

contents

Issue 87 December 2002

cover disc

The cover disc is full to bursting point with great programs this month, so enjoy...

- 11 CD highlights
- 12 DVD highlights
- 273 In-depth CD tutorial
- 280 In-depth DVD information



ON THE COVER DISC

www.pcadvisor.co.uk/about/coverdisc.cfm

news

For up-to-the-minute IT-related news stories log on to www.pcadvisor.co.uk/news.

- 20 News
- 26 Behind the news
- 32 New products
- 34 Top gear



consumerwatch



We investigate some pitfalls of PC buying and give sound advice on dealing with all consumer issues.

- 36 ConsumerWatch
- 38 Consumer tips & tricks
- 40 Terms & conditions
- 42 Legal advisor
- 44 Contacts
- 46 Healthcheck spotcheck
- 48 Supplier profile: HP

14 competition

There's plenty up for grabs this month, so get that entry form in quickly and one of our fab prizes could be winging its way to your home. There's a Brother colour laser printer and Steinberg music-editing software bundles, as well as stylish Trust digital cameras and Xara graphics suites.



WIN!

regulars

- 8 Contacts
- 16 Welcome
- 18 Readers' writes
- 96 Faxback
- 223 Subscription CD only
- 283 Subscription CD & DVD
- 284 Ad index
- 285 Next month

reviews

54 Hardware reviews

- 54 Dell Inspiron 8200 and Evesham Voyager 5700
- 55 Sony Cybershot DSC-F717
- 56 HP iPaq 3970
- 56 Asus MyPal A600
- 58 Acer TravelMate 100
- 64 Creative SoundBlaster Audigy 2 and Creative Inspire 6.1 6700
- 66 FujiFilm FinePix F401 Zoom
- 67 Evesham Quest Li
- 67 Sony Clie PEG-SJ30
- 68 Toshiba 5200-801
- 68 IBM X30 TK04BUK
- 69 Creative MuVo
- 69 MadWaves Madplayer
- 70 Motorola Bluetooth headset
- 70 Iomega Zip 750
- 71 Kodak EasyShare DX 4330
- 72 Iomega NAS P405U
- 73 Lexmark X75
- 74 NEC LT260 and Toshiba TLP-561



page 58



page 55



page 69



76 Software reviews

- 76 Serif Digital Camera Suite
- 77 PC Booster 2.0
- 78 IBM ViaVoice 10.0 Windows Pro USB edition
- 79 OmniPage Pro 12.0
- 82 Gowi Presenter 2.0
- 84 SignPoster 4.0
- 85 Crystal Reports 9.0

88 Technofile: personal digital assistants

There's so much choice in the handheld market nowadays that it's hard to work out which features you require. Read our guide to PDA technology and you'll be an expert in no time.

94 Reader's choice: budget PC for video editing

This month's reader required a PC that could handle his video-editing demands, so we got two manufacturers to create a system on demand.

97 Top 10 charts

- 98 Power PCs
- 104 Budget PCs **NEW**
- 110 Superbudget PCs
- 116 Graphics cards **NEW**
- 126 Notebooks
- 130 Beginner digital cameras
- 130 Intermediate digital cameras
- 134 Professional digital cameras
- 134 Digital camcorders
- 136 Personal printers
- 138 CD drives
- 138 DVD Writers
- 142 Monitors
- 144 Flatbed scanners
- 144 Digital projectors

114 Buying advice

- 114 Desktop PCs
- 122 Graphics cards

features

150 Trouble-free computing

The consequences of data loss can be catastrophic. We discuss the merits of online data recovery firms and show you how to prevent disaster occurring in the first place.

158 Signs of improvement

Due to economic uncertainty, many small firms are making do with upgrades rather than renewing their IT equipment. We take a look at the history of the PC market and ask whether things can ever be the same.

164 40 great online freebies

The web is home to a huge number of useful computing applications – and they can be yours without you paying a penny. Here's a round-up of some of the best online freebies.



ON THE COVER



COVER STORY



172 Sisters are coding it for themselves

Technology is no longer the preserve of the male nerd, but a vital and exciting part of everyday life for both sexes. As more women use technology they're beginning to make their mark, insisting on beautifully designed products that look good and help them improve both their home and working lives.

workshop



178 Build your own PC, part III

Having completed the physical assembly of our PCs, in this final part we power them up for the first time, install Windows and ensure everything runs smoothly.



184 Photoshop Elements tips & tricks

Armed with the inexpensive Photoshop Elements, put your PC to work by correcting, retouching, enhancing and being generally creative with your images.

ON THE COVER

xp advisor

189 Introduction

We discuss the pros and cons of upgrading to Windows XP.

190 Conference call

Add a webcam to your PC and you'll soon be chatting to relatives on the other side of the world or holding a video-conference with another office.

194 Windows XP Q&As

Our experts help smooth out those XP upgrade niggles.



helpline

- Our experts tackle your PC problems and offer a variety of solutions to get your PC running smoothly.
- 198 General
- 199 Windows
- 202 Internet
- 207 Applications
- 210 Pass it on

lifestyle



page 220

We take a look at the latest shoot-'em-ups, role-playing games and sports titles, while also managing a beach resort.



page 227

- 219 ECTS special
- 220 Mafia
- 220 Medieval: Total War
- 222 Neocron
- 222 Command and Conquer: Generals
- 226 Aliens Vs Predator 2: Primal Hunt
- 227 Beach Life
- 228 Barbie Explorer