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Devices

Verizon has the Treo 700W (which is a Windows based device). It isn't ready for prime time. Sprint is now offering the AudioVox 6700 (also Windows based) that includes WiFi and EVDO. Great device if you are a two-handed user, but having the keyboard concealed (as it would be when you are using the phone normally) makes dialing contacts very difficult. (See next section on must have Windows device software.)

The Treo 700p/750/800 device is rumored to be just a couple of months away (this is Palm's palm-based Treo 700) and will be available on Sprint.

Windows Device Software Must Haves

Palm makes things easy--the software you need to work your device is included with the OS. Additional applications that you've grown to love tend to install and work pretty easily.

Lately, though, Microsoft based PDA/phones are starting to emerge as serious contenders in the market. Some are good, and some are almost ready.

Here are a few applications that are really important if you want to use a Windows based phone. Most range between free and \$40. (BTW--These are courtesy Alex Roosakos.)

1. PhoneAlarm \$\$ <http://www.pocketmax.net/phoneAlarm.htm>
2. WizBar Advance \$\$ <http://www.lakeridgesoftware.com/wisbar/>
3. SBSH PocketBreeze \$\$
<http://www.sbsh.net/products/pocketbreeze>
4. Egress \$\$ <http://www.garishkernels.net/egress.html>
5. Weather-to-go (free) <http://www.tonaya.com/>
6. MS Voice Command. \$40. Works awesome; no training req'd.
7. KeePass, (free) open source Device and Windows XP software for storing passwords. Works awesome on both; just sync the data file so you can use it on either device or on laptop
<http://keepass.sourceforge.net/>
8. Total Commander free. <http://www.ghisler.com/pocketpc.htm>
9. MemMaid \$\$
http://www.pocketgear.com/software_detail.asp?id=14279
10. Imaginet Finger Clix \$\$ One handed dialing for times when MS VC can't do the job
http://www.imagnet-software.com/index.aspx?p=fingerclix_en

Alex says he couldn't do without PhoneAlarm and MS VC. The others are nice to have and add a ton of value.

Blackberry--Is it Dead Yet?

Is Blackberry going off-line? Bookies we know are giving RIM less than 50/50, but *when* is the question. Feb 24, Feb 25, and Mar 24 are the key dates. Most of the people we're talking to agree that the judge will rule in NTP's favor on Feb 24, and he will rule that RIM's service be turned off in the US. RIM has repeatedly angered the judge and flouted the US courts, and the judge has indicated that he may have the service turned off the following day. Because NTP, though, is only asking for it to be turned down 30 days later, that is a slightly more likely scenario. Regarding the software "workaround" below, there are two important things to think about:



1. The judge may also rule on Feb 24, that before RIM begins operating, that a full review of the software be concluded to ensure that it does not violate the patent (it likely does violate a patent that one court has ruled valid and another has ruled invalid). If this happens, RIM will be shut down, regardless of any workaround
2. The software has yet to be tested in any scale--RIM, historically has done worse at 1.0 than even Microsoft.

Upgrading all devices and the server will likely be a 4-6 hour exercise initially, and we don't know if the new software will be compatible with all devices (RIM has said that they have tested it in-house only, and only on "recent" devices).

While it is still possible that RIM may settle, and there are many possible outcomes that would allow some or all of your devices to continue operating, I would say that the chances of everything going smoothly are now below 50%.

RSS Update

While the world of RSS is still evolving, there are two RSS news readers that are worth using right now--Google and Yahoo. While Google is more flexible, most people will like Yahoo (Steve Walker uses Yahoo, so does Sue, his attorney wife.)

Google: More flexible. Easy to configure. Fewest Options. Unfortunately, font is huge and makes it hard to have everything on one screen to browse. Easiest to get content (you can search for RSS feeds using Google!).

Yahoo: Seems to be the best RSS viewer right now. Highly customizable. Easy to use. You can change colors and layout (which actually do make a big difference). Easy to integrate Yahoo Mail. Good use of screen real estate to get a lot into a small space. While it has the biggest list of pre-

configured feeds, getting addition feeds (NYTimes Circuits, for example) can be a little bit tricky (but also can be done).

Printers

There was a time, when you simply picked which HP Printer was right for you. No longer. HP is no longer synonymous with quality. Call it the Fiorino effect, or just maybe that the competition has caught up. Either way, HP is not the place to buy printers in 2006.

In years past, Brother was associated with terrible quality. No more. The latest lines of Brother printers are inexpensive, easy to install, color, yield excellent quality prints, and have networking built in. Also, Samsung--not exactly a household name in printers, has one of the best color lasers on the market right now, and it can be had for a very reasonable cost.



A couple of cautions:

1. Printer price is not all inclusive--manufacturers use printers as loss-leaders to sell ink cartridges!
2. Refurb ink cartridges can often save huge amounts of money (like 60% off of \$600, for some color lasers).
3. Be very careful to get only printers that include Network Support--even for home. The feature isn't very much more expensive on most printers, but it is not usually the one that is on sale.

Two units that Iteon can recommend are:

- **Brother MFC 420CN** (about \$150). For personal use--includes feeder, fax, network, color, and scanner.
- **Samsung CLP-510** (about \$450). Color Laser--excellent quality and speed for a medium-sized office.

Symantec vs. Trend-->Trend

Over the past 3 months, we at Iteon have been collecting data on anti-virus software. We've found 4 things:

1. Symantec, Trend, McAfee, and f-Prot all do a good job of catching viruses. Trend seems to be top at preventing non-virus exploits.
2. Trend is significantly less expensive, and the licensing is incredibly less complicated, and has support that is far superior to any of its competitors.
3. McAfee and Trend have far superior management modules (making it less expensive to administrate)
4. Symantec has not been very stable, and has actually caused problems with a lot of servers and desktops. McAfee's home products likewise anger end-users with pop-ups and information that they don't need. Both require a large amount of time to properly configure.
5. Most of Iteon's clients use Postini, which uses McAfee for anti-virus detection. Purchasing a software other than McAfee makes more sense for most of our clients.

For these reasons and after a great deal of consideration, we've decided to move all of our clients from Symantec (the largest player in the industry) to Trend. As Symantec

licenses must be renewed yearly (and often have to be reinstalled annual as well because of licensing issues), this will involve minimal if any additional time or costs to our clients. We will time the changes over the next few months to minimize license overlap.

Iteon has negotiated discounted volume licensing with Trend directly, and we will be passing on this discount to our clients. Only Iteon clients will be eligible for this discount.

Price Watch

Dual Core Chips

Intel Dual Core 3.0 GHz chips have fallen in price and are now nearly as cheap as 3.0 GHz single core chips. Although PCs and servers based on this architecture are about \$150 more than single core architecture, the difference in performance makes the dual cores a steal at this price. The faster dual cores (3.2 to 3.6 GHz) are still a bit pricey, but they will likely drop in price before the next newsletter is out.



Dell

Dell seems to have gotten a whole bunch of the 3.0 Dual Core GHz chips very cheap from Intel. They have both PC and server lines out that have to be loss-leaders, they are so cheap. This is a great time to upgrade hardware, if your servers are coming up on 3-3.5 years (mean time between failure for most hard drives). Also, if you are contemplating getting additional servers or were considering Xeon's but the cost was making you hold off, these dual proc servers might be the ticket for you. We are also anticipating a steep climb in server prices starting in early April--Intel will likely discontinue the 3.0D and 3.2D chips, and the 3.4+ chips (barely faster) cost hundreds of dollars more.

Large Screen TVs

As predicted, post-holiday prices on large screen TVs were down, and have dropped again that the Superbowl is over. 60" DLPs are low, as are brand-name 32" and 37" plasmas. Non-brand-name 42" plasmas are also incredibly cheap. For judging quality--let your eyes be the guide.

Iteon News

Recently the best hardware resource we know has agreed to join our team--Jon Putnam started in the first week of February! Some of you may see him as he begins lending his considerable knowledge to our clients!

We were glad to see so many friends at the Scotch and Chocolate Tasting. If anyone would like to see pictures, they are available on the web--just email Marcin.

For more information on Chocolate, see <http://www.mrkland.com/fun/xocoatl/index.htm#SEL>

As always, thank you for your business and referrals!

