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READY NET GO ... NEWS

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<http://www.readynetgo.net>

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Tip of the Month

PC Troubleshooting Resources

Interested in learning more about how PCs work and what to do when they don't? Check out these resources:

General Info – web/print/online publications

1. PC World – www.pcworld.com
2. PC Magazine – www.pcmag.com
3. Computer Shopper – www.computershopper.com
4. www.doxdesk.com – learn about viruses/Trojan Horses/Worms
5. www.spywarewarrior.com – reviews anti-spyware software

Software Updates

It's time to download the latest versions of installed software such as:

1. **Microsoft OS** (Automatic Updates should be turned ON but if it isn't click the Start button and scroll up to Automatic Updates to download critical and security updates)
2. **Microsoft Office** - in the upper right corner click → **Check for Updates** at <http://office.microsoft.com>
3. **Adobe Flash Player** – www.adobe.com; click on the icon for Get Adobe Flash Player. The latest version is **9.0.16**.
4. **Adobe Reader** – while you're downloading the Flash player, check to make sure that **Adobe Reader 7.0** is installed. If not, download as well.

Restart your computer after each installation to ensure that the program functions properly.

Ultraportable Laptops *Changing how we do business*

Some of the best things come in small packages and computers are no exception. From laptops to PDA's, many computers are small, lightweight and packed with features to satisfy nearly everyone. For this newsletter, we'll discuss **ultraportables**, **tablet PCs** and **PDA's** and briefly describe a new technology, **SSD**.

Laptops

Ultraportable laptops are defined by screen size and weight – 12.1" screen or less with some having a widescreen feature (necessary for watching many DVD movies) and weight usually ranging from 1 – 5 lbs.

Besides these two features, ultraportables have similar OS and processor capabilities, Ethernet ports, and expansion slots. Only drawback is that many ultraportables don't have room for an internal optical drive such as a CD or DVD drive. USB ports, though, allow external devices to be added quickly and easily.

Reasons for using ultralight / ultraportable laptops:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Sales | 4. Traveling |
| 2. Marketing | 5. Contractors/field work |
| 3. Conferences | 6. Inventory |

Ultraportables are branching out as more individuals want the convenience of computers on-the-go. For instance, Sony has a new product on the market - **Sony Vaio UX Micro PC** with features that include a 16 - 32GB drive, 4.5" widescreen monitor, 1.3 megapixel camera, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, a cellular SIM card, Win XP Pro, 64-key thumb keyboard, fingerprint security sensor, and a battery life of 2.5 – 4.5 hours. At 1.2 lbs, this MicroPC has a lot to offer.

WWW (Websites Worth Watching)

1. www.stopbadware.org – Created by Institutes at Harvard and Oxford Universities, this site discusses Spyware and Malware (aka "badware").
2. www.quotedb.com – Interactive database of famous quotations

Although the price is steep right now (about \$1,800), Sony is betting that this MicroPC will fill the gap between ultraportable laptops and PDAs. The cost is high for good reason though. The PC uses a new technology called **SSD** or **solid-state disks** which may eventually replace hard disk drives.

SSD (solid-state disk)

SSD drives use magnetic storage platters and flash memory as a data cache. Data stored in this cache can be accessed faster than in traditional hard disk drives. Look for this feature in Microsoft's new Vista OS called **ReadyDrive**. SSD allows for faster boot times, quiet operation, less power consumption, and increased performance due to faster seek times – the time it takes to locate data on the disk. Applications that require reading sequential strings of data such as video or games won't see much improvement unfortunately. For more information on the new Vista OS see:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/>

Convertible Notebooks and Tablets

Tablet computers replace a traditional writing pad you would normally take to a conference. The screen lays flat so you can write on it using a stylus pen. Handwriting conversion software converts your pen strokes to typed letters. General specifications include: full OS (e.g. WinXP) and processor, 20GB Hard Drive, 10-12" screen, weight about 4 lbs, wireless and Ethernet connectivity, docking station for synching with your desktop or laptop. Many accessories are available to modify the usability of this style of notebook such as keyboards and wall mounting brackets.



Tablet notebook

Convertible notebooks on the other hand, look like a laptop computer with full keyboard except the screen swivels and lays flat making it ideal for presentations or privacy. These notebooks generally have a faster processor and have more hard drive space than tablet computers.



Convertible notebook

PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants)

If the ultraportable laptops are still too large, there are many PDAs on the market that should fulfill your needs. Choose from three operating systems: **Palm**, **Windows Mobile PocketPC** or the **RIM OS** for **Blackberry** devices. Standard features include: email and office programs, synchronization with Windows and Macs, handwriting recognition software, and wireless connectivity. Additional features include: cell phone, GPS, multimedia capabilities (including speaker and headphone jacks), fingerprint readers, and memory card readers.

While a PDA doesn't have a hard drive, data can be stored in RAM or on memory cards. If you don't use a memory card like a secure digital or compact flash card, keep in mind that the more RAM you have the more applications you can run and use simultaneously and the more data you can store. As with all electronic devices, it is very important to recharge the batteries on a regular basis to ensure accessibility to data and prevent data loss.



Palm LifeDrive

Another option is a mobile manager which looks very much like a PDA but has an integrated hard drive. **Palm's LifeDrive**, for example, has a 4GB hard drive, integrated Wi-Fi / Bluetooth, memory card slots, voice recorder, MP3 player, hi-res display and much more. Although the size is comparable to other PDAs, the LifeDrive weighs in at 7oz (other PDAs weigh in around 4 - 5 oz).