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# tech smart

## Spring in your Tech

The best gear for the  
great outdoors



## Asus Slider

Tablets, now with keyboards



## Samsung X900

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# TECH OUTDOORS ISSUE

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ISSUE 96 September 2011 ISSN 1726-3358



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Flicker free 3D



**CINEMA 3D**  
MONITOR



# The Outdoors Issue » September 2011



## Climb aboard the tech bus

Sometimes you'll wait ages for a bus and then several come along at once, and this was indeed the case for big tech news in August. The mighty Google bought Motorola Mobility to strengthen its patent portfolio (see p7), while HP admitted defeat by calling an end to its WebOS-based TouchPad tablet, before we here in SA could even get a sniff of it (we lament its premature departure on p25). In the same announcement HP also stated that they might consider full separation of its Personal Systems Group (PSG), which includes their notebooks and desktop PCs, through spin-off or other transaction. If all this was not enough, one of the business world's most prominent CEOs, Steve Jobs, called an end to his amazing tenure at Apple's helm, now serving as chairman of the board of directors (see p3).

With all the hard news out of the way, our Outdoor issue is all about finding the best gear to take on the great outdoors this spring. Winter felt way too long and I for one cannot wait to get back into the sun.

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

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## » Features

### Tech Outdoors

With spring officially arriving we've rounded-up all the best running and outdoor gadgets to put a bounce back in your step. Come on summer!

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## » Tablets

### The latest Tablets

Looking for a tablet? Don't miss our reviews of three of the latest 10" Android tablets hitting the SA market. Read more about Asus' Slider, the Motorola Xoom and Samsung's hot Galaxy Tab 10.1 write here.

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## » Competition

### Kaspersky & Microsoft

We have three copies of Kaspersky Internet Security 2012 featuring hybrid protection to give away, and if you're not lucky there how about winning an amazing Samsung Omnia 7 running Windows Phone 7?

17

## » Gadgets

### Garmin Forerunner 610

We take the new Forerunner 610 GPS training watch for a run to test out its all new touchscreen capabilities. How well did it perform? Read here to find out.

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## TOP TECH TITBITS

### Google munches Motorola Mobility



Google stunned the industry when it announced that it will be acquiring Motorola Mobility for \$12.5 billion in order to "Supercharge Android, enhance competition, and offer wonderful user experiences". The purchase is motivated by Google's desire to strengthen its patent portfolio, in order to shield it against lawsuits from the likes of Apple and Microsoft (see more on p9). Google CEO and co-founder Larry Page explained that Motorola will be run as a separate business and that the Google would continue to work with other hardware partners who have based their phones on the Android platform. ([bit.ly/googorola](http://bit.ly/googorola))

### HP drops TouchPad, might spin off PC division



HP dropped a bombshell of its own when it announced that it was discontinuing its TouchPad tablet line and webOS-based smartphones. This follows a poor adoption rate in the US, despite a \$100 price cut on the device. In the same announcement, the company confirmed that it was considering a full or partial separation of the Personal Systems Group division, which encompasses consumer PCs and mobile computing devices. This has left many industry commentators without immediate answers to why HP would do this, seeing that HP is the number one notebook manufacturer in the world. The separation is far from a done deal though. ([bit.ly/touchgone](http://bit.ly/touchgone))

### Apple CEO Steve Jobs resigns



As the chief executive officer of one of the most successful technology companies in the world, Steve Jobs' resignation from Apple helped to make August one of the big IT news months of the year. However, Jobs will stay on in the company, to serve as chairman of the board, director and "Apple employee". He quickly urged the board to name Tim Cook as his successor CEO of Apple, which it has.

In an open letter, Jobs stated: "I have always said if there ever came a day when I could no longer meet my duties and expectations as Apple's CEO, I would be the first to let you know. Unfortunately, that day has come." ❀

## HOT NEW PRODUCTS



### Sony 3D DEV-3 and DEV-5 binoculars

Sometimes catching a glimpse of that elusive bird or member of the big five happens so fast, that there may not be time to reach for the camera bag. Enter Sony's new DEV-3 and DEV-5 binoculars, the world's first digital binoculars with full HD (1080p, AVCHD 2.0 format) video recording and a 3D mode. It's out in November in the US for the pricey sums of \$1400 and \$2000 (approximately R10 000 and R14 420) respectively.

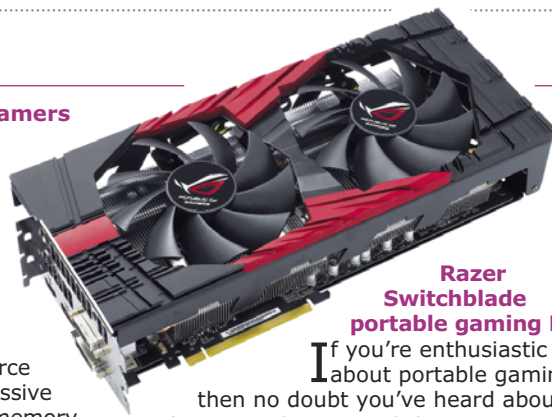


### Sony Handycam 3D HDR-TD10

Watching movies in 3D and playing stereoscopic games is one thing, taking 3D home movies and making your own 3D masterpieces is quite another. Sony's HD 3D Camcorder enables you to switch between recording movies in 1920 x 1080 in 3D or full high definition 2D, while 3D content can also be previewed on the camcorder's LCD screen. It retails for \$1500 (R10 800). No local release date is available yet.

### Asus Republic of Gamers MARS II GPU

Asus calls this limited edition graphics processing unit, the "world's fastest, most powerful graphics card". With good reason seeing that it combines twin Nvidia GeForce GTX 580 GPUs and sports a massive 3 GB of GDDR5 video memory. No.1 on our Xmas 2011 wish list, no RRP or release date is available yet.



### Razer Switchblade portable gaming PC

If you're enthusiastic about portable gaming, then no doubt you've heard about the Nintendo 3DS and the Sony PSP Vita. How about the Razer Switchblade? The device, which is based on an Intel Atom processor and is currently in development, features a multi-touch 7" screen, a dynamic tactile keyboard, and an intelligent user interface that adjusts the configuration and key layout on-the-fly based on game content and user requirements. ❀





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## Sci News



### Twist and turn

The perfect golf swing is all in the hips.

And the shoulders it seems, with a study that recently appeared in the *Journal of Applied Biomechanics*, showing that the pros have got it down to a tee. Scientists recorded three-dimensional images of a group of pro golfers' as well as amateurs' swings. Analyses showed that the pros all tilted their shoulders to a similar degree, displayed a similar degree of twist relative to the shoulder tilt and exerted similar peak turning force when hitting the ball – which they all did really well. Amateurs, though, displayed a much more variable style and, not surprisingly, clubbed the ball with less force. The study shows that the combination of the correct shoulder tilt, hip swing and turning force is the key to golfing success, while simultaneously minimising injury risk.

#### » More hot science

IBM produces first 'brain chips':  
[bbc.in/iwantbrain](http://bbc.in/iwantbrain)



### Coffee break

Tell-tale signs of your coffee break may soon be a thing of the past, say physicists in a recent article in the journal, *Nature*. Paper stains from, for example, spilt coffee are caused by the shape of the particles suspended in the fluid drops. By systematically stretching perfectly round particles suspended in water, the researchers showed that more oblong particles tend to cling to one another because of strong attraction forces. The oblong shape prevents the particles from flowing evenly to the edge of the water drop. As the water evaporates, they thus get stuck on the paper. A drop of soap added to the mix, however, broke the surface tension of the water drops and allowed even evaporation of the fluid, leaving no stains behind. The findings may be useful for printing and painting techniques.

The case for parallel universes:  
[bit.ly/morethan1](http://bit.ly/morethan1)



### A drop in the ocean

The Earth was a suffocating place about 2.3 billion years ago. But a paper in a recent issue of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, says oxygen may have been around 300 million years earlier. Spurred by earlier findings of fossilised traces of chemicals called sterols, which contain oxygen, scientists grew yeast cells under two different conditions. Without oxygen available, the yeast happily took up sterols from the culture medium. But when tiny amounts of oxygen were introduced, the cells started to make their own sterols. The results suggest that as blue-green algae slowly got the hang of photosynthetically producing oxygen, other oxygen-dependent organisms immediately used it. The eventual oxygen spike thus occurred only once more colonies of the blue-green algae caught on, leading to an oversupply of the life-giving gas. Lucky for us. [LP] ♻️

Aliens may destroy humanity to protect other civilisations: [bit.ly/spareme](http://bit.ly/spareme)

## Eco News



### Nashua Mobile saves paper, plants trees

Nashua Mobile launched an initiative in September 2008 via which they hoped to get their clients to convert to electronic billing. The company committed to donating R10 to Food & Trees for Africa (FTFA) for every customer that opted to receive electronic bills as opposed to printed paper bills. Nashua Mobile has now revealed that due to the success of this project FTFA has already been able to plant over 7278 trees across South Africa, as well as to train and pay stipends to 146 unemployed people within disadvantaged communities. With their latest cheque of R383 480, FTFA will be able to plant a further 4262 trees across the country, bringing the total number of trees planted to 11 540.

#### » Other interesting eco news

Discarded alligator fat can be converted into biodiesel. <http://cnet.co/fatallig>



### Ford & SunPower join forces on green car tech

Ford and SunPower have teamed up to provide a high-efficiency rooftop solar system, providing Focus Electric car owners with enough renewable energy production, to offset the energy used for charging. The 2.5 kilowatt SunPower system will produce an estimated 3000 kilowatt hours of electricity per year and employs high-efficiency solar panels that generate around 50% more electricity than conventional panels and also utilises less roof space.

It was sized to accommodate a customer that drives approximately 1600 km per month. The cost of having a green charging solution for your eco-friendly car comes at a high cost though, with a base price of just under \$10 000 (almost R72 000).

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### Philips winner of L Prize competition

Last month the US Department of Energy announced that Philips Lighting North America has won the 60-watt replacement bulb category of the Bright Tomorrow Lighting Prize (L Prize) competition. The Department of Energy's L Prize challenged the lighting industry to develop high performance, energy-saving replacements for conventional light bulbs, which will save American consumers and businesses money. Philips' replacement bulb holds the potential for massive power savings, because if every 60-watt incandescent bulb in the States was replaced with the 10-watt L Prize winner, then the American nation's power savings would amount to a whopping 35 terawatt-hours of electricity or \$3.9 billion annually, as well as avoiding 20 million metric tons of carbon emissions. ♻️

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## Interview: Megan Nicholas, Country Director, Motorola Mobility

As part from being purchased by Google, Motorola Mobility launched the Atrix smartphone and Xoom tablet locally. We talked to Megan Nicholas to discuss these interesting developments.



**TechSmart (TS):** Did you expect the Google purchase of Motorola Ability?

**Megan Nicholas (MN):** No, it was a complete surprise for us.

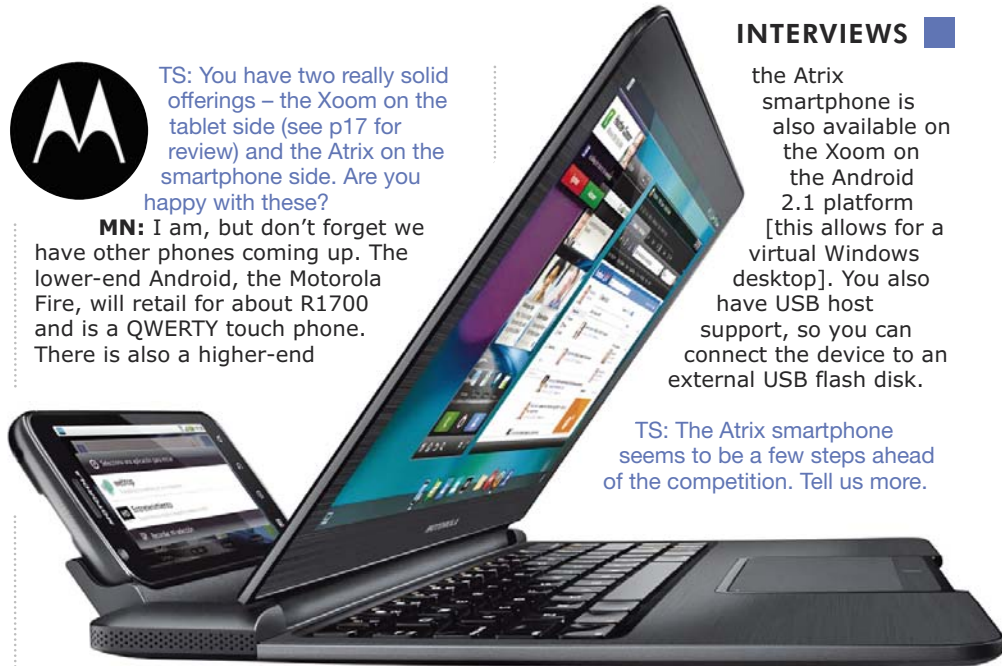
**TS:** How has the SA market taken to Android?

**MN:** The SA market doesn't know a lot about Android, so it's an education process. Worldwide, Android has a 50% market share – two years ago it was next to nothing. We are sitting on 6-8% and we will follow this trend.



**TS:** You have two really solid offerings – the Xoom on the tablet side (see p17 for review) and the Atrix on the smartphone side. Are you happy with these?

**MN:** I am, but don't forget we have other phones coming up. The lower-end Android, the Motorola Fire, will retail for about R1700 and is a QWERTY touch phone. There is also a higher-end



The Motorola Atrix docked in the Lapdock to form a notebook.

QWERTY touch – the more solid Motorola Pro with a bigger screen.

**TS:** A number of other tablets are running the Tegra 2 processor, just like the Xoom. What is the differentiating factor?

**MN:** We future proofed the device making it MicroSD card ready, so you can go add all the way up to 32 GB of extra storage. The Webtop software with which you can go on to Citrix that is on

**MN:** The main driver will be the HD Multimedia Dock with which you can connect to a TV. For the man on the street it's easy to use. The notebook dock is suitable for the corporate market. Companies are looking to put their field marketing agents on the Lapdock, since with this you can dock your smartphone in the Lapdock, do full reporting on it like a regular notebook and send orders immediately. 📶

## INTERVIEWS

the Atrix smartphone is also available on the Xoom on the Android 2.1 platform [this allows for a virtual Windows desktop]. You also have USB host support, so you can connect the device to an external USB flash disk.

**TS:** The Atrix smartphone seems to be a few steps ahead of the competition. Tell us more.

## Interview: Rob Orr, Vice President for Product Management, Research In Motion

The new BlackBerry Curve 9360 has been released internationally and is a lot sleeker (11 mm) and faster (800 MHz processor) than its older Curve brothers. We talked to Rob Orr, vice president for Product Management at Research In Motion, about the new features.



**TechSmart (TS):** So what's important on the new BlackBerry Curve 9360?

**Rob Orr (RO):** I would say three main things. We are bringing the new BlackBerry 7 operating system to the Curve franchise; there

are new Facebook browsing capabilities; while the new Liquid Graphics user interface is also onboard. The 9360 also offers improvements in the form of an 800 MHz processor – the fastest on a Curve yet, a new display resolution of 480 x 360 pixels, GPS, Wi-Fi, memory improved to 512 MB and a sleek backlit keyboard.

**TS:** What are you most excited about in the new Curve models?

**RO:** There are lots, but if I have to pick I would say the design. The Curve range has always been very approachable and for many it's their first smartphone experience. Our industrial designers have done a marvelous job and the Curve's name is now reflected in its design, with a curved slope on the front and back. The new BlackBerry Curve 9360 takes the hardware, software and

communication to the next level.

**TS:** Why do you think BlackBerry is so popular here in SA?

**RO:** The things that make BlackBerry are BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) and further enhanced messaging capabilities. BlackBerry has brought smartphone technology to a new segment, and for many it's their first experience on the internet. Furthermore it's cost effective and cost controlled.

**TS:** Tell us a bit more about BBM 6.

**RO:** BBM 6 takes the messaging experience and enhances it. For example the developers have worked on the chat user interface, you can post your status on BBM, allow friends to join games and access new content and services straight from BBM. We have 67 million BlackBerry users, with 50 million BBM users, across the globe right now. BlackBerry is growing in a number of emerging markets, such as Venezuela and Dubai, but also, for example, in the prepaid sector in the UK and the Netherlands. 📶





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
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# THE BIG ISSUE

## ANDROID PATENT WAR

With a leading market share in the burgeoning smartphone market and 500 000 handsets activated each day, Google's Android operating system (OS) seems unstoppable. But now its growth is stifled by a number of companies claiming copyright infringement on patents used in the popular OS.

The Google patent war has steadily gathered steam, with legal battles being fought on many fronts. Redmond-based software giant, Microsoft, started its systematic "sign patent agreement or get sued" campaign against many an Android original equipment manufacturer (OEM). According to reports, the company is receiving a lovely \$5 for every HTC device being sold and is currently making more money off Android than it is off its own Windows Phone OS.

Another Silicone Valley heavyweight, Oracle, sued Google stating that Android "knowingly, directly and repeatedly infringed" on its Java-related intellectual property (latest is that Google might be willing to settle with Oracle). This while the biggest fish in the tech company pond, Apple, started waging its own large scale battles with the biggest Android smartphone maker Samsung as well as

HTC, in regards to patents relating to user interface, design and hardware.

### The quest to find a patent lawsuit shield

In order to protect its partners from Android patent lawsuits Google needed to secure a wealth of patents under its patent portfolio, so it started shopping around. A half-hearted bid (\$900 million) for Nortel Network's patent portfolio of over 6000 patents and patent applications failed. Instead it was claimed by an alliance of, amongst others, Apple, Ericsson, Microsoft, Research In Motion and Sony whose winning bid was five times as much (\$4.5 billion). In the meantime, Google purchased over 1000 of IBM's patents and also took the contentious patents war issue into the PR arena, stating that there's "a hostile, organised

campaign against Android by Microsoft, Oracle, Apple and other companies, waged through bogus patents [lawsuits]."

### Googorola is born

Now it seems Google has played its trump card with the announcement that it will be acquiring Motorola Mobility for \$12.5 billion. "Our acquisition of Motorola will increase competition by strengthening Google's patent portfolio, which will enable us to better protect Android from anti-competitive threats from Microsoft, Apple and other companies," Google CEO and co-founder, Larry Page, explained.

Many questions can be posed as a result of this deal, including whether the Motorola patent portfolio is strong enough and if all manufacturers using Android are still equal. The more pertinent question for us though is what could Google have come up with for Android, if it spent \$12.5 billion on its development rather than defending Android from lawsuits? [HD] 🌟

## Need to go somewhere? Just take out your smartphone »

### Nokia and Google update their map applications

GPS navigation received a boost over the past several weeks in the form of a new update for Nokia Maps as well as Google Maps Navigation (Beta) being made available for South Africa.



Nokia South Africa's latest update to Nokia Maps, version six, which will run on a range of Nokia touchscreen phones, including the 5230, N97, N97 mini, N8, C7 and C601, is a free download that is available from the Ovi store or as a software update within the existing Nokia maps application. The company explained that the latest update shows people real-time traffic conditions, enabling users to pre-plan

the quickest and most environmentally-efficient route. Nokia Maps traffic includes updates on congestion, road closures, road works and other traffic incidents, colour-coding roads as red, amber or green depending on traffic flow. The maps software comes pre-loaded on all Nokia smartphones, and provides free turn-by-turn voice guided navigation, while the traffic service is available on all touch Symbian smartphones.

Nokia South Africa's Patrick Henchie explained that Nokia Maps included 100% coverage of the road network (554 239 km), with speed limits for major roads and lane guidance for all motorways. Along with walk navigation, which is available for Joburg and Cape Town, Nokia Maps for desktop (<http://maps.nokia.com>) has also been updated and now includes photo-realistic 3D imaging of Cape Town, amongst other major global cities, such as San Francisco.



### For Android

After a long wait South Africans are now also privy to Google Maps Navigation (Beta) for Android running smartphones or tablets. Google Maps Navigation is an internet-connected GPS navigation or 'satnav' system, which provides turn-by-turn voice driving directions as a free feature of Google Maps. The update followed Google's announcement last month that it had released Google Maps 5.9, adding voice and ringtone notifications for Transit Navigation (beta) as well as adding support for tablets, while bubble buttons are making a reappearance, helping to add call and navigate buttons on the main map. Transit Navigation for public transport employs GPS to determine a user's current location along their route and then alerts them when it's time to get off the bus or train. [RN] 🌟





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## Tech Running

## Great gear for that PB

It's time to shake off that winter fat and hit the road again. Luckily there's some excellent tech-filled gear to get you up and running in no time.



## Puma Complete Trailfox 4

When it comes to the great outdoors, you don't want to suffer due to inadequate trail running shoes. Puma's Trailfox range has built up quite a reputation over the past few years, with the new Complete Trailfox 4 looking set to continue in this tradition. With IdCELL cushioning for improved shock absorption, directional lugs to help with footing and a forefoot frame for added support, there's no trail this shoe can't tackle. R1199.



## Nike Vapor Flash jacket

Remaining visible at all times is the name of the road safety game while running. Nike's new Vapor Flash jacket has a reflective laminated face that ensures 360-degrees of visibility in low-light conditions. And while one side is highly visible, the jacket can also be reversed to be worn when not sweating on the road. It costs a pretty penny though, retailing at R2999 in Nike stores only.



## Vibram Fivefingers Bikila LS

If Hobbits had the need for running shoes we're quite sure it would look a bit like this. Vibram started the "barefoot" running craze which has now taken the running world by storm. Their new Bikila LS's closed quick lace system makes sure different foot types fit comfortably, and apart from looking unlike any other running shoe, the Vibrams can also be machine washed. R1499.



## Nike+ SportWatch GPS powered by TomTom

Working in conjunction with the Nike+ sensor (although not needed), the Nike+ SportWatch GPS tracks not only distance, pace and time, but now also maps your route thanks to help from the folks at TomTom. Once done you download data to your PC via the included USB connection. This cheeky timepiece gives little run reminders, while also congratulating you for a hard worked personal best. Unfortunately we'll have to wait until February 2012 for a local debut. ❖



Also check out the the Garmin Forerunner 610 on p21.

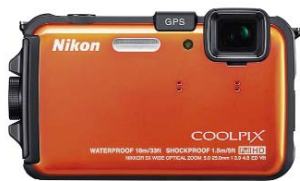
## The great tech outdoors

## Must have outdoor gadgets

Spring has sprung and if you're heading to the great outdoors, the following tech gear is essential.

## Nikon Coolpix AW100

If cameras were people, the Nikon Coolpix AW100 camera would be the adventurer you read about in *National Geographic* who is bushwacking through the Amazon, barefoot. This 16 megapixel camera boasts a 5x zoom and is waterproof to



ten metres, freezeproof to minus ten degrees Celcius and shockproof from heights of up to 1.5 metres. The camera further features full HD (1080p) video and includes a built-in GPS, electronic compass and integrated world map, enabling users to geotag their images and track their route when exploring.



## Bear Grylls Survival Kit

The name Bear Grylls is synonymous with survival under extreme conditions. Therefore when he endorses a survival kit, you know it's going to be worth taking notice of. The Bear Grylls Survival Kit contains a Gerber miniature multi-tool, miniature light, hand saw, signaling mirror and number of other survivor essentials that is a must in case of outdoor emergency. R649 from The G.A.D.G.E.T. Shop. [www.thegadgetshop.co.za](http://www.thegadgetshop.co.za)

## Panasonic Toughbook

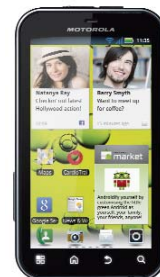
Panasonic's Toughbook range are built for outdoor abuse and its line-up includes fully rugged, semi-rugged and business rugged notebooks that are designed to work in extreme conditions or less than ideal situations. The latest fully rugged

models have received a performance upgrade in the form of 2nd generation Intel Core i5 vPro processors. This should add even faster performance, with the CF-31 for example boasting a 13.1" high brightness LCD (1200 nits) and battery life of between thirteen and twenty hours. Most importantly it's dust and water resistant and has passed a drop-shock free fall test up to 1.3 meters. Call Vanessa on 011-313-1492 or [vcoopasamy@pansolutions.co.za](mailto:vcoopasamy@pansolutions.co.za).



## Motorola Defy+

The Motorola Defy+ smartphone is the go-to device when you want a phone that's water resistant, scratch resistant and dust proof. It features the same life-proof design of the Motorola Defy (our review: [bit.ly/defymoto](http://bit.ly/defymoto)), but comes with a 1 GHz processor that runs 25% quicker than its predecessor's 800 MHz Cortex-A8 processor. Additionally, it comes pre-loaded with a CardioTrainer application, which no doubt trail runners and joggers will find a use for. We might just see a spring release for this phone. [RN] ❖



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## Nokia E6 » Business savvy touch-and-type experience

Before unveiling its first Windows Phone 7 OS powered smartphone, Nokia seems content to continue with Symbian-operating mobile devices such as the new E6. It runs the new Symbian Anna OS, which sports some under the hood and cosmetic improvements.



Nokia's E6 comes with a very grip- and pocket-friendly (115.5 x 59 x 10.5 mm) design, with an easy-on-the-fingers QWERTY keyboard. Besides the keyboard, the smartphone features a 2.46" capacitive touch-screen boasting a VGA (640 x 480 pixels) resolution that packs more pixels per inch (328 ppi) than the iPhone 4's superb Retina Display (326 ppi). It translates to photos, websites and video looking very good indeed.

### Symbian Anna

The E6 runs on Symbian Anna with which Nokia hopes to bring its mobile OS on

par with modern rivals such as Android and iOS. Symbian Anna sports a fresh look and the ability to have five home-screens with faster movement between them due to real-time scrolling. You lack the OS customisation levels of rivals including Android though, and whilst accessing functionality is simple, the same convoluted menu structure characterised by other Symbian versions remains.

### Features

Keeping things running smoothly is a 680 MHz ARM 11 CPU, but we did experience instances of occasional lag. It does not

compare well to other smartphones featuring CPU speeds of 1 GHz, with top of the line models sporting dual-core chips. That said, the E6's battery life is much better than the usual one day fare, lasting well over two days. Also onboard is 802.11n Wi-Fi connectivity, support for USB flash drives, Bluetooth 3.0 and an eight megapixel camera that has a dual-LED flash and HD-ready (720p)

video recording. Nokia's E6 boasts a solid 8 GB of internal memory that can be boosted by adding a microSD card of up to 32 GB.

### Conclusion

Nokia's E6 makes for a decent offering, retailing for R4499, which nets you a free car charger, leather pouch and a handy windscreen dock for when you employ Ovi Maps to guide you whilst driving. Symbian Anna is a much needed upgrade to Symbian^3 and looks a little more modern too, but still doesn't rival iOS or Android. [HD] ♦

**Full review:** [bit.ly/NokiaE6review](http://bit.ly/NokiaE6review)

## HTC Desire S » Compactly capable

There is a certain level of quality we have come to expect from HTC, and picking up the Desire S conveys this at first touch.

The Desire S is somehow compact and sizable enough at the same time, with a reassuring weight and slight heft that renders it neither overly heavy nor unpleasantly bulky. However, it's what happens when you turn on a device (using a thankfully slightly raised power button on the top) that matters, and on this count, the Desire S does not disappoint. HTC has opted to include the latest version of Android's

**"The phone is somehow compact and sizable enough at the same time."**

Gingerbread (2.3.3), and overlay this with its Sense (2.1) interface. At this point, HTC knows what it's doing with Sense, and on the Desire S it shows. The Sense interface flies between integrated social feeds,

the best apps arrangement in the business and intuitive accessibility to numerous functions, all while retaining Android's familiarity.

### Performance

General phone navigation is fast and fluid, thanks in no small part to the 1 GHz CPU, which is joined by 768 MB of RAM and 1.1 GB of internal storage. Of course, this can be expanded with a microSD slot, which is neatly hidden beneath the

same slot that holds the battery in place. Additionally, the 3.7" screen, while capturing its fair share of fingerprints, is bright, clear, and offers up saturated and vivid colours that made the most of the Desire S's screen size.

### Features

While it may not be enough to stand alone as a feature, for those who tend to browse the internet on their smartphone, the Desire S's does boast the ability to reflow text from websites to fill the screen. For any screen smaller than the 4" mark, this makes a considerable difference, that, when paired with the bright screen, made a bit of internet surfing on the Desire S that much more feasible. Beyond the basic functionality, which the Desire S handles beautifully, it also has a few other features on offer. Along with its VGA front facing camera for video calling, the Desire S is also home to a five megapixel colour camera, with a flawless auto-focus and LED flash as well as 720p video recording.

### Conclusion

The Desire S is another sought after smartphone in HTC's lineup that we battled to find fault with, that offers a slick interface in a compact yet 'big enough' package. It retails for R4988. [RN] ♦







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## Asus G74Sx » This beast is a beauty

**Make no mistake, Asus' G74Sx is a beast in size, in performance and in price.**

The G74Sx's all black exterior may not scream high performance notebook as loudly as some other gaming notebooks of its ilk, but it has plenty of

**"It came as little surprise that it delivered some of the best benchmarking scores we've ever recorded."**

computing muscle in its stead. At 4.28 kg, the G74Sx is not a notebook that you would ever venture to try balance on your lap for extended periods of time, rather, it's more akin to a high performance car for gaming. It seems to lend itself to serving as an ideal LAN or gaming notebook when you want to slay the most demanding of games and applications.

### See me roar

The G74Sx packs an Intel Sandy Bridge Core i7 (2630 QM) processor, and a whopping 16 GB of DDR3 RAM. It came as little surprise that it delivered some of the best benchmarking scores we've ever recorded.

However, running on an Nvidia GeForce

GTX 560M with a massive 3 GB dedicated video memory, full 1080p high definition and a screen resolution of 1920 x 1080 was apparently not enough for Asus. It needed to ensure the notebook was really cutting edge, and this it has accomplished with the built-in stereoscopic (3D) 17.3" display. The 3D option is there and it does work, provided you don't mind wearing 3D

glasses, which require power from one of the notebook's USB ports. Either way, our test game, Crysis 2, with all the settings turned to maximum, looked spectacular and played smoothly on the G74Sx's crisp and clear screen both with and without 3D turned on.

### Everything else

Along with one terabyte (1000 GB) of hard drive space, the notebook further boasts a full sized keyboard and notepad with a generously size trackpad, both of which were comfortable to use. This accompanies Wi-Fi (802.11n), an HDMI port, three USB 2.0

and one USB 3.0, a Blu-ray player and for more extreme performance, one touch overclocking.

### Conclusion

At a battery life of around two and a half hours, it would be reasonable to expect the power brick to be constantly close by. However, this matters little, as the G74Sx seems to be built for the gaming enthusiast who does not want to settle for anything less than optimal performance. It retails for a hefty R26 999. [RN] 🌟



## Samsung Series 9 900X » Thin, light and powerful

**The Samsung 900X notebook is wafer-thin and light enough to carry just about anywhere, but still manages to pack some impressive features.**

Despite being thin and light at 1.31 kg and measuring 327.6 (width) x 227 (depth) x 15.7 mm (height), the 900X is nonetheless solid enough, thanks to its Duralumin cover. More importantly, the reduction in weight hasn't come at the expense of performance.

**"The 900X takes under 20 seconds to boot up from a powered down state."**

### Performance

Apart from looking extremely stylish, the 900X ran smoothly on an Intel Sandy Bridge Core i5 CPU (1.5 GHz), with 4 GB of memory on the 64-bit Windows 7 Home edition. For a thin-and-light unit it ran quietly and produced little discernible heat, while offering an

impressive battery life of between five to six and a half hours before requiring a visit to the charger. The 13.3" screen, which boasted 16 million colours, a solid 1366 x 768 resolution and a good 400 nit brightness, was sharp and clear.

### Feature packed

Most notable was the notebook's quick response time, taking under 20 seconds to boot up from a powered down state and, if in a sleep state, waking in an

impressive three seconds. This was due in part, to the 900X's respectable 128 GB solid state drive instead of a

regular motorised hard disk. An auto-sensing backlit keyboard, that automatically lit up as the environment in which it was being used became darker, gave just the right amount of light to make finding the keys easy. However, the fact that the trackpad's mouse-buttons are also sensitive to touch can make it difficult to operate.

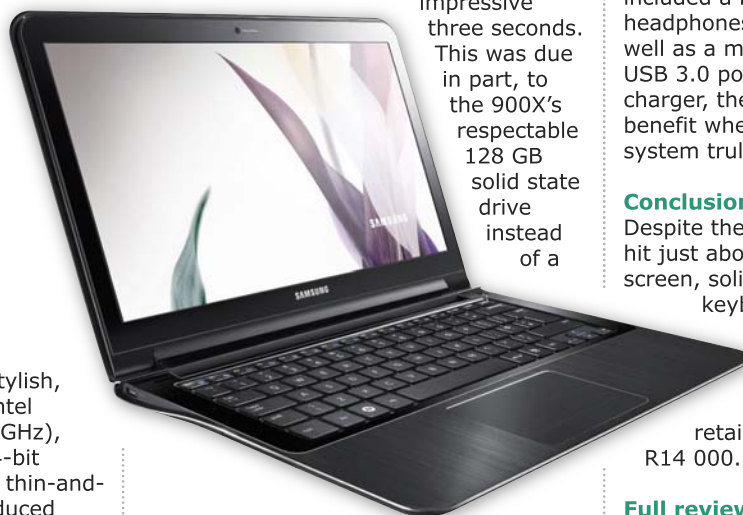
While lacking an optical drive, several ports were hidden behind two flaps on the sides of the notebook. These included a micro SD slot, a 3.5 mm headphones jack and one USB 2.0 as well as a mini Ethernet, mini HDMI and a USB 3.0 port. Instead of a brick sized charger, the 900X's mini charger is a big benefit when travelling, making the system truly portable.

### Conclusion

Despite the touchpad issues, the 900X hit just about every note. The bright screen, solid yet light build, illuminated keyboard and quick boot times were some of our outstanding features, and made the 900X a superb thin and light notebook. It

retails for a pricey R14 000. [RN] 🌟

**Full review:**  
[bit.ly/samser9](http://bit.ly/samser9)



## Asus Eee Pad Slider SL101 » Keyboard convenience

**The wise say tablets are for media consumption, not media creation. Asus' Slider tablet with slide-out QWERTY keyboard begs to differ.**

There are loads of 10" Android tablets in market, each offering pretty much the same with slight variations here and there. Asus' Slider SL101 is the first one that really brings something different to the table. This of course in the form of a very useful slide-out QWERTY keyboard that went a long way in impressing us.

### Now with keyboard

Typing on a tablet can be an awkward experience, which can be made a lot more comfortable by either a stand that raises the screen into a more comfortable position, or a separate stand-alone keyboard. Asus' slide-out

but unlike a full sized notebook the Slider's keyboard comes across a bit cramped. Once you know how, the keyboard is easy to slip out, while at the same time it tilts the screen allowing for a more comfortable viewing angle.

The added keyboard does come with a downside, as it adds considerable weight and size to the device. It pulls the scales at 960 g, while its competitors range between 595 g on the Samsung 10.1 to 765 g on the Acer Iconia A500.

### Ports galore

Another stand-out feature of the Asus Slider is the amount of ports found on the unit. The added keyboard allowed Asus to include both a full USB 2.0 port and a microSD card slot, while

Armed with a Tegra 2 processor and 1 GB of RAM, the Asus Eee Pad Slider SL101 is equal in power to other 10" Android devices in market, but with the big plus of an included slide-out keyboard. If you're going to take lots of notes, write emails or create the odd document, you should seriously consider the Slider. Our model was Wi-Fi only with 16 GB of space. It retails for R5999 and comes with a nice pouch. [MJ] ♦

**"Another stand-out feature of the Asus Slider is the amount of ports found on the unit."**

offering is slightly superior, since the keyboard is always attached and surprisingly comfortable to work on. Comfortable can be a relative term, since compared to typing on glass it's both more responsive and a lot easier,

a mini HDMI port can also be found, although you would have to bring your own HDMI cable to this tablet party.



## Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1 » Thinnest 10.1" tablet by far

**Samsung has launched its latest salvo in the tablet wars with a 10.1" Honeycomb device that is the thinnest and lightest to date.**

For starters, the Galaxy Tab 10.1's most noticeable differentiator is its 8.6 mm thinness and low weight of 595 g. Despite its solid construction and its 10.1" size (almost half an inch larger than the iPad 2's 9.7"), the Galaxy Tab

performance didn't disappoint. We experienced no lag when navigating through the Honeycomb 3.1 interface, while performing common tasks and opening and closing applications were equally as responsive. Playback of 1080p full high definition video on the device was a sight to behold. Simply put, video, which renders at 30 fps, looks awesome on the Tab. Additionally, as a somewhat portable gaming device, the Galaxy Tab

performed equally as brilliantly. Our browsing experience was similarly impressive. Multi-touch, opening and managing multiple tabs worked flawlessly, making zooming into pages and navigating between multiple tabs a pleasure.

With Wi-Fi 802.11n, the Tab maintained a strong and stable connection to our wireless router, while its battery gave us up to ten hours depending on our usage pattern. While the Tab does have a three megapixel rear camera and a two megapixel front camera for video-calling, it disappointingly does not have a slot for adding external storage.

**"The race for the definitive Android tablet is far from over, but with the Galaxy Tab 10.1, there is a clear contender of what an Android tablet can be."**

proved to be neither ungainly nor overtly heavy.

Equally as important, the Galaxy Tab 10.1's screen was excellent, offering deep blacks, superb contrast and vivid colours at a WXGA 1280 x 800 resolution that coped admirably with direct light. However, its glossy coating did readily attract fingerprint and necessitated constant cleaning.

### A real performer

With an Nvidia Tegra 1 GHz dual-core processor, Galaxy Tab 10.1's



### Conclusion

The Galaxy Tab 10.1 is not perfect (a lack of additional ports being one) – but it is close enough to make it a superb, impressive tablet. The race for the definitive Android tablet is far from over, but with the Galaxy Tab 10.1, there is a clear contender of what an Android tablet can be. The 32 GB Wi-Fi and 3G version, which is at present the only model available, retails for R7500. [RN] ♦

**Full review:**  
[bit.ly/samtab10](http://bit.ly/samtab10)





## Motorola Xoom MZ601 » Room to Xoom

**While it seems as though almost every manufacturer is rolling out its version of an Android Honeycomb tablet of late, it would be easy to forget that Motorola's XOOM was actually the world's first Honeycomb tablet.**

On its surface the XOOM is actually quite attractive, with its black screen and silver accents around three quarters of its diameter, and while it's also on the thicker and heavier side at 708 g, its anodized aluminum composition lends it a solid, even rugged, feel. Most notably, the XOOM's 32 GB capacity is accompanied by both an onboard microSD slot and micro USB port, which is something that some other Honeycomb tablets (like Samsung's 10.1) still inexplicably lack.

### Performance

As we have come to expect from 10.1" tablets, the XOOM boasts the Tegra 2 1 GHz dual-core processor, which coped as well as expected with all the general tasks we could throw at it. It provided smooth transitions between pages when navigating, responsive pinch to zoom and it blistered through applications

such as YouTube, Google Maps and the occasional game and handled browsing the internet and opening multiple tabs without a hitch. No Android tablet though can match the smooth experience of the iPad.

**"Its anodized aluminum composition lends it a solid, even rugged, feel."**



While we wish that the 10.1" WXGA (1280x 800) screen would have been a bit brighter at its maximum setting, and matched the Galaxy Tab 10.1's, it was nonetheless adequate enough to be comfortable to read and view.

### Features and foibles

The sound on the XOOM is excellent, offering, crisp, loud, clear sound even at the 50% mark. With a five megapixel rear and two megapixel front facing camera, HD 720p playback, up to ten hours battery life and 802.11n Wi-Fi, the XOOM has all the right features for a tablet of its class. The one minor annoyance was the placement of the power button on the back of the device next to the left speaker.

### Conclusion

Since the Motorola XOOM's global release, we have seen the likes of the Acer Iconia A500, Asus Transformer and Samsung Galaxy Tab 10.1, which means that the XOOM has a fair amount of competition now. While its build and obvious quality is commendable, we suspect that the next generation of XOOM's will need something extra to differentiate it more or help it stay ahead of the tablet pack. It retails for R6599. [RN]

## UP FOR GRABS!

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What we said: "Windows Phone 7 boasts a much cooler, design-conscious look and feel compared to previous versions." [bit.ly/samwin7](http://bit.ly/samwin7) \*review unit.



To enter go to [www.techsmart.co.za](http://www.techsmart.co.za) and find the competition on the right hand side. The competition runs from 1 to 31 September 2011. Terms and conditions apply.

  
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## Olympus Tough TG-310 » When the going gets tough

**The Olympus Tough legacy is quite a mean one – build a rock solid camera that can roll with the punches and make it as user-friendly as possible. The latest addition to the range, the TG-310, is no exception – providing rugged good looks in quite a small body.**

You know from the start that the 14.5 megapixel Olympus Tough TG-310 is not your usual little compact, seeing that it looks rock solid. According to Olympus it can survive drops from 1.5 m, which is

**“We’ll actually bet that it can survive a good distance more since its build quality exudes confidence.”**

typically what most cameras are subjected to at least once during the course of their lifetime. We’ll actually bet that it can survive a good distance more since its build quality exudes confidence. Olympus went to a great deal of trouble to also

make the TG-310 waterproof (up to 3 m) with most of the buttons rubberized and the battery/SD card slot securely locking via a two-step process. Although it’s not necessarily a feature that South Africans would make use of that often, the Tough will continue to work in sub-zero temperatures of up to -10°C, so remember that when you’re up for a skiing holiday in Lesotho.

### But why so small?

One of the biggest problems we experienced with the camera was the LCD screen at the back. Its 2.7" screen size is pretty much standard, but its pixel

count of 280 000 compares unfavourably with say for example the Canon G12’s 461 000. With no optical viewfinder present you’re dependent on the LCD screen at the back to view whatever you’re shooting and when doing so images are simply not displayed crisp enough. This makes composition a frustrating experience, since only when playing back images will your pics display sharply. For such a rugged camera the size of the buttons is also a slight concern with a number of them a bit too small. It’s especially the dainty power button that needs attention and we preferred the design on the previous TG-3000, but luckily the shutter button is nice and large.

### Final word

Despite this the Tough impressed with a number of features, such as interesting filter effects and HDMI out, making an appearance, while 720p video recording is also included. Whether your vacations consist of trips to the mountains, bush, sea or desert, the Olympus Tough TG-310 makes for the perfect travelling companion. It retails for about R2099. [MJ] 🍀



## Canon IXUS 310 HS » Ergonomic ease

**While we love and turn to our smartphone camera as much as the next photographer when a quick and casual snap is called for, there’s still something to be said for an ergonomic, solid and dedicated compact camera. Canon’s IXUS 310 HS is exactly that.**

The IXUS is styled such that it seems to slide and rest comfortably in one’s hand, as if daring you not to cradle the camera’s noticeably curved and pleasing shape. On the front of the body, only

**“The screen, which is no doubt amongst the camera’s most striking features, serves triple duty”**

the 4.4 x optical zoom lens and flash are noticeable, while the top of the camera is almost as minimalistic, with just a power button, full HD switch, zoom and shutter release. Indeed, the one thing you won’t find on the IXUS is an overwhelming

number of buttons or dials to set the camera’s functions. That task is left to the 3.2" touchscreen which covers the back of the camera. The screen, which is no doubt one of the camera’s most striking features, serves triple duty as viewfinder, the screen from which to check one’s photos and control panel for the camera’s functions.

### Feature set

Functions are a plenty, with the abundance of modes on offer including Program mode, Aperture Priority, Shutter priority, portrait, high speed burst, handheld nightscene, low

light, fish eye effect, monochrome, super vivid and slow motion movie, amongst others. Apertures on offer range in ½ stop increments from f2 to f8, while shutter speed range incrementally from 15 seconds to 1/1000 of a second. Additionally, the IXUS, which records to SD cards, offers an impressive 24 mm focal length at its widest zoom range, motion tracking, several auto-focus options and most notably, full (1080p) high-definition video.

### Quality

In terms of the quality of the images themselves, the IXUS produced consistent and above average results, in a variety of lighting conditions, including indoor, low light, outdoor, with or without flash and at various ISO settings, of which the IXUS goes up to 3200. Additionally, the modes – and their in camera processing – worked as advertised, offering a number of no fuss creative options.

### Conclusion

For a mid-range compact camera, the IXUS was a pleasure to hold, to use and to photograph with, offered an abundance of easily accessible features and produced impressive images. It has an RRP of R3150. [RN] 🍀



It is unfortunate, but a fact of life, that PCs, computer related products, process control and data communications equipment can be damaged by high-voltage surges and spikes.

These surges and spikes are most often caused by lightning strikes but can also be triggered by power cuts produced by, for example, load shedding. A lot can be done as far as protection is concerned; however, it is best to begin by describing the magnitude of the threat from which one needs protection.

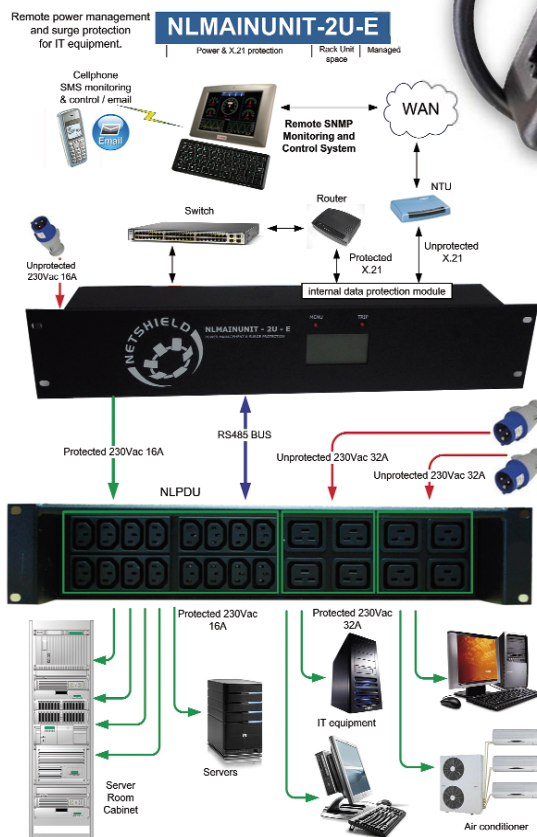
The first stroke of lightning during a thunderstorm can produce peak currents ranging from 1000 – 100 000 Amperes with rise times of one microsecond. It is hard to imagine, let alone protect against, such enormous magnitudes. Fortunately, such threats only apply to direct hits on overhead lines, which is a relatively rare phenomenon. More common is the induced surge on a buried cable. When lightning hits the ground, it creates a ripple effect similar to a drop falling into water. These ripples can travel up to five kilometres, making their way through buried cable which can cause damage to unprotected equipment.

Another cause of harm to equipment comes from power cuts or power surges. Electricity can be described as a river which flows into different channels. When one channel is closed, the water must still go somewhere, causing some of the other channels to reach peak levels.

## The best protection

### A) For buildings/businesses with server rooms

Companies simply cannot afford to not pay attention to high-voltage surges



and spikes. To this end, Netshield offers a range of protection equipment, including the following, for the server room:

### The NLMAINUNIT-2U-E and NLMAINLITE-2U-E

The NLMAIN-range offers protection to X21 Telkom lines and also has an internal SNMP device that enables the user to connect to monitoring software. There are two extra slots available to either expand to X21, Ethernet or E1. If still further expansion is needed, there are chassis that can be added to accommodate further protection for X21, Ethernet and E1.

The NLMAINLITE-2U-E has only one low power meter probe containing eight kettle (IEC) connectors. It provides



16A max and is suitable for smaller environments.

The NLMAINUNIT-2U-E has one low power meter probe containing 16 kettle (IEC) connectors giving out 16A max, as well as two high power meter probes, each providing 32A max. These devices are suitable for larger environments.

### B) For field offices/SOHO/ home environment

The NLSP surge protection range consists of standalone units available to protect general equipment and Telkom lines. These units each have one plug point where the user can add a short extension lead with additional plug points if more than one device needs protection, as long as the total does not exceed 16A. An important additional feature is the inclusion of technology that detects when damage occurs, which is then visually indicated through an LED light. This gives users the advantage of knowing when the unit has taken a fatal strike and needs to be replaced.

### The range consists of:

- NLSP-M-M: To protect equipment such as a PC, Hi-Fi or TV
- NLSP-ADSL-M: To protect internet access and telephone lines
- NLSP-E1-M: To protect all G703 lines and PBXs
- NLSP-ETH-M: To protect all network applications including 10/100/1000 and POE protection in one unit.

For enquiries on any of these products, contact Netshield on 086-111-4428 or 012-841-0320, or visit [www.netshieldsa.com](http://www.netshieldsa.com).



## Garmin Forerunner 610 » Touch training

**With almost all new smartphones coming out with touchscreens, it was only a matter of time before sport watches went the same direction.**

This is indeed the case with the new Forerunner 610, which boasts a new resistive touchscreen. The 610 is a lot smaller than some of the GPS watches on the market, and although it still looks very sporty, it moves slightly away from the usual oversized sport design.

### Now with touch

The shift towards touch is very natural and on a watch like this, where there are lots of menus to work through, it's an obvious benefit. But the fact that it's a resistive touchscreen is both good and

Forerunner 610 is actually a very good running solution. The watch tracks your run via GPS (can be turned off when indoors), and gives constant feedback about pace, distance, calories burned and of course time. There are a number of very good features onboard, and although it might not make your training physically any less strenuous, it sure helps to enhance it. Take for example programmable interval workouts or alerts when you reach a certain distance or pace. You'll also find an auto lap feature which can be set according to distance, while a virtual training partner shows you how far ahead, or behind, your goal you are.

### Heart and sole

We would recommend purchasing the 610 in the bundle which combines the watch with a heart rate monitor (HRM).



Garmin to incorporate Training Effect capability from Firstbeat. With this you can measure the impact of your training on your aerobic fitness.

Apart from a few niggles with the touchscreen, the Forerunner 610 is a very impressive training partner. With loads of functionality, better HRM incorporation as well as both online and offline storage and viewing of training data, the 610 comes highly recommended.

Unfortunately it's priced high at R4010 and, when bundled with heart rate monitor, goes for R4595. [MJ] ❖

**"Although it might not make your training physically any less strenuous, it sure helps to enhance it."**

bad. Good because even when jogging with gloves you won't have problems scrolling through the menus, but also a problem, since it's simply not as accurate as a capacitive touchscreen (as featured on most smartphones).

But enough of the negative, since the

Garmin has done a lot to better incorporate the HRM with the 610 to improve training than, for example, with their previous FR60. The watch now offers customisable training modes which can be based on heart rate zones, while the 610 is also the first watch from

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## BiPAC P108 Powerline 500 HomePlug AV Ethernet adapter starter kit » Wired through your wall sockets

Being on a wireless network is a wonderful thing, but some buildings make it very difficult for the wireless signal to travel effectively.

For people streaming movies, playing games or making VoIP calls, this can be a very frustrating experience. It is possible to simply connect PCs via regular Ethernet cables, but this can look unsightly when cables are not laid

properly. Luckily there is a solution in the form of wall plug Ethernet adapters, such as Billion's BiPAC 2075 kit. With this solution you can use your home's power cables to network data traffic. You plug the one adapter in the wall socket closest to your broadband router and hook it up to the router or modem via the supplied Ethernet cable. The other adapter then goes to another wall socket in whichever room it is needed in, connected to PC via included Ethernet cable.

The BiPAC P108 AV 500 Mbps starter

pack includes two 2075 AV 500 wired HomePlug adaptors with gigabit interface, which is also available as single units to expand on the network. It retails for R1025. Phone Nology for more info on 012-657-1317.



## Advertorial KICKER iKick501 iPod/ iPhone Speaker Dock »

### Just the right amount of kick

The nice thing about modern smartphones, especially the iPhone, is that you always have your music with you. But what when you don't want to listen via earphones? This is where the KICKER iKick501 speaker dock comes in.

The KICKER iKick501 speaker dock packs a punch in a portable form. Powered by an internal amplifier with digital signal processing for rich sound, the dock features a square shaped reflex subwoofer on the back of the unit and a pair of 127 mm woofers and silk-dome tweeters.

If you also have other sources of music, including MP3 or compact-disc players, other smartphones or desktop PCs and notebooks, a mini jack input enables easy connection. Additionally the KICKER also includes RCA stereo outputs that allow for further audio connections and to display video from your phone or iPod to a TV.

The iKick501 dock comes with a thin infrared remote to navigate the iK501's

system menu as well as cycle through the iPod or iPhone's menus and sub-menus.

The dock works with the iPhone, iPhone 3G and all 4th-generation or newer iPod media players, including the iPod touch and any featuring a click wheel. Luckily it is also "Works with iPhone" certified.

Get the iKick501 iPod Speaker Dock from Planet Electronics on 0860-65-64-63 or visit [www.planetworld.co.za](http://www.planetworld.co.za). The price is R2499.



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## Corsair Force Series GT 120 GB Solid-State Hard Drive » Step up to SSD

Using a PC can be significantly more enjoyable when you are not waiting for it to start up, load your game, save your files or launch your applications. To this end, the Corsair Force Series 3 Solid State Drive (SSD) makes a significant difference to general computing.



The Corsair Force Series GT 120 GB SSD has sequential read speeds of up to 555 MB/s, with sequential write speeds of up to 515 MB/s. This translates to disk operations that are up to four times faster than the fastest mechanical hard drives. In other words, the Force Series offers real

world benefits to anyone who works with music, movie and graphics files. And because SSDs have no moving parts, they can handle shock, vibration and temperature changes far in excess of traditional hard drives. Additionally, the absence of moving parts means that the drive remains quiet, without noise or vibration.

The Corsair Force Series GT 120 GB SSD is available from Evetech ([www.evetech.co.za](http://www.evetech.co.za)) for R2623, but R2499 for payments made via electronic funds transfer.



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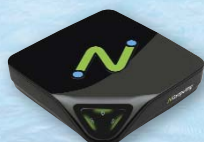
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# Opinion: Innovation lost

## Goodbye HP TouchPad

It's not every day that a technology company of HP's profile makes shattering announcements. But its announcement that it was discontinuing its TouchPad line may well have left technology users and the technology space a little poorer for its absence. So says Ryan Noik, who investigates this further.

While there is no shortage of alternative tablets, technology thrives on innovation, and HP's own mobile operating system, webOS had a number of interesting approaches to common tablet tasks that we were actually looking forward to seeing first hand. While the company stated that it wasn't abandoning

the operating system, without compelling hardware (such as tablets and smartphones) to run on, it seems like the future of webOS is even murkier than that of the company's personal systems division (see p3).

### Features lost

This is a shame because, as a platform, webOS has a number of things going for it. The first is multitasking via a card-

especially excited about was Just Type. The webOS envisioned enabling users to start typing and then decide what they want to do with that text – include it in an email, update their status, or use it as the basis for searching the web.

### Apps with heart

Another feature that seemed to be unique to HP's tablet effort was the reported launch of a dedicated electronic magazine, *Pivot*, which would have highlighted particular webOS apps. Forget the closed Apple App store or the fragmented Android store, HP seemed intent on providing their app efforts with some heart.

A final feature worth looking forward to was the integration between webOS based devices. In fact, one of these features was the ability to seamlessly and wirelessly transfer files between webOS based devices by touching them to one another. In itself, this is something that Android would have been wise to take note of and learn from.

### Rest in peace

The loss of these innovations does not bode well for HP or for companies that are spurred on by each other's unique approaches to common problems. Nor does it benefit those of us who love and use technology either. [RN]



based approach to applications. Each application was represented by its own 'card', which could be flicked through like shuffling a deck of playing cards. Applications, which could be ordered on the fly, would have been closed by 'flicking' them, as if tossing them off the screen. Another of the features we were

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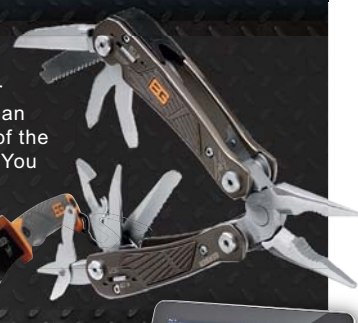
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## PC Medic » First aid for your PC

Some say the internet is kept alive by the power of his dreams, while it's believed that he is the "i" in iPhone. We call him the PC Medic and he's here to answer your PC related queries.

**Q** Hiya PC Medic. I recently broke up with my girlfriend and I need to change my relationship status on Facebook. How can I do this without it showing up on friends' News Feed? Anonymous for a reason.

**A** Hi A. All you have to do is click on the "Accounts" tab and select "Privacy settings". Click on "Customise settings" and under the "Things I share" list, click on the drop-down menu next to "Relationships" and choose the "Customise" option. Change this option to "Only me" and no one but you will be

privity to this info, only you. Here you can also change rules for a number of other details such as "Religious and political views", "birthday" and "Interested in".

**Q** Hello PC Medic. I take my portable HDD with me to work almost every Friday to swap some TV series with my colleagues. Is there a free and easy-to-use software program I can use to password protect certain personal folders on my HDD and USB flash drives? N. Cassidy.



**A** Hi there. You can download (853 kb) Folder Latch (<http://cnet.co/foldlatch>), which will enable you to protect and lock your folders and files from unauthorised users. It's really simple to employ and will password protect files and folders up to 3.5 GB in size. ❖



### » Tips for Windows 7: Your info support life-line for all things Microsoft:

If you are having problems whilst trying to complete a task within a software program on a PC, then the most useful shortcut is the F1 key.

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### Carbonmade

While carbonmade.com is a platform to upload your own portfolio, you could literally spend hours sitting and staring, with your mouth agape, at beautiful imagery from close to six million images and almost 400 000 portfolios on its example page from illustrators, photographers, graphic designers and fine artists, to name a few. These are well worth a visit, especially when you're in the mood for an artistic pick-me-up. One of the artists alone <http://kait.carbonmade.com> offers a sumptuous portfolio of concept art, illustrations and 3D renders.



[www.computerarts.co.uk](http://www.computerarts.co.uk)

### Computer Arts

In case merely looking at digital art makes you yearn to create some of your own, Computer Arts is a good place to start. With hundreds of tutorials in PDF format available for free download, as well as the supporting files to follow along established artists and learn their techniques, the site is an artist's gold mine. Tutorials can be found in categories, including 2D (illustration), Photoshop, new media, 3D and animation. While the site is the home of the UK based magazine, refreshingly, you do not have to sign up.



[www.sporkle.com](http://www.sporkle.com)

### Sporkle

In case you thought games were a waste of time, you clearly haven't visited Sporkle yet. The site hosts numerous quizzes, which range from providing trivial diversions to being used for educational purposes. Quizzes are available in categories including geography, entertainment, science, history, literature, sports and language, as well as movies, television and 'just for fun'. Each category has its own featured daily game, and making things a little more interesting, some quizzes are timed challenges.



<http://playtheend.com/game>

### The End

Although this site can take a while to load depending on your broadband speed, once it does, it's both surreal and spellbinding. Part game, part philosophical journey, you begin by creating and customising your avatar and then embarking on your journey to discover who you are (Mystic, Awakener, Crusader or Truth-teller) across worlds aptly named Body World, Mind World and Spirit World, on the way to The End world. If this all sounds very esoteric, that is because it is, but is well worth your time and one site we strongly recommend. ❖

# CompTIA® Getting formally certified: **The reasons why**

Does getting yourself formally certified actually help? We talk to Ismail Hassim, software and solution support consultant at Smart Office Services, to learn more about the qualification process, writing exams and the benefits involved in a CompTIA certification



## Explain to us what your job entails?

I am part of the Solutions Department in our company and we install and support document account software as well as device management software. My company is responsible for implementing and supporting printing solutions for our clients.

## How did you decide which certifications to choose?

Since starting out at Smart Office Services, I realised that we work a lot with networks and encounter a lot of network related issues, as well as questions pertaining to the network. When hearing other IT consultants speak and using terminology you don't quite understand, just made it even more of a necessity to study and further myself.

## Which CompTIA certifications did you select and why?

I selected the CompTIA Network+ certification, reason being that it's a stepping stone to other certifications. I believe that understanding the basics and the fundamentals of networking creates a solid foundation when pursuing other certifications in the same direction.

## Tell us more about your training experience.

When I heard that our company had given us an opportunity to do the CompTIA Network+ certification at Torque IT, I jumped at it. This has been one of my ambitions and to be formally certified is always a benefit. The training was given by Patrick Young, who is a very helpful individual. He was extremely patient in his explanations when we didn't understand something, and used "everyday" scenarios to help us understand it better.

Torque IT is a reputable training company and a Platinum partner of the CompTIA Authorized Partner Program (CAPP). The lecture rooms are spacious and well equipped, breaks are on time and since we were doing the evening classes, supper was always great. Torque IT went out of their way to cater for our dietary needs.

## How was the actual testing experience at the test centre?

Well like everyone out there writing any sort of formal exam, I was extremely nervous. But after I was seated at my desk and in front of the computer, I just imagined that I was at home in front of my PC studying.

## Has certification made a difference to your job and how you perform it?

A typical example of how it helped is this: we often experience slow printing or slow login speeds to our devices. As a solution we would speak to the network guys to force a port to 100 full duplex, from auto negotiate, and then we would turn our devices to be the same. Before doing the N+ certificate, this was just something we would do because it was a solution. But now I understand the reasons for doing this.

## Would you recommend CompTIA certifications to other ICT professionals and why?

CompTIA being internationally recognised, is ESSENTIAL. It adds value to your academic profile and having done any CompTIA course and certification, just shows that you as an individual are a competent and knowledgeable person to have on a team.

## In your opinion, does being certified really make a difference to employers in South Africa?

Yes definitely, it is of great importance to have that formal qualification. When applying for any position without any formal qualification, it makes it almost impossible for you to land that important job. I'm sure that as an employer you would want to hire somebody who is formally qualified, for many reasons. Would you have confidence in a person who just says he knows what he is doing, as compared to a person who has studied and has the qualifications to prove that he knows what he is talking about? ❖



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## UFC Personal Trainer: The Ultimate Fitness System » Fighting fit

The idea that you could turn your console into a personal trainer and use motion control to get fit is not exactly new. UFC Personal Trainer (UFC) is the latest attempt, now bringing mixed martial arts training to your console and living room.



UFC starts innocuously enough, by allowing you to input your height, weight and gender. Then, after a brief test of how many push ups, sit ups and jumping jacks you can perform in a minute, the game gets to the heart of the matter: training.

### Light my fire

This is divided into Workouts, Quick Workouts, Activities and Programs, along with multiplayer games. While Activities – which include free striking, hit the mitts, and speed bag, for example – can last up to a few minutes, Programs are more intensive training regimes that can last up to two months. Also found under Activities are well presented unlockable videos

grouped by general fitness, injury prevention, striking technique, and general information. Programs, activities and quick workouts are further geared towards addressing one of three major goals: building strength, reducing weight or increasing endurance.

### Is it a workout that works?

Under workouts, you can choose to train with virtual avatars of Mark Dellagrotte (muay thai), Mark Jackson (mixed martial arts) or Javier Mendez (kickboxing). Whichever you choose, the workouts on offer do work, incorporating staples of exercise such as warm up routines, shoulder stretches, push-ups and tricep extensions for example, and not all even require the use of a controller, and thus certainly do get one's heart racing and muscles burning. To its credit, the production values of both the graphics and the sound are of high quality throughout, combining animated trainers who do each exercise with you, along with real video instruction in-between.

Just note that you have

to clear a space in your living room – typically filled with sofas, tables and chairs – to create the ideal space. You also require a PS Move to play this game.

### Conclusion

As a personal fitness trainer, UFC has a wealth of information on the mixed martial arts in particular and fitness training in general, and does offer it in a slick and engaging manner. Provided it is done in a suitable environment, UFC Personal Fitness Trainer is a worthy contender in the current roster of fitness games that can be found on consoles. [RN] ★



## Shadows of the Damned » One hell of an enjoyable trip

What would happen if the chilling Silent Hill mated with the horrific Resident Evil? Shadows of the Damned tries to provide the answer.



Shadows of the Damned (SD) brings together the talents of Resident Evil 4's director Shinji Mikami and the man behind the terrifying sounds in Silent Hill, Akira Yamaoka. Within SD you assume the role of the oddly named demon slayer Garcia Hotspur, who has sent countless numbers of the Devil's fallen army on a one way trip back to hell. Understandably, this has left him with a less than favourable reputation in the realm down under (and we don't mean Australia). Fleming, the lord of the demons, decides to kidnap Hotspur's girlfriend, Paula, giving our hero no other choice but to follow them down to hell.

### Environment and atmosphere

The City of the Damned isn't really the type of place you would find in an Thompsons Tours travelling brochure.

Besides not being as picturesque as say Rome, the place is filled with dilapidated buildings, hoards of demons and bosses who definitely haven't friended you on Facebook. There's also a number of really graphic and horrific scenes. Luckily you won't navigate this dangerous environment alone, as you are aided by a former demon called Johnson. Besides being able to transform into an assortment of weapons, Johnson also possesses a vast selection of clever and funny one-liners, which will lighten up the dark atmosphere of the surroundings.

Speaking of light, as in Alan Wake, there is an element of light vs. dark in the gameplay. Some areas are bathed in darkness which cloaks demons in an impenetrable aura of strength and eventually eats away at your health. The only way to counter this is to fire a light blast at a mounted goat's head to lighten the area up and dispatch your foes. There are a number of these unnecessarily weird concepts in the game, and this, coupled with the commentary of Johnson, does detract from the scariness factor of this title.

### Conclusion

Filled with tense moments (especially when the waves of demons outnumber your bullets), Shadows of the Damned

provides for some engrossing gameplay as you go through one hell of a journey (both literally and figuratively) to save your girlfriend. That said, it could have been a lot scarier seeing that it's basically a Resident Evil game with hell as its venue. [HD] ★





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