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Founded 1987

Chairman's,  
Editor's &  
Secretary's Bit

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Logitech MX1000  
Mouse  
Navicore GPS  
How to Google —  
Part 2  
Norton Ghost 10  
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885 Remote  
Control  
New from Canon  
Netgear ADSL  
Modem  
Coming Soon —  
Microsoft FS-X

ROM is issued  
six-times  
a year to  
members of the  
Guildford PC  
User Group  
All Contributions  
to the Editor  
Tony Hawes  
(details on page 2)

# ROM

Newsletter of the Guildford PC User Group

## Editor's Bit

### **Time again for the Annual General Meeting of the Group**

In accordance with the rules, individual committee members will explain their past years' activities and the treasurer will present the accounts. Committee members of the Guildford PC User Group will stand down and an election of a new committee will take place.

If you have any points that you think should be raised at the AGM, please let your Chairman know before the meeting (you'll find his contact details on page 2).

This is the opportunity to help guide the group in the months ahead. Please let your requirements or wishes be known to the Chairman or a member of the committee. Remember, if you don't volunteer, things will remain the same and some work may not even get done.

### **Secretary's Bits — Recent Meetings**

**February 2006.** On Monday 13 February we had a talk on Microsoft Excel by Francis Jacques our

Honorary Treasurer. He started by showing how he organises his filing management system with the use of three hard disks. It was interesting to note that he had no icons on his desktop and that he made little use of his mouse by the emphasise on keyboard key commands.

He started demonstrating Excel by showing the Excel window with its 256 columns and 65536 rows making up 1677216 cells and how to enter information as words or figures. He showed the use of the simple functions of add, subtract, multiplication, division, averaging, etc and also pointed out the value of using the rounding function. Custom formatting of cells was shown and how rows or columns can be inserted or deleted. The more complex functions of IF, AND and OR were shown and the use of relative, absolute and mixed references with the \$ sign.

Using the financial management accounts of a complex social club displayed on the Sage 10 program he showed how aspects could be incorporated into Excel for printing or a-mailing. Francis gave us a most inter-

*(Continued on page 2)*

**The April presentation after the AGM will show how to make a very acceptable DVD video without the use of a Video Camera.**

**OK I know it's April, but believe me this is not an April Fool's joke but a simple way to impress your friends with your video skills even when you don't possess a video camera!**

**The program is from Microsoft, is free and if you'd like a copy, bring a USB memory stick or blank CD and I'll make a copy for you to take away on the night. Just ensure your memory stick has 6Mb of free space for the full program — Ed.**

ROM is available as a full-colour .pdf download from the Group web page at:  
[www.guildfordpcusergroup.co.uk](http://www.guildfordpcusergroup.co.uk)

**NEXT MEETING — Monday  
10th April 2006 at 7.45 p.m.**

### **AGM Followed by a Practical Demo of how to Make a Video Without a Video Camera**

Committee members will present their annual reports and will want to hear from those present how best the Group can serve their needs. A new committee needs to be elected.

After the AGM a chance to see a remarkable free program in action (see box above).

Please bring a friend — coffee, tea &

**Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7.45pm at the Stoughton Youth Club and Community Centre (opposite "The Royal" — Pub) Worplesdon Road (A322), Guildford.**

### **Forthcoming Meetings**

Monday 8th May at 7.45 pm

Neil Manual. How to build / add peripherals to your computer. Follow Neil's advice and you'll find it's easy — learn how with Neil's practical hand's-on presentation!

Monday 12 June at 7.45 pm

In arrangement

## CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries or questions about the Guildford PC User Group and its activities please contact the following members of the committee:

### Chairman

Tony Wood  
"Madrigals"  
97 Broadhurst  
Farnborough  
Hants. GU14 9XA  
Tel: 01252-549884  
e-mail: tonywoodtw@ntlworld.com

### Membership Secretary

Maxine Bushell  
Tel: 01483 811908  
e-mail: mbushell@wanworld.co.uk

### Treasurer

Francis Jacques  
"Sampford", Elmstead Road,  
WEST BYFLEET, KT14 6BJ  
Tel: 01932 341888  
e-mail: francis.jacques@virgin.net

### Secretary & Public Relations

Bryce McCrerrick  
Surrey Place,  
5 Coach House Gardens,  
FLEET, GU51 4QX  
Tel: 01252 623422  
e-mail: b.mccrerrick@ntlworld.com

### Web Master

Laurence Fenn  
84 St George's Road,  
ALDERSHOT, GU12 4LJ  
Tel: 01252 330408  
e-mail: laurence@orchardoo.com

### Laurence's Web Page:

<http://www.orchardoo.com>  
(this site contains many of the reviews that have appeared in ROM)

### Group Web Page:

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

### EDITOR

Tony Hawes  
25 Folly Close, FLEET, GU52 7LN  
Tel: 01252 617962  
Fax: 01252 664756  
Mobile: 07941 778007  
e-mail: thawes@ntlworld.com

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esting evening.

**March 2006.** On Monday 13 March Laurence Fenn gave a fascinating talk about Retro Gaming. The playing of games developed for arcade machines and early computers on modern equipment. He started by outlining the history of computer games developed originally for arcade machines starting from about 1972 with the formation of the Atari Company and then for the early the computers explaining the various formats that were used. Emulators for such modern systems as Windows 2000 and XP have been developed for arcade machines, game consoles and old computers such as the BBC, Commodore and Sinclair. He then went on to demonstrate such games as Prince of Persia, Sonic the Hedgehog, Frogger and Star Wars on his Tablet PC using Windows XP.

### Review of the year

**April 2005.** At the AGM Tony Woods was elected Chairman following the untimely death of Norman Risbridger. Following the AGM the rest of the evening was devoted to Neil Manual demonstrating the installation of Mandrake Linux (now called Mandriva Linux).

**May 2005.** Unfortunately Richard Huddy of ATI was unable to be with us at our meeting on Monday 9 May, but at short notice Tony Hawes, who produces and edits ROM gave a demonstration of how he uses Microsoft Publisher 2003 to produce ROM, the Group's bi-monthly Newsletter. It was interesting to see how a very professional newsletter can be produced using a relatively simple program.

**June 2005.** Our talk on Monday 11 July was given by Steve Pendsay from APC (UK) Ltd (American Power Conversion) who is UK and Eire Retail Channel Manager. APC is well known for its power supply, surge protection and interrupted power supply equipment widely used by major organisations. They have now, however, developed a range of consumer products aimed at the small business and home user ranging from power outlets with surge protection to battery backup and mobile solutions. He had available for inspection a number of different combinations of surge protection covering power, data line and telephone line, with some including backup power. The mobile accessories shown included USB mobile phone chargers, international plug adapters, retractable cables, a biometric password manager and a universal notebook battery. The range of equipment generated much interest and many questions.

**July 2005.** A practical demonstration of Pinnacle PCTV 200e, an external digital terrestrial TV tuner that comes with MediaCenter software to allow you to receive digital terrestrial TV on your laptop. Dubbed "Anywhere TV," DVB-T the acronym for Digital Video Broadcasting — Terrestrial is an ideal technology when coupled to a mobile product. A not very successful demonstration let down by problems with the equipment on display.

**August 2005.** Monday 8th August 2005 was a bring your own computer meeting with Tony once again trying to get Pinnacle's PCTV 200e external digital terrestrial TV tuner to work. Unfortunately with the small aerial supplied it was difficult to get a signal, despite being so close to the Guildford transmitter. Along with the Media Manager software that seemed to crash all the time it was impossible to

show off the capabilities of the hardware.

**September 2005.** 64-bit Computing and Ulead PictureShow 4. On Monday 12 September Tony Hawes started the evening by demonstrating the new Acer Ferrari 4000 series laptop. This incorporates an AMD 64 Mobile (M37) Turion 64-bit chip and was shown using Microsoft Windows XP Professional 64-bit edition. He explained that not much in the way of 64-bit software was available yet but a considerable number of 32-bit programs can be loaded and run. The main problem is the lack of essential 64-bit drivers. Particularly noteworthy is the lack of any 64-bit compatible anti-virus programs for desktop use from the major anti-virus program makers. The only 64-bit anti-virus program available at this time is, however, Czech company Alwil's AVAST anti-virus which for home user's is free. Using this laptop he went on to demonstrate Ulead's newly released PictureShow 4 to create a slideshow of photographs.

**October 2005.** We had a demonstration of Corel Paint Shop Pro X and Corel Photo Album 6 by Laurence Fenn. Laurence outlined what's new in the latest version and explained the differences between the two versions. In particular the new easy to use and friendlier user interface. Using Photo Album 6 he produced a slide show and also demonstrated the creation of a photo calendar and other print projects.

**November 2005.** A demonstration by Laurence Fenn of some of the facilities offered by Nero 7 Premium. The name Nero is synonymous with CD burning and although the latest version still provides this feature it is only one of the many tools of this extremely versatile media utility. Laurence showed how music can be collected from the web or other CDs to build up an album of files, compress them and burn them on to a new CD. He demonstrated many of the other applications built into the program giving a good introduction to a powerful media utility.

**December 2005.** Monday 12 December was again Christmas Quiz Night but first John Childs demonstrated the new Canon Pixma iP6600D printer. This is Canon's latest high quality printer in the mid price range. Examples of some of John's A4 colour prints were demonstrated with outstanding quality. As an added bonus you can print directly on to the face of CDs or DVDs with the appropriate printable surfaces, John again showed examples. As icing on the cake it also accepts a Bluetooth adaptor that allows wireless printing from a suitable PC or Laptop or even from the camera of a mobile phone with Bluetooth capabilities. Then the Quiz took place. It consisted, as usual, of twenty written questions with multiple-choice answers. While the papers were being marked we had warm mince pies and German Marzipan Stollen with our tea or coffee. This year's winner was Mike Bray, with Neil Manual and Paul Kuzmin equal second and Maxine Bushell and John Childs equal fourth. Nearly all the contestants received super prizes donated by Microsoft, Adobe, Corel and others to whom we are grateful.

**January 2006.** At the first meeting of the new year Tony Hawes demonstrated Video Editing using the newest version of Pinnacle Studio Plus,

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## Vista — Five Different Versions

- **Windows Vista Business.** Regardless of the size of your organization, Windows Vista Business will help you lower your PC management costs, improve your security, enhance your productivity, and help you stay better connected.
- **Windows Vista Enterprise.** Windows Vista Enterprise is designed to meet the needs of large global organizations with highly complex IT infrastructures. Windows Vista Enterprise can help you

lower your IT costs while providing additional layers of protection for your sensitive data.

- **Windows Vista Home Premium.** Whether you choose to use your PC to write e-mail and surf the Internet, for home entertainment, or to track your household expenses, Windows Vista Home Premium delivers a more complete and satisfying computing experience.
- **Windows Vista Ultimate.** If you want all of the best business features, all of the best mobility features, and all of the best home entertainment features that Windows Vista has to offer, Windows Vista Ultimate is the solution

for you. With Windows Vista Ultimate you don't have to compromise.

- **Windows Vista Home Basic.** Windows Vista Home Basic is designed to deliver improved reliability, security, and usability to home PC users who just want to do the basics with their PCs.

## Latest — Windows Vista Delayed Until 2007 — see Left!

Microsoft announced at the end of March that the Consumer versions of Vista will be delayed until 2007. (In this connection don't forget Microsoft are "Partners" with the new Wembley Stadium — which following Microsoft's example also announced a few days ago that it has put off its opening / launch until 2007 — coincidence — or conspiracy theory? — we'll probably never know!)

(Continued from page 2)

version 10, which came out on November 2005. Tony showed how recorded video material can be transferred from the camera to the computer, the setting up of the storyboard, how clips can be moved around and edited and have various transitions added. The demonstration ended by his playing a previously edited DVD he made of a visit to "Chessington World of Adventure" lasting about nine minutes which looked very professional including as it did a DVD menu to navigate the DVD, together with titles, transitions, background music and added sound effects.

**February 2006.** Microsoft Excel a practical demonstration by Francis Jacques our treasurer. An accountant by profession, Francis showed how he created his own templates to make his accounting tasks easier.

**March 2006.** Retro Gaming — Laurence Fenn showed that all those simple and addictive games which appeared at the start of the computer revolution, for example, Prince of Persia, Sonic the Hedgehog, Frogger and Star Wars, were still alive and very much kicking!

## Windows Vista — Latest News

Microsoft Windows Vista is designed to dramatically improve the computing experience of every kind of PC user. To make sure that everyone has an offering tailored to meet their specific needs, Microsoft will deliver five different versions of Windows Vista. Each version is focused on the needs of a specific type of person.

Microsoft delivered five different versions of the Windows XP operating system, but these different versions were aligned with specific types of PC hardware instead of with the different ways people use their PCs. The five different versions of Windows Vista are designed to fit the way you intend to use your PC.



Some of the placards you weren't shown when the cartoon protesters protested!



When you next fly in an Airbus consider the sort of day the Captain faces when his computerised instrument panels shows this at 35,000 ft!

# Logitech MX1000 Laser Mouse

Reviewed by Tony Hawes

Having had a look at a new Microsoft Mouse (ROM December 2005) I thought it was time to have a look at one of the newer laser driven mice that are becoming more widely available.

Logitech have had a laser mouse in their product line-up for a little while and having heard from a friend of how well Logitech's MX1000 Laser Mouse worked for him decided it was time to see how well it would work for me.

The Logitech MX1000 comes in an eye-catching and stylish box. Inside the purchaser will find: Logitech MX1000 Laser Cordless Mouse, Rapid-charging base station, CD with SetPoint software, a printed folded Installation Guide, USB to PS/2 adapter and a mains power adapter.

System requirements: IBM or compatible PC, Windows 98, 2000, Me, XP, USB or PS/2 port, CD-ROM drive. If you've got a Mac it needs Macintosh OS X+, a USB port and a CD-ROM drive.

## In Use

Read the Installation Guide, install the Logitech SetPoint software from the CD, decide which port you want to use for the mouse receiver (PS/2 or USB), plug the AC Adapter into a mains socket, access the Mouse Properties in the Control Panel and choose your own personal preferences and that's it. BUT one word of warning, batteries are only semi-charged when taken out the box and ideally need to be fully charged for several hours (eight for a full charge) before use, so how do you charge the batteries? The supplied charging cradle which also incorporates the receiver, charges the batteries whilst the mouse is not in use. If you go away from your desk for a while or switch off your computer, just park the mouse in the cradle for it to top up the charge. The only drawback is that you'll need a spare power socket which needs to be on whilst the computer is not in use to allow the batteries to be charged.

A nifty gadget is a tiny display on the mouse that shows you the battery level. Three bars and it's full, two bars OK and when it shows just one and its flashing think about getting it charged, but being lithium-ion (Li-Ion), a charge should last a long time and unlike Ni-Cad batteries Li-Ion batteries don't acquire a "memory effect". So like your notebook computer you can charge it at anytime without shortening the battery life. Li-Ion batteries usually have a life span of around 500 full charge-cycles. A full charge-cycle means running from full capacity to empty and recharge to full, so if you use 10% of the total capacity and recharge, it counts as 10% of a cycle. The only slight downside is that the batteries are sealed into the mouse and cannot be



Logitech MX1000: Fold out User Guide

changed by the user, which is a pity.

## Battery Life

As an experiment I fully charged the mouse and then used it without charging to see how long it worked. At the end of seven days it showed I'd used up less than one LED on the charge bar which means it still had three weeks or so of use before the LED's start flashing to warn you to get it charged.

## Shape

The shape is 'chunky' but nicely curved and fits comfortably in the hand. The MX1000 also features a tilt scrolling wheel mechanism similar to the ones found on the latest Microsoft IntelliMouse Explorer mice, so it's now possible to scroll in all directions when working on large documents such as spreadsheets or DTP programs that occupy a large area of your screen, or in my case when I edit ROM as a two-page spread — just tilt the wheel from side to side to scroll right and left, rather than having to click on



MX1000 Sitting in its Charging Cradle / Receiver

the tiny scroll arrows at the side and bottom of your screen. You can also zoom in and out by clicking on the scroll wheel.

## Tracking

Being laser rather than pure optical technology, the laser is capable of being used on uneven and glossy surfaces with no lack of tracking ability. Standard optical mice have problems when being used on glossy or multi-patterned surfaces, but the MX1000 seems to just work on any surface with no loss of tracking. Being laser, when you raise the mouse from the work surface the standard optical red glow is absent, all that's visible is a miniscule dot (the laser beam) being emitted from the base through the laser hole.

## Conclusions

Any reviews of mice have to be subjective. If it does what you want (or expect) easily and well it must be good. I found it tracked well on most surfaces, the scroll / tilt wheel works well and is exceptionally precise. Logitech's FastRF technology means there is less latency (delay) between moving the mouse and seeing the effect of the movement on screen, a problem with some wireless mice using earlier RF technology. The mouse itself is truly wireless, and once you've tried it you'll find it indispensable. The only slight downside is:

- the necessity of having to leave the charging cradle connected to the mains to be able to charge the mouse, but given that a full charge lasts a couple of weeks not too much of a problem.
- no way to change the batteries should they lose their charge (all batteries do eventually), even Li-Ion ones.

## Pricing and Availability

£41.63 from Amazon.co.uk inc VAT and delivery.



MX1000. Bottom View

# Navicore Bluetooth Mobile Phone GPS Navigator— SiRF3

Reviewed by John Childs

## Introduction

In the August/September 2005 edition of ROM, I reviewed two GPS navigation devices. One was an “all in one” unit, the Medion GPS navigation system and the other was the Navicore SiRF3 module which works with mobile phones running the Symbian Series 60 and 80 operating systems. I have been asked to review an update to the Navicore system. Whilst the Navicore hardware remains the same as previously, the software which is installed on the mobile phone has been updated and I have therefore road tested the updated version for this review. The new Navicore system came with a different mobile phone (a Nokia 6680) than was supplied with the previous review sample.

The Navicore comes with a quick start guide, a car charger, a user manual in paper and in CD ROM form, a leather carrying case and a 256 MB RSMHC card containing the map data. The memory card was inserted into the mobile phone slot, and a “Navicore” icon appeared on the menu screen. The phone logged on to the Navicore home base and activated the unit. This stops the Navicore module from being used with any other mobile phone. If you change your mobile phone, the system will work automatically with the new phone so long as you transfer your old SIM card to the new phone. If you change both the phone and your SIM card then you must contact Navicore customer support.

Those customers who had purchased an earlier version of the software with their Navicore module can update the software for £61 incl VAT on an MMC memory card or £54 incl. VAT on a CD. The latest version includes full 7 digit UK Postal code support, free traffic information, dynamic routing, safety camera downloads and updated Tele-Atlas maps.

## In Use

I used the Navicore device in place of my usual Sat Nav on a journey to Christchurch and for a few days away in Norfolk. The Navicore got us to our address in Christchurch, but along the way it told us to turn left whilst we were on the M3. The problem was that we were just approaching Fleet Services at the time! I ignored the device and for about a mile it kept insisting that I should do a U turn (on a motorway!!!!). The unit insisted that the



house numbers in our destination road stopped at number 9 even though we were stopping at number 17 (and these “extra” houses had been built about fifteen years ago). On this topic, our Editor Tony Hawes’ address is still shown as Folley Close, rather than the correct spelling which is Folly Close, but at least his postcode is now identified correctly.

The journey to Norwich passed uneventfully with the unit behaving itself. Next morning we set out for a destination to the north west of Norwich. The device told me to come off the ring road a turning before I would normally have done, but I went along with it for the purposes of this review. It then proceeded to take us due west miles out of our way and we eventually passed through a town with a nasty one-way system and a diversion due to road works in operation. I was not well pleased! On the evening before coming back from Norfolk I charged up the mobile phone with the mains charger provided, but in spite of this the mobile phone died on me during the journey back. No car charger is included with the phone, and I didn’t want to find out on the journey that the Navicore module’s car charger would fry the phone if I used it to charge the phone, so I ceased to rely on the units from then on.

## Speed Cameras

The Navicore has the locations of Gatso cameras in its memory and every so often this database is updated automatically. However, when doing 60 miles per hour along the M25 past Heathrow airport, the unit recognised each Gatso on the overhead gantries but only when my car was directly underneath each one. Likewise on the open road, one was on top of the Gatsos before the unit warned me. In these instances the unit gives an audible “ding”. The Gatsos are also shown on the map but this is too small to be of much use when driving your car. Thus the information was far too late to be of any help.

The unit comes with a free service where you are warned of traffic jams, incidents etc. This worked fine so far as it went. On the journey to Norfolk the screen warned me of roadworks coming up, but it didn’t tell me what to do about it. If there had been long delays then it would have told me this, and how to avoid the hazard, with traffic on alternative roads taken into account, but we were not held up for long at the three long sets of road works that we encountered so this feature went untested.

I found the “Points of Interest” (POI) feature less than helpful. We visited Banham Zoo but couldn’t find this in the zoo POI. Back home I tried to find Marwell Zoo in the POI but it wasn’t there. London Zoo was, though!

## Conclusions

There are some notable improvements in this latest version of the Navicore software, so much so that if I had one with the older software I would be very tempted to update. If I already had a suitable mobile phone then I might be tempted to splash out the £199 needed to purchase the Navicore module. You would also need to buy a “hands free” fitting kit so that you could place the mobile phone in front of you where you can see it easily. The full post code facility and the ability to receive traffic info and rerouting instructions would be a boon. It is a pity that the Gatso warnings came too late to do anything about adjusting ones’ speed.

## Pricing and Availability

From retailers such as Carphone Warehouse, Tesco.com, The Link, MobileFun, etc. at £199 inc. VAT

# How to Google Successfully — Part 2

by Geoff Arnold

Part 2 — Part 1 appeared in the Feb/March 2006 of ROM.

*In less than five years, “to google” has become a generic verb to describe searching the World Wide Web — and with good reason. Yet even experienced fact-seekers may be unaware of the full range of powers that the world’s favourite search engine places at their fingertips. Like a friendly spirit that says, “Your wish is my command”, Google is limited only by the skill and imagination of its master. In our second extract from a new, unofficial Google manual, you will discover the advanced commands and tips that searchers can draw on to summon the Google genie*

## Terms That Help You to be Specific

When you type a query into the Google search box, you can add commands (also called operators) that tell Google something specific about your search. For example, titles — the underscored words in blue that appear at the top of each Google search result — are different from web addresses. Titles are handy to search when you want pages that really focus on your topic. Type in the command *intitle* with a colon before each of your terms, without spaces: *intitle:bird intitle:watching* or *intitle: “bird watching”* (note quotation marks). The first example finds titles that contain each of your terms; the second finds titles that contain the exact phrase. A variation of this command, *allintitle*, finds pages that have all your keywords or phrases in the title, in any order. For example: *allintitle: bird watching Scotland*.

## Searching for Links

A link anchor refers to the words and pictures on a web page that serve as links to another page. Mostly, a link is a blue, underlined word or phrase that describes a related, linked page, but they turn up as buttons, icons or images, too. The *inanchor* operator searches for text in link anchors. It’s a nifty way to gain an idea of which or how many pages link to a person, place or thing. Sometimes, it can help you find an e-mail address, since most web pages consider e-mail addresses to be links. Use it like this: *inanchor: “Andrew Sullivan”* to find sites linking to the popular political weblog The Daily Dish. Not surprisingly, Google has an *allinanchor* option. Bear in mind that the key words you specify with this command must all appear in a link anchor in order to show up in your results.

## Searching Within Sites

The *site* command makes a quick and handy search function for websites that don’t have their own search feature. Unlike the previous commands, *site* has two parts. First, you have to attach a web address to

the *site:* command. Second, you add the keywords or phrases you want to search for: *site:uefa.com “Luis Figo” goals*, or *site:gov.uk “agricultural subsidies”*. You don’t have to include *http://* or *www* and you don’t have to put the site name in quotes. You can also exclude a particular website from your search by placing a hyphen before the command. For example, if you want to look for sites about books, but don’t want to wade through results from Amazon, *books -site:amazon.co.uk* does the trick.

Mostly. This doesn’t block Amazon UK’s international partners, such as Amazon.com, because that is not the site you specified. To avoid all instances of Amazon in an address, and to search within site subdirectories (words at the end of a site name after a slash), use the *inurl* command, as below.

## Searching Within Web Addresses

The *inurl* operator tells Google to look only for web addresses (URLs) that include your search terms. No body text. No titles. Unlike the *site* command, *inurl* doesn’t require additional query words: *inurl: “great pumpkin”* is perfectly acceptable. Remember, a URL can’t contain any spaces, like the one between “great” and “pumpkin”, but if your query includes an exact phrase that has spaces, Google automatically searches for variations that work in URLs, such as *great*, *pumpkin* and *great-pumpkin*. Unlike the *site* command, *inurl* lets you search subdirectories. Thus, the search *inurl: ebay.co.uk/help* brings a gaggle of links to eBay help pages. When using *inurl*, you can’t include *http://* or Google will come up with zero results. As with the *site:* command, you can exclude a site from your search. For example, *books -inurl:amazon*. A variation, *allinurl*, finds all instances of your keywords, but it doesn’t mix well with some other special commands.

## BRING ME SYNONYMS

If your keywords describe a concept, you might want the results to include synonyms for your query. For example, if you’re looking for technical help, it’s useful to include automatically synonyms like *support* and *customer service* without having to type them all in. The *~* symbol tells Google to look for synonyms of the term immediately following the symbol. Typing *~help Microsoft Word* yields a list of pages with *tips/hints/advice/guidance* about the word-processing program.

## How to Mix Several Commands

Some combinations of commands work extremely well. Here is an example to start you off: *intitle and site*. If you wanted a sense of the fill-in forms available from the Department of the Environment, Food and

Rural Affairs, you could enter *intitle:form site:defra.gov.uk*. If you want to narrow that down, you could include other keywords, like this: *Rural Enterprise intitle:form site:defra.gov.uk*. As noted above, some commands work only on their own, while some play well with others. For those you can combine, cleverly splicing them together can narrow your search results in the most satisfying manner. The trick is to experiment and find out what works best for your searches.

## How Not to Mix Commands

The most important rules to keep in mind are those dictating which commands not to mix. These don’t get along with any of the others: *allinurl*, *allintitle*, *allinanchor*. You can also run into trouble by doubling up a single operator. The query *“history courses” site:.com site:.sch* might look as though you are asking Google to give you results from either *.com* or *.sch* sites; in fact, you are telling it that your results should come from sites that are simultaneously part of both domains. Unfortunately, there is no such address as *www.google.com.sch*. If you want results from *.sch* and *.com* domains only, try *“history courses” site:sch OR site:com*.

## Refining by Number and Date

You can temporarily change Google’s behaviour by placing an ampersand (&) at the end of the results address (the long string that ends up in your browser’s address bar after you’ve hit Search) and adding a modifier, which is simply a term that alters your results slightly. So, if you don’t see *num=* (which tells you the number of search results Google will show on each results page) in the results address, add an ampersand (&), then type in *num=x*, where *x* is your desired number. For example, set the number of results to 50 per page by adding *&num=50*. By adding *&as\_qdr=#*, you can alter the maximum age of the results, in months. Simply change the *#* symbol to any number from 1 to 12. This trick can be an excellent way of narrowing results to only the freshest pages — handy when looking for a page that you are sure has been changed recently.

## Safer Searching

To make sure the SafeSearch filter is on, add this to the search URL: *&safe=on*.

## Soapbox Opinion and Expert Advice

Google Groups are handy for finding arcane bits of knowledge shared by specialists (how to use an old Atari console as a web server), for connecting with people who share an interest of yours (Renaissance portraits), or for hooking up with an expert who might be able to answer a question (whether your family has ancestors in Wellingborough). For tech support, consider heading over to Groups, where you can search existing messages for help and

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post questions or answers.

The groups (accessed from Google's home page) are organized by categories, each of which has subcategories. Each topic contains many discussions (also known as threads), and each discussion is made up of one or more posts. Top-level categories, such as those listed on the Google Groups home page, are called hierarchies. All groups fit into a hierarchy, as indicated by the first part of a group's name followed by a dot. For example, the Sci. (science) hier-

archy has a sub-category called Agriculture.

The Google Groups home page lists 10 hierarchies. Alt. stands for alternative, but might as well mean "anything goes" and is by far the largest hierarchy, containing thousands of groups. The rest have dozens, sometimes hundreds. You can browse these groups alphabetically from the Groups main page by clicking "Browse complete list of groups". When you see an asterisk in a group name, that means the group has many sub-categories, beneath which come subgroups. For example, Microsoft.\* means that

the Microsoft hierarchy has sub-categories, and Microsoft.public\* means that Microsoft.public also has several subgroups (296, in fact), and so on. The asterisk is a wildcard, and this is the one place on Google where a wildcard works.

### To Quote a Phrase

If you want, only the web pages that contain your words in order enclose them in quote marks. So, if you search for "to be or not to be", Google gives you matches that include that whole, exact phrase.

## Symantec Norton Ghost 10

by Tony Hawes

### Introduction

Every computer, no matter how carefully maintained, is still subject to disasters. Disaster can be caused by viruses, damaged files, hard drive failure and other assorted catastrophes. Sod's law dictates that disaster will strike at any time and without warning. From personal experience hard drive failure is as inevitable as death and taxes, yet it comes as a revelation to those users who think that backing up is something that only others do. Speaking from personal experience if you choose to be unprepared for disaster it will surely occur and you'll suffer the consequences.

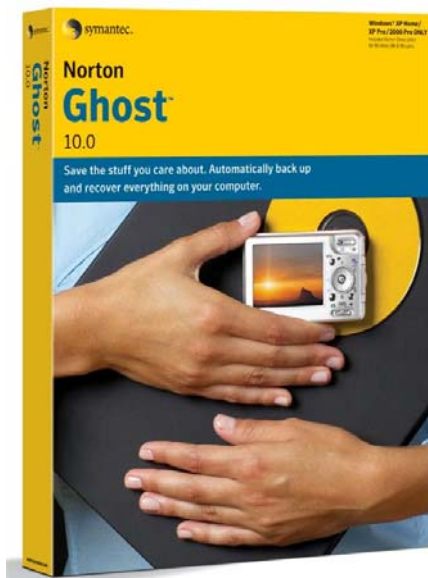
Norton's Ghost has long been the application of choice when it comes to backing up the drives and data on your computer. But until fairly recently Norton Ghost users have suffered from one major drawback. Users are transported into a time-warp where DOS still ruled, even if you use the most sophisticated of modern operating systems. Two years or so ago Symantec bought PowerQuest Corporation, some commentators considered that this was to acquire PowerQuest's Drive Image 7 application that PowerQuest had successfully adapted to run under Windows, meaning that the old DOS-type interface of Ghost, or DOS itself was no longer a requirement when it came to image back-ups.

With the latest versions of Ghost it is now possible to capture the image of a hard drive and any partitions — boot record, file tables, data, the lot from within Windows. On the box it states quite clearly that Ghost 10 is for Windows XP Home / XP Pro / 2000 Pro ONLY. All is not lost however if your OS is Windows ME or Win 98 because in the box you'll find a separate CD with a copy of Ghost 2003, which takes you back to the DOS-based interface.

### Key Features

According to the documentation Ghost 10:

- Backs up everything on your computer - digital music, photos, financial documents, applications, settings, operating



system, etc. - in one easy step.

- Recovers your system and data even when you can't restart your operating system.
- Makes incremental backups to maximize space and save time.
- Makes backups on the fly, without restarting your system.
- Backs up to almost any media, including CDR/RW and DVD+-R/RW drives, USB and FireWire (IEEE 1394) devices, and Iomega Zip and Jaz drives.

### New Features

- Automatically creates an initial backup schedule based on your computer's configuration.
- Automatically detects storage devices, analyzes your system, and offers "best practice" backup advice during installation.
- Automatically monitors and optimizes backup disk space.
- Triggers backups on key events, like new program installations or user logins.
- Creates new backups on demand with One Button "Back Up Now".

- Encrypts backups to help keep them secure.
- Task-based interface simplifies management and monitoring.
- Displays all scheduled backups - plus the degree of backup protection for each drive on your computer - in one convenient view.
- One-step setup wizard makes installation and configuration quick and easy.
- Begins backing up to Maxtor external drives by simply pressing the Maxtor OneTouch button.

### How Does Drive Imaging Work?

Disk-imaging software lets you create sector-by-sector copies of hard-drive partitions, including boot information—so when disaster strikes, system recovery is easy. Symantec in this the latest version of Ghost concentrates on improved usability.



### In Use

Having inserted the CD and started the install routine the program examines your computer to see whether it's capable of running Ghost 10. One particular requirement is that Microsoft's .NET Framework V1.1 *must* be installed *prior* to installing and using Ghost. The file is in one of the .CAB files on the CD and installation is automatic once you agree that it should be installed. This adds a massive 35Mb to Ghost 10's already large 85Mb installation requirements. As I already have Microsoft .NET

(Continued on page 8)



Ghost 10: Back Up Menu



Ghost 10: Recovery Menu

(Continued from page 7)

Framework V2 on the computer already (a necessary requirement for another application), I'm rather puzzled as to why Ghost insisted I install an earlier version to be able to run the program rather than the existing newer version. One possible explanation is partly historical. I recall PowerQuest Drive Image 7 needs this file and that when Symantec acquired PowerQuest and rebranded Drive Image 7 as a Symantec (Ghost) product, this .NET Framework requirement was included, but why Ghost needs an earlier, rather than later version of .NET Framework is a mystery.

If you use other Symantec / Norton products, the user interface for Norton Ghost 10 will look familiar, the layout, colouring etc. looking much the same as Norton Anti-Virus or Internet Security etc. So for a Norton user the interface will be friendly and familiar. This universality means that the look and feel of Ghost simplify the way you approach backup and restoration.

In the box you'll also find a very useful printed 130-page user manual which covers all you need from the easy to the relatively complex.

Having installed Ghost 10, a wizard guides you through the process of creating a backup schedule even suggesting locations to store the backup. Though Ghost can back up data to removable media, such as DVD-RW drives, it works best with an external or secondary internal hard drive (I used my external Maxtor 250GB hard drive with a FireWire connection that I already use for my monthly backups using PowerQuest Drive Image 7, so was almost halfway there when the Wizard went to work). Ghost 10 puts an icon in the system tray and once you've decided the way you want Ghost to work, it works seamlessly in the background, by default Ghost creates a complete backup once a month and performs daily incremental updates of the data that has changed, this means you are protected if you suffer a major mishap, such as a virus infection or a hard disk crash, or more minor troubles, such as accidentally deleting a file or a folder.

One thing I was not so keen on is that

Ghost doesn't have the capability of backing up individual files or programs, it's the whole drive or nothing. However once you got your backup made it's possible to restore individual programs or files from the backed up drive, which is a consolation of sorts.

### Encryption

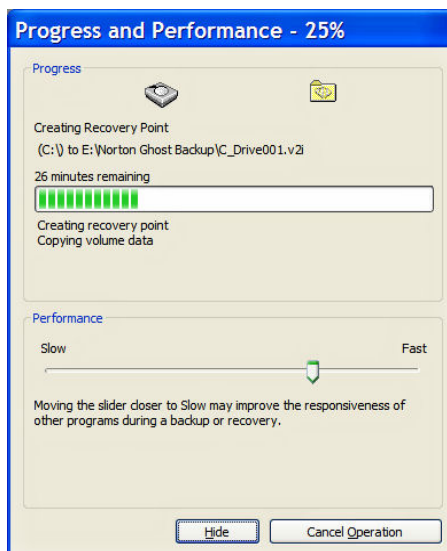
If really paranoid, Ghost 10 allows you to use password-based AES 128-bit, 192-bit, or 256-bit encryption, ideal for those making backups to removable media, since these are vulnerable to theft, but for ordinary home users not particularly necessary, unless you are really worried about your data falling into the wrong hands.

### New Computer?

Ghost 10 offers a Copy My Hard Drive function that replicates the complete contents of one hard drive onto another, Windows, data, the lot — very handy if you are upgrading your system drive to a larger hard disk, or even building / buying a new computer.

### Compression

Using Ghost 10 I used my Maxtor One-Touch 250GB external drive to back up my Acer Notebook's 100GB drive C which contains 63GB of data. Ghost compressed this data using its standard compression algorithm down to 25GB of backed-up data. The only



problem is that if you have a large amount of data or many files to be backed up it can take an hour or so, but as mentioned above, once its done, it needn't be done for another month, whilst meantime incremental backups are done in the background, recording all the changes made since the last full backup.

### Restoring a Broken Computer

If because of some catastrophic failure your computer is unable to start Windows normally due to lost hardware, data, or program files on a drive, the Ghost 10 CD can be used to start the computer using the recovery environment, known as Symantec Recovery Disk. To do so it's necessary to ensure your BIOS in configured to see the CD/DVD drive as the first bootable device. Once it's booted you follow the simple instructions on the Norton Ghost 10 Disk.

Applications are included on the CD to enable you do hard drive error checking and virus scanning when you boot into the recovery module. However you have a better chance of success with the latest virus definitions which are available from the "Update Locator" which locates virus definitions available from Symantec servers. Assuming your computer has Internet access that is!

### Conclusions

Ghost 10 is easy to use and works well in both copying and restoring data, meaning you can restore anything from just one file to the complete contents of the backed up drive. The backup process is totally automatic or if you want you can do it manually. Hard drive error and virus scanning is also included in the package which is a bonus.

From experience, disaster will almost certainly strike at some stage and if unprepared for you'll suffer the consequences. Norton Ghost 10 with its easy to use interface will put your mind at ease — so like a Boy Scout "Be Prepared."

### Pricing and Availability

Amazon.co.uk for £33.97 inc VAT and delivery.



# Logitech Harmony 885 Universal Remote Control

Reviewed by Laurence Fenn

## Introduction

After the problems I had with the Harmony 675 universal remote, Logitech have sent their latest model, the Harmony 885. The functionality of the remote is the same, i.e. you can program it to replace all your existing remote controls and set activities to switch several pieces of equipment at the same time, so I'll only cover the differences between the older and newer models. The remotes are both the same size, but the 885 is lighter, due to the four AA batteries being replaced with a lithium rechargeable battery, and a charging unit. The three connection points at the back of the remote do not seem to make a snug connection when the unit is resting in the charger and there was nowhere in the manual that gave how long it takes to do a full charge. There are three cells indicating the charge status, but to be safe I left it charging overnight.

## Display

The black and white three line display has updated to a colour portrait display, and eight function buttons (as opposed to six on the 675). The buttons are all designed to look good and fit into the look of the remote rather than comfort, but they are more tactile and have a better feel as opposed to the small rubber buttons on the 675. The function buttons on the sides of the screen are tiny, but still functional (excuse the pun). The four colour buttons (which can be used for teletext and interactive services on cable and Freeview) are smaller than ever, and the transport buttons and numbers are better, but in the wrong position. Holding the remote in your hand means the volume, four way controller and channel buttons are easy to reach, but the buttons on the lower half of the remote are difficult to get to without moving your hand or using your other hand. The row of activities buttons at the top have been replaced with one Activities button which is a bit redundant as the Device button toggles between devices and



activities. The Glow button switches the display on and lights up the buttons, but if the display is already on, it fades it out and then on again (and makes the buttons glow).

## Updating

Updating from the previous remote was easy, as when I plugged in the device and logged into the website, I click on the Connectivity button and it detected the 885. When I went to customise the device, the

extra options for the colour display were available. My previous activities were still set up, but several of the descriptions needed changing to cope with the new display.

## Functions / Descriptions

There are two lines for the function/device descriptions, strangely divided into nine characters on the first line and six on the second, using a larger font. Long titles for the functions are handled by an automatic break in the line if there is a space in the description, but shorter lines are put on the bottom line with larger text. The limits mean that on the setting for my JVC DVD player the word DIMMER is okay, but DISPLAY is shown as DISPLA..). With two line descriptions the OPEN/CLOSE DRAWER tag is abbreviated on the first line to OPEN/CLOS with two dots. This is odd as the two dots just about take up the space the extra E would have. You have no control over the automatic break in the lines (other than the length of the words), so on my surround sound system BASS UP is on one line, but BASS DOWN is on two. It doesn't make any difference to the control, but if you wanted both functions to appear the same on screen, you would have to add more spaces between the words to force the line break.

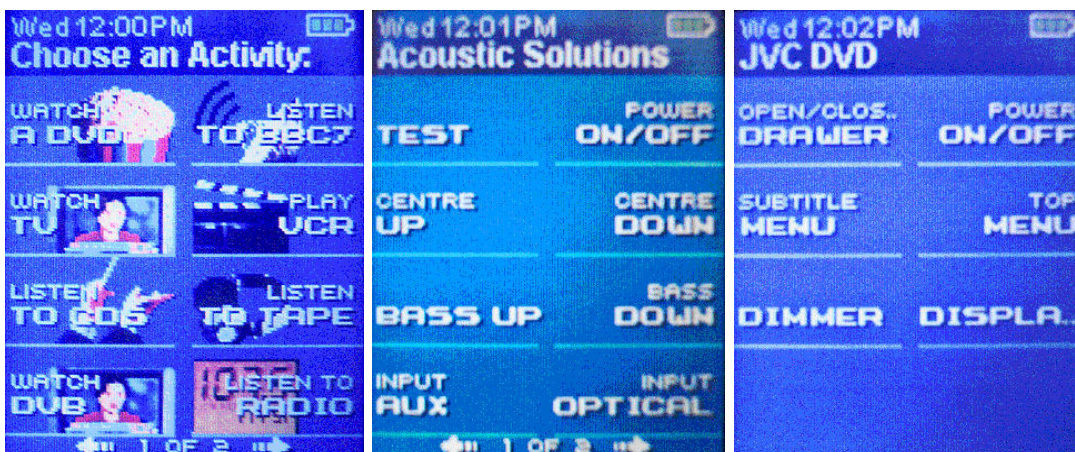
## Power Saving

The display dims after a few seconds of inactivity to conserve power, and there is a tilt control in the remote that detects movement, to switch it back on. The display has coloured icons for the activities and devices, but you cannot customise them. You can change the background colour in the settings, but it still puts a bar along the top. A slide show can be created, with images uploaded to the device. You can set the slide show to run by an option on the menu, or it shows automatically when the unit is recharging. Unfortunately the lack of a full colour display makes the normal pictures look strange and the annoying bar at the top which covers part of the picture.

## Conclusions

This remote cannot cope with carrierless infra-red codes, which was the problem with the 675 and my old Hitachi television. I was assured by the support team that newer Harmony remote controls would be able to control them, but this is not the case. Users should be aware that this remote may not work with all your devices and old devices may not be programmed using a replacement remote. The range of the re-

(Continued on page 10)



Harmony 885 — Colour Display Showing Menu Choices



Logitech Harmony 885 Sitting in its Recharging Cradle

(Continued from page 9)

remote is still very good, and the display

shows a small icon beside the battery indicator whenever you press a button. You also have the day and time shown in

the top left corner of the screen.

Despite the bells and whistles, the 885

remote doesn't really offer any advantage over the older 675 model. Yes, the buttons are better and the display is bigger, but the odd limitation of the descriptions still makes it an effort to get the tags for the extras functions correct. I could not see the use of a slideshow for the remote, as the only time it comes on automatically is when the remote is charging and the display dims after a few seconds anyway.

### Pricing and Availability

£145 inc. VAT and delivery from Amazon.co.uk

## New Cameras From Canon

As part of their Spring Collection 2006, Canon launched 39 new consumer products as part of its Spring Collection, including 1 digital still camera, 2 EF lenses, 1 digital DVD camcorder, 5 designer PIXMA Inkjet Single Functional printers (SFP), 3 PIXMA Inkjet Multifunctional printers (MFP), 8 Digital Still Compact cameras (DSC) and 3 Multimedia Projectors. The launch demonstrates Canon's unique position as a manufacturer with expertise in both image capture and image output solutions.

### Digital Still Compact Cameras

- Digital IXUS 800 IS
- PowerShot A430 and PowerShot A530
- PowerShot A700 and PowerShot A540
- PowerShot S3 IS
- Digital IXUS 60 and Digital IXUS 65

### Multimedia Projectors

- LV-7255 and LV-7250
- LV-X6
- XEED Range (XEED SX6, SX60 and X600)

### Inkjet MFP printers (Multifunction Printers)

- PIXMA MP800R
- PIXMA MP830 and PIXMA MP530

### Digital SLR camera

- EOS 30D

### Inkjet SFP printers (Single Function Printers)

- PIXMA iX4000 and iX5000
- PIXMA Pro9500 and PIXMA Pro9000

### EF Lenses

- EF 85mm f/1.2 L II USM
- EF-S17-55mm f/2.8 IS USM

### Digital DVD Camcorder

- DC100 DVD

Two new cameras in particular caught my eye. The PowerShot S3 IS and the Digital IXUS 800 IS.

### The PowerShot S3 IS

The former has a lot going for it as a



6.0 MP PowerShot S3 IS (left) and 6.0 MP Digital IXUS 800 IS (right)

fully specified, high-end camera for the consumer market whilst the IXUS 800 is aimed at the compact aim-and-shoot brigade of photographers who expect a little more from their compact camera.

The S3 comes with a 12x optical zoom and incorporates a 6.0 Megapixel CCD sensor, Canon's Optical Image Stabiliser technology and video functionality rivaling that of dedicated digital video camcorders. The compact PowerShot S3 IS answers the demands of advanced photographers with several improvements over its predecessor (the S2) including an increased sensitivity range of ISO 80 to ISO 800, a larger 2.0" vari-angle LCD screen, widescreen (16:9) recording, new movie features and an additional Sports mode.

**Optics.** The most powerful zoom in a Canon digital compact camera (36 – 432mm f/2.7-f.3.5), the PowerShot S3 IS' lens incorporates the same leading technologies used in Canon's professional EF lenses. An Ultra-Sonic Motor (USM) drives rapid and near-silent zoom operation; an Ultra-low Dispersion (UD) lens element significantly reduces chromatic aberration in telephoto shots; Canon's optical Image Stabiliser 2 (IS) technology counteracts camera shake to reduce image blur when shooting stills or recording video, essential for handheld shots at longer focal lengths. IS allows photographers to shoot at shutter speeds up to 3 stops slower for reliable flash-free photography in low light conditions.

### Digital IXUS 800 IS.

The delightfully compact Digital IXUS 800 IS combines IXUS style with advanced photographic features. Experience sharper flash-free shooting with ISO 800 and a 4x optical Image Stabilizer zoom lens.

**Features.** 6.0 MP CCD, 4x optical zoom with optical IS, ISO 800, 2.5" LCD, 16 shooting modes and My Colours, Wide-screen recording and 30fps VGA movies, PictBridge and Print/Share button.

4x optical zoom lens features Canon's optical Image Stabilizer (IS) technology to counteract camera shake - particularly noticeable at slower shutter speeds, full zoom and in low light conditions.

### Price Guide

A browse of Dabs.com shows they will be selling the PowerShot S3 IS for £320 inc VAT when the S3 goes on sale on 16th May. Amazon.co.uk have the Digital IXUS 800 IS in stock now for £286 inc VAT and free delivery.

In depth specifications of both these cameras and other new products can be found at:

<http://www.canon.co.uk>.

Your editor is requesting review samples for John Childs to review and demo at one of our Group meetings.

# Netgear DG834PN RangeMax ADSL+2 Modem Router

Reviewed by Tony Hawes

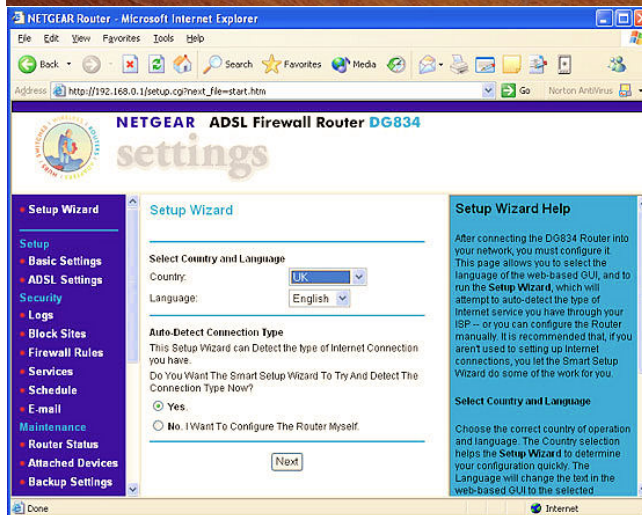
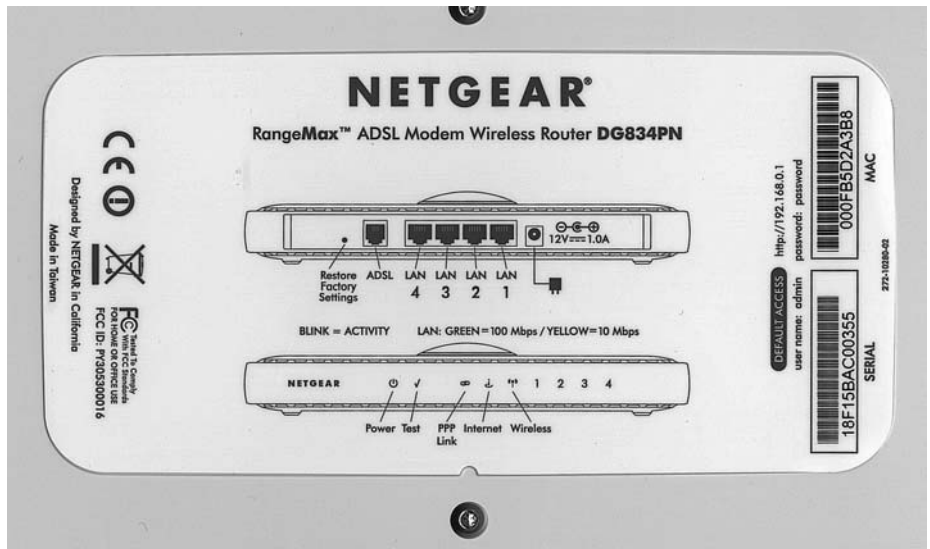
As the happy user of BT's Voyager 2100 ADSL wireless router for my home network I was keen to test the capabilities of Netgear's latest which was getting good reviews.

Netgear's DG834 is an ADSL wireless modem with built-in router, a 4 port 10/100Mbps Ethernet switch which allows the connection of up to four computers, whilst the wireless component offers 802.11g wireless connectivity support

The router is aimed at the home market and is ideally used on a single IP address account.

## Here's What Netgear Says

- 500% more wireless coverage than standard 802.11g
- As a 21st-century consumer, computers are an integral part of your life. But does your home computing environment work for you? Even if you already have a wireless network, you've probably found "dead spots" in your home where your Internet connection fades in and out, or drops off completely.
- Now, say good-bye to those dead spots ... and say hello to the freedom to work (and play) absolutely anywhere in your home!
- With the RangeMax ADSL2+ Modem Wireless Router, your whole house becomes a "hot spot." NETGEAR's exclusive RangeMax technology gives you the longest range of any wireless device on the market today – up to 5 times the wireless coverage of 802.11g. So you'll have a sizzling-fast, consistent connection in every room of your house ... and beyond.
- Put the NETGEAR RangeMax ADSL2+ Modem Wireless Router to work for you, and that's all you need – leave those range extenders, repeaters, and external antennas at the store. RangeMax adjusts to the interference and physical barriers in your home, and delivers up to 25,000 square meters of coverage – 500% more than 802.11g. And you don't need to throw away your old wireless devices; RangeMax is 100% compatible with your existing 802.11b/g products and will boost their range and speed by up to 50%.
- RangeMax is an advanced Smart MIMO (Multi-In, Multi-Out) technology that uses six internal antennas.



Installation with the SmartWizard

RangeMax constantly surveys your home environment for physical barriers and interference and adjusts the wireless signal to compensate for these performance blockers. For example, if you carry your laptop from the family room to the bedroom, RangeMax automatically senses the change and selects from scores of possible antenna configurations to deliver you the fastest, clearest connection! Everyone will enjoy consistently high-speed connections, every-

where in your house – no drop-outs, and no dead spots.

- No need for a separate modem – this unit connects directly into your ADSL line. Built-in Port Forwarding settings, Universal Plug and Play (UPnP) and Virtual Private Network (VPN) pass-through make it simple to play Internet games, send instant messages, and host Internet services. The user interface matches your local language (English, French, German or Italian). The DG834PN supports PCs, Macintosh, and virtually all Ethernet devices, and comes with a free Ethernet cable for connecting your first computer.

## In the Box

The router comes with the necessary range of accessories to enable your modem to work straight out of the box: a three-metre long Ethernet patch cable, a similar length RJ-11 ADSL modem lead, a micro-filter to plug into your telephone socket (to split the telephone and data into their separate streams), a six-page printed quick set-up guide, a CD-ROM containing the SmartWizard Install Assistant and manual, a 12v PSU with a three-pin plug and finally a two-year warranty card.

## Set-up

A quick read through the set-up guide shows that using the SmartWizard is the simplest way to configure your internet connection using this modem. So having installed the SmartWizard application from the CD, connected the ADSL lead between the modem and the micro filter, plugged the micro filter into the telephone socket, connected the Ethernet cable between the computer and the modem, plugged in the power supply; all that

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

smart necessary was to allow the SmartWizard to lead me through the configuration settings, including the necessary wireless security settings (I chose WPA). If you want to use some of the more complex settings, Netgear allows you to do this through their web interface.

### In Use

I'm not going to do a full technical appraisal of the modem's performance as I don't have the requisite test equipment, but I'll concentrate on its range when used with a laptop in various locations around the house.

The first thing that strikes you is that there is no aerial for the wireless connection — but don't be too worried, Netgear have managed to cram six internal antennas inside the modem's casing.

So before installing this modem I took some readings from my Acer Notebook's wireless internet connection menu using my existing ADSL Wireless Connection modem (BT 2100 Voyager) and the Notebook's built-in wireless card. I then compared how well the Notebook connected wirelessly to the Netgear DG834PN, again using the Note-

Signal Strength			
Location (Modem is in an upstairs study at the back of the house)	BT 2100 Using the notebook's built-in Wireless card	Netgear DG 834PN Using the notebook's built-in Wireless card	Netgear DG 834PN with WPN511 Using Range Max PC Card Adapter in notebook
In the same room as the modem	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Adjacent room through two walls	Very Good	Very Good	Excellent
Downstairs room through two walls and a floor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Back Garden Patio through one exterior wall — 10 metres distant	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Bottom of back garden through one wall / window — 40 metres distant (with almost line of sight to antenna)	Very Good	Excellent	Excellent
Furthest end of front garden through three internal walls and one exterior wall — 50 meters	No Signal	Poor	Good

results in the table are reasonable, I wasn't expecting too much in the way of improvement, but was struck by the apparent increased range and signal strength from otherwise difficult locations, I'm not sure as to how it's done, but given that Netgear claim their MIMO modems constantly adapt to connection requirements at any time, and any place, to provide the strongest signal from a possible 60 different antenna configurations, Netgear appear to have a magic touch not available elsewhere! At an additional £50 each the adapters are not cheap, but if you operate your other computer/s from locations where poor reception gives 'iffy' connections, the RangeMax card will be a worthwhile investment.

### Conclusions

The DG834PN is an impressive piece of kit. It's a doddle to setup, works well in a normal household environment and compared with alternatives doesn't cost too much. Add the WPN511 RangeMax Adapter and you'll have an unbeatable combination. My ISP (PlusNet) is about to upgrade my 2Mbs ADSL connection to 8Mbs at no extra charge, so it'll be interesting to see how well the Netgear modem and RangeMax card perform



book's built-in wireless card and finally using Netgear's WPN511 RangeMax Wireless PC Card Adapter. The results are shown in the table above.

### WPN511 RangeMax Adapter

To increase the DG834's range, Netgear supply their RangeMax adapters (PC card or USB2) for any of the computers you want add to your network. I used the the RangeMax PC card version (left). Given that the

when the speed is increased — I'll keep you posted.

### Pricing and Availability

Netgear's DG834PN ADSL Modem is available from Amazon.co.uk for £92 inc VAT and delivery. For the RangeMax WPN111 Adapter expect to pay around £50 for the PC Card version or £41 for the USB2 version.

## Microsoft Flight Simulator X — Coming Soon



At the recent Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Microsoft officially unveiled "Flight Simulator X" and provided an exciting first look at the innovative new title. During Microsoft's keynote speech, hosted by Bill Gates, attendees were given an exclusive sneak peek at the realism and exciting new content enabled through "Flight Simulator X," which is scheduled to be available by Christmas this year.

"Flight Simulator X" is the culmination of nearly 25 years of the landmark "Flight Simulator" franchise and the most significant addition to date. "Flight Simulator X" will be fully optimised for Windows Vista. "Flight Simulator X" will also present players with a wide array of new aircraft to fly in a beautifully rich and believable world which will contain greater detail than past versions.

Players will be able to experience what it is like to be a pilot and fly their dream aircraft, from classic seaplanes like the de Havilland Beaver and Grumman Goose to the Cessna 172, plus many others.

As mentioned above FS X is optimised for Windows Vista, so whether the delay to the release of Vista to 2007 will have an impact on the release of FS X remains to be seen. I'll keep you posted — Ed.