

What's New

Looking for higher-education technology products and services? Start here.

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A More Efficient Office Manager

Microsoft's Microsoft Office 2008 for Mac contains updates for making the creation of professional documents and the managing of calendars and priorities easier. Word 2008's Document Elements automates common but tedious tasks such as adding a table of contents, while Publishing Layout View can produce rich documents such as newsletters. In Excel 2008, Ledger Sheets offer preformulated cells to handle common money management tasks. PowerPoint 2008's SmartArt turns slides from bulleted text into charts, diagrams, and graphics. Improved presenter tools feature elapsed and actual time indicators, plus a notes pan and thumbnail view of presentations. Entourage 2008's May Day gives an at-a-glance schedule without having to launch the program. Suitable for PowerPC- and Intel-based Macs and compatible for colleagues on PCs, the core suite also has the Elements Gallery, a user interface for fast access to tools and specific features within applications. A full retail version is \$399.95, while an upgrade version is \$239.95. Go to www.microsoft.com/mac.



Going Wide

The NP3151W projector from NEC Display Solutions of America caters to widescreen laptops by having a WXGA resolution of 1,280x800, which provides 30 percent more space to display more content. This 4000-lumen LCD projector can connect to wireless networks to let users show and control presentations from their computer notebooks. Though designed for conference and business rooms, the projector features HQV home theater video processing to make presentations more engaging. Users can monitor and make adjustments to the projector remotely. A USB connection for a mouse and keyboard allow desktop control when using the projector to connect to a remote desktop via a wired/wireless network connection. A quick power-off function protects the lamp during the cool-down period if the projector is accidentally unplugged or the power strip is switched off. It weighs 16.1 pounds and costs \$4,999. Go to www.necdisplay.com.



Like a Personal Coach but Better

InsideTrack is offering uCoach, a student coaching program that trains university staff how to coach students in weekly one-on-one sessions in order to strengthen student engagement and first-year retention, and to track students through graduation. It has seven focus areas, including helping students identify the reasons for academic success or struggle each week, addressing ineffective approaches to studies, and creating and defining action plans for the coming week. The service also includes an implementation process, access for students and coaches to software that supports goal achievement and student management, and ongoing quality assistance. Suitable for public universities with large student populations, the cost of implementation is \$129 to \$398 per student based on the program's size. Visit www.insidetrack.com.

Record Like a Professional

Panasonic's AG-HMC70, a professional AVCHD (Advanced Video Codec High Definition), shoulder-mount camcorder, operates like a digital camera by using SD cards to capture single images or record and store widescreen video. AVCHD lets the device record 1080i video longer at half the storage rate of formats such as HDV. There are three recording modes. For example, users can record more than 2.6 hours at 13Mbps or up to 6 hours at 6Mbps on one 16GB SDHC memory card. Offered for \$2,495, it features professional audio and video connectivity and comes standard with HD Writer software and a 2GB SD card. Higher capacity SD cards (4GB, 8GB, and 16GB) are also available. Visit www.panasonic.com/broadcast



A Point of Protection

Endpoint Protector 2008 by CoSoSys helps administrators better protect PCs from data theft, loss, or leakage by creating specific controls to determine which portable storage devices should or shouldn't have access to certain data files. The software monitors and records all data transferred to and from mechanisms such as USB devices, external hard drives, and CD/DVD readers and writers. If data is deleted before or after a transfer, a copy is stored on a network storage server. The TrustedDevice feature enforces encryption of data placed on devices previously authorized to have it, such as ones that have been lost or stolen. It's geared for PCs running Windows Vista, XP, and 2000, or Windows 2003 Server with IIS and Microsoft SQL 2005 as a database, and can be installed on a Linux Debian platform with Apache web server and MySQL as a database. Base pricing is \$2,395 for 100 users, with an additional per-user licensing cost ranging from \$15 to \$22. Additional maintenance and support is extra. Learn more at www.cososys.com.



Scanning Away

Have a bulging Rolodex with business cards still to fit in? I.R.I.S Group's IRIScan 2 is a portable scanner that lets users capture business card information for use in Microsoft Outlook or Entourage, Apple Address Book, Now Contact, and other applications. It can



also act as a sheet feed scanner to save documents as text, PDF files, or JPEG images. The scanner comes with powerful OCR (optical character recognition) software to edit scanned documents or recognize, sort, and export information from business cards. The unit is powered through a USB connection and is available in two versions: Express 2 (available for \$149) and Executive 2 (at \$199). Learn more at www.irislink.com.

The Password Is Reset

As calls about remembering or resetting passwords often go to an IT help desk, why not let the voice do the changing as well as the talking? Nuance Communications has developed an Automatic Password Reset module, a turnkey solution designed to help users reset security passwords for any networked device or application simply by using their voice and the company's telephone system. The module uses voice biometrics that securely identify the caller and allow for computer and other passwords to be changed. Part of the Employee Productivity Suite, the cost of this system starts at under \$75,000 for a smaller setup and \$100,000 for a larger version. Both prices include installation and first-year maintenance. Learn more at <http://nuance.com>.

Either Mobile or Stand Still

Samsung's Q1 Ultra Premium UMPC, a mobile personal computer, weighs less than 2 pounds but comes with an 80GB 1.8-inch ultra-small hard disk drive, a fingerprint reader, and an SD memory card slot. Integrated 802.11b/g WiFi and Bluetooth 2.0 provide wireless communications. A 1.3-megapixel camera snaps and blends videos and photographs, while a 300-pixel webcam encourages video conferencing. The unit runs Microsoft Windows XP Tablet Edition, and a 57.7-watt lithium cell battery provides power for up to 7.5 hours. It is priced at \$1,299.



Also, there are five new display monitors in the SyncMaster BX and BWX series, which vary in size from 17 to 22 inches. All have a height-adjustable stand. An ultra-slim (15 mm) bezel allows users to "tile" the monitors side by side plus offers ample space for viewing multiple computer applications and images. They are capable of automatically enhancing color where needed and can deliver video images without distorting picture quality. The widescreen models, 943BWX (\$269), 2043BWX (\$299), and 2243BWX (\$349), accommodate content shown in a tall or wide format. The series also includes the 743BX (\$239) and the 943BX (\$279). Visit www.samsung.com.

From Documenting to Interaction

The SMART document camera, by SMART Technologies, transforms any physical object into a digital video or still image to be projected on an interactive whiteboard. The camera can also be lined up to a microscope eyepiece without an adapter. An auto brightness feature enables the camera to be used in rooms with various light levels. Its Notebook collaborative learning software lets users capture images on a page and write over them in digital ink. It's available for \$849.



The SMART Board 685 interactive whiteboard, another new product, has an extra-wide format to offer more working space, with 16:10 aspect ratio for use in conjunction with widescreen projectors and laptops. An expansion slot on the whiteboard's pen tray makes upgrading easier. It's offered at an educational price of \$1,799. Visit www.smarttech.com.

Maple with Math

Maplesoft has released Maplesoft-MAA Placement Test Suite, a collection of placement tests developed by the Mathematical Association of America (MAA). The tests are administered through Maple T.A., a web-based system that automatically assesses student responses and performance. The suite's online setup enables officials to administer placement tests even before students arrive on campus, with results available as soon as tests are completed. This latest version aims to simplify the process of delivery, analysis, and administration. It also offers MAA calculator-based tests with math problems similar to those found in classrooms. Pricing can be as low as \$2 per student, depending on the number of students and the licensing option. Learn more at www.maplesoft.com.

A Signal for Effective Audio

Designed for rooms that require multiple live microphones and/or outputs, Crestron's MPS-300 is a presentation control and signal routing box that now includes features for digital audio signal processing. The multimedia system consists of a full-featured box with two gated microphone inputs that have an audio compressor/limiter to help prevent distracting audio spikes. The system can route and manage up to eight microphones. On the video side, the MPS-300 has a full 8x7 matrix to make routing more flexible. Used in any chosen combination, outputs can function separately as RGB color, composite or separate video outputs, or can be combined to create a single component output. Pricing for the system starts at \$6,400 but can vary by installation and programming requirements. Check it out at www.crestron.com.



They Can Notify and Be Customized

Hitachi has unveiled two new 3LCD projectors. Available for \$8,495, the CP-X615 allows networks to be used as notification systems. Still images, such as emergency alerts, can be transferred from a PC to each projector on the network, even to projectors not in use at the time. Offering 4000 ANSI lumens and a 1,000:1 contrast ratio, the projector displays images via a 1.2x zoom lens. Able to be remotely controlled and maintained



through a LAN network connection, the projector's bayonet lens can support up to four optional lenses. Advanced anti-theft features include a transition detector that senses when the projector has been moved.

Also new, the CP-X450 contains a hybrid filter that does not need to be replaced for 2,000 hours. The projector offers 3500 lumens brightness and weighs 7.7 pounds. Security features include a transition detector, which requires a password to operate when the device is moved from a fixed position. Whiteboard Mode provides clarity while limiting brightness when used with whiteboards, Day Time Mode is designed for use in a bright environment, and Blackboard Mode is for displaying an image on a colored background. It's priced at \$3,995. Learn more at www.hitachi.com.

To link to any of these companies, visit www.universitybusiness.com/ProductInfo.