

# welcome

Broadband is the latest burning issue, so we've devoted a whole new section to it. And there's our customer satisfaction survey, where you can put other topics on the agenda

**B**roadband. Don't you love it? Or are you sick of it? Either way, broadband internet is the subject of everyone's conversation currently, whether it's the frustration of waiting for BT to enable your local exchange or the amazement at the difference broadband makes once it's finally up and running.

With the introduction of low-cost satellite broadband recently, few places remain out of the reach of this ultra-fast internet service. However, the high price of an always-on connection keeps it out of reach for many customers. And while broadband ISPs have cut down the charges for business services, small firms have yet to be convinced that broadband will boost their profits.

Whatever view you take, broadband is set to change the way we use computers and is currently one of the bright spots in an otherwise lacklustre PC business. With this in mind, we've wrought yet another change and launched a new section, Broadband Advisor, dedicated to bringing you the latest news, features, workshops and advice on broadband internet connections. Turn to page 154 to find out more.

**We test the performance of PCs each month. But to assess a supplier's ability to serve its customers we need your help**

## Big questions

Log on to our home page ([www.pcadvisor.co.uk](http://www.pcadvisor.co.uk)) and you'll see that, once again, we're asking for your help in compiling our annual customer satisfaction survey of PC suppliers.

When buying a computer, the features and performance you get for your money

is only half the story. Can the supplier deliver the PC you want when you want it? And what happens if the machine plays up? Will there be anyone to help you out?

While technological performance advances faster than you can say "gigahertz", the methods of providing customer service and technical support out of PC makers' wafer-thin profit margins has changed little over the last decade. We test PC performance in our Test Centre and publish the results in our charts each month. But to assess a supplier's ability to serve its customers we need your help.

So if you've bought a PC for home or work in the last four years, we'd like to know your opinions. How do you rate the company? Would you recommend it to a friend or colleague? We'll be bringing you the results later in the year.

Finally, if you want to give direct feedback to manufacturers, our annual Brand Awareness Survey is also running this issue, accessible at [www.pcadvisor.co.uk/ba2003](http://www.pcadvisor.co.uk/ba2003) or by following the link from the cover disc. ■

Andrew Charlesworth



## reader information

### Competition rules of entry

The following rules and conditions apply to all competitions and giveaway offers in the magazine. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. There is no cash alternative to the prize or prizes offered. Employees of IDG Communications, the company or companies donating prizes and their relatives are not eligible for entry. Winners' details will be printed in the next available issue of the magazine. Neither *PC Advisor* nor IDG Communications can be held responsible in the unlikely event that a company is not able to fulfil its obligation and provide a prize, for whatever reason.

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Products submitted for reviews in *PC Advisor* are accepted on the basis that the same product will be available to the consumer. This ensures we give our readers the most accurate analysis of commercially available products. If, after reading a review in *PC Advisor*, you contact the manufacturer or vendor and find the specific model is not being offered, please let us know at [reviews@idg.com](mailto:reviews@idg.com). Prices quoted throughout the magazine exclude VAT except where otherwise stated.

### Technical helpline

We cannot answer technical queries over the phone, except via our Expert Advice Hotline (see page 173). Calls are charged at £1.50 per minute, up to a maximum of six minutes. *PC Advisor* offers a full money-back guarantee if you are dissatisfied with the service.

### Consumer hotline

Whether it's consumer-related or a more general enquiry, our experts can help with all your legal problems. The *PC Advisor* Consumer Hotline costs £1.50 per minute. Call 0906 906 0276, 8am to 10pm, seven days a week. English law applies to all advice given.

### November competition winners

**Lexmark T520:** Mr O Scott, Crangleigh, Surrey. **Lexmark X85:** Mr N King, Reading. **Lexmark X125:** Mr P Christopherson, Pickering, N Yorks. **Psion Wavefinder:** Mr E Griffiths, Eastleigh, Hants; Mr C Waubrey, Swansea; Mr A Burnage, York; Mr J Rickard, Oldbury, West Midlands; Mr W Waghorn, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex; Mrs J Le Merechal, Southampton; Mr P Fermar, Deal, Kent; Mrs D Emery, Stoke on Trent; Mr S Fox, Poole, Dorset; Mr P Dustman, Mirfield, W Yorks. **Formac Studio DV:** Mrs T Hunt, Mitcham, Surrey; Mr B Philpott, Faversham, Kent. **Freeserve broadband connection:** Ms L Robb, Cumbernauld, Glasgow. **Eclipse broadband connection:** Mr R Whitrow, Neath, West Glamorgan.