

UnderstandIT

From **MAY DAY CONSULTING LIMITED** in association with **FACILITATORS UK**

A publication designed to inform and enable businesses to understand the implications, costs and advantages of using Information and Communications Technology. Distributed through Chambers of Commerce.

INTEL INCREASES THE POWER OF THE PENTIUM 4 PROCESSOR

Intel, the PC processor manufacturer, has just launched an upgraded Pentium 4 processor – the “brain” inside your computer.

Codenamed “Prescott”, the new range of processors are designed to handle multimedia as well as scientific and engineering applications even more efficiently than the previous processor. Initially the new processors will handle information at rates of 2.8 and 3.2 MHz (millions of cycles per second), but soon will run at 3.4 MHz.

Intel have also introduced a number of new design innovations that will make it possible to increase performance even further in the future, without having to completely re-design the processor.

The new processor will begin to be included in new PC systems almost immediately. The downside is that only when applications are produced that can make use of the new processing power will we users notice or be able to take advantage of all this new processing power!

TWO-WAY TEXT MESSAGE SERVICES

Some business users may already be familiar with text messaging services (using your mobile telephone) to enable you to automatically receive up to date information (on share prices, news headlines or football scores etc).

These services have also become a new business opportunity for many entrepreneurs, always keen to exploit new technology. Typically, you either send a short text message or even code word to a short mobile phone number or subscribe to a service that sends appropriate information whenever the relevant information is released or changes.

The cost to a business of using some of these services has been as high as £500 per year. However, one new innovative company is about to significantly reduce this cost and bring such services within the reach of small businesses and private users too.

iTAGG has developed the facility for anyone who wishes to subscribe to their service to register a short code word with them – this could, for example, be your name (but this must be unique, just like an Internet domain name).

Sending this code word to a specific number will result in information be automatically returned to the sender. One obvious use for this would be an electronic business card. Instead of passing out contact information, you just ask your contact or client to text your name to a specific short number and your full contact details etc will be returned to him/her.

The cost of a basic iTAGG account or code word is £9.99 per year. This provides the ability to set up the information to be sent in response to any request. The cost of sending the information can be borne by you, or charged to the requestor via a “premium rate” route at 25p (in which case you, as the account holder would receive 1p “commission”). An iTAGG code word can be further sub-divided into 20 keywords, each one configured differently.

A more advanced package is also available at £99 per year, which provides for much higher commission rates on responses sent to requestors, and enables information to be forwarded via email etc.

For further information, visit the iTAGG web site at:

<http://www.itagg.com/>

NB: Mayday Consulting and/or Facilitators UK are not responsible for external web sites and do not warrant any services offered by them.

YET ANOTHER FLAW FOUND IN MS WINDOWS

Microsoft have just announced yet another flaw it has “discovered” in some of its Windows operating systems, and have issued a “fix” that can be downloaded and will repair this flaw. In truth, it has been reported that the flaw was pointed out to Microsoft in July 2003, but has only now produced this fix.

The “flaw” only affects the later versions of Windows – NT, NT Server, Windows 2000, Windows XP and Windows Server 2003. It can potentially allow a hacker to gain access to an affected system and create logon accounts, install and run software, read, write and delete information.

You should visit the following site to find out more information and download the fix if yours is an affected system:

<http://www.microsoft.com/technet/treeview/?url=/technet/security/bulletin/MS04-007.asp>

MYDOOM VIRUS BEATS MOST RECORDS

The massive publicity surrounding the recent A and B variations of the MYDOOM virus should have warned most people that it is important that they update their anti-virus definition database regularly.

One trend in recent high-profile viruses is that they now tend to be designed to produce extremely large quantities of e-mail traffic, which significantly slows down the entire network, and the mail systems generally, or to orchestrate an "attack" on a specific web site or sites (by bombarding the site with requests for information in such large numbers that the site just stops responding and fails). This is known as a "Denial of Service" attack.

In any event, we would recommend that you ensure that your anti-virus software is updated at least once every week – even more frequently if possible. Some anti-virus software now includes automatic updating facilities that can initiate an update in the background, almost without you knowing.

However, despite the publicity, many millions of computers across the world were affected by MYDOOM. You have the most up-to-date virus definitions on your PC haven't you?

WINDOWS '98 TUNE UP

Many businesses and private individuals are still running the tried and tested Windows '98 operating system. Perhaps it is adequate for their needs and an upgrade to Windows 2000 or XP is not justified. The hardware in the PC may not be able to support Windows XP, triggering an unwanted major hardware upgrade or even a complete system replacement.

However, Windows '98 does suffer from some problems that will often affect its performance. Over time, you may feel that '98 begins to run slowly. This is quite common, but there are a number of things you can do to recover some speed and improve performance. These include running some of the system tools provided with Windows '98:

- Scan disk
- Disk Defragmenter
- Disk space manager

Each of these tools can help to improve your system performance. Microsoft has a very useful article on the knowledgebase area of their support web site. This provides detailed explanations of these tools and some other tips and techniques for getting more out of your Windows '98 operating system.

See this article at:

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb:en-gb:835606&Product=w98>

Finally, if all else fails, then many simply resort to re-installing Windows '98 from the original system disk. Providing you install Windows again in the same (default) directory, it will retain all your system settings. However, you may need to re-install some of your applications software.

If you need assistance in trouble-shooting your Windows operating system, whether it be '95, '98, 2000 or XP, then give Alan Finch a call on 01224 697457 as soon as possible.

MS WORD – TABLE OF CONTENTS

If you are creating a long, complex document, it is often useful for the reader to include a Table of Contents (TOC) to aid navigation through the document. MS Word provides a feature that automatically creates a TOC for you.

The entries in the TOC are, by default, based on the paragraph or section headings in your document i.e. the headings formatted using one of the built-in HEADING styles. You can create a TOC based on Outline levels, or customised heading styles, but this brief explanation concentrates on the default headings.

Follow these simple steps to create your TOC:

1. Go through the document and apply the heading styles 1, 2, 3 etc. to each of the headings that you wish to appear in the TOC.
2. Place your cursor at the point in the document where you wish to insert the TOC (it is often useful to insert a blank page or pages for this).
3. Go to INSERT, REFERENCE, INDEX and TABLES.
4. Select the TABLE OF CONTENTS tab.

Here you can select the number of heading levels to be included in the TOC. You will most probably only wish 1,2 or 3 levels. Any more than this creates a complex TOC which may be difficult to follow.

You can also modify the appearance of the TOC – whether you want page numbers right-justified or not, any tab-leader character (the default is dots), whether you want page numbers included or not – you will normally want them included. You can also modify the style of the entries in the TOC here as well.

Finally, when you are ready, click on OK and the TOC will be inserted in your document.

We wish to acknowledge with thanks that some of the material contained within this publication has been sourced from Computer Weekly.

May Day Consulting Limited and your Chamber of Commerce have endeavoured to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication, but do not accept liability for any inaccuracy or omission contained within it.

Information on other Business and IT services can be found on our web site at: <http://www.maydayconsulting.co.uk> or by calling Alan Finch on 07968 262079.

May Day Consulting Ltd
.....stress free IT

9 Benbecula Road
ABERDEEN AB16 1FT
Tel: (01224) 697457

E-mail: info@maydayconsulting.co.uk
Internet: <http://www.maydayconsulting.co.uk>