THE UNTHINKABLE

ASUS TAICHI™ THE INCREDIBLE ULTRABOOK™. INSPIRED BY INTEL.

As inspiring as it is innovative, the ASUS TAICHI™ is the world's leading Ultrabook with double-sided full HD IPS displays. Powered by the Intel[®] Core[™] i7 processor, with Windows 8, it allows us to remarkably share ideas in ways we never thought possible. See the unthinkable at insearchofincredible.com.













(intel inside

Lenovo Yoga

Bending over backwards



With the Yoga, Lenovo proves that sometimes, making a bold design choice can pay off.

Chinese PC powerhouse Lenovo's Yoga is not your usual ultrabook. It bends and flips backwards, folding back on itself in order to be used as a tablet. Interesting you might say, but what is the practical value? For us, it was in getting rid of the ungainly keyboard while watching movies or surfing, since you can flip the Yoga into its Tent or Stand mode to have the screen close by. Furthermore, having the reassurance that your keyboard is there in case you need to fire off an email or two, counts for a lot.

As a notebook...

As a straight forward ultrabook, the Yoga is very efficient, since it comes with a third-gen Core i5 processor, 4 GB RAM and a 128 GB solid state drive. The i5 in our opinion offers the best value for money, and in the Yoga's case, performance could not be questioned. For some, the 128 GB SSD might create hassles since it is partitioned with only 60 GB useable space available (a new patch allows for a bit more space). Included are two USB 3.0 ports, an SD card slot, full HDMI, but unfortunately no LAN port nor VGA is on offer. Like many of its ultrabook kin, there's also no DVD drive.

But as a tablet?

With the 13.3" (1600 x 900) IPS touchscreen folded back onto the device, the Yoga turns into a rather big tablet. Seeing that it weighs 1.54 kg, with a thickness of 16.9 mm, it's not exactly the thinnest nor most lightweight tablet around. But, here's the kick: it runs the full version of Windows 8, and not the RT version, so all your Windows compatible software should work

'What Lenovo got right with the Yoga is that it's first and foremost a decent ultrabook.'

on it. One thing that does bother us, is the fact that in tablet mode, the keyboard under the screen is exposed. While the keys are locked, the long term effect of keys being pushed while on a table or lap is of concern. Nonetheless, the keyboard is excellent, providing a comfortable typing experience, even though a few of the keys are undersized.

To the point

What Lenovo got right with the Yoga is that it's first and foremost a decent ultrabook, performing as well as, if not better than, other units on the market. The added benefit of all its different stand positions, eventually culminating in a tablet, is more than a simple gimmick; it came in useful on a number of occasions. RRP on the 13" starts at R14 000. [MJ] &

Samsung Series 5 Ultra

Windows 8 touches ground



With the launch of Windows 8 a few of months ago, it was only a matter of time before our anticipation of seeing Samsung's Windows 8-laden offerings would come to fruition. Thus it came as little surprise when Samsung's Series 5 Ultra ultrabook landed on our desk for review.

The good news is that on the hardware front, the Ultra Series 5 makes a great first impression. This begins with this its solid construction, as evidenced by not only a great chassis, but from rigid hinges. In the looks department, the Series 5 Ultra boasts a smart, modern aesthetic, while at 1.6 kilograms, it might not be the lightest available, but it's certainly easy enough to carry around for extended periods.

Touch something

The Series 5 Ultra sports a responsive touchscreen for scrolling across Windows 8's tile-loving interface. Navigation across the touchscreen, and scrolling pages of tiles, proved to be smooth and fluid. The 13.3" LED backlit screen offers a decent resolution of 1366 x 768, and boasts 300 nits of brightness. While the colour saturation is good, viewing angles in particular were unfortunately quite poor. Meanwhile the chiclet keyboard was laudably comfortable to type on, while the keys themselves offered a very nice balance between depth, and springiness.

Outing the innards

The ultrabook is equipped with a 1.7 GHz dual-core Intel Core i5-3317U processor and 4 GB of RAM. Additionally, a 24 GB ExpressCache solid state drive accounted for relatively quick start up times (17 seconds from powered off), and closer to 4 seconds from sleep, while this is accompanied by a 500 GB SATA hard drive for media files.

'On the hardware front, the Ultra Series 5 makes a great first impression.'

One of the standout features of the notebook is its audio, while the ultrabook's battery life topped out at a respectable six hours. Like most ultrabooks, the optical drive has been excluded, but the notebook does host an above average array of ports, including two USB 2.0 ports, one USB 3.0 port, an SD card slot, an HDMI port and mini VGA port, as well as an Ethernet port.

To the point

Users' enjoyment factor of the ultrabook is going to depend on their response to Windows 8. In our experience, we found the new OS hampered the hardware; but that does not mean that it will do the same for all prospective purchasers. The Samsung Series 5 Ultra has a RRP of R14 000. [RN] &

10 | techsmart.co.za January 2013 | Issue 112

What You Need to Know: Acer Aspire V5 Touch

Best of all worlds

Acer's new Windows 8 offering, the Aspire V5 Touch series, has more than a little going for it, particularly for users who are seeking thin and light notebooks that enable them to enjoy both entertainment and content creation anytime, anywhere.

While thin and light has become an oft heard phrase, in the Aspire V5 series' case, it's far more than a cliché or hyperbole, as the V5 Series notebooks are all 30% slimmer than previous designs. For example, while the 14" model includes an optical drive, it is nonetheless less than 21 mm thin and weighs in at 2.1 kg. The 15.6" model, which similarly includes an optical drive, is thinner than 23 mm, and weighs 2.4 kg.

Up for anything

On the performance front, the notebooks likely won't disappoint, as they are powered by Intel Core processors and Nvidia GeForce GT Series graphics. Together these make the range a good choice not only for general content consumption tasks, like browsing the internet and watching movies, but also up to catering to content creation and gaming as well. Additionally, the Acer Aspire V5 Series boasts a 10-point touch display and a larger trackpad. These are intended to take advantage of the features offered by Windows 8, and enhance multi-gesture content consumption, while optimising the touch experience.

Users can further expect to be able to enjoy a full-sized chiclet keyboard, while a LAN/VGA combo port enables users to easily extend connectivity online and external display from one cable. File sharing is also catered to



via the fast and efficient USB 3.0 ports. The V5 Series also boasts Acer Instant Connect, which automatically scans and registers most-visited access points, letting users connect to the internet in just 2.5 seconds.

Thoughtfully yours

However, the thoughtfulness poured into the Aspire V5 series does not stop there. Acer explained that a smart power management and component layout optimises acoustics and thermal comfort without compromising performance. This means that the notebooks can be used both quietly and comfortably on one's lap, whether one is working, or indulging in some entertainment.

To the point

In short, the Aspire V5 Touch Series looks set to be a mainstream winner, that seems more than up to the task of offering Windows 8 in an appealing package. Prices start from R9 000. [RN] :

MEDICAL EMERGENCY DETAILS CARD



WAS: R2100.00 ea. NOW: R1500.00 ea.

Can you afford to be without one?

www.medcardflash.com | medcard@medcardflash.com | 🔊 @MEDCard_Za | 🚮 www.facebook.com/MEDCardFlash

Minimum System Requirements:

.NET Framework (distributed with the MEDCard)

*Discounted Rates available on batch orders of more than 20 units

*Limited Offer *Whilst Stocks Last

Apple iPhone 5

Best iPhone ever, but is it the best smartphone?



Apple's iPhone 5 is more eye-catching than ever before, and thanks to solid under the hood improvements, the new iPhone 5 makes for a much better upgrade than the previous 4S.

The latest iPhone feels like the scrum-half to the lock that is the Galaxy S3 and the prop that is the Lumia 920. In fact, number 5 is Cupertino's lightest (112g; 20% lighter than iPhone 4S) and thinnest (7.6 mm) smartphone yet, resulting in the best device to use one-handed out of all the recent smartphones we've managed to test.

More screen real estate

Apple equipped the iPhone 5 with a new Retina display that measures 4" (640 x 1136 pixel resolution; 326 ppi) compared to 3.5" (640 x 960 resolution; same ppi) found on the 4S. Not only does it boast vivid colours (though not as good as on an AMOLED display) and fine details, but it outmatches most rivals (excluding the Lumia 920) when used outdoors in direct sunlight.

'The iPhone 5's featherweight frame is classic piece of industrial design.'

Also onboard is a trustworthy-as-always 8 MP rear-facing autofocus camera which performs well in all lighting conditions, helping users snap excellent looking stills and lag-free full HD (1080p) videos. You are now also able to capture pics whilst recording video, and take panorama shots, but both of these features have been available to Android users for a while now.

Faster CPU and new OS

It's difficult to fault the iPhone 5 on performance, since onboard is Apple's new dual-core 1.2 GHz A6 chip with 1 GB RAM (not 2 GB as on the Samsung Note II). This makes things noticeably snappier when multitasking and accessing more advanced functionality such as taking HDR photos for instance. Less impressive than the new CPU, is Apple's new iOS 6, which may sport more than 200 new features including Facebook integration, but looks and feels exactly the same as iOS 5. It's also

looking seriously dated next to Android Jelly Bean.

Beyond the new OS, Apple also finally launched the full music section of the iTunes Store locally (see p1), making a huge library of more than 20 million songs available to local users. This while the arrival of Google Maps to the App Store has played a huge part in mitigating the Apple's beleaguered new Maps.

Other features

Although the iPhone 5 does offer support for LTE, this service is currently not available for this smartphone, but is expected early this year. Apple equipped the iPhone 5 with a 1440 mAh battery, which lasted well past a 12 hour working day, as we managed around 14-16 hours from a single charge on average.

It is worth noting that you now use a smaller Lightning connector the phone, meaning that users who have iPhone accessories will have to fork out around R330 for a Lightning-to-30-pin adapter. You also won't be able to use your iPhone 4S' micro-SIM in the new device, since it makes use of a new nano-SIM card format.

To the point

As can be expected, Apple's iPhone 5 is the best ever incarnation of Cupertino's smartphone, boasting a much needed larger display and quicker processor, within a more slender, featherweight frame that is a classic piece of industrial design. Although staunch iPhone supporters will not be disappointed with their choice of smartphone, we feel that the S3 offers better spec bang for a lot less bucks.

The iPhone 5 is available from Vodacom for R8 800 (16 GB), R10 300 (32 GB) and R 11 700 (64 GB). This means users are paying a premium over its closest rival, Samsung's Galaxy S3, which costs R7 740 for the 32 GB version and R7 000 for the 16 GB model. [HD] .

Thanks to Vodacom for providing us with a review unit.

LG Optimus L7

Well rounded mid-range offering



LG aims to win mid-range market share with the Optimus L7, tempting buyers with an alluring touchscreen and a quick-on-the-draw camera.

A4.3" WVGA (480 x 800; 217 ppi pixel density) display on a mid-range device is very tempting, and the L7 is made even sweeter with Android 4.0 (Ice Cream Sandwich) straight out the box. It's powered by a Qualcomm MSM7227A Snapdragon chipset that features a single-core 1 GHz Cortex-A5 processor. On paper this does not compare well against its dual-core rivals, confirmed in practice by some noticeable lag when multitasking.

'The LG Optimus L7 is made even sweeter with Android 4.0 (Ice Cream Sandwich) straight out the box.'

However, this single-core processor did provide a decent day-to-day usage experience when navigating the Android platform.

Snappy performance was also delivered with the L7's 5 MP autofocus camera that captured goodlooking, but not overly impressive, stills and smooth (@30 fps) VGA (640 x 480) videos.

The L7 costs R3 700, placing it up against HTC's Desire X (R4 000) with its 4" screen. Users who opt for the L7 will not be disappointed, but the Desire X with its dualcore CPU and easy-on-the-eyes design is still our mid-range top dog. [HD] •



12 | techsmart.co.za

HTC Windows Phone 8X | Nokia Lumia 920

Worthy signature device for Windows Phone 8



The tech review stork delivered our first Windows Phone 8 (WP8) powered smartphone experience with HTC's Windows Phone 8X. Can HTC do to Windows Phone 8 what they did to Windows Mobile devices a few years back?

TC's 8X is off to the right start thanks to its slim and curvaceous body that features a soft-touch finish, making the smartphone very comfortable to hold. In fact, it feels like a Ferrari next to Nokia's flabby 920. Thanks to high-definition screen support included with WP8, the 8X's front is also easy on the eyes, due to the crisp 4.3" (720 x 1280; 342 ppi pixel density) Super LCD capacitive touchscreen.

On the hardware front

HTC included a snappy dual-core 1.5 GHz Qualcomm S4 processor, which keeps things as smooth as silk within WP8, while you'll find 14.5 GB user accessible storage but no microSD expansion unfortunately. Furthermore, HTC's Beats Audio integration offers an enhanced sound experience via headphones, while almost as we came to expect from HTC, the camera options are solid. A 2.1 MP front-facing camera with 88° ultra-wide angle lens can snap up to four people into a single photo, while a guick-on-the-draw rear-facing 8 megapixel shooter captures quality stills and records full HD videos. Unfortunately users do not have access to HTC's added camera functionality offered on the One X, such as burst- or panorama shot.

Windows Phone 8

WP8 boasts the same look and feel of Windows Phone Mango with its familiar Live Tiles showing updated info without users having to open apps. New within WP8 is the ability to resize tiles, and you can also customise the quick status notifications, including SMSs received and missed calls, on the lockscreen. Unfortunately, unlike Nokia's Lumia devices that offer an

'HTC's Windows Phone 8X is a fantastic allrounder with a slim body difficult to match.'

array of extra apps such as Nokia Drive, HTC has not included a varied selection, with only a photo enhancer app, HTC lock screen and HTC hub for aggregating your weather, stock and news subscription info. Instead of the excellent Nokia Maps, users have to make do with Bing Maps, which lacks voice-guided turn-by-turn navigation.

To the point

HTC's Windows Phone 8X is a fantastic all-round smartphone with a slim body that is difficult to match. It shines in almost all departments except for apps, for which Nokia's Windows Phone devices remain superior. RRP: R6 700. [HD] 4





Nokia aims for a bullseye with their first Windows Phone 8 (WP8) running smartphone, the flagship Lumia 920, which sports some clever camera optics, LTE connectivity and wireless charging functionality.

he first thing you'll notice about Lumia 920 is its lumpy size and bulky weight, tilting the scales at 185 g vs. the HTC Windows Phone 8X's 130 g. You do, however, quickly get used to it, especially whilst navigating WP8 on the responsive 4.5" (768 x 1280 resolution: 332 ppi pixel density) PureMotion HD+ screen that is one of the best (if not the best) touchscreens around. It fares well outdoors when used in direct sunlight thanks to the brightness of the display and Nokia's ClearBlack display technology.

Hardware- and software differentiators

Besides the high-resolution touchscreen, Espoo kitted the Lumia 920 with an 8.7 MP rear-facing camera that features advanced floating lens technology and optical image stabilisation, which helps you take in-focus shots even with shaking hands. The camera also performs brilliantly in low-light conditions, but misses a trick without HDR (high dynamic range) shooting option.

'It's Nokia's proprietary applications that give the 920 the upper hand against other Windows Phone rivals.'

Another distinctive feature of the 920 is built-in wireless charging, although the wireless charging accessories are unfortunately sold separately. When fully charged, the massive 2000 mAh Lithium Ion battery lasted between a full day and 11/2 days on average, besting most smartphones available.

For us, however, it's Nokia's proprietary applications that give the 920 the upper hand against other Windows Phone rivals. Besides the excellent Nokia Drive+ navigation app and Mix Radio streaming music service, users also get an assortment of photo and video editing apps, such as Cinemagraph, that helps one make the most of the PureView camera technology.

To the point

If you can get past its hefty frame and bulky weight, Nokia's Lumia 920 is a great all-round smartphone that can compete head-on with the likes of the iPhone 5, Galaxy S3 and HTC One X. It offers some amazing camera tech (and apps), LTE connectivity, and novel wireless charging functionality, which put it ahead of its WP8 brethren. RRP is a pricey R8 000, making it R1 300 more expensive than the 8X. [HD] &



Hyundai i30 A complete driving package

Hyundai has come a long way with its cars in a shor

Hyundai has come a long way with its cars in a short space of time, from being the car people buy because they couldn't afford a Golf or Focus, to a full-fledged rival. Now, the i30 looks to convert even more Golf owners.

It was way back in August 2012 that the "fluidic sculpture" styling of the i30 first caught our eye at its local launch. We liked it right off the bat and so did a lot of pedestrians as they kept on ogling the vehicle, even when we received our test model three months after the South African launch. On the inside, the captivating exterior is complemented by a classy cabin that is elegant, practical, spacious and well laid out. All the controls are well within the driver's (or front passenger's) reach, and even though the interior features plenty of plastic, it still comes across as sturdily constructed and premium enough to go toe-to-toe with (but not beat) the class leading Golf.

Easy rider

We drove the 1.8-litre four-cylinder petrol engine that delivers 110 kW at 6500 RPM and 178 Nm of torque at 4700 RPM, enough to bring up 100 km/h on the speedometer in around ten seconds and go on to reach 190 km/h. In terms of fuel economy, we averaged just under nine litres per 100 km on a combined cycle (town and highway driving).

'Hyundai's i30 manages to impress in all aspects, culminating in a very worthy rival for the Golf and co.'

The i30's steering and handling was very competent, with the ride quality leaning towards comfort more than dynamically sporty as with a Ford Focus. Within the congested streets of Pretoria, this powerplant of the i30 felt punchy enough, but on the highway, we did wish for a bit more overtaking oomph.

Alluring value prospect

The 1.8 GLS manual is priced at R249 900 (incl. VAT), making the i30 almost as pricey as the equivalent Golf or Focus. But Hyundai's biggest selling point is in the impressive list of standards. Our test model came with a full accompaniment of six airbags, as well as all the expected bells and whistles including an MP3-compatible audio system that caters to both USB as well as Bluetooth connectivity, satellite controls on the steering wheel, and parking sensor for the rear. Ticking off features such as park distance control for the Golf adds another R4 600 to its asking price, highlighting the value offered by the i30.

To the point

Due to its sublime styling, comfortable cabin and ride, and impressive list of standard features, Hyundai's i30 manages to impress in all aspects, culminating in a very worthy rival for the Golf and co. Is this enough to make people buy it instead of a Golf? We're not too sure, but we can say that opting for the i30 won't result in you turning greener than the Hulk every time a Golf drives by. [HD] •

Ford Focus with Sync

Say hello to Sync





Ford is focusing on the trendy multimedia needs of drivers, making its Sync in-vehicle infotainment system available to local buyers, kicking off with the new Focus models.

Sync has been co-developed with Microsoft and features an advanced voice-recognition system, enabling drivers to use voice commands and steering-wheel mounted buttons in order to access calling or music control functions.

How does it work?

To begin, you simply pair your mobile phone with the Sync system, by turning on Bluetooth and scanning for devices. Once connected you can copy your contacts (as the primary registered device) to the system, which allows up to six devices to be registered. It paired easily across a large number of platforms and enabled us to stream music from the phone and control playback via the buttons on the Focus' steering wheel (skip forward and back, volume).

'Not only is Ford's Sync system safer for drivers, but it distinguishes the Focus from its main C segment hatchback rivals.'

Alternatively, you can also use voice commands to navigate your music library by pressing the voice button on the steering wheel and saying "play similar" to find similar types of tracks, or "play Coldplay" to play the songs by your favourite band for instance. When you want to make or answer a call, the skip forward and back buttons function as call answer and reject buttons, while voice control is also available. It's also great to see both USB and auxiliary input slots located in the car's glove box.

Driving impressions

We drove the 1.6 Trend four-door, which is powered by a 1.6 litre Duratec Ti-VCT petrol engine that churns out 92 kW of power and a 159 Nm. Even though this is down on both counts (110 kW and 178 Nm) compared to the 1.8 litre four-cylinder petrol engine of the Hyundai i30 we tested, the Ford actually felt punchier through the streets. This was as a result of its steering being more direct than the far-too-light steering on the i30, whilst the Focus also had a firmer, sportier ride.

To the point

Not only is Ford's Sync system safer for drivers, but it distinguishes the Focus from its main C segment hatchback rivals, including the VW Golf. It's the kind of infotainment system we expect from cars in 2013, and Sync is to become standard in almost all new passenger Ford models sold locally (excluding the entry-level Figo), starting with the new 2013 Fiesta that launches in Q1 2013. The Focus 1.6 Trend 4-door goes for a recommended retail price of R235 750 which includes VAT and CO₂ tax. [HD] ♣

14 | techsmart.co.za January 2013 | Issue 112



Back to



Windows 8 workhorse

Lenovo B950

Limited Stock

Pentium Dual Core B950, 4GB Memory, 500GB Hard Drive, DVD-RW Drive, 15.6" Display, Windows 8

TechSmart readers price (incl VAT, while Stocks Last):

Was R4,499

Now R3,999 Incl. Free Delivery

Use Promotion Code: TS01132

Essential Laptop

Lenovo Essential B575e

AMD E-300 processor, 2GB Memory, 320GB Hard Drive, DVD RW Drive, 15.6" Screen, Windows 7 Starter

TechSmart readers price (incl VAT, while Stocks Last):

Was R3,499

R2,999

Use Promotion Code: TS01131

Core i5 power house

Lenovo IdeaPad V570c

Limited Stock

Intel Core i5 Processor, 4GB Memory 500GB Hard Drive, DVD-RW Drive, 15.6" Display, Windows 7 Home Basic*

TechSmart readers price (incl VAT, while Stocks Last): Was R6,499

Now R5,499

Incl. Free Delivery

Use Promotion

Code: **TS01133**

www.livdigital.co.za/Shop

* Product eligible for Windows 8 upgrade on www.windowsupgradeoffer.com. Upgrade cost is R300 and only available until 30 January 2013 If you have any questions call us at 010 590 9281 or send us an e-mail at Deals@LivDigital.co.za



Canon: Looking ahead

It's not often that one gets to discuss the future of photography with not one, but two product managers at Canon SA. TechSmart sat down to chat with Roger Machin, who oversees Canon's EOS range, and Abri Kriegler, responsible for their compact and video cameras, about some of the trends they see coming in 2013.

Canon EOS

TechSmart: With the EOS 6D we're seeing full-frame moving into more affordable territory. Will it ever fall down into the prosumer APS-C range?

Roger Machin: Canon really started the trend with the EOS 1Ds and now full-frame are the have-to-have cameras. Full-frame is going to carry on growing in popularity, but having said that, the APS-C sensor's production line is so well entrenched, that I don't see it disappearing in any type of hurry. These smaller sized sensors have an incredibly good reputation so it will be around for a long time. But full-frame is the wave of the future.

TS: Canon last year introduced their first mirrorless camera, the EOS M. But currently it seems like a lot of good things are happening at the top-end (+R15k) of the mirrorless market, with cameras such as the Sony NEX 7, Olympus OMD EM-5 and Fujifilm X1-Pro. RM: The market in SA for mirrorless is still rather small, but it is growing exponentially. Canon is very reticent in revealing future plans of action, but my personal opinion is that the serious-end of the market is not going to grow much. Keep in mind that Canon also has the high-end PowerShots to compete with, so if anything, I think price is going to go

downwards rather than upwards. The bottom of the market is where most of the bodies are being sold.

TS: So what's getting you excited at the moment?
RM: Well, I'm loving the EOS M. I can't wrap my mind around why, but it does make me want to take more photographs. I'm also very addicted to the 6D, purely because of its low-light focusing capability. It's light, it's tiny, it's full-frame, it does everything I want it to do except high-speed action photography.

TS: Any big things linedup for Canon in 2013?

RM: I can tell you this much –
2012 is going to be a hard act to
follow. With it being the 25th
anniversary of the EOS system, we launched

more DSLRs than ever before; while the addition of the cinema- and mirrorless line-up changed EOS forever.

From a design perspective, one of the things we are starting to see, which mirrorless kind-of started, is that form vs. function is going to change. So aesthetic appeal is going to have a determining factor with regards to products.

For example, colour becomes important – look at the styling on the white EOS M and the PowerShot S110. We also have to look at what Fujifilm did with their retro-look – the Leica type of vibe. There are a lot of pro photographers who like that, they want the camera to look like an old rangefinder. The mirrorless market place is where we are looking at as representative of future change.



Canon Compact

TechSmart: On Canon's compact side, the PowerShot G1x included a much larger sensor, and now the EOS M showed that an APS-C sensor can be fitted into a smaller body. Do you personally think we'll see an APS-C sensor in a compact body?

Abri Kriegler: It is a logical step and I believe it will definitely happen. On the G1x we showed that a compact body can handle a bigger sensor and it was the first step in the right direction. As to when an APS-C sensor will come to one of our compact bodies, I'm not sure.

TS: What are the features that South African compact users look for?

AK: Zoom, zoom, zoom. We live in the awesome country where we can go outside to see and shoot beautiful things. People are realising that they don't have to take a DSLR with a humongous lens, instead they opt for one of our

SX-series cameras.

ISO is also becoming much more important, especially on the compact side. Since you carry your camera to parties, you want the ability to shoot well in low-light, and this is where our latest PowerShots really excel.

TS: For you personally, what are some of the new features that make you stand up and take notice?

AK: Definitely how far we are able to push the ISO boundary on these small sensors. I'm also wondering what's next for our SX range, since we already have the SX50 HS that has a

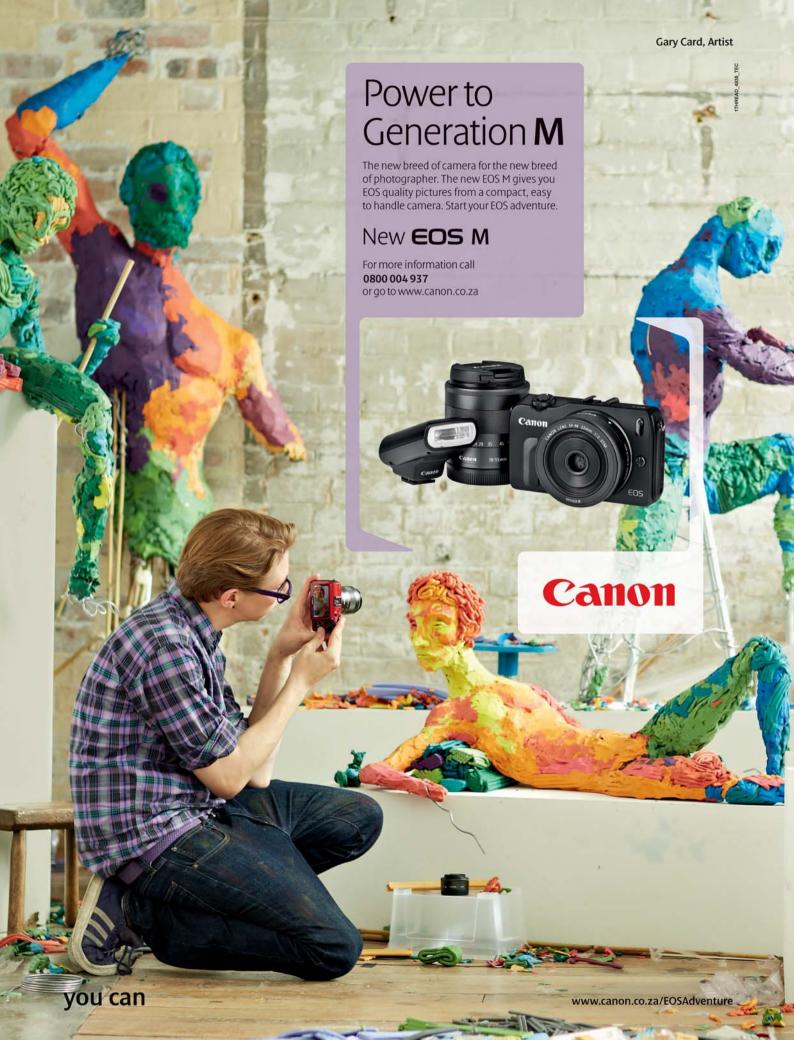
50x optical zoom. I do think we can expect more compacts with wireless capabilities and capacitive touchscreens in the year ahead.

TS: Both Samsung and Nikon have now produced compacts with a SIM card included.



Do you think that the future of compact lies with this type of connectivity?

AK: No, I cannot see Canon going there. The main factor for this is the cost involved, since adding a SIM card and extra phone technologies out prices the camera. [MJ] *





The Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology on the Vaal Triangle Campus represents a powerhouse of academic activities, innovative

technologies and groundbreaking research. Consisting of the School of Information Technology; the School of Accounting Sciences and the School of Economic Sciences, it's the first and only Faculty of its kind in the world where business and information technology are combined.

Research projects in the Faculty include:

- The development of speech technology in conjunction with Google
- A cellphone laboratory, sponsored by the World Bank
- Mobile and handheld devices
- Poverty alleviation
- Generation Y
- Serious Games.

Learning is a Serious Game: Serious Games Institute – South Africa (SGI-SA)

For those interested in gaming development, it's the Faculty's establishment of South Africa's first Serious Games Institute in November 2011 that will draw attention. This institute, affiliated with the International Serious Games Institute at Coventry University in the UK, is involved in pioneering work in the field of Serious Games in South Africa, particularly with respect to mobile apps and games programming for commercial purposes.

How it works

Serious Games create the same feeling of 'playing' as ordinary computer games, and also offer the participant the opportunity to progress to more difficult levels and/or to eventually win. However, in contrast to ordinary computer games, the primary aim of Serious Games is to pose challenges that the users have to overcome. Without realising that participants are learning, they start to acquire the concepts or abstract ideas and use them within the context of the game.

Real-life situations or processes are simulated on PC or cellphone so that people can learn new skills (such as piloting an airplane) or renew existing skills (for example, military personnel who improve their strategic skills through simulated war situations). Serious Games can also be used to transfer people skills. Situations or conditions in the workplace can, for example, be simulated on

the screen so that the participant can learn certain effective behaviour management techniques.

About the academic side

SGI-SA's objective is twofold: one part is aimed at the academic

world, and the other at industry. As far as the academic side is concerned, the design of basic elements of Serious Games forms part of the projects of third-year BSc IT students. From this year, two Serious Games modules will be included in the expanded BSc IT curriculum, while a Serious Games project will form part of the honours level of this qualification. A master's degree in Serious Games is also in the pipeline for the near future – a first for the African continent

But also the commercial

As far as the commercialisation of Serious Games is concerned, the institute supplies games or elements of games to organisations, thus generating additional income for the University. Furthermore, these games offer training possibilities to organisations in the private and public sector, contributing indirectly to the economic development of the country. The institute is already involved in several projects, including the following:

- A life skills game played on MXit, with soccer as the theme.
- A game known as TASK (Teen/Adult Survival Kit), also for MXit.
- That's Life, a board game for tablets.
- Royalopoly, a game about team work in business, for tablets, PCs and cellphones.
- A safety game for risk management in factories, among other work settings, for tablets, PCs and cellphones.

These projects also create opportunities for research, which in turn contributes to the promotion of Serious Games in South Africa.

New developments

With an eye on the future, the SGI-SA is developing a post graduate diploma in Serious Games, in partnership with the Netherlands and the UK. Furthermore, the SGI-SA is an active role player in the international Mandela27 project – a cultural collaboration between the European Union and South Africa. Their involvement in this international project is truly a feather in the cap of this young Institute/venture.

Contact them today

For further information about the SGI-SA and what it has to offer potential students, browse over to www.nwu.ac.za/sgi/welcome.html. Werner Ravyse, the SGI-SA program leader at the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, can also be contacted on 016-910-3277, or via email at Werner.Ravyse@nwu.ac.za.





A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step

Chinese philosopher Laozi (c 604 bc – c 531 bc) in the *Tao Te Ching*

Start your journey and uncap your potential

For more information please contact the following student advisors

Mr P van Wyk: 016-910-3153 Piet. Vanwyk@nwu.ac.za Mr M Tsotetsi: 016-910-3186 Morenan.Tsotetsi@nwu.ac.za Mr K Telane: 016-910-3186 Knox.Telane@nwu.ac.za Mr M Kganakga: 016-910-3183 Matome.Kganakga@nwu.ac.za





3M MP410 mobile projector

Petite puncher



For those who live on their iPhone, the Joybee GP2 might just be a godsend, seeing that included is a mounting slot for the iPhone 4/4S.

Now while this isn't new (the Epson MG-850HD projector also has one), what is unique is the combination of the GP2's range of connectivity options and its small size. The GP2 fits in one's hand and is less than a sixth the size compared to a conventional projector.

'What is unique is the combination of the GP2's range of connectivity options and its small size.'

It weighs half a kilogram and can be fitted, along with the power cable, in its included carry bag. It might not be as small as 3M's business focused MP410 (on the right), but it takes up very little desk real-estate, and can be set up in any boardroom, living room or bedroom. An added boost is the JoyBee's ability to automatically correct the keystone, which in most cases worked just fine.

Ports and connectivity options

Apart from the ability to dock your iPhone/iPod and play content from there, it's also possible to control your device's volume and playback options via the included remote control. No iPhone? No problem, since included is a myriad of other connectivity options. These include HDMI mini (v1.3, no cable provided); USB Type A for flash drives; Mini USB to connect to your PC (cable provided) and an SD card slot (difficult to eject, supports up to 16 GB cards). Furthermore, the Joybee GP2 includes 1.3 GB worth of onboard storage space for when you don't want to drag your PC along to presentations, since the unit can display Word, Excel and PowerPoint presentations (but without animations or transitions).

Brightness and price

One thing to keep in mind is the JoyBee's 200 ANSI brightness. Powered by three LED lights (supporting a DLP, not LCD, projection system), it does not match full-sized projector's ± 2000 lumens. However, the JoyBee is in line with the similar sized Acer K11 LED projector but falls short of 3M's MP410's 300 lumens. This translates to brightness that should do fine in a dark room, but you do need to keep ambient light at bay for a clear picture.

It retails from Incredible Connection and Hi-Fi Corporation for R7 500, which seems to be in line with other similar sized offerings but still not quite affordable. [MJ] •

Long gone are the days where hauling a 3 kg projector round to meetings is necessary. 3M's punchy MP410 mini projector is actually so small that, if needs be, it can fit inside a lunch box.

or such a small little thing (400g), it's also particularly bright, with its 300 ANSI lumens doing a much better job at coping with ambient light than BenQ's 200 lumens (and slightly larger) JoyBee GP2. This, coupled with a good WXGA (1280 x 800) resolution, should be fine for most presentations as long as the room is dark. It should do even while watching some movies at home, but don't count on the onboard sound to provide a decent soundtrack.

Brighter is better

One of the benefits of such a small little projector is that you need very little throw distance to get an in-focus picture. You should receive a 30" screen from only 1 m away, while 3M states a screen size of 80" from 8.48 m away, although screen brightness decreases at a substantial rate at such a large size.

'3M's MP410 mini projector is very small, but with a 300 lumens brightness it still provides a clear picture.'

As far as connectivity option, the MP410 provides a number of ways to connect. Firstly, we enjoyed the full sized HDMI port, although no cable is provided, while 3M also includes a Universal 24-pin to VGA cable. As far as wireless options are concerned, there are a microSD card slot and USB A port available. But to note is that the projector will only read video, music and photo files, so, unlike the BenQ GP2, it cannot display Word, Excel or PowerPoint files unless connected to your PC. Also no remote is included. Because of its compact size, the MP410 has to look at its cooling very carefully, and here unfortunately the fan noise becomes a distraction when sitting close to the unit.

To the point

3M's MP410 mini projector is very small, but with a 300 lumens brightness it still provides a clear picture. Its small size will do a lot to draw attention from road warriors and maybe even those that have forsaken a TV in the living room, but hunkers after bigger sized screen than a notebook to play movies on. At R8 000 it is a bit of an investment though, a bit more expensive than these types of high standard portable projectors. For that price though 3M could at least have thrown in the remote control. [MJ] &

ESET's prediction for 2013:

ASTOUNDING GROWTH OF MOBILE MALWARE

In 2012, the number of unique detections of malware for Android increased globally by a factor of 17X (yes, that is 1700%), and ESET expects the increase in 2013 to be even greater.



Near the end of 2012, the research teams at ESET discuss the malware and cybercrime trends they think will be important in the year ahead. Among the predictions: malware for smartphones will once again experience rapid growth in 2013.

In reaching this conclusion, ESET analysed what has happened with malware for mobile platforms over the last 12 months, seeing that its growth has been even greater than they had imagined at the end of 2011. Although the number of different families of malware for Android has not increased much, if one looks at the number of variants, there has been serious growth. A variant is a modified version of a specific and known malicious programme. Cybercriminals modify the structure and the code of an existing threat to create a new one with the aim of adding new malicious functions and evading detection by antivirus programs.

But then what about smartphones?

So what does this malware do to smartphones? Basically one can divide the threats into three groups: information theft; botnets; and SMS Trojans. ESET's research indicates that SMS Trojans represent 40% of all Android malware at the moment. After infecting the phone, SMS Trojans start sending messages to premium SMS numbers that have an additional cost to the user, and are, of course, profitable for the attacker. Although they have been more popular in Eastern Europe, in recent years SMS Trojans have been expanding throughout the world, like the Android/Boxer variant affecting 63 countries in the world.

What you can do: ESET Mobile Security

Protect everything on your smartphone or tablet with ESET Mobile Security, which is now also available for Android-powered mobile devices. ESET Mobile Security combines the robust detection of ESET's scanning engine with advanced antispam and antitheft functionality for real-time protection on the go. With ESET you are protected in the following ways:

- Protection from threats All applications, files, folders and SD memory cards are continually scanned for emerging threats, including hidden files and processes.
- SMS/MMS antispam Define trustworthy contacts via customisable black- or whitelist or simply block message traffic from unknown numbers.
- Call blocking Block unwanted calls in both directions – incoming and outgoing. This is a powerful tool that is especially suitable for parents to control their children's phone bills.
- Security audit with built-in task manager Stay informed about all vital phone functions, including battery life, free disk space, running processes, Bluetooth and device visibility. Take action on the spot to reduce your risk profile.

ESET also offers an impressive anti-theft system Included in ESET Mobile Security are multiple layers of protection that allow you to maintain control over phonestored data even in the event of device loss or theft. These include:

- SIM Matching In case of an unauthorised SIM card insertion, you or your trusted contact are automatically notified by a text message containing the IMSI and telephone number, so you can locate the perpetrators.
- Remote Lock Allows you to block the phone remotely to prevent unauthorised access to your data.
- GPS Localisation Locate your lost or stolen phone by a remote command (only for Android OS).
- Remote Wipe As the last instance of protecting your privacy, delete all phone-stored data remotely using an SMS command. Wipe clean all your contacts, messages and memory cards.

Find the ESET Mobile Security app for Android on Google Play here: http://bit.ly/ESETANDROID. It is a free download, and is about 3.4 MB in size. For more information on ESET's range of internet security services, visit www.eset.co.za.



Olympus SZ-31 MR

Creativity unleashed



Olympus is no stranger to producing intriguing, solid cameras, and the Olympus SZ-31 MR is certainly one such offering.

he 16 megapixel compact camera not only boasts a solid build, it also resembles a mini DSLR in its ergonomics, with a noticeable indentation alongside the handgrip that naturally falls beneath one's fingers, and offers a firm grip in one's hand. Along with a 24x wide optical zoom, the camera sports a built-in flash (but no hotshoe) and full HD video recording.

Have you Scene this?

Scene settings, which automatically optimise camera settings based on the photography situation, contains modes like Cat and Dog mode (which cause the camera to automatically take a picture when the respective pets are detected); Backlight HDR, which combines several exposures into one optimal image, a Portrait mode and a Landscape mode.

Flipping the top dial to Magic Filter further allows one to access numerous

'A further mention must go to the 24 x optical zoom, which offers a staggeringly good range of 25 - 600 mm equivalent.'

artistic effects, while a multi file setting enables one to save two differently sized photos or movie files simultaneously. While there are further Full Auto, Panorama and Program Priority settings, there aren't Manual Priority, Aperture Priority or Shutter Priority settings for those who want a bit more manual control.

Dial up and keep track

All other settings are selected via a quick mode dial on the back of the camera; this also doubles as a four way trackpad, and together these two controls are used to access features and a myriad of file size choices.

The 3" LCD screen is not only bright and beautiful when viewing images, but it also supports touch autofocus. Whether using that particular method to focus or not, we found the autofocus to be fast and responsive.

A further mention must go to the 24 x optical zoom, which offers a staggeringly good range of 25 mm to 600 mm equivalent. This makes the camera a very good, all purpose option for photographers who anticipate dealing with a variety of subjects, both near and far away.

To the point

In a nutshell, the SZ-31 MR impressed, proving itself well built and accessible compact with a plethora of features on offer to keep creative shooters busy. It has a RRP of R4 000. [RN] &

TomTom hands-free car kit

Call, charge, stream



While we all can't have Ford's Sync in-car infotainment system installed in our car (see p14), TomTom's Bluetooth hands-free car kit is a solid offering.

What we like about the TomTom kit is not only its solid mount which can stick to your windscreen or dash (via adhesive disk), but an extendable cable makes it easy to get the microphone into a position where your voice is easily heard. The speaker located at the back of the mount is also loud and clear, with the added benefit that the unit can not only make and receive calls, but thanks to its AD2P Bluetooth capabilities, also stream music. Having said that, the 2 Watt speaker is certainly not home theatre quality, but will do just fine for podcasts or talk radio.

The power to give

While some Bluetooth car kits are battery powered, the TomTom draws its power via cable from your cigarette lighter. It unfortunately means that a cable needs to run down your center dash to the socket (only three cable clips are provided for both the power and microphone

'The TomTom car kit allows hands-free calling, music streaming and it actually charges your phone while driving.'

cable), but it adds the ability to charge your phone while driving This comes in handy when using Google Navigation or the TomTom navigation app to find your way, seeing that using the GPS does not suck your battery dry. Plus of course your phone is mounted in front of you for easy viewing.

To pair and share

The pairing process is about as easy as expected, and the unit can pair with up to five phones, with only two phones being connected at the same time – ideal for family situations where a car is shared. You are able to use voice commands to dial, but it's a feature we barely used.

In the two months that we've been driving with the unit we found it dependable not only for receiving calls while driving, but it also connects as soon as we start the car without hiccup. The cable running down to your lighter socket might hinder, but charging your phone while driving is extremely helpful. The TomTom hands-free car kit retails in the region of R1 000 at bit.ly/tomtomcarkit. [MJ] *

Disclaimer: The TomTom car kit was received as a seeding unit.





Call us on 087 980 0375 www.xdsl.co.za l sales@xdsl.co.za

E & OE, terms & conditions apply. All prices exclude VAT. Installation and hardware cost not included!



Philips 221SU USBpowered LCD

Wires be gone



Philips' 21.5" LCD display rids users of the all too common inconvenience of struggling with connection and power cables.

One of the problems with secondary monitors is the extra plug needed to power it. Philips' 221SU is here to lend a helping hand, since this plug and play monitor only makes use of a single USB 2.0 port for both power as well as video transmission to the display. According to Philips, the screen consumes around 9 watts of power, which is about 50% less than similarly sized, conventionally powered displays. Unfortunately, since it only draws power from USB, there are no other connectivity options included on this display. This means no HDMI inputs so you cannot hook it up with a PlayStation 3 or Xbox 360, while there's also no sound onboard.

Convenient setup

Since it measures in at $507 \times 323 \times 59$ mm (without the stand) and 3.85 kg (with the stand), users don't need to have Beast Mtawarira's physique to be able to carry it. This makes it easy to move around an office where workers do not have a fixed desk and work where a space is available.

Once connected, you are easily able to find the best viewing angle, as the monitor can be tilted up or down and swivelled around, while the neck of the display's Compact Ergo base can also be adjusted by as much as 7 cm. Philips' screen boasts a typical response time of a decent 5 ms (milliseconds), full HD (1920 x 1080) screen resolution for crisp looking text, images and video, as well as a 16:9 aspect ratio that is perfect for watching movies. Colours look good but are not as vibrant as on a few of the displays we tested recently, including Acer's Olympics P238HL LCD monitor and LG's D2542P Cinema 3D display, although both of these cost a lot more.

To the point

Powered by the same USB port that you use to connect this secondary monitor to your tablet, the Philips 221SU monitor can have a real impact in actual power consumption and the lives of those with cable aversion. It's just a pity about the lack of any additional inputs to expand upon its connectivity horizons. The RRP of USB-powered LCD monitor is R1 875, making it around R400 more expensive than other cable intensive 21" displays. For more info phone Drive Control Corporation (DCC) on 011-201-8927 or send a mail to info@drivecon.net. [HD] •

Beats by Dr. Dre Wireless headphones

Beat the wires



Beats by Dr. Dre's Wireless headphones provide the sound quality that users demand from a premium headsets brand, and now also offer the convenience of delivering your tunes wirelessly.

It's been a good year for Beats by Dr. Dre, not only confirming their premier status by a very visible ambush marketing campaign at last year's Olympics, but also expanding its portfolio. Now with their Beats by Dr. Dre Wireless headphones, you can get premium sound delivered wireless via Bluetooth. Once connected, music can be streamed to the headset over a distance of around 10 m, meaning you can leave your smartphone on charge on the kitchen counter whilst listening to music in the living room.

However, controlling the playback is where the problem comes in. The placement of the buttons really does take some getting used to since they are located on the ear cup of the headset. You have a 'back' and 'next' button for repeating or skipping tracks, a 'play/pause' button (Beats logo in the centre) and a volume rocker (+ and – buttons).

Substantial bang for a significant amount of bucks

The frown over the placement of the playback controls is soon wiped aside courtesy of the impressively crisp, distortion-free sound. This high-quality sound is quite similar to what you get on the Nokia Purity HD stereo headset, which is not surprising since electronics company Monster manufacturers both sets of headphones (at least up until the end of last year). The difference between the two lies in the bass, which is accentuated a lot more on the Beats. Whilst the boosted bass levels may put a broad smile on the faces of Hip Hop and House fans, sound-purists including Jazz fans and audiophiles looking for a more neutral balanced sound may be turned off by the extra dollop of bass.

To the point

The Beats Wireless headphones by Dr. Dre is a solidly constructed headset that oozes quality from its high-end design through to the premium sound on offer. However, the biggest hurdle that will prevent most people from getting a pair is the recommended retail price of R3 500, making it around R1 200 more expensive than the wired Beats Solo option. But then again, when you're buying Beats, you're not really that concerned about the price, are you? For more info contact Phoenix Distribution on 011-803-5437. [HD] •

24 | techsmart.co.za January 2013 | Issue 112





Web Time Wasters





Photograph

www.dearphotograph.com

or a hefty dose of nostalgia – and a view of some very innovative photographs - Dear Photo is certainly worth a visit. The premise behind the site is simple: users submit a photograph in which they are holding a photograph taken several years ago, in the same place it was originally captured. This provides a window of sorts into how places and people looked in time past, and how they have changed today. Brief explanations of the scene, beginning with 'Dear Photograph' are written below. Many of the offerings are poignant, quite a few are clever and more than a couple are profound.

Eco-friendly Africa Travel

bit.lv/ecoafrica

ome grown and distinctively South African, Eco-friendly Africa Travel is a refreshingly earth-aware site dedicated to both recording the beauty of Africa, and promoting the pursuit of a sustainable lifestyle. The site, founded by journalist and photographer husband and wife team, Melissa and Christopher List, aims to do this via photographs of the duo's carbon-neutral trek through Africa, as the couple document Food and Trees for Africa's permaculture and organic food garden projects across the continent



Curisma

www.curisma.com

urisma is a rather different ✓ social network – rather than being centred around one's friends like Facebook, or around one's interests, like Pinterest, it is instead solely dedicated to gadget lovers. The site then enables one to browse, bookmark and share gadgets that catch their eye, and follow other gadget lovers and see what gadgets they are recommending.

Gadgets are organised into trending, categories or, the budget conscious will be glad to hear,

I waste so much time

iwastesomuchtime.com

ost of the sites that we cover Mare interesting, fascinating, inspiring and occasionally, even educational. 'I waste so much time' is none of these, but it is compelling nonetheless, and browsing its myriad of photographic entries, videos and random posts is much like eating a bag of crisps and promising yourself that you will only have just one more. The site is essentially a collection of "funny or interesting junk" in the founders' words. Nonetheless it's well worth a visit, or two, or perhaps even, just one more. 🍾

Around the web

- 50 amazing concert posters to inspire: bit.ly/50gigposter
- Awesome Magnum photographer Steve McCurry in action bit.ly/magnumsteve
- Interesting documentary about the war on drugs: it.ly/breakingtaboo
- Gadgets galore at This is why I'm broke: ww.thisiswhyimbroke.com/
- Time's best websites of 2012: bit.ly/top50web

TechSmart's top tweets

Here are the tweets that struck our fancy last month



Sarveshen Govender @sarvs

"Motivated" was the most overused buzzword in SA LinkedIn Profiles.



Danaë Botha @ThePixelPoet

Language is so 2012. Next year I plan on communicating solely via interpretive qif.



Tiego Modisagae @tiegodonas

@TechSmartMag See wat I like about TechSmart? These guys are not biased on their reviews. They are like Jeremy from TopGear, tell



Craig Wilson @craigwilson

Today's neologistic acronym: JACAP - Just Another Crappy Android



Sam Beckbessinger @greenham sam

Spent Saturday afternoon talking to a robotics engineer. Came away convinced I'm doing the wrong thing with my life. Robots, man, ROBOTS!



Lewnatic @LewFvil

Before getting that tribal tattoo, ask yourself, are you ready to be a



Trevor Noah @Trevornoah

"If you never want to get email from us, click unsubscribe" *click* New mail "This is an email to say you have unsubscribed"



I bet Osama Bin Laden accidentally hit the "Add your location" button during his last tweet.



Reuben Goldberg @RubyGold

One thing I learnt a long time ago. Never trust a politician. Especially one in government. And never ever trust government



Jerm @mynameisierm

I enjoyed 'Lord Of The Hobbit'. It was fun seeing the same storyline, but with different actors this time.



Neil deGrasse Tyson @neiltyson

If geeks ruled the world, we'd solve International crises overnight. But we might spawn new arguments about Kirk vs Picard.



Khalifa @KKAlThani

Feelings are what separate us from animals. That's why you'd never see an ape crying while eating ice cream and watching The Notebook.

TechSmart.co.za online poll results

Which device is the top smartphone of 2012?

42% Apple iPhone 5 29% · Samsung Galaxy S3 15% Nokia Lumia 920 5% · Samsung Galaxy Note II 5% · Others 4% HTC One X



Need your Tech fix faster? Join us now on:

Twitter: @techsmartmag

Facebook: facebook.com/techsmartmag

To receive our newsletter: http://techsmart.co.za/

user registration

January 2013 | Issue 112 26 | techsmart.co.za

Apple iOS Apps of the month



The World in 2013

With Zono c... upon us, there can be few more appropriate apps than The Economist's The World in 2013. The app, which runs on the iPad, features a selection of articles from the print version by the same name. The App is big, 213 MB big, but free. The World in 2013 further boasts video interviews from numerous cities internationally, while it offers predictions of the people and events to keep an eye out for in the next twelve months



ere's a rather interesting one for kids, creative types or parents that want to encourage their children's artistic, or crafty side - Foldify. The app, which can be purchased for R16, at its essence enables users to create different paper figures by first drawing or designing them with an intuitive user interface. These can then be printed out as paper cut outs, that, once folded, form a three-dimensional paper figure. Several templates are included.



Marlee Signs

Marlee Signs is a superb 134 MB app which has actress, Marlee Matlin, teaching American Sign Language, by demonstrating everything from the signed alphabet and basic vocabulary through to common expressions (excuse me; hello; goodbye; help; thank you; etc). Additionally, you can specify a particular word and then see Marlee demonstrate in sign. Free, and available for iOS 5.0 and later. %

BlackBerry Apps of the month

TENT



This R12 app does

what it says on the

your BlackBerry device

box, namely locking

need to redraw. This

app is similar to the

both require you to

'connect the dots' in

order to unlock your

phone. Besides the

easy to use interface,

Pattern Lock also has

a feature called 'forget

password' in case you

Obviously this app is

limited to touch screen

can't recall your

combination.

devices only.

pattern lock found on

Android devices since

with a pattern you

fancy text fAn¢Ŷ tEχt fAnd¥ T£xT ŦÁŃČŶ ŤĔЖŤ FADOV TEVE

Fancy Text

ired of using the same old fonts on your BlackBerry? Then have a look at this R6 app. Fancy text provides access to over 10 different font types and you can even have your message typed backwards. Fonts can be used on email, SMS and BBM, with many third party applications, such as WhatApp and Facebook, also supporting it. Fancy Text offers an easy way to spice up your messages, but if you're still sceptical try the free version first.

Little Bia City

ittle Big City is Gameloft's latest take at city building simulation. This free app requires you to build a town and be its mayor at the same time. Look after the needs of your citizens, complete objectives and soon your town will evolve into a city.

A wide selection of mini games are also available if you want to take a break from current objectives. Little Big City may not be SimCity, but it does bring a pleasant and fresh new outlook for the city building genre. [IF] %

Ith 2013 already

Pattern Lock

how to spell the word

Android Apps of the month



Easy Voice Recorder

his free app turns your smartphone into a dictaphone. enabling users to record meetings, lectures, or voice notes, without any time limits. You are able to record audio in .WAV format (default) for the highest sound quality, or change the format to AAC for a better mix of good audio quality and smaller file sizes. Even AMR is selectable if storage space becomes a concern. Voice notes can be easily shared over email, Bluetooth, etc.

Fluid Football

'luid Football sets itself apart from the numerous sports titles on Google Play by merging an intuitive swipe-based control scheme with set piecebased football strategy. You are given a set piece scenario such as scoring a goal from a free-kick or throw-in for instance. In order to put one of your team's stars into a scoring position, gamers must manoeuvre their players like chess pieces around the field using a variety of swipe-friendly aestures

Pixlr Express

Besides the usual mix of photo editing features such as filters, cropping, resizing and rotating images, PixIr Express also offers more advanced functionality. These include colour correction, the ability to remove noise from a photo, and focal blur, which allows users to keep one element of a photo in focus whilst blurring out the rest of the image. Once finished editing a photo, users can send it to friends or family or post it on any of their social network accounts.

Smartphone top tips

Struggling to master your new smartphone? TechSmart is on hand to provide some helpful tips.

Apple tip

onsidering that iOS 6 now has many of its initial bugs ironed out with the release of iOS 6.0.1, this tip is for those users who are running the latest version of the software, and thus are able to take advantage of one of iOS 6's better features. Do Not Disturb mode enables users to set their device to block all incoming notifications as well as phone calls. The setting, found under Settings > Do Not Disturb can either be set to a specific schedule, or just turned on as the need arises.

🔢 BlackBerry tip

o you want to change the "Sent from my BlackBerry" message that pops up below your email? All you have to do is go to 'Setup', next go to 'Email settings'. Select your email account and choose 'General' options. Select the 'Signature' option and edit it however you like.

Android tip

Reeping your apps and games updated is essential if you want access to the latest features for these. To avoid from burning through your entire data bundle just by



keeping these applications up-to-date, you can opt to have apps updated only when you are connected to a Wi-Fi network. All you have to do is launch the Play Store, press the menu button and select 'Settings'. Next, users simply tick the box next to 'Update over Wi-Fi only'.

Sci News



Touchy feely

Crocodiles don't strike us as the most sensitive creatures around. But according to a study reported in a November issue of the *Journal of Experimental Biology*, we're in for a surprise. Scientists found that dark spots dotted all over a crocodile's body are clusters of sensitive touch sensors. These spots were previously thought to

release oil onto the animal's skin, detect electrical fields or sense water salinity. But the current study has ruled out these functions and pinpointed the spots as pressure sensors that can respond to small environmental changes such as water ripples. The sensors around the mouth and teeth are especially heavily connected to nerves, which suggests that crocodiles likely use touch to identify prey they catch in their mouths. Maybe crocs are a bit touchy-feely?



Face off

When it comes to dating, you think with your head rather than your heart after all. According to a report in a recent issue of the *Journal of Neuroscience*, two separate brain areas help you to decide on someone's dating potential. In the study, scientists gave a group of volunteers four seconds to rate each of 90 face pictures for dating potential while recording their brain activity, and later

asked them to repeat the test without having their brain activity measured. Results showed that faces with high dating potential activated not only the brain area involved in decision making and comparing options, but also the one responsible for comparing oneself with others. This suggests that both looks and compatibility are considered within seconds when deciding who will get your number.



Bit by bit

Data storage has come a long way since computers first became part of our world. And now the maximum storage capacity of hard drives has just gotten a boost. Researchers report in the journal *Science*, that they have developed a new material that will give hard drives almost five times the

memory capacity they have now. At the moment, data is written as closely packed magnetic dots on a metal surface. But if the dots are placed much closer together than the current limit, they can start to flip unpredictably, which will corrupt stored information. However, the new, non-magnetic material forms regular patterns of very closely spaced data dots when heated to just over 200 °C, without any unwanted interactions. This allows substantially more data to be crammed onto a hard drive's surface. Max that memory. [LP] •

Green News



SA pedal power invention scoops Red Dot Award

Local product design consultancy, Ideso, scooped a coveted Red Dot 'Best of the Best 2012' Design Award for its transportable PowerPac invention. The PowerPac stores energy that is generated during cycling, which can then be used later for charging various mobile devices. This device boasts a 132 Wh battery

which can be fully charged after 80 minutes of cycling. The PowerPac is the world's first product to offer a removable power storage device that becomes a portable charging unit for use anywhere in the home or office. Ideso is now looking for an investment partner in the cycling industry, to assist the company in developing the PowerPac product further and get it into mass production.



Electric power comes to the Fiat 500

At last month's LA Auto Show, Fiat showcased the upcoming electric powered version of its nostalgic 500 small premium hatchback (see p2), dubbed the 500e. This car's electric-drive engine delivers 83 kW of power and 200 Nm of torque, which is more on both counts (74 kW; 131 Nm) than what

you get in its conventionally-powered 1.4 litre petrol stablemate. Its 24 kWh lithium-ion high voltage battery can be charged via a 240 volt outlet in about four hours, to deliver a driving range of almost 130 km. This car goes on sale in California during Q2 of 2013 and the rest of the US in the middle of 2013. No pricing or locally relevant release info is available yet.



Toshiba Tec unveils new green printer

Printers have been available with an automatic duplex (double-sided) printing feature for some time now, allowing users to save on paper. Toshiba Tec decided to take this one step further with its new eco-friendly copiers that make use of a 'Loops' copier system to erase the ink of printed documents, so that the pages can be reused as blank sheets.

The copier is able to erase the ink off of 30 sheets per minute, and pages can be wiped and reused up to five times. Once erased, the unit will check all the pages and remove damaged sheets from the system. Toshiba Tec's Loops eco-friendly printers go on sale in Japan during February 2013, sporting a not-so-budget-friendly price tag equivalent to R147 500.

More cool science



Biodiversity in your belly button bit.ly/buttonlife

Foldable e-paper may hit the stands soon. bit.ly/epapercut

Your favourite morning cuppa could one day be no more. bit.ly/begrumpy

Green living tip of the month

If you own a vegetable patch you know how damaging certain insects can be to your crop. Many gardeners are moving towards more natural, toxin free ways to kill bugs and pests, with the web of course buzzing with related info. If you want to find out more about making your own home-remedies for getting rid of mites, slugs, soft bodied insects and more, head over to bit.ly/buggarden or bit.ly/gardenfree.



28 | techsmart.co.za

Gear in the office

The TechSmart office usually overflows with new products coming in for review. Here are our thoughts on a few of them.

3M Mobile privacy screens

ver been on a plane or conference where Lthe jerk next to you won't stop staring at vour screen? 3M's Privacy Filters cuts the viewing angle on your notebook's display so that it's for your eyes only. They are removable and we also found it very effective in lowering screen brightness, bringing relief to tired eyes. R400 to R700 depending on size, call 3M on 011-806-2000.





Wonderbook: Book of Spells

efinitely one for the younger players, the Jaugmented reality game Wonderbook is very well done. Set in the world of Harry Potter, it enables players to learn and practise spells, using the PlayStation eye and move controller to overlay images and effects over the included Book of

Spells. Spells are accompanied by amusing stories that we suspect will be a great source of amusement for the kids. R500 for the game on its own, or R900 with the Move starter pack.

Vodacom Smart II

/odacom's Android Gingerbread operating Smart II is another entry in the competitive budget smartphone segment. It distinguishes itself thanks to an impressive build quality and 3.2" (320 x 480 pixels; 180 ppi pixel density) display, both of which are above average. It goes for an RRP of R1 300, placing it up against the likes of Samsung's Galaxy Pocket (R1 000) and LG's Optimus L3 (R1 500).





D Link ShareCentre Quattro 4 bay network storage

-Link's ShareCentre Quattro 4-Bay network storage device adds a compact and convenient way of centralising one's storage. By accommodating

four SATA drives, users can share and stream their content and secure and backup their data, while the ShareCentre Quattro enables users to download files from the internet without a PC. RRP of R3 000.

Durable laptop cleaning kit

urable's screen cleaning spray and micro-fibre cloth worked a treat in getting the smudge marks of Windows 8 notebooks' touchscreen, while also keeping smartphone and tablet clean. However, the cleaning wipes for keyboard cleaning did not quite live up to expectations, and you only receive six in the packet. R295.



DeskBags

eskBags is an excellent initiative. With the help of unemployed women, local PR company, PR Worx, is manufacturing school bags that include a flap reinforced with perspex which doubles as a portable desk. This comes as about four million children in SA don't have access

to school desks. Our favourite part? They're using recycled billboard material to construct these durable and waterproof bags. Supporting this initiative is a range of notebook bags (R155 - R210) and tablet satchels (R177) made from similar material. Prices depend on quantities ordered, so order for your company or yourself today on 011-896-1818.

2012: The world in searches and tweets

As has become an annual event, at the end of last year Google once again unveiled their Zeitgeist list of the fastest rising search terms, while Twitter similarly revealed its most popular tweets. Want to know what South Africans were searching for and the world tweeted throughout the preceding year? Look no further.

Google's top 10 local search terms

- OLX
- Whitney Houston
- Hurricane Sandy
- Gangnam style
- Olympics
- 6 Velvet Sky
- Caster Semenya
- 8 Diablo 3
- 9 Khanyi Mbau
- 10 iPad 3

Google's top 10 gadgets and phones searches

- iPad 3
- 2 Samsung Galaxy S3
- Samsung Galaxy S2
- iPad Mini
- Nokia N9
- 6 iPhone 4S
- Nokia Lumia
- 8 BlackBerry 9360
- 9 BlackBerry 9320
- 10 iPad 4



Top 3 Tweets themes garnering most tweets and tweets per minute (TPM)

- 1 London 2012 Olympics, 150 million tweets, 116 000 TPM
- 2 US Presidential Election, 31 million tweets, 327 452 TPM
- 3 2012 MTV Video Music Awards, 14.7 million tweets, 98 307 TPM

Top 2 Tweets most re-tweeted in 2012

- Barack Obama's (@BarackObama) tweet: "Four more years," retweeted 810 000 times
- Justin Bieber (@justinbieber) tweet: "RIP Avalanna. i love you," retweeted 220 000 times

The British Olympic team's (@TeamGB) tweet: "29 gold, 17 silver, 19 bronze - We finished 3rd in medal table after most successful Olympics for 104 years #OurGreatestTeam RT your support" received an honourable mention for 67 000 retweets.

Top tweet terms in tech

- 1 AT&T
- 6 iPad
- 2 iPhone
- 7 Pinterest
- Instagram
- Draw Something 8
- 9 Amazon

Skype Kindle 10 Apple

WIN: We will be giving away 2x DeskBags notebook bags and 2x DeskBags tablet satchels away during the course of the month. Watch our Twitter stream (@techsmartmag) and Facebook page (facebook.com/techsmartmag) to find out more.

Issue 112 | January 2013 techsmart.co.za | 29



The popular Skype™ user interface and the attractive



CLOCKY ALARM CLOCK ON WHEELS

Clocky will never let you oversleep again. Clocky runs away and hides if you don't get out of bed



1 - 2 - 3 -

4 - 5 - 6 -

7 8 9 9

* [0]

HUAWEI E5331 MOBILE WI-FI

This pocket mobile Wi-Fi device is a high-speed packet access mobile hotspot and is a multimode wireless terminal for SOHO and business professionals



PQI 2.5" SHOCK PROOF HDD

Utilising special rubber material and unique internal shockabsorption suspension technology, which provides ultra protection



CONN CTION



e-PoS





JBL MICRO WIRELESS

is extremely easy to upload all

tracked activities to the runtastic

RUNTASTIC GPS

WATCH

The runtastic GPS

Watch records all

important workout parameters including

pace, laps, calories,

distance, heart rate,

as altitude and target

fitness website

speed, duration, as well

heart rate zones. With the runtastic Connect software it

With a 40mm driver, it delivers fullrange JBL sound with exceptional bass - yet it fits easily in backpacks or clips onto clothing



MAGIC WAND

WI-FI SCANNER

The Magic Wand Scanner provides a fast and easy way to scan, transfer files via Wi-Fi, organise and archive documents.

NEO CUBE

Composed of 216 individual highenergy, rare-earth magnets which allows you to create and recreate an outrageous number of shapes and patterns.



FRANCHISEES REQUIRED FOR: Bloemfontein, Port Elizabeth, Durban, George, Polokwane

PTA - Brooklyn Mall (012) 346-2726

PTA – Woodlands (012) 997-0450 JHB – Randridge Mall (011) 792-4912

CNT - Centurion Mall (012) 643-0967

WOODLANDS

BOULEVARD BRANCH NOW OPEN!



THEGADGETSHOP.CO.ZA

Franchise enquiries, please email franchise@thegadgetshop.co.za



@TheGadgetShopSA



555 Mitchell Street **Pretoria West 0183** South Africa Tel: 012 327 5855 Fax: 012 327 6275 sales@superb.co.za www.superb.co.za

BUniwell





IMPORTER & DISTRIBUTOR











CASH REGISTERS - PC POINT OF SALE - SCANNING -TOUCH SCREEN - NETWORKING - SCALES - BAR CODING



CASH DRAWERS - SCANNERS - POLE DISPLAY -- POS PRINTERS - RIBBONS - RENTALS-- REPAIRS TO ALL MAKES OF CASH REGISTERS -

www.superb.co.za

Dealers Countrywide

Franchise/Dealer Opportunity Available



sales@superb.co.za info@superb.co.za

DEDICATED TO

Focus specifically on the Hospitality, Retail &Catering Global distribution and support network Software development for PoS, Back Office & Head Office Systems integration with option of embedded or PC based systems Range of PoS terminals to suit various styles of operation & budgets



Smart Emergency Inflatable Beer Bucket Charger Keep your beers and other drinks Never again worry about your cool in an ice bucket. smartphone running out of juice.





South Africa's only one-stop online shop for the urban man.

www.BuyMantality.co.za



Tel: 011-462-5482

NEXT DAY COURIER DELIVERY! E & OE | All prices include VAT

Are you brave enough to bare all in a Mankini? Not just for the beach, the Mankini is the perfect item to wear at formal events such as graduation ceremonies, embassy cocktail parties or funerals. For too long, men have been discriminated against in the bikini stakes, but no longer.

The armour style watch has no face. Concealed LED lights appear within the chinks of the bracelet to reveal the time.

RC Helicopter If piloting remote control helicopters wasn't fun enough, this 3-channel military-inspired number comes with a built-in missile launcher too!

The Data Recovery and Virus Removal Specialists

Hard Drive Failure? Data Corruption?

Data Recovery and Virus Removal performed on all PC's, Mac's & iPods etc. Including Hard drives, CD's, DVD's, Camera SD cards etc.

RAID failure? (Assessment fee applies) **Unbeatable Service & Turn-Around Time**





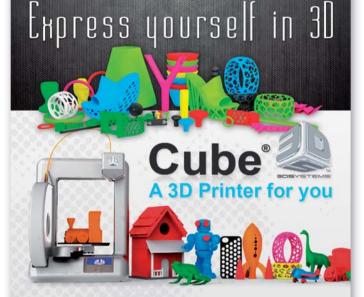
Unit 81A Studio Park 5 Concourse Crescent Lonehill, Gauteng

No Recovery - No Charge. **No Quotation** Rejection Fees. No Assessment & **Evaluation Fees.**

Call: 011-467-38

www.datagate.co.za





Plug and Play Simplicity: Straight out of the box - you can get started immediately with the Cube's simple setup.

Goodbye Cables. Hello Wi-F: 3D printing with the Cube is easy. Send your prints to the Cube from your computer.

Cubify Software: The Cube ships with easy to use software that turns all your downloaded models or self-made models into files the Cube can understand.

Unit 6 Ground Floor Right, Cambridge Park 5 Bauhinia Street, Highveld Technopark, Centurion Tel: +27 (0)12-654-0559 | Cell: +27 (0)82-561-5051 Email: info@3d-printer.co.za

Web: www.3d-printer.co.za



Nintendo Wii U



Coming at the tail end of 2012, and offering a fine way to start 2013, was Nintendo's latest console, the Wii U. The question on everyone's lips though, is whether it can enchant the masses – and score as many eager fans – as its predecessor, the Wii.

'The GamePad genuinely

experience making the Wii U

enhanced the overall

a winner.'

o begin with, contrary to some criticism that To begin with, contrary to some states has been levelled at the device, setting up the Wii U is relatively easy. Charging the GamePad before beginning the process is a good idea though, particularly as it will be used quite extensively to run through the entire setup process.

Ready, setup, go

If you have purchased the Basic pack (reviewed here) you will need to already have the Wii's sensor bar (from the previous Wii) at hand, as one is not included with this particular package.

Additionally, there is an initial update that needs to be downloaded and installed; while this can take a while over the Wii U's built in Wi-Fi connection, it is certainly not 8 GB as previously reported, but

rather close to 1 GB, and took us a little more than a couple of hours over a fast ADSL connection for the Wii U to be ready for action. Another nifty feature of the setup process is that you can opt to create a new Mii (personalised avatar) from scratch, or you can import a previously created one from your 3DS or a QR code

Ergonomically speaking

Whereas the Wii was relatively small and compact, the Wii U is quite a bit larger and thicker, although if you opt for the Premium pack, this can be offset by the included vertical stand. Like on its predecessor, the hard plastic casing is a familiar sight (white in the Basic pack, black in the Premium pack). The main difference between the two packages though - besides the price - is in the storage. The white, Basic Wii U has 8 GB of storage, while the black. Premium version holds a more generous 32 GB. You can, however, connect an external hard drive using one of the two USB ports, and transfer data using the SD card slot on both.

Streets ahead

On the graphics front, the Wii U is streets ahead of its predecessor. Although the Wii's graphics definitely showed its age, the Wii U's graphics via its HDMI port can certainly hold its own against the Xbox 360 and PS3. However, the Wii U's real

distinction comes from its GamePad controller. While this is larger than it first seemed, it is also lighter as well as more comfortable to hold in one's hand. Both analog sticks, bumpers and triggers fall right

where they need to, while the D-pad and X, Y, A and B buttons are similarly within easy reach. Additionally, the touchscreen is very responsive to touch, and the dual screen functionality is one we quickly fell in love with. It means one can easily switch off one's TV or turn it to another channel for someone else to watch, while continuing to play a game using the GamePad exclusively, along with a pair of headphones.

To the point

All this translated into a very enjoyable experience when playing games such as Nintendo Land and New Super Mario Bros U, while the GamePad genuinely enhanced the overall experience. In short, the Wii U is a winner. The Wii U Basic pack has a RRP of R4 000, while the Premium pack has a RRP of R4 600. [RN] 6

NintendoLand

You and your Nintendo friends



An excellent starting point for new Wi U owners, NintendoLand is a theme-park based game, split into twelve attractions, many of which are centred around familiar Nintendo franchises.

ans of series staples, such as The Legend of Zelda, Mario, Metroid and Pikmin, should all find something nostalgically familiar to gravitate towards.

More specifically, attractions on offer include the Legend of Zelda: Battle Quest, Pikmin Adventure and Metroid Blast, Mario Chase, and Luigi's Ghost Mansion (great fun played as a group).

Additionally, some less familiar offerings are also available but no less enjoyable, namely Animal Crossing: Sweet Day, Yoshi's Fruit Cart, Octopus Dance, Donkey Kong's Crash Course, Takamaru's Ninja Castle, Captain Falcon's Twister Race and Balloon Trip Breeze,

While some of the attractions are particularly aimed at providing team and competitive (player versus player) fun, they can also be enjoyed singularly as well. Adding impetus to keep returning to the attractions is the fact that participating in them then nets you the chance to score coins, which results in a prize.

It bodes well that it is difficult to choose a singular personal favourite attraction, but Legend of Zelda: Battle Quest certainly had us coming back for more, and only whetted our desire for a full Zelda game on the Wii U in the near future.

To the point

As well as being an excellent showcase of the GamePad's functionality, NintendoLand also offers more than its fair share of wholesome, and family-friendly, fun. It is bundled with the Premium Pack, and has an RRP of R500. [RN] &

Top 5 games for the first quarter of 2013

Gamers get ready

2013 is already looking like its shaping up to be a spectacular year on the gaming front. Along with many of last year's delayed titles, several other heavy hitters are slated to make their debut. Here are our top picks for 2013.



DmC: Devil May Cry

Slashes 15 January

eading the charge is the reboot of the Devil May Cry franchise by developers Ninja Theory, which, if the demo is anything to judge by, is striking all the right kinds of notes for a fantastic, bloody and thrilling actionadventure and hack and slash title. The game centres around Dante, who finds himself in the demon controlled Limbo City. Quickly recruited by a mysterious organisation known as The Order, led by his brother Vergil, Dante's stylish and weapon-laden battle to liberate Limbo City is accompanied by a subplot to reveal more about his own origins.



Dead Space 3

Scares February

fter Dead Space 2, another entry was inevitable, less than two months' time, Isaac Clarke and John Carver, will be bringing frightening back, as they attempt to track down the source of the Necromorph

scourge. This time though, it will be the ice planet of Tau Volantis that will be the setting of a title we expect will skewer our attention and haunt our nightmares. Whether players opt to brave the treacherous planet alone, or team up with a friend to share the fear, Dead Space 3 should



Tomb Raider

Vaults March

his reboot of Tomb Raider takes us back before Lara Croft became the renown adventurer extraordinaire that we are familiar with, to rather tell an origins story. Players can expect to see a more vulnerable and fallible Lara who has to fight for her own

survival. The young archaeologist finds herself on a not so deserted island after being shipwrecked, and accruing the skills for which she has become famous. In place of the trademark duel pistols, Lara, at least at first, will rely on a bow and arrow to dispatch foes. Parallels have been drawn to Uncharted, for all the right, and exciting reasons.



Aliens: CM

Crash lands February

o say the anticipation for Aliens: Colonial Marines is of epic proportions for fans of the Aliens franchise would be no exaggeration. Hopes are high that the game will be offering up some genuine, spine-tingling Xenomorph scares last experinced by Ripley and co.

Indeed, Gearbox's co-op friendly first person shooter is set after Alien 3 and is officially considered part of the Aliens canon. Players will step into the shoes of Corporal Christopher Winter as he and his team go on a search and rescue mission to find Ellen Ripley and investigate what went wrong on the USS Sulaco. Players can also expect a nasty confrontation with the Queen herself.



Bioshock Infinite

Floating in March

Delayed and delayed again, Bioshock Infinite is nonetheless looking like a game that will be well worth the wait when it arrives in March. Taking place in the floating city of Columbia, the third in the series puts players in the shoes of Booker

DeWitt, who is tasked with freeing a young woman Elisabeth, who has some rather interesting powers at her disposal. While players will have an arsenal of weapons and psychokinetic powers, expect the stylishly rendered city, with its fair share of intrigue, to keep you captivated till the

Honourable **Mentions:**

Two honourable mentions bring our tally to seven, as the PlayStation exclusive, God of War: Ascension and the Xbox 360 exclusive Gears of War: Judgment, will similarly lead a fearsome and unrelenting assault on gamers' wallets this March. In short, the first three months of the gaming calendar are chock full of goodness. [RN] 4

Issue 112 | January 2013



Acer recommends Windows®



Aspire S7 | Touch

Don't just touch...









For further information please call Acer Sales on: 0861 Acer SA (223 722) or visit www.acer.co.za

For regular updates visit our Acer Africa Facebook page and follow us on twitter





www.acer.co.za