

# 100 reviews

To celebrate the 100th issue, we've taken the 100 theme to its natural conclusion and gone large this month with 100 reviews – count 'em if you don't believe us.

We've got big stuff, like the brand-new Windows Media Center and Athlon 64 PCs on the hardware front, plus a web designer's dream with a full rundown of Macromedia's latest MX 2004 products in software.

With more space, we've also expanded out into areas we wouldn't normally cover. So if you're after a robot vacuum cleaner or fancy spying on people using your PC there's plenty of stuff in here.

We hope you enjoy the expanded section as much as we did putting it together.

Will Head, reviews editor

**60 Hardware 94 Software 112 Technofile**



## Scoring and testing explained

Each review rates a product according to a set criterion for its type. The score is broken down at the end of the review to show how we reached our final verdict. Ratings range from 1 to 10 and fall into the following classifications:

1 to 3 – poor  
4 to 6 – average  
6 to 8 – good  
8 to 10 – excellent

### How we rate hardware

- **Features** This score rates the specification of a product by current standards. For example, a 3GHz PC with 1GB of RAM and a 250GB hard drive would score highly.
- **Build quality** This rating denotes how well the product is made and the quality of the components.
- **Value for money** The price of a product will often be the deciding factor between a good review and a bad review. This is not to

say that cheaper products will always win out, but the better the price/performance and features ratio the higher the score.

### How we rate software

- **Ease of use** Rates how easy software is to install and use.
- **Features** Indicates how much the package contains. An office suite that only came with a spreadsheet would score poorly.
- **Value for money** We're looking for lots of features, good performance and a low price.



### Prices

All prices are quoted by the manufacturer or distributor and include VAT. Please note that prices are only intended as a guide and you may see products on sale for less or more than our quoted price. PC Advisor's recommendations are for guidance only and are not a guarantee of suitability. The publisher takes no responsibility for purchasers' decisions.

### PC ADVISOR GOLD

#### PC Advisor Gold award

Outstanding hardware products receive a *PC Advisor Gold award*. This may indicate that the product will enter our charts next month but it also honours excellence in a product that is not covered in our monthly charts.

## 251 Top 10 charts

Located at the back of the magazine, the charts are designed so they're a cinch to navigate. The at-a-glance comments and buying advice help you make the right purchasing decision. Products we've already tested are ranked in our charts after competing against existing entrants. The result is a definitive guide to the best hardware on the market.