ROM

Newsletter of the Guildford PC User Group

Editor's Bit

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)

Secretary's Notes — Monday 14th August 2006

BRING YOUR OWN COMPUTER

This was the one evening in the year when members can bring their equipment to the club to get expert views on any difficulties they are experiencing or merely to show off any new purchases they have made. We then had a short presentation by Phil Ely, a lecturer at the University College for the Creative Arts at Farnham who is also a PhD student at the University of Surrey. It was in the latter capacity that he spoke on Monday. He is looking for willing participants to take part in a pilot study on the way that we innovate with home interactive technology. The study involves one home visit to create "Technology Biographies". These are profiles of users of home interactive technology and their attitudes to past, present and future technology in their home. The research forms a significant part of Phil's studies at the Digital Worlds Research Centre at Surrey University. Phil received a number of interested Club members and any one else interested can get further information at: www.philely.com or www.dwrc.surrey.ac.uk.

The evening ended with Tony Hawes demonstrating Pinnacle Studio 10 Plus. This was a reprise of the talk he gave earlier in the year (reported in ROM February/March 2006), of the then recently released Pinnacle Studio 10 video editing suite. For his August talk and demonstration he concentrated on the new features of the enhanced Studio 10 Plus version which incorporates the latest downloaded patch/s to bring the program up to version 10.6. Using a number of digital sequences from the Farnborough Air Show he showed how they can be edited by being spliced together using some additional still photos, which when enhanced with a number of different transitions, sound effects, background music and titles, can produce an interesting short and topical video.

Tony also referred to one item that he omitted from his Microsoft Windows Vista demonstration the previous month. This is the inability of being able to use Microsoft's PhotoStory 3 application to create pseudo "movie" (slide-show) sequences from a selection of still photos with Windows Vista. Microsoft considers that MovieMaker, a feature introduced with Windows XP and with an updated and improved version included with Vista, will do all that PhotoStory 3 does plus more. Tony considered this a retrograde step as he found PhotoStory simple to use and ideal for a beginner to be able to try out this powerful but simple to use graphical application whereas anyone who has used MovieMaker will realise there is a much steeper learning curve to be overcome before being able to use Vista's MovieMaker successfully.

An interesting evening

ROM is now only available as a full-colour .pdf download from the Group web page at:
www.guildfordpcusergroup.co.uk

NEXT MEETING — Monday 9th October 2006 at 7.45 p.m.

Dragon Naturally Speaking 9 — A Practical Demonstration

Dr Paul Kuzmin will be demonstrating the latest version of Nuance's acclaimed speech recognition program Dragon Naturally Speaking 9 (see his review on page 6).

Paul uses this program daily in his medical practice so as an experienced user is well qualified to give a good overview plus an in-depth demonstration as to the new features and capabilities of Dragon Naturally Speaking 9.

Spread the word and please bring a friend — coffee, tea & chocolate biscuits are free.

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 13th November at 7.45 pm
Canon's latest scanner and possibly a printer being demonstrated. Among other features the scanner can reputedly create PDF's direct from scanned documents. A chance to see how well they perform.

Monday 11th December at 7.45 pm
Christmas Quiz night. With prizes up for grabs.

Secretary's Notes — Monday 11th September 2006

DVB-T (FREEVIEW) AND MICROFT'S NEW FLIGHT SIM — FS-X

The evening started with Tony Hawes demonstrating two pieces of hardware to provide TV reception on your PC. The first was a new USB connected device not much larger than a memory stick by TerraTec Electronic, the Cinergy T USB XE. Obtaining it's power from the USB socket this provided all the Freeview TV channels and the radio channels included in this service. Using his notebook the installation procedure ran well, channels were scanned and all the channels available were selectable from the menu. Although the nearest DVB-T transmitter, Guildford, can be seen from our meeting hall it is only a low-power gap filling station using the top channels (41 to 54 operating at 100-watts). The signal from the tiny 6-inch vertical aerial provided was obviously only marginally sufficient showing up very noticeably on movement. The cost of the hardware is about £39.

For comparison the second piece of hardware was in the form of a PCMCIA card provided as part of a laptop package from Tony's daughter's new Targa notebook. Operated with Cyberlink Power Cinema, this provided DVB-T (Freeview), TV analogue and FM radio outputs and used a slightly larger vertical aerial for the TV reception and a ribbon aerial for DAB and FM reception. Again the installation went well and output on the digital service was very similar to that of the TerraTec Cinergy T USB XE. It also coped very well and received dozens of DAB radio stations plus a good selection FM analogue stations. No price for this as its comes bundled as part of the laptop package.

Tony, in complete contrast, then went on to show a demo of the trial version of Microsoft's Flight Simulator X, the successor to Microsoft's Flight Simulator 2004. This available as a free 636MB download from: http://www.microsoft.com/games/flightsimulatorx/downloads.html. Flight Simulator X trial version includes two airports, three practice missions, and three different aircraft. All of the missions take place at St. Maarten in the Caribbean.

The new planes included in the trial (there are more in the full version) are a de Havilland Beaver DHC2 floatplane, an AirCreation Trike Ultralight and a Bombardier CRJ700. With improved scenery and more variable weather conditions this new version of Flight Simulator would seem to be an interesting edition. According to Amazon.co.uk UK launch date is set for 13th of October. So about the time you read this FS-X will be about to hit the shelves.

EDITOR'S BIT
Windows Vista — RC1

In mid-September Microsoft released to the public the Release Candidate 1 (RC-1) version of Windows Vista. For those who remember the trials and tribulations of the July demo of Vista Beta 2, the operating system is now much improved and

stable. In particular the drivers for my Acer notebook's ATI Radeon Mobility X-700 graphics card work a treat and in many other respects show a vast improvement.

Sadly the current Anti-Virus tools from McAfee (McAfee Internet Security 2007) and Norton (Anti-Virus 2006) still refuse to install and having talked to the PR representative for McAfee, developers are still working on a version for Vista that will be available when Vista is launched at the end of January 2007. Similarly I spoke to a Norton developer who assured me that Norton's Vista-capable anti-virus product will be available by Vista's launch date. As I've mentioned before if you feel exposed when trialling/using Vista, Alwil's AVAST anti-virus program does work and is free to home users.

Another oddity is that neither Nero 7 or Roxio's Easy CD Media Creator 9 which creates and copies CDs and DVDs work with Vista, they refuse to install and some web sites imply that Microsoft have crippled Vista's CD/DVD copy features when using an external copy program for some reason. This is a pity as Vista's built-in application to make and copy CD/DVD's is horribly clunky and un-user friendly.

Microsoft Office 2003 and Office 2007 (beta) work just fine with Vista, which is I suppose to be expected.

WINDOWS VISTA RC1 — HOW DOES IT COMPARE WITH BETA 2?
Installation

I'd downloaded RC1, a 2.5GB file, from Microsoft's Vista site, burnt the DVD as an ISO image and ran the install routine using as directed by MS my original beta 2 install key. All went well and without a hitch.

As mentioned in my July review of Vista Beta 2, installation took a long time, even when installing to a newly formatted blank hard disk, which in my case took over an hour to install and configure. But since then work has obviously been done to improve matters as this time around the install and configure routine, again to a newly formatted blank HD was done in a little over thirty minutes, a vast improvement.

Drivers

Driver problems I experienced in beta 2, mainly the absence of suitable and compatible drivers for some hardware appear to have been resolved with RC1 now supporting a wider range of hardware. On my notebook all the major hardware components were identified and drivers installed accordingly.

Performance

Subjectively, compared with beta 2, Vista RC1 has speeded things up significantly. Notable are improved boot-up and shutdown times plus the ability for a system to wake from sleep mode in seconds. Microsoft make much of the new disk caching utilities like Windows SuperFetch and Windows ReadyBoost that reduce the need to read and write from disk, thus improving performance.

Networking

There are enhancements that enhance network connections, in particular RC1 has improved and simplified the connection steps for getting connected wirelessly and offer support to an increased number of wireless network devices.

Security

Security enhancements which include Windows Defender that features automatic signature updates and enhanced scanning, helps to protect from unwanted spyware and adware. User Account Controls are still there but have been toned down so that only major changes are

flagged to bring to the users attention as to whether changes should be allowed or not. For those with kids security enhancements include improved parental controls.

Multimedia

If you are into multimedia, RC1 offers support for HD-DVD. While the photo gallery, Movie Maker and DVD Maker applications sport improved interfaces. What's more, RC1 now supports a host of multimedia devices, ranging from digital cameras to MP3 players to output devices—a much-needed develop-ment for those working with audio and video.

Conclusions

RC1 is almost the final version before Vista is released to manufacturing for launch at the end of January 2007.

Just as ROM was being finalised on 8th October it was officially announced that Microsoft has unusually released a further Release Candidate (RC2). So whether using RC1 or RC2 users' will be able to trial and get a taste of what Vista is really about.

If you do want to try it out Microsoft have implied that additional users will be able to download RC1 or RC2, in which case I urge you to give it a go. The Microsoft Windows Vista site says you can trial it free of charge until June of next year.

Windows Vista UK Pricing.

Windows Vista Home Basic — £154.99

Windows Vista Home Premium — £184.99

Windows Vista Business — £250

Windows Vista Ultimate — £350

Pricing from Amazon.co.uk.

Upgrades are available but as yet no price details.

McAfee's Internet Security Suite 2007

by Tony Hawes

McAfee have launched a whole raft of updated security programs designed to keep your computer protected from internet threats. These range from the basic 3-in-1 protection against viruses, hackers and spyware offered by McAfee VirusScan Plus 2007 through to the 10-in-1 protection of the top-of-range McAfee Total Protection 2007 which among other things:

- Identifies, blocks, cleans and removes viruses automatically
- Blocks spyware before it installs on a PC and removes existing spyware
- Protects consumers' online identities so they can shop, bank, e-mail and instant message
- Shields and conceals online access of PCs from hackers
- Monitors incoming and outgoing Internet activity automatically, looking for suspicious applications and data
- Prevents spam and phishing scams
- Filters offensive content, pictures and Web sites so children can be safe when online
- Manages Wi-Fi network security, blocks hackers from attacking Wi-Fi® networks and monitors PCs across home networks for security weaknesses
- Monitors and manages security on PCs connected to the home network
- Helps consumers easily share files and printers on a home network
- Cleans clutter off PCs to keep them running smoothly
- Provides advanced warnings using SiteAdvisor's patent-pending technology to help consumers avoid sites which send spam, install adware or attempt online scams
- Automatically backs up consumers' most valuable files by encrypting and compressing these on a CD/DVD, USB, or external or network drive

As a long term user who relies on McAfee to keep my PC safe I've chosen to review McAfee Internet Security Suite 2007 the "middle-of-the-road" version of McAfee's 2007 range of security products.

Threats Countered

So what threats does McAfee Internet Security Suite 2007 protect you from? According to the box it counters eight main threats:

1. Stops Viruses. Automatically blocks, cleans, and removes viruses so you can surf the Web safely and download files.
2. Blocks Spyware. Blocks spyware before it installs on your computer and removes existing spyware so you can surf the Web safely.
3. Stops Hackers. Protects and conceals your computer from hackers so you can surf the Internet safely.
4. Improves PC Performance. Cleans clutter off of your computer so you can keep your computer healthy and running smoothly.
5. Backs Up & Restores Files. Automated backup and one click restore so you don't lose photos, music and important files.
6. Secures your Identity. Protects your online identity so you can shop, bank, e-mail, and instant message worry free.
7. Prevents Spam & E-mail Scams. Prevents spam and phishing scams so you can e-mail with friends and family safely.
8. Protects Children Online. Filters offensive content, pictures, and Web sites so you can keep your children safe when online.

Additional Benefits

Internet Security Suite 2007 also offers additional benefits:

- Automatically monitors incoming and outgoing Internet activity, looking for suspicious applications and data.
- Guards important files stored on your computer, and helps prevent your computer from crashing.
- Provides advance warning to help you avoid sites which send spam, install adware, or attempt online scams.
- Redesigned for you. Scan your computer, check for updates and configure your security settings using the new McAfee® SecurityCenter. This essential, easy-to-use program gives you one-click access to your computer's security information.
- Always On, Always Protecting. 24/7 virus and threat protection from McAfee AVERT Labs continuously monitors worldwide virus activities and provides immediate anti-virus protection and removal solutions.
- Always Upgrading, Always Updating. Daily updates are installed automatically. When a new version of McAfee is available, you get it automatically at no charge during your subscription, ensuring that you always have up-to-date protection.
- Convenient, Ongoing Protection. McAfee offers a variety of renewal options to keep your McAfee protection current.
- Real People, Real Help. Support from McAfee's computer security experts, via Internet chat, e-mail and phone. (www.mcafeehelp.com)

Installation

Installation was slightly quirky and basically trouble-free but it took much longer than I expected; it installed OK from the CD and

then appeared to download the program again when connected to the web for the registra-

tion/update routine. I don't quite know what happened but it seems to work OK, although computer boot-up since installation is significantly longer than before.
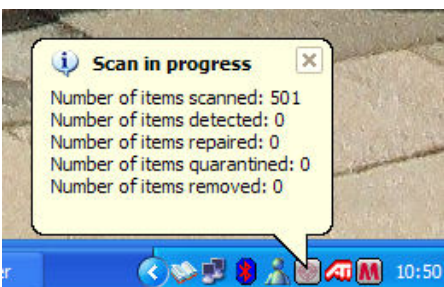
In Use

McAfee's Internet Security Centre can be managed and run by clicking on the McAfee system tray icon, a small square with a red 'M' in the bottom right hand corner of your desktop. When open it's obvious changes have been made since year's version. From here it's possible to manage and configure not only the VirusScan security settings but it enables you to configure all the other firewall, hacker and other settings supplied with the program. Unlike last year's Security Centre

index which used graphical bars (with a 1 to 10 rating scale) to show how well your PC is protected against threats, the 2007 version offers a simplified view of your settings (see above) , showing whether you are protected or not.

As with the 2006 version, virus signatures are downloaded and installed automatically in the background, the only indication that this is being done is the appearance of a small animated icon indicating that an update is in progress (see below) and the opening afterwards of a small window on the desktop to announce that an

update has been downloaded and installed. A very useful feature with minimal user involvement.

As with earlier versions VirusScan integrates well with Microsoft Outlook Express scanning both incoming and outgoing e-mail and attachments for viruses and spyware. This makes the virus scanning features together with its user–friendly interface, one of the better security/anti virus programs; novices in particular will find it a doddle to use.

Last year's McAfee's VirusScan 8 was first rate at flagging up infected files or attachments and although I haven't as yet been able to assess VirusScan 2007's real world protection capabilities (I've not yet received a virus infected file or attachment, or even a hacker's Trojan horse since I installed the program) I have no reason to doubt it'll deal with these threats in a secure and capable manner should I be unfortunate enough to receive such a missive.

Other Features

Whilst I was most interested in the protection offered in the four major areas of Anti-Virus threats, Hacking, Spyware and Trojans, it turns out that McAfee Internet Security 2007 offers a lot more.

Clicking on "Tools" in the Advanced menu brings up a collection of bonus tools of varying degrees of usefulness.

- Maintain Computer. Opens McAfee QuickClean to clear accumulated computer detritus. It removes Internet Explorer traces such as cookies, history, and cache, and it can delete lists of recently used files for many programs it also deletes unnecessary files and Registry items.
- Disk Defragmenter does what it says.
- Task Scheduler allows you to create Windows Scheduled task to clean your computer regularly.

- The Shredder securely deletes files or disks, though it won't securely overwrite unused disk space.
- The Virus Map links to McAfee's online Virus Map and Virus Information Library to show graphically the latest threats and where they're from.
- The Visual Tracer attempts to map the location of a given IP address, but I found this module confusing and difficult to use.
- Traffic Monitor that provides incredibly detailed statistics about network traffic.
- HackerWatch page with aggregated information on current hack attacks

Slow Down

As mention earlier there has been a noticeable slow down in booting my computer, presumably because its checking my files for possible infections / problems. But once up and running I'm happy to let it protect me silently in the background.

McAfee Data Backup

One further tool intrigued me. This is McAfee Data Backup which archives many essential file types. Depending on your needs it can schedule a full backup weekly and a quick backup of only changed files every two days. When invoked it will ask where you want to store the backup. You can direct it to CD/DVD, to another local drive of any kind, to a network location or an external hard drive. Although it has a simplified and very easy to use interface setting the destination of the backup is all that's necessary. But if you want to do more you can tell it to back up other folders, with or without their subfolders, but be aware that this only backs up a dozen or so file types by default. DOC and XLS files , but not RTF. JPG and TIFF but not BMP or GIF; MP3 but not MIDI, WAV or AVI, so a little care is necessary here.

It's fairly flexible so that you can do a full backup on a daily, weekly or monthly basis and set it to save changed files every 1 to 6 hours or days. A useful and fascinating application which I'll be exploring during the next month.

Conclusions

McAfee Internet Security Suite 2007 offers a whole raft of essential security tools plus some very useful extras. It was easy to install and use and the automatic handling of high-risk spyware threats plus the included extra tools is a worthwhile bonus.

Symantec's Norton Internet Security 2007 has just been released but was received too late for a review in this issue. However I'll be reviewing it in the next issue of ROM to see how it compares with McAfee's Internet Security Suite 2007 reviewed here.

Pricing and Availability

McAfee Internet Security Suite 2007 is available from Amazon.co.uk for £44.99 inc VAT and delivery, or an upgrade from an earlier version for £26.99. A three user version is available for £80.99.

NewsBytes & What's New

McAfee, Microsoft and the Financial Times

Just as I was finishing my review of McAfee's Internet Security Suite 2007 (see previous two pages) I heard a quite extraordinary story on the news that George Samenuk the boss of McAfee had written an Open Letter that was published as a full-page ad in the London Financial Times on Tuesday 2nd October.

Given that rumours persist as to what does and doesn't work in Vista, see my piece regarding the non-working of third-party CD/DVD copying / recording programs on page two, it appears Microsoft are dragging their feet in not allowing their "partners" access to Vista's kernel. If you haven't read it already McAfee's Open Letter is alongside.

MS Software Protection Platform

Microsoft is adding technology to its Windows operating system software that prevents pirated copies from working properly, starting with Vista due out in January.

Failing to activate the software with a genuine product key within 30 days will cause the software to operate with "reduced functionality," says Microsoft on its Web site.

Microsoft is trying to alert unsuspecting users of illegal software and punish those doing it intentionally. To this end Microsoft will begin using the Software Protection Platform, a new set of technologies that deny users of pirated software access to features such as security protection and the new Vista design. The pirated software will display a message that "this copy of Windows is not genuine" in the lower right-hand corner of the computer screen.

The Software Protection Platform is made up of several parts. The first move is to make certain features unavailable unless the user has confirmed their copy of Windows as genuine. Only licensed copies would have access to Aero—Vista's new user interface—and ReadyBoost, which uses a flash drive to temporarily add more memory to a computer system.

Additionally, the functionality of Windows Defender would be crippled, and optional downloads from Windows Update would be unavailable to the unlicensed user. Microsoft would also place a watermark on the desktop at all times that reads "This copy of Windows is not genuine."

The biggest change, however, is to the Windows activation process. With a number of corporate product keys publicly available on the Internet, activating a pirated copy of Windows Vista was quite easy as it only took one activation to prevent reduced functionality.

Microsoft Increasing Security Risk with Vista

Dear computer users around the world,

Over the years, the most reliable defenders against the many, many vulnerabilities in the Microsoft operating systems have been the independent security companies such as McAfee. Yet, if Microsoft succeeds in its latest effort to hamstring these competitors, computers everywhere could be less secure.

Computers are more secure today, thanks to relentless innovations by the security providers. Microsoft also has helped by allowing these companies' products full access to system resources—this has enabled the security products to better "see" threats and deploy defences against viruses and other attacks.

With its upcoming Vista operating system, Microsoft is embracing the flawed logic that computers will be more secure if it stops cooperating with the independent security firms. For the first time, Microsoft shut off security providers' access to the core of its operating system—what is known as the "kernel." At the same time, Microsoft has firmly embedded in Vista its own Windows Security Centre—a product that cannot be disabled even when the user purchases an alternative security solution. This approach results in confusion for customers and prevents genuine freedom of choice.

Microsoft seems to envision a world in which one giant company not only controls the systems that drive most computers around the world but also the security that protects those computers from viruses and other online threats. Only one approach protecting us all: when it fails, it fails for 97% of the world's desktops.

McAfee has a different vision.

We think customers large and small are right to rely on the innovation arising from the intense competition between diverse and independent security companies. Companies like McAfee have none of the conflicts of interest deriving from ownership of the operating system. We focus purely on security.

Independent security developers have proven to be the most powerful weapon in the struggle against those who prey on weak computers. Computer users around the globe recognize that the most serious threats to security exist because of inherent weaknesses in the Microsoft operating system. We believe they should demand better of Microsoft.

For starters, customers should recognize that Microsoft is being completely unrealistic if, by locking security companies out of the kernel, it thinks hackers won't crack Vista's kernel. In fact, they already have.

What's more, few threats actually target the kernel—they target programs or applications. Yet the unfettered access previously enjoyed by security providers has been a key part of keeping those programs and applications safe from hackers and malicious software. Total access for developers has meant better protection for customers.

Let's be clear: McAfee is fully committed to innovating on behalf of its customers. McAfee has the resources and resourcefulness to remain a leader in computer security, despite Microsoft's new obstacles. McAfee's sights are set on future security battles far beyond where Microsoft is spending its time. We will support the new Vista operating system and we plan to launch ever more sophisticated security innovations.

But we won't remain silent as Microsoft imposes unnecessary security risks. Microsoft's new approach is misguided in principle, bad for innovation and competition. Above all, it's bad for users. We urge Microsoft to return to the historically collaborative approach it has taken in providing security companies with full access to system resources and allowing customers genuine freedom of choice in security.

George Samenuk

Chairman and CEO

McAfee, Inc

With Vista, the activation isn't permanent. If Microsoft discovers that the user has used a product key without authorization, it will force the user to reactivate his or her copy of Windows. Product keys may be blocked for a number of reasons, Microsoft says, including for abuse, stolen or pirate keys, or if the key was seized due to anti-piracy efforts.

Roxio Easy Media Creator 9

With dozens of new and improved features plus Blu-ray and HD disc compatibility, Creator 9 is the essential software for your digital life. Roxio Easy Media Creator 9 is the perfect solution for your digital lifestyle, bringing together best-of-class media creation and playback tools with virtually universal media output support for taking digital media on-the-go.

Making Entertainment Mobile

To keep pace with consumers' growing interest in mobile entertainment, Creator 9 provides extensive support for portable devices including a wide assortment of video players such as the iPod, PSP, as well as Windows-based media players such as Samsung's

Dragon Naturally Speaking 9

By Dr Paul Kuzmin

Dragon Introduction

Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical 9 enables healthcare professionals to complete clinical notes instantly and at a fraction of the cost of manual transcription. Its never been faster or easier to use, and its amazingly accurate - up to 30% more accurate than the prior release. Use with any Microsoft Office application, or any Windows based Electronic Medical Records solution. Packaged with 14 pre-configured medical specialty vocabularies, and allows you to create other custom vocabularies to maximize recognition accuracy. Includes tools for network deployments, such as support for Citrix thin clients. Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical 9 means lower costs and better patient care!

Claimed Key Benefits

- **AMAZINGLY ACCURATE!** The new Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical 9 speech engine is up to 30% more accurate than version 8 - up to 99%. Dragon NaturallySpeaking never makes a spelling mistake, and it actually gets smarter the more you use it!

- **REDUCE OR ELIMINATE MANUAL TRANSCRIPTION.** With Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical 9, you can save tens of thousands of dollars per physician every year!

- **FASTER THAN TYPING!** Most people speak over 120 words per minute, but type less than 40 words a minute. Dragon NaturallySpeaking lets you create letters, reports and e-mails about three times faster than typing by hand! You can even create special voice commands that instantly build and format templates for medical documents.

- **SO EASY TO USE!** You'll be dictating to your PC right away! No script reading required to get started. We even include a full set of on-screen tutorials, and a Nuance approved noise-cancelling microphone.

- **USE WITH ANY WINDOWS PROGRAM!** Use your voice to dictate, edit and control virtually any Windows application, including the full Microsoft Office Suite, Corel® WordPerfect®, and any Electronic Medical Records application.

- **NETWORK READY!** Use Dragon NaturallySpeaking from any PC on your organization's network, including a Citrix thin client.

- **BLUETOOTH SUPPORT** Use Dragon NaturallySpeaking with Nuance-approved Bluetooth headsets. Convenient to use with a Tablet PC system!

- **MOBILE** Dictate into any Nuance-certified handheld device for automatic transcription when you synch with your PC.

New Features

- **New! AutoTranscribe Folder**. The option to create a desktop folder to place digital dictations from a handheld device and have them transcribed automatically to streamline the dictation workflow.

- **Improved! Unprecedented Speech Recognition Accuracy**. The new Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical 9 speech engine is up to 30% more accurate than version 8.

- **Improved! Medical Specialty Vocabularies.** 14 Pre-configured medical specialty vocabularies give additional accuracy boost.

- **New! No Script Reading Required**. Get started instantly with Dragon NaturallySpeaking 9 without having to read any scripts or training text.

- **New! Tutorials**. New tutorials simplify the training process, so you can be an expert Dragon NaturallySpeaking user right away.

- **New! Support for Non-standard Edit Controls.** Support for Non-standard Edit Controls means you get full Dragon functionally, such as "Select-and-Say" in more applications than ever before. New supported edit controls include Borland's TMemo, TEdit & TRichEdit controls as well as TE Edit from SubSystems and TX Text from TX Text Control.

- **New! Select-And-Say Indicator**. Dragon NaturallySpeaking 9 includes a new indicator that lets you know when you have "Select-and-Say" functionality available.

- **Improved! Dragon NaturallySpeaking Command Browser**. The Dragon NaturallySpeaking command browser is faster and easier to use than ever before.

- **New! Expanded Support for New Applications.** Dragon NaturallySpeaking 9 now supports Mozilla Firefox and Thunderbird.

- **New! Bluetooth Wireless Microphone Support**. Use a Nuance-approved Bluetooth microphone as an input device, meaning you no longer need to be tethered to your PC.

- **Improved! Dictate Into More Handheld Devices.** Dragon NaturallySpeaking 9 also supports handheld digital recorders and other PDAs that record in .wma and .mp3 format for deferred transcription.

- **Improved! Higher Accuracy.** Although all editions of Dragon NaturallySpeaking use the same core engine, the ability to create multiple custom vocabularies in Professional, Medical and Legal can increase accuracy by as much as 5%.

- **Improved! User Profile Available Anywhere on the Network.** Dragon NaturallySpeaking 9 makes your user profile available anywhere on the network, via mapped drive, UNC Path or http, and automatically synchronizes updates and adaptations centrally.

- **New! Citrix Support**. Dragon NaturallySpeaking 9 supports Citrix deployments, giving users access from thin client workstations.

- **New! Voice Notations.** Dragon NaturallySpeaking 9 includes a new "Voice Notations" feature for Microsoft Word, which allows users to include untranscribed instructions for third-party editors.

- **Improved! Tools for Network Management**. Manage user profiles, vocabularies and installations of Dragon NaturallySpeaking over a network with a new GUI.

- **Improved! DNS Administrator**. Use DNS Administrator to manage vocabularies and commands from a central network location.

Installation

It was quite exciting to receive this product for review and the above new features from
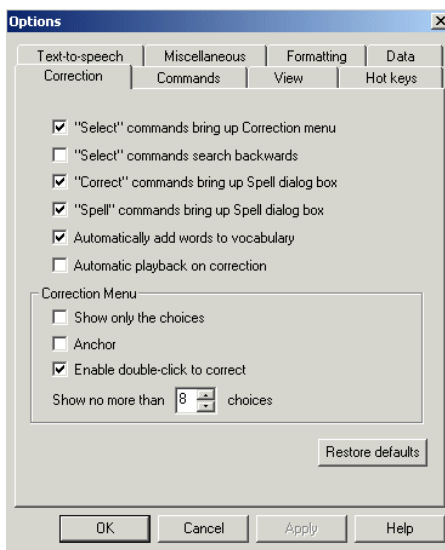
the website seemed quite extensive.

As I was using Dragon NaturallySpeaking Professional both at home and at work, more than one installation style was possible. Initially at work, where the predominant usage is, it was sensible to do an upgrade from previous speech files as so much had been stored on the roaming profile I had on the previous version. During the installation the previous Dragon was detected and the option to update and remove the previous version was suggested as it could not exist side-by-side. User files were updated following this on the work installation. At home I had just decided to install a new hard drive and therefore given previous low usage of the program I thought a fresh clean install of the medical version would be appropriate. It was possible to omit installation files for non-UK English as one of the custom install options, but the setting was definitely UK English. The quick start Systray icon was enabled so that one can write click on open a recent user quite fast once the computer is up and running.

Roaming profile

The wonderful roaming profile that I used in the previous version is located on the server. There was a slightly convoluted installation initially in that you had not to be logged in at the time in order to make the profile in existence roaming and yet on initial installation you had to create some sort of a user which had to be local therefore. One had to log out of this local user without using it much and then going to the administrative settings in order to enable roaming profile is before we could finally unify things.

The only one I use regularly anyway is the + symbol on the numeric key pad. This turns on and off the microphone. Options that I particularly prefer are shown below and I personally can't understand how people would want to use this differently. There were as usual the same 2 that were not in the default settings. The first was "correct commands bring up spell dialog box" and the second was "enable double click to correct". With these two together in the user can operate at the greatest speed I find. I do not wish to say the word or phrase that has gone wrong one more time as this is demoralising and so I generally double click the word or phrase and then expect to see a list of alternatives that I can click on to select if in the list or type in the dialog box if not. I am not a voice command devotee and prefer to use a mouse for everything else. I am also rather loath to use voice macros as keyboard macros are perfectly quick and much more reliable. It would be a major disaster if a voice macro was triggered during dictation by mistake. Keyboard macros use combinations of keys that are not normally pressed during typing. I wonder if the program could be sold in a

cheaper version called Dragon Dictate Only and we could just dump all command and control over the computer? I really doubt that most people would feel as relaxed to doing everything by voice with menus and files as with a mouse which has to be quicker as well.

There were no major installation issues I have to say and the new local profile at work did not compare favourably with using the upgraded existing roaming profile as one would expect, so I abandoned it.

In Use

I do not think there was any difference in the demands of Version 9 compared with 8 on either work or home computers (2.8 Pentium 4 with 512 MB of RAM at work and 1.2 Athlon (surprisingly this word is not in the dictionary) with the same 512 MB of RAM at home.) This latter was close to the minimum specifications stated on the box of 1GHz and 512 MB RAM.

I briefly toyed with the "Automatically add commas and periods" option although I later realised this was present in the previous version. I did not like the effect in that when I paused one or other was added without my particularly wanting it, so I abandoned this option which was not set by default.
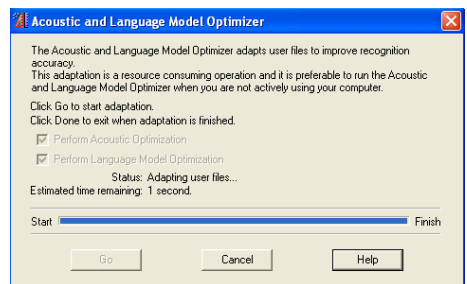
First impressions

First impressions were pretty good for medical description at work but drug names were often rather disappointingly misunderstood. To put into perspective how the medical bit used to work, it was actually a bolt on to the Professional version 8 as an additional language - medical. I brought the medical dictionary from a company called Hands Free Computing from whose website I obtained a number of the prices listed at the end. In the updated work computers which I use, being in 4 different rooms in 2 buildings on different days, previously added words still appeared with red asterisks by them (including those I added and those in the bolt-on medical vocabulary from the previous version) The new medi-

cal vocabulary appeared to have green asterisks. I would comment that the Hands Free vocabulary was far too extensive as I commented on in my previous review with probably 90% of its words completely unused in everyday context requiring large numbers of deletions when I came across one of its odd words. Often I would delete a whole of a section of similar odd words that I am sure a no doctor in the UK would ever have heard of. This medical vocabulary seemed somewhat better although they were still several unheard of medications in the list. This review is being written with the medical version in order to see whether in ordinary usage it functioned adequately with the bare minimum (medical text) enrolment given that it was effectively a new installation. At home very few of the words were marked with an asterisk at first. This time many of the ones without were medical and to my surprise the profile at home said "Medical" while the one at work said "General".

To view the vocabulary, the user must click "Words" then "View/Edit". In this menu the help file explains the meaning of the different coloured stars.

- Dictation commands, such as "backslash," are located at the top of the list.
- Words stored only in the backup dictionary are not listed.
- A red star * next to a word indicates that it is a custom word that has been added to the vocabulary.
- A blue star * next to a word indicates that the properties of the word have been changed from the default properties.
- A green star * next to a word indicates that a word was moved from the backup dictionary to the active vocabulary due to a correction. For more information, see the "Automatically add words to the vocabulary" option on the Correction tab of the Options dialog box.

Now I'm not sure whether the work one was actually thinking that medically in view of the drugs that were not initially understood. Unfortunately I think this was the effect of updating various previous versions that were General UK English with the medical bolt on vocabulary and I tried to use Voctool to try and emphasise that it is the medical vocabulary that should predominate. Unfortunately it did not seem to work and clicking next on the vocabulary section had no effect. Also the work version did not have the Acoustic and

Language Model Optimizer on the Accuracy Center while the one at home did. Was this to stop users running something that could make the server grind to a halt or just a bug I wonder?

The one at home ran absolutely fine and improved the vocal accuracy and even added words not in its dictionary, such as lumiracoxib, to the vocabulary that I had corrected by typing rather than in the Correction Dialog box which was quite impressive. It actually looks back at what you genuinely have dictated and remodels its language based on exactly how you said it.

At work (Windows 2000) there was a schedule option only on the Start menu link, which I ran and some hours later the user microphone was still greyed out so I ended task.

Certainly there are some amusing medical phrases being put in during this review done on the home computer, but not too troublesome and easy enough to correct.

Big Error

The one big error with the previous version and unfortunately continued with this version is the strange effect if one paused before a full-stop at the end of the sentence in the note section of our clinical system. It had the effect of moving the mouse cursor to the 3 little dots to the right of the Read code entry box which when clicked on open and other window. I am not sure which key strokes actually replicate this but I will continue to research this and feel it should be corrected by Nuance in that a full-stop would never normally perform this function if typed.

An excellent improvement, though not mentioned, was the memory both at home and in every workstation sharing a roaming profile of exactly where the DragonBar was when it was left which in my case is usually in the bottom corner in floating mode on the screen.
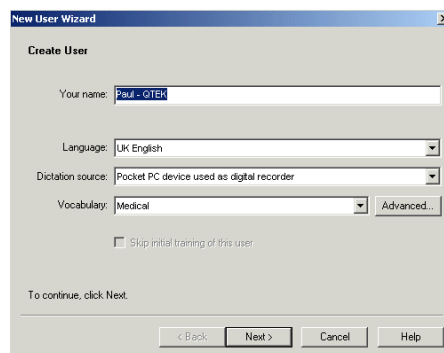
There seemed to be slight problems with capitalising sentences either after heading as such as this article. At work too no capital after the microphone had been switched off and a new sentence following a full-stop in a previously dictated free text box (though this is not a proper window just a text box). This seems to be a new bug not present in the previous version. In use I thought the program was superb about 95% accurate out of the box and learned very quickly although most reliably by training incorrect words by voice immediately a mistake was made and I certainly didn't enrol at all at work. Apart from a slight hole in medications especially newer ones at work and a slight tendency to medicalise phrases.

It was great that the main interface was just smarter but not altered radically for previous use as of Lernout & Hauspie, Dragon or ScanSoft versions. This was easily the best and the quickest to learn

from errors. I do feel eventually however the all these products reach a stage where they learn no more and it could be that perhaps I have surpassed the number of megabytes devoted to the network archive as is shown in one of the options in the administrative settings. Amusing mistakes noted include the following: "either protein" for "ibuprofen", "jaws since early" for "yours sincerely", "tribe" for "try" and "Nuance" for "new onset" at work. This seemed as if the favoured dictionary used was rather non-medical. At home "No bowel recorder" for "mobile recorder", "views of" for "user", "full" for "for", "thirst" for "force", "in bowl most" for "by voice" and "admit" for "omit" were common mistakes suggesting the medical element was dominant here. These errors seemed to occur when slightly lazy pronunciation occurred and didn't necessarily replicate themselves every time. Correction was made just once and then these mistakes never happened again. Full sentences or phrases worked much better than individual words. Frequently correct phrases were on the pick list requiring minimal user effort to correct.
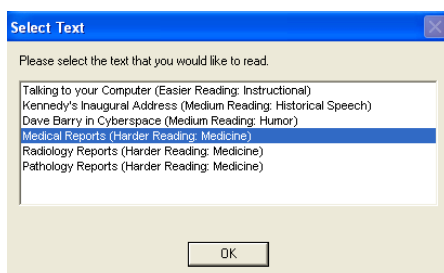
Mobile recorder

I had used the mobile Dragon 8 to good effect on my previous iPAQ 5550 which had gone wrong mechanically at a remarkably early stage in its life. I decided to go for a Windows Mobile 5 device called a QTEK which is similar to an I-Mate and managed to install a user profile onto a voice which was also roaming. Installation was via the Voice Recorder section of the 1st CD and permitted the user to choose from texts to be read out that also needed installing. It is shear torture reading out aloud for 15 minutes another American style piece of text.

Why can't this be curtailed?

This profile however did force the user to enrol with the chosen text and that had to be recorded on the mobile device and then

learning took place when the device was plugged back into the computer.

American English.

Much to my horror, the medical reports text was both written and spelt in American English. There is no way any UK doctor would discuss a cardiology case like this and so they definitely haven't done their homework here. I don't know how much use this enrolment would have been to me at home therefore. There was a slight time lag on the slower home computer as before when using Microsoft Word, one had to be patient before making corrections as the computer was still typing a few seconds after the speech had finished. Even in this, the first article I have dictated, there seems to be an improving accuracy as I go along which is impressive. The bug in the previous version where a double click to correct did not work in Microsoft Word at first appeared to have been corrected much to my delight. This was short lived however as that seemed to reproduce the error by opening up Microsoft Word before opening Dragon and only a system restore put the double-click to correct back into Microsoft Word which must have been what happened before that went wrong in the previous version.

Conclusion

I would be fascinated by how our children get on with this program as so far they have not been terribly successful with its predecessor. I think this is a far punchier, faster learning program with more going for it than the previous version and I would highly recommend the ordinary user to get from Nuance.

Pricing and Availability

Dragon Naturally Speaking Preferred (the non-medical version) for £102 inc VAT or the less well specified Standard version for £68 inc VAT from Amazon.co.uk.

The Medical version is available from specialist resellers for around (£645.00 + VAT) new and £141.00 upgrade). Dragon Naturally Speaking 9 is available in integrated versions for all leading GP system suppliers. Two versions of Emis-Talk for Emis users, Vision-VoiceDictate for Vision users and SynergySpeech for iSOFT Synergy that we use are each £664 inclusive of VAT. No upgrade for these latter as they are fairly new programs. Possibly I would have found that the problem with the full-stop disappeared but no other advantage as I have no intention of controlling the whole clinical system by voice. See the link below for the Demo which is impressive however but I would never use this in front of the patient in case it went wrong and they would think I was nuts!

http://www.hands-free.co.uk/resources/demos/file1/000004/SynergySpeech.html

Contact Details

Further Information can be had at Nuance's web site at:

http://www.nuance.co.uk/naturallyspeaking/

Norton Internet Security 2007 — Preview

Launched just a few days before ROM went to press the downloadable review copy arrived too late to feature in this month's ROM. However a press release covers the main points of what's new and improved and extracts appear below. Review will follow in the next issue.

Norton AntiVirus 2007

Norton Internet Security 2007 is a powerful security suite that includes the antivirus and AntiSpyware protection of Norton AntiVirus 2007 and safeguards against the latest online dangers by providing sophisticated new phishing protection, an enhanced firewall, and defence against software vulnerabilities.
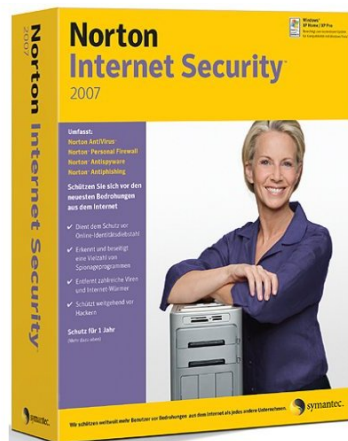
Symantec are delivering significant advancements in two key areas of the 2007 release: security technology and product performance. Symantec has developed sophisticated new security features to automatically identify and neutralise online threats without requiring users to make complicated decisions about their security. This is complemented by technological advancements with performance enhancements — from boot time to full system scans.

The AntiVirus protection module of Norton Internet Security 2007 now provides proactive protection for users even before a new worm or virus is created and released. AntiVirus' defences are kept current with protection updates delivered daily. In addition, Norton AntiVirus has been strengthened so that it can find new types of viruses that use rootkits to hide themselves from security software. This patent-pending technology detects camouflaged threats at all system levels, including the application, user mode, and kernel level.

Norton AntiVirus 2007 also incorporates enhanced scanning capabilities to ensure that high-risk spyware is detected and removed prior to installation. An improved and faster full system scan leverages foreground and background throttling modes giving users the option to move scanning to the background, requiring less processing power and letting them continue working on their computer without a major performance impact.

Norton Internet Security 2007

Norton Internet Security 2007 includes all the features found in Norton AntiVirus 2007 and enhances its award-winning detection, blocking, and removal tools with innovative transaction security technology that protects consumers against the latest online attacks. The new phishing protection feature safeguards users from online identity theft by combining lists of known phishing Web sites with advanced heuristic technology to help safeguard users from visiting fraudulent Web pages. This sophis-

ticated fraud detection technology allows users to enjoy zero-hour protection against known and unknown phishing sites. As a result, users can always be protected—even when they are the first visitors to a fraudulent site.

Intrusion Prevention

The Intrusion Prevention feature in Norton Internet Security 2007 offers critical protection against recently discovered vulnerabilities in the Windows operating system and other popular applications. These security holes can be shielded by Norton Internet Security much faster than it typically takes a vendor to release a patch to fix the problem. In fact, Symantec's most recent Internet Security Threat Report noted that on average, virus writers are able to start exploiting these new security holes approximately six days after the disclosure of vulnerability. With Norton Internet Security 2007, viruses, worms and hackers attempting to infect or invade a person's computer through these vulnerabilities are immediately blocked from ever getting on the system. Users are now able to patch their operating system and other applications on their own schedule, yet remain safe.

Enhanced Firewall

Norton Internet Security's enhanced firewall addresses one of the greatest frustrations users experience with current Internet security solutions—confusing firewall alerts. Most firewall applications today require users to decide whether to block or allow software on their computer from connecting to the Internet. Few users have the expertise or the interest in making these decisions. The enhanced firewall in Norton Internet Security 2007 automatically configures itself to allow good applications yet blocks spyware, viruses, worms, crimeware and hackers from stealing sensitive information from the user's computer. The result is a smart firewall that provides much more effective security and does not require users to make complex security decisions.

In internal performance tests both Norton AntiVirus 2007 and Norton Internet Security 2007 delivered significant performance enhancements in year-over-year product comparisons in the areas of memory usage, boot time, scan speed, user interface (UI) launch speed, and HTTP download speed. Additionally, Norton Internet Security 2007 outpaced the industry average results in performance tests against nine competitive Internet Security products. Key findings from the internal product performance review include:

Less Memory Usage – Size of working set memory for Norton Internet Security 2007 is only 10-15MB — approximately 2-3x less than the competitors' average

Faster Scans – Norton Internet Security 2007 runs a full scan on a 1GB file set in 2:15 (mm:ss) —faster than the average scan time of 2:49 (mm:ss) for tested competing products. Scans 30-35% faster than Norton Internet Security 2006

Faster Boot Time – The average boot time impact for tested competing products was 20 seconds —Norton Internet Security 2007 impact was only 14 seconds. Systems boot 5-10% faster than with Norton Internet Security 2006

Faster UI Response – The user interface in Norton Internet Security 2007 launches in under 1 second (following initial launch), about 2 times faster than the competitor's average

Norton Internet Security 2007 is designed to work in concert with today's most popular home networking equipment, complementing their security features to provide even greater levels of protection. In addition, an enhanced network detection component automatically provides users with separate security policies for the networks that they connect to. By automatically configuring the security settings for the type of network they connect to, Norton Internet Security customers can take full advantage of their home networks and stay fully protected when connecting to more dangerous public networks.

Viewing security status has never been clearer with the newly designed streamlined user interface of the Norton Protection Centre for Norton AntiVirus 2007 and Norton Internet Security 2007. Additionally, overall computer status is always visible via the Norton Status icon on the taskbar or the Windows system icon tray.

Symantec Security Response

Norton AntiVirus 2007 and Norton Internet Security 2007 are backed by Symantec Security Response, a team of dedicated intrusion experts, security engineers, virus hunters, and global technical support teams that work in tandem to provide extensive coverage for enterprise businesses and consumers. Syman-

tec Security Response provides customers with comprehensive, global, 24x7 Internet security expertise to guard against today's complex Internet threats. This security information is delivered to our customers on a daily basis to ensure they remain fully protected.

An optional add-on pack with AntiSpam and Parental Controls will be available for Norton Internet Security 2007 customers who desire these features.

These products are designed for Windows XP Home/XP Pro users and are eligible for a free Windows Vista compatibility update when Vista is launched.

Pricing and Availability

Norton Internet Security 2007 is available now from Amazon.co.uk for £44.99 inc VAT and delivery (full version) and £35.99 (upgrade version).

Review to Follow

Given that Symantec state there are significant performance enhancements it'll be interesting to see whether PR promises are matched by real world improvements. Read my review in the next issue.

ScanSoft PDF Converter 4 Reviewed by Tony Hawes

Introduction

Have you ever wanted to convert the text and graphics in a PDF file so you can edit it and use it MS Word? You can do it if you have Adobe's acrobat; you highlight columns or portions of text, copying them and paste into a Word document, but it isn't easy, formatting goes all haywire, fonts are wrong and the process needs an inordinate amount of fiddling to get it right. If you don't have Acrobat it's very hard indeed to convert one format into another.

A couple of years ago ScanSoft introduced a new utility called ScanSoft PDF Converter which makes it easy to convert PDF files to Microsoft Word documents. Since then its gone through several version upgrades each with added functionality. Late last month ScanSoft launched the latest version, PDF Converter 4.

As a regular user of Adobe's Acrobat I was keen to see how ScanSoft's latest compares and was supplied with a review copy of the Professional version.

Version 4 — New Features

Improved FormTyper

With PDF Converter Professional 4, you can automatically and instantly transform your static forms into fillable PDF forms!
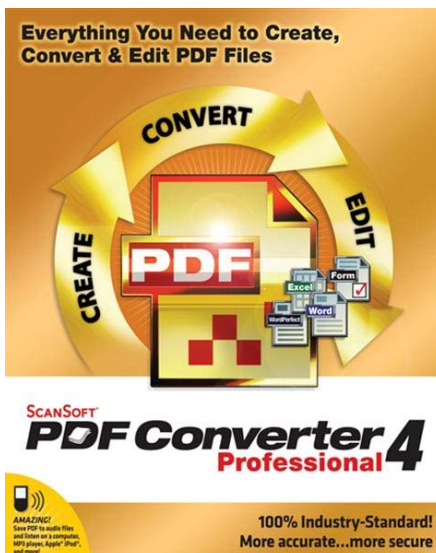
New PDF File Size Optimizer

Converting Microsoft Office files into PDF results in files that are significantly smaller – making them easier to share as email attachments and on the Web. The new PDF Optimizer gives you even more power in making the smallest possible PDF files, with controls that allow you to make specific settings for compression type, font embedding and more.

New Print with Comments

Display and print comments to get a convenient synopsis of changes that result when collaborating on PDF documents. All sticky notes in a PDF can now be printed with reference lines that make it easy to review even large, complex documents.

New PDF-to-Audio Conversion

PDF conversion doesn't stop at your PC. With the new PDF-to-Audio conversion you can easily save PDF documents as human-sounding RealSpeak™ audio files for Apple iPod and other media players. This lets you easily share your documents as Podcasts, without the time and expense of manual recordings.

Compatibility

Embracing standards of PDF/A, Microsoft Vista and more!

New Microsoft Windows Vista Ready

Looking forward to the new release of Microsoft Windows Vista? PDF Converter Professional is the first PDF solution designed specifically to meet the needs and new look & feel of Vista. Supported Vista features include 32- and 64-bit, native Vista look & feel, PDF creation that is compliant with the new Vista print sub-system, ability to create XPS from PDF and of course the cool 3D Alt-Tab feature of Vista. The product also supports Microsoft Windows XP and 2000.

New ISO PDF/A Support

The International Standards Organization (ISO) has officially published the specification for 19005-1 PDF/A, a specification of PDF the long preservation of archived documents. PDF Converter Professional supports this important new PDF specification, as well as PDF 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6

Why are PDF files popular?

The Portable Document Format has become a de-facto standard for document exchange across platforms and computing environments. More than 200 million PDF documents are posted on the World Wide Web. Key benefits that have driven this popularity are:

- Integrity: PDF files look like the original documents they were created from. They conserve their appearance after sharing - regardless of platform, operating system or local settings on each computer or device.

- File size: In many cases, PDF files can be more compact than their source documents - ideal for file transfer.

- Security: PDF files can be digitally signed and password protected to prevent unauthorized changes.

- Sharing: While the basic document content can be frozen, commenting and mark-up tools allow collective authoring and document review.

What PDF Professional can do for you

ScanSoft PDF Converter Professional 4 from Nuance Communications Inc. offers the full circle of functionality for handling PDF files. It can open PDF files from versions 1.3 to 1.6 for viewing, editing, annotation and re-assembly. It can create PDF files from versions 1.3 to 1.6 (PDF/A format is also supported). It can unlock PDF files for repurposing in other applications.

This professional product has three parts for creating, editing and unlocking PDF files. These are all installed and activated with a single procedure.

Create PDF Files

ScanSoft PDF Create! 4 lets you create PDF files from a wide range of file types. The Print dialog box in your print-capable applications will offer a printer named ScanSoft PDF Create!

The PDF Create! Assistant lets you compile a list of files generated by different applications. Each file can be converted to a separate PDF file, or they can be combined into a single file. When working in Microsoft Word, Excel or PowerPoint you can call on the program to create a PDF file directly from your current document. When converting from Microsoft Word, hyperlinks and comments

can be transferred and you can set bookmarks to be generated from the structure of the Word document. Files can be protected by passwords and can include watermarks. Compression and font settings give you control over PDF file size and appearance.

Edit PDF Files

ScanSoft PDF Converter Professional gives you extensive control over your PDF files through an easy-to-use browsing and reading interface. You can edit pages and documents, annotate and review them, adjust document security, sign your documents and more. PDF documents can be compiled from different sources and pages can be rearranged. The program delivers a powerful document management system: use it to create archives from related documents to index and search them later.

Export PDF Files

The ScanSoft PDF Converter 4 lets you unlock PDF files to edit them as Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Corel WordPerfect, and generic RTF files. It also lets you open PDF files directly from these applications, edit them and save them in the appropriate file type. It converts PDF files up to and including version 1.6. Encrypted PDF files can be opened if the required password is provided. The program offers four types of conversions: standard documents, legal documents, forms and spreadsheets.
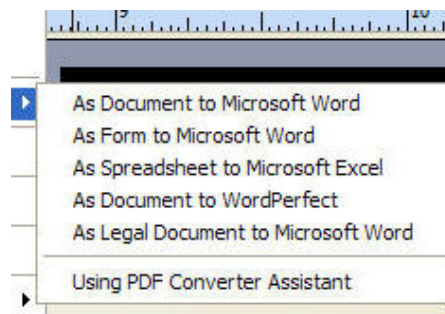
Installation

I have Microsoft Office 2003 on my computer, but PDF Converter works with earlier versions of Word. On installation an 18-digit serial number has to be entered, and you are invited to submit a completed registration form. If you choose not to register you are then invited to do so at periodic intervals. However, PDF Converter needs to activated and can be launched only five times without activation, although ScanSoft state: "You will be allowed a reasonable number of re-installations."

In Use

Once installed and rebooted; PDF Converter adds a choice under Word's 'File' drop-down menu — File/Open/Files of type/PDF (Portable Document Format) *.pdf — choose the PDF file you wish to convert and off it goes. Depending on the size or complexity of the PDF file to be

converted this can take from a few seconds to well over a minute. Alternatively four mini icons (above) are installed in the Word menu bar allowing quick access to the Convert / Create /Open PDF in Word functions.

The converted file is displayed in Microsoft Word with all the original formatting, columns, graphics, tables etc converted ready for editing.

Alternatively just right-click any PDF file in Explorer and click on the "Convert" tab. This brings up five choices of conversion — see above.

When I last reviewed PDF Converter 2 a couple of years ago the program was not good at all. Simple files converted very well indeed but as soon as there was any hint of complex formatting, odd tables or unusual graphic formats embedded in a file PDF Converter was less than useful.
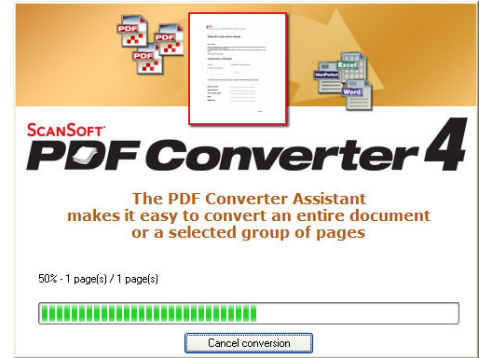
However this time I'm impressed. As you will see in the examples nearly all I threw at it, whether Word to PDF or vice-versa was handled in a competent manner. The only time it was not too good was the shadowed text in the Masthead of ROM and once again an encrypted file was just that and couldn't be converted.

Finally PDF Converter works only with PDF "normal" files, such as those created from all PC applications. To process PDF "Image" files, such as those created from a scanner, its necessary to use ScanSoft's OmniPage Pro. Also if your PDF file doesn't contain a text layer the file can't be processed and offers to process it with OmniPage Pro. I don't know what would happen if OmniPage Pro was not installed!

As a test I tried to convert four PDF files:
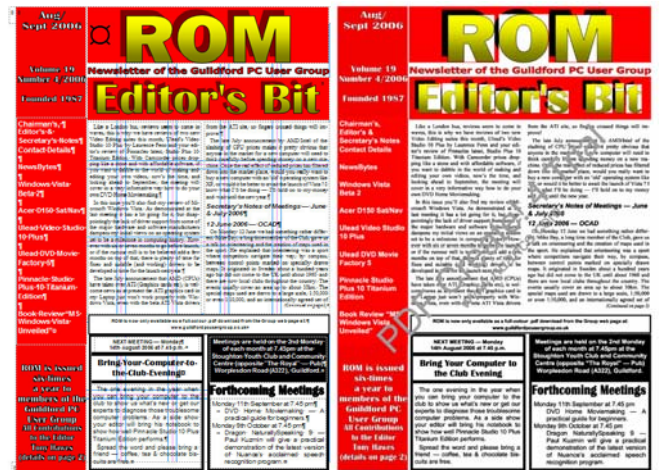
To test PDF Converter 4 I decided to convert:

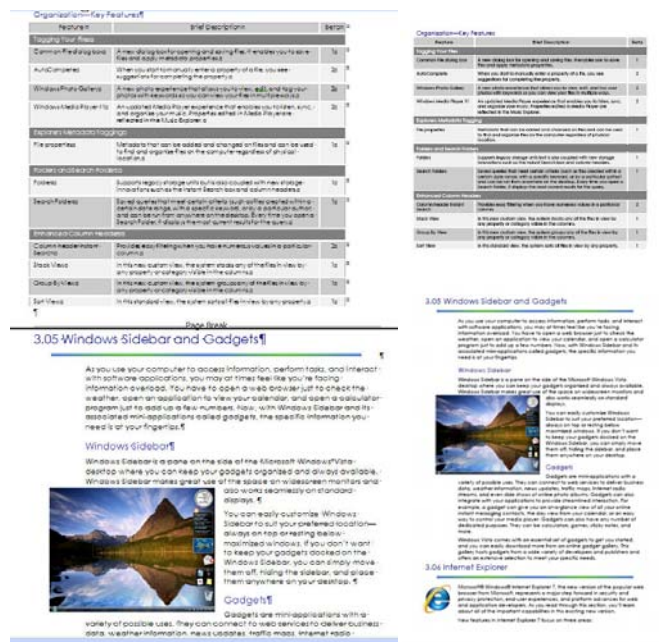1. From PDF to Word the first four pages of the last issue of ROM on our web

PDF Converter 4. Processing in action

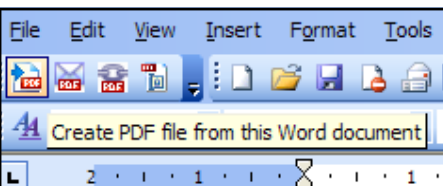site that contains complicated graphical formatting

2. To Word a "normal" PDF (without much in the way of formatting)

3. A simple Word document to PDF

4. A Word document to PDF with complex formatting (from the 300-page Microsoft

Original PDF (left). Converted to Word (right)

Original Word doc (left). Converted to PDF (right).

Windows Vista Manual)

5. And finally I wondered how it would cope with an encrypted PDF file to Word.
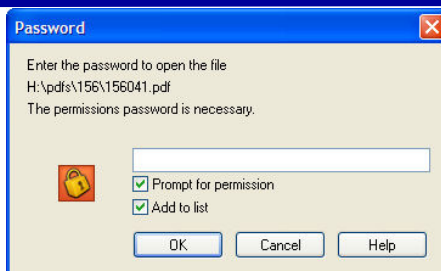
The result was:

1. Main page converted OK except for the "Shadow Text" Mast Head. The remainder converted accurately.
2. A good conversion, text and formatting were perfect.
3. A perfect conversion.
4. It tried but wouldn't convert because the file is encrypted.

Conclusions

One has to consider the alternatives for PDF conversion and creation; this comes down to two major players Adobe Acrobat and ABBYY PDF Transformer. Given that Acrobat in its new incarnation as Acrobat 8 costs more than £400 with the Standard version at £259, on cost alone one would

PDF Converter balks at encrypted files.

need to make a compelling case to consider these two.

The other alternative is ABBYY's PDF Transformer Pro 2. This is costs in the region of £60 so is a serious competitor. However, given that ScanSoft PDF Converter 4 Professional has been around longer and in its latest incarnation is a vast improvement over the version I reviewed

two years ago, with conversions that result in accurate and editable documents nearly each time, whether converting or creating from Word to PDF or PDF to Word. PDF Converter 4 has my thumb's-up and is recommended.

Pricing and Availability

Expect to pay £62.99 for ScanSoft PDF Converter 4 Professional. The less well featured Standard version is cheaper and available for £32.99. Both prices from Amazon.co.uk which include VAT and free delivery.

PS

ABBYY's PDF Transformer Pro 2 will be reviewed in the next issue. It'll be interesting to see how it compares with ScanSoft's PDF Creator 4. Meantime its main features are described on page 16.

Terratec Cinergy T USB XE Digital TV Receiver

by Tony Hawes

As the company product description says:

The Compact TV USB Stick!

The Cinergy T USB XE receives digital TV signals, yet is no larger than a USB memory stick! Just connect the ultra-compact TV tuner to a notebook or PC via a USB port - and in a flash you're able to view the digital programs transmitted via DTT (Freeview). Regardless of where you are, your TV card is there with you. At a stationary PC at home you can receive programs using your standard roof aerial, and away from home you simply connect the handy tuner to your notebook and use the included DTT compact aerial. Even in areas where signal is low the stick convinces you of a proper reception.

You can also use the Cinergy T USB XE as a digital video recorder for recording digital terrestrial TV programs with full MPEG 2 support. The electronic program guide (EPG) helps you accurately navigate through the large number of stations and activate your recording timer. The integrated videotext function makes sure you're excellently informed even beyond the TV program.

And if you have to interrupt a program for some reason, the TimeShifting function saves the part you miss on the hard disk. That means you can simply resume viewing later at the desired point.

DTT, digital video recordings, EPG, TimeShifting and Videotext - only the Cinergy T USB XE offers so many functions in such a small device!

Antenna Requirements

The Terratec Cinergy Digital TV products require that you use a high-gain roof

antenna to enable and enjoy reliable Digital Television reception throughout the UK. The portable antenna that we provide should only be used and relied on in areas where the Digital TV signal reception is

optimal.

Portable or mobile Digital TV reception in cars, trains or airplanes etc. is normally not supported.

In Use

Install the software from CD. Plug the mini-antenna into the antenna socket of the USB stick, plug this into your notebook's USB slot, power being obtained from the notebook, and run the program.

Once open the first step was to scan for receivable channels. Having set this up in my study in Fleet it was obvious that Fleet's notorious reputation for being a "back-hole" as far as TV and radio reception is concerned lived up to it's reputation. Because NOTHING was received via the supplied mini antenna and being on NTL Cable without an exterior antenna there was no way I could patch through or receive any signal of significance.

The only way to see whether it would work was to wait until the practical demo at our meeting location in Stoughton, Guild-

ford which I knew was within sight (two miles) of the Guildford DVB-T and radio transmitter site on the downs to the west of town. The Guildford DVB-T transmitter is only a low-power gap filling station using the

top channels (41 to 54 operating at 100-watts). The Freeview TV channels and the radio channels were receivable and scanned into the menu which allowed one to select one's channel of choice from the menu

However the signal from the bundled tiny 6-inch vertical aerial was obviously only marginally sufficient, showing up very noticeably on movement. Choosing different channels didn't help and I consider that Cinergy T USB XE is only useful if you are VERY near an existing Freeview transmitter. UK Digital Terrestrial TV coverage is patchy to say the least, although it's improving all the time as new digital transmitters are installed. DAB Radio fared better as can be seen from the screen grab above.

Given its limited and less than perfect results, buy this if you plan to use it near a main and powerful TV or radio transmitter, but otherwise it's only worthwhile buying if you want to show off the latest gadget.

Expect to pay around £39 for the Cinergy T USB XE .

Further information can be found at:

www.terratec.co.uk

Logitech QuickCam for Notebooks

Reviewed by Laurence Fenn

Figure 1 — The QuickCam

Logitech's QuickCam for Notebooks Deluxe is a USB webcam designed for laptops. I had some initial problems with the installation, not to mention the fact that I don't have a laptop! This small device is not really suited for a normal desktop PC as the base of the camera doesn't have anything to grip on a monitor or flat screen. This is also true with my Tablet PC which I also tried it on. The base can stretch to fit on an LCD display 6-14mm thick, and has a rubber cover to aid gripping on thinner screens.

As you can see from the image it has a simple, rectangular design with an arched top all enclosed in grey plastic. A silver ring encloses the extruding, easily-adjustable focus ring of the camera which lies right above the built-in microphone. The focus ring is very sensitive and easy to adjust. To either side of the microphone are three smaller dots that follow the circular path, forming what resembles a subtle smile. Underneath the silver ring on either end is a green LED indicator that turns on when the camera is active, and a small button for manually taking pictures. The unit is hinged to the clip at the centre, allowing for a vertical tilt of 45°. Unfortunately the clip does not allow for horizontal rotation so positioning the camera must be done carefully. There is some face tracking setting that can be enabled in the software which means the camera will do it's best to digitally zoom in and centre on your head. This worked most of the time although occasionally it would zoom for no reason. Switching from 640x480 resolution to 320x240 turns off the face tracking setting.

Figure 2 — The QuickCam balanced on top of my monitor :

Although you're not likely to change the resolution that often it was annoying that it didn't remember the setting.

I got a Windows protection error (which I had never got before) when I installed the software, and I had to reboot before inserting the camera into a USB port. The wizard then asked me to reboot before the end of the installation, so all in all a messy set up process. This also happened when I installed the software on the Tablet PC, although I didn't get a protection error.

Starting the QuickCam software will bring up a launcher for various instant messaging clients such as AIM, Yahoo and MSN, and provide links to download them if they are not already installed. On the right-hand side of the QuickCam launcher are shortcuts for Quick-Capture, Video Email, My Logitech Pictures, and the Logitech Control Panel. Quick-Capture is a small, easy-to-use application for taking still photos and motion videos to save to the Logitech photo album. Here you can also select what resolution you wish to capture at, with options ranging from 160x120 to 640x480, as well as 1.3 mega pixel although this involves software interpolation and can either help or hurt your pictures. The quality of the pictures is not as good as a digital camera, and bearing in mind how cheap a decent digital camera can be these days, it's no substitute. Videos recorded to the hard drive are encoded as Indeo Video 5.1 AVIs, not mpg or wmv.

Clicking more options in the QuickCam window will bring up the Logitech Control Panel for adjusting brightness and contrast, enabling low light and colour boost modes, selecting the audio source, and flipping the picture horizontally and vertically. Clicking Driver Settings will bring up even more options for controlling hue, saturation, gamma, sharpness, and white balance - the latter of which can be done manually, although it will often overcompensate and introduce some blue overtones. What's more, you can set anti-flicker modes for use with fluorescent lighting, and control the exposure and gain to make the most of your lighting environment.

Still pictures can be taken at a mega pixel resolution of 1280x960 pixels, but you have no control over the compression setting. It adds a My Logitech Pictures folder to Explorer, but I had no idea where. I installed the program on drive I, but after showing Image information when dragging a file from the Logitech folder to Paint Shop Pro, it showed the location as C:\Documents and Settings\Laurence\My Documents\My Pictures\My Logitech Pictures\Pictures and Videos\

The built in microphone means that you don't have to attach anything else to use this as a video phone. When I contacted my niece using MSN Messenger I could see her, but was unable to speak to her as she didn't have a microphone plugged in on her PC. This is a
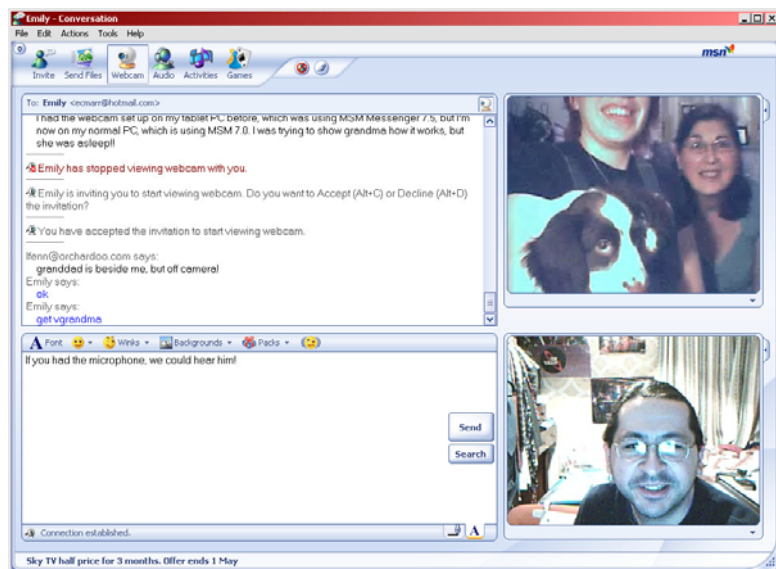

Figure 3 - video conferencing with my niece, sister and their dog Ozzy!

limit of the way MSN Messenger works and not the camera itself. The microphone can be used by itself so could be handy to use with Skype, for example. It also means that you don't have to wear a headset to speak to someone as the microphone is remarkably good at

picking up sound.

One of the limitations of the camera was that it uses USB 1.1, which means a slow frame rate. It may give a wider range of PCs that the camera can attach to, but being only USB 1.1 means the transfer rate is just not quick enough to produce anything more

than what looks like 15 frames a second. I had never used a webcam before, but the lack of a decent frame rate was disappointing. I know that my PC was capable of at least 25 frames per second at DVD resolution as I can video capture at that rate.

The QuickCam was slightly disappointing based on the several other Logitech products I've reviewed recently. The colour

saturation under artificial lighting was not accurate, and the still image capture was not as good as a digital camera. The cable from the camera to the USB socket was not very long, but as this is primarily for a laptop, you're not going to need a long cable.

Cost: £34 from dabs.com.

Acer — What's New   By Tony Hawes

Closer ties with Intel, an innovative range of new products and very healthy profits pushing the company into fourth position in the worldwide in the PC market were just three of the highlights of Acer's annual Global Press Conference that took place in Monte Carlo in mid September.

During 2Q 2006, Acer continued to achieve better results than its direct competitors posting 35.7% growth in the Global PC market, 3 times recorded market growth (IDC preliminary 2Q06 data). Thanks to these positive results, Acer now ranks fourth in the Global PC market. "It is continually clearer that the highest growth is posted in emerging markets where economies are more positively dynamic." commented Gianfranco Lanci, President of Acer Inc.

The closer ties with Intel results from the adoption by Acer of Intel's new Core 2 Duo Processor (formerly codenamed *Merrow*) in four new Desktop Replacement notebooks. One of the notebooks in particular, the TravelMate 6460 caught my eye.

TravelMate 6460

The TravelMate 6460 delivers virtually double the performance thanks to Intel's dual-core architecture in the Core 2 Duo. A

T5500 CPU running at 1.66GHz with 2MB of cache is fitted as standard. It comes with 512Mb of RAM, a 100GB HDD and a 15.4in WXGA (1280 x 800) display powered by an ATI Radeon X1300 graphics card with 128MB VRAM, a dual layer DVD re-writer is fitted as standard. Also included is an integrated 1.3MP webcam for videoconferencing.

Increased reliability and productivity are guaranteed by dual-channel DDR2 memory and the S-ATA 5400RPM Hard Drive which is protected with Acer Disk Anti-Shock Protection (DASP+) Technology. DASP+ technology prevents Hard Disk shocks and guarantees unprecedented levels of active physical security also supporting Acer Gravisense technology that detects sudden motion changes of notebook (such as a fall) and automatically retracts the disk heads to avoid surface scratching.

Also included is Anti Theft technology that warns the user when the system is being moved.

There are many other features and which will be described in the next issue.

GPS

As you'll recall from John Childs' reviews Acer is now making a name for itself with affordable GPS receivers, both basic navigation models and the more up-market versions which come integrated into a PDA.

At Monte Carlo Acer were showing a couple of new models the P610 and P630. Both look identical, but are noteworthy because of their eye-catching 4½-inch widescreen displays. The screens are touch sensitive TFT's with an aspect ratio of 16:9 displaying at a resolution of 480 x 272 pixels.

Both have Microsoft's Windows CE 5.0 operating system installed and are powered by a fast Samsung S3C2440A 400MHz processor. They have 64MB of ROM and 64MB RAM on board with an SD card slot for extra storage.

Although physically identical, the P610 will come with UK maps installed on the supplied 256MB SD memory card, while the more up-market P630 has Europe-wide

maps in addition to those of the UK.

Bluetooth connectivity is available on the P630, but is absent on the P610. With Bluetooth one can synchronise the GPS device with your mobile phone for example. Multimedia functions include an image viewer and a MP3 Player and there is a built in speaker too. Both devices come bundled with a car charger, mounting kit, and USB cable for synchronization.

No UK pricing as yet but according to the GPS expert displaying these products at Monte Carlo, the P630 will be available in October for about 299 Euros (£200), but as yet no pricing details for the P610.

MP3 Players

Acer is broadening its multimedia device range with the new MP-400, MP-340, MP-150 and MP-120 MP3 players.

Acer MP-340

The Acer MP-340 is a thin and light multi-functional hard disk drive and MP3 reader. Different from the common MP3 devices, the MP-340 comes with a bright 1.8" LCD display (160 x 128 pixel resolution) a digital voice recorder, a 20 or 30 GB mobile HDD (depending on the model) and useful features such as Photo Show, games and eBook.

Designed for style and ergonomics, the MP-340 also features a generous HDD, a rechargeable Li-ion battery and a colour LCD display that make it perfect in each moment and for many activities: either listening to music or saving personal data on the HDD, or digital voice recording and eBook reading and playing.

Audio Formats

The Acer MP-340 is highly flexible: it supports several audio formats such MP3, WMA adding the capability to directly record in WMA format without the PC thanks to the line-in. In addition it features seven equalization functions, six preconfigured and one customisable by the user, a microphone for compressed-format recording and headsets. The Microsoft DRM 9 (Digital Rights Management) preinstalled platform enables secure sharing of digital content over the company's LAN/WAN, Ethernet or Internet. Thanks to Microsoft DRM 9, authors will be able to protect their content – both live or upon demand – ensuring the right material is available

for the right audience.

Thanks to practical keys, the MP-340 is very easy to manage for every function: memory, volume, fast forward, rewind, A-B mode, Mode, play, stop, e hold. The same keys allow the user to manage the Photo Show function, that visualizes images in JPG format while the user is listening to audio files. Last but not least, the SD/MMC slot is very useful to share or transfer files or images to or from the MP-340.

Ten-hours of battery life are guaranteed thanks to the Li-ion 1200mAh polymeric battery. In addition the Mp-340 comes equipped with a USB cable that makes the device be automatically detected as a storage peripheral by Microsoft Windows SE/ME/2000/XP; Mac 9.x, 10.x.

Aspire L Small Form Factor Desktop PCs

On show was Acer's trio of new small form factor PCs. Of these the Aspire L 350 is set to make a sizeable splash in the consumer market it's ViiV certified, sports an Intel Core 2 Duo processor, 400GB hard disk, TV tuner and can be fitted with up to 2GB of RAM. A wireless keyboard and mouse are bundled and its reduced environmental impact because the Aspire L series utilises the notebooks' power subsystem (19VDC, 4.74A) that cuts down power consumption – is coupled with reduced noise levels (26dB only when idle). This

low noise helps to cut down stress and distraction deriving from working in loud environments whilst its reduced dimensions – 3 litres physical volume – save and free a lot of space in the office or home environment.

To improve ease of use, all frequently used ports have been placed on the front side of the PC with easy system upgrade and maintenance are guaranteed by a screw-less structure that simplifies the access to internal system components.

The integrated Acer eRecovery Management eliminates the need for recovery CDs working as efficient back-up and recovery tool. It includes a predefined image that is stored in a hidden partition of the system's hard disk drive. Acer eMode Management manages several multimedia activities such as music, video, photo, TV, FM radio, Internet and Digital TV enabling users to burn films, photo albums and music on DVDs or CDs.

Acer Aspire L350

The Aspire L350 features the HDMI interface (supporting 480p, 780p, 1080i e 1080p formats) by using a unique cable a fully digital and uncompressed connection between the source and the screen. By eliminating analogue conversion, HDMI

Acer MP-340 MP3 Player (left) & Aspire L350 Small Form Factor PC

provides best audio and video quality in one cable replacing up to 8 Audio and 5 Video cables. In addition HDMI allows to display on the HD-TV all contents stored in the PC.

At the back there is a multitude of additional connections supporting the connection of several devices and peripherals, such as headsets, microphones, digital still cameras, scanners or video cameras.

The Acer Aspire L series comes pre-installed with Microsoft Media Centre Edition 2005, compatible with Windows Vista, Adobe Reader, CyberLink PowerDVD, NTI CD Maker and Norton Antivirus that can be directly updated over the Internet.

Free Update to Windows Vista

In response to my question, Gianfranco Lanci, Acer's President, confirmed that if you bought an Acer computer in December 2006 around Christmastime or in January 2007, it would come with a voucher for a free update to Windows Vista when launched in late January 2007.

Yepp, audio players, and mobile phones. Within Creator 9's Media Manager, the application used for quickly organizing and accessing photos, music, video files, and multi-media projects, users can now upload selected content to their multimedia mobile phones through a USB or Bluetooth connection. Users can send photos and video clips to a phone to create a mobile digital album or even upload music segments as personalized ringtones. In addition to sending personal content to phones, consumers can also send the impromptu moments they capture using their built-in phone camera back to the PC for storing or sharing. Consumers can also transfer their favourite entertainment such as DivX content or recorded programming from a TiVo system or set-top DVD recorder. Consumers can use predefined settings to auto-format files for sending to an iPod, PSP or select from a comprehensive list of supported file formats that can be customized to suit any device.

Securing Memories

Creator 9 confirms its leadership in optical disc recording with the inclusion of Blu-ray Disc support. Creator 9 allows consumers to record to both single and dual-layer BD discs and archive as much as 50 GB of personal data – or 12,500 music tracks, 50,000 photos or four hours of raw

high-definition video. Creator 9 also enables users to span large projects across multiple BD discs and secure content through disc encryption. In addition, Creator 9's Drag-to-Disc packet writing software offers consumers the convenience and efficiency of dragging and dropping files to a Blu-ray Disc in the same way they would place files on a hard disk or flash drive.

Re-Discovering Music

Creator 9's already impressive music capabilities are enhanced with new applications including the Audio Capture Widget, which is a desktop application that lets users easily record any audio playing on their computer such as Internet radio pro-

gramming. The Capture Widget includes a unique Pre-Roll feature that can automatically record and store audio even before the record button is selected. Acting like a Personal Video Recorder for audio entertainment, the Pre-Roll feature ensures users never miss a moment. Another innovative feature of the Audio Capture Widget is the Mute System Sounds feature that lets consumers hear system alerts, while suppressing them from the resulting recording. All programming recorded through the Capture Widget can be modified in Creator 9's Sound Editor and easily converted for output to a portable audio player or disc.

Also new to the audio capabilities in Creator 9 is AutoMix, a feature that automatically generates perfect playlists. Using sophisticated algorithms to analyze and fingerprint each song in a consumer's library, the AutoMix feature defines a complementary mix of music based on a 'seed' track chosen by the user. Consumers can use AutoMix to quickly generate an upbeat selection of songs to motivate them at the gym or a relaxing set to use as background during their next dinner party. Resulting playlists can be defined to fit the size limitations of a portable player, recorded to CD, uploaded to a mobile phone, or used as the basis for creating a DVD Music Disc. A unique feature found only in Creator, DVD Music Disc turns any standard DVD player

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into a virtual music jukebox with up to 50 hours of Dolby Digital quality music. DVD Music Disc now offers attractive new customizable menu styles and an option for shuffle play.

Hollywood Capabilities for the Home

Easy Media Creator 9 includes a rich selection of authoring and video editing tools that offer consumers the perfect blend of automation and hands-on control. For creating professional-quality videos, consumers can use the high-definition enabled, 32-track timeline editor with advanced video overlay tools and fine-tune editing controls. Easy Media Creator 9 also delivers a host of automated features that enable consumers to achieve stunning results with minimal effort including a one-click colour correction tool, automatic background noise removal feature, a fit-to-disc encoding option, and an automated scene editor that allows consumers to easily omit unwanted content from their video programming. The enhanced CineMagic 2 takes consumers' raw video footage and favourite song and automatically generates a polished production complete with professionally-stylized video introductions, special effects, and appropriate transitions that are all synchronized to the tempo of the selected music.

Creator 9 also includes an enhanced version of MyDVD, which allows users to generate blockbuster-style DVDs with new professionally-designed menu styles that include matching scene menus – coordinated with the CineMagic styles. Consumers can choose to enter the MyDVD Assistant, which will guide them quickly through the production of a personalized DVD or enter the advanced editor and take complete creative control. Advanced features include motion menus, menu-to-menu transitions, and animated buttons.

Additional capabilities typically found only in higher-end DVD authoring applications include advanced support for object and sub-menu linking and comprehensive end action controls, which allow users to precisely dictate the sequence of events following a DVD navigation selection such as playing a title or returning to a menu.
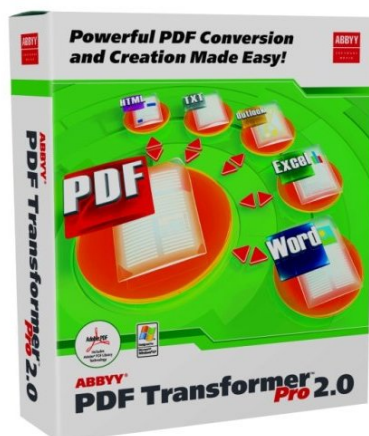
Pricing Around £56 *(Review to Follow — Ed)*

ABBYY PDF TRANSFORMER 2.0 PRO

ABBYY, a provider of document recognition, conversion and data capture technologies, has announced the worldwide availability of ABBYY PDF Transformer 2.0 Pro, a PDF conversion and creation application ideal for business settings where PDF conversion and creation is a routine job function. This easy-to-use PDF utility converts all types of PDF files to Microsoft Office documents; it also creates PDFs from Microsoft Office applications. In addition, PDF Transformer is the first utility in its class that translates static, image-only PDF files into searchable PDFs in one step. With this new feature, users can perform full-text searches for scanned PDF image documents, such as magazine articles, signed contracts, and books, by simply entering a search word on a desktop search tool.

"When developing PDF Transformer 2.0 we thought about user convenience as a first priority. With an intuitive interface familiar to anyone working with PDFs, and an optimal set of functions, the product fits organically into your work environment", explained Alex Bobrovskiy, ABBYY Chief Product Manager for Desktop Products. "We believe that we have found the best way to make our product powerful without sacrificing ease of use."

PDF Transformer combines two utilities in a single package, offering PDF conversion and PDF creation. The software is designed for those who need an easy-to-use, affordable, yet powerful program for converting PDFs into editable office documents and generating PDF files from office applications.

Convert Scanned PDF Images to Searchable PDF Files

Most scanners or multifunction devices, such as digital copiers, scan documents into "image-only" PDF formats, which are not searchable. ABBYY PDF Transformer 2.0 helps to convert such images into searchable PDF format in one step. By adding a text layer to image only PDF files this smart program makes them accessible for key word searching.

Convert PDF to Editable Formats

The PDF conversion component of the software allows quick and easy conversion of all types of PDF files (from image only PDFs to files with special encoded fonts or complex formatting) to a variety of editable formats including Microsoft® Word, Excel, TXT, and HTML, allowing users to reuse the information or make changes.

The product's intuitive, viewer-style interface is flexible and easy to use. It is instructive and provides the ability to choose the level of control needed in the PDF conversion process, depending on user preferences, file formatting complexity, or its use purposes. Users may look through a PDF file before converting it and change the settings if necessary. Users can also select a specific page or zone within the PDF file to process and set up the level of layout retention needed. PDF Conversion options are easily accessible, without requiring navigation through many different windows and dialog boxes to select conversion requirements.

PDF Transformer 2.0 Pro delivers superior accuracy with PDF file conversion using its dual-option approach. When processing PDF files, the utility determines if the text is embedded, examines the integrity of the text layer and makes a decision to extract the text or apply optical character recognition (OCR). Each area is examined individually, and the most appropriate method is applied to each area of the document to achieve the best possible results.

When processing PDF files, the utility captures and re-creates internal links and hyperlinks as well as retains document properties including titles, subject, author and key words and saves this information in Microsoft Word, Excel, HTML and searchable PDF formats. In addition, PDF Transformer 2.0 Pro converts documents in 37 languages, supporting conversion of multilingual documents, and provides paper size and image quality retention.

Creating PDF Files

PDF Transformer creates PDF files directly from Microsoft Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations or Visio diagrams using toolbar buttons embedded in the applications. Users may save the PDF file or send it by e-mail without first saving the PDF. The Create PDF functions are easily accessible from applications with the PDF Transformer toolbar or Windows Explorer. Users may also create PDFs from other applications that support the "Print" function. ABBYY PDF Transformer 2.0 Pro supports PDF security settings and allows users to produce his or her PDF document with permissions passwords to prevent the unauthorized opening of documents or to restrict certain operations including printing, content extraction, editing, adding comments and adding or removing pages.

The utility retains internal links and hyperlinks when creating PDFs as well as automatically keeps document properties, including title, author, subject, and keywords in the created PDF file. The PDF creation interface also allows users to specify the size of the resulting PDF files depending upon use.

Pricing for ABBYY PDF Transformer 2.0 Pro, is around £60 (from Amazon.co.uk) *(review to follow — Ed)*.

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