

ALAN HENRY

E-Mail : alanhenry@novawerks.net

NEWS

- Apple Drops NDA for App Store Developers

http://www.appscout.com/2008/10/apple_drops_nda_for_app_store.php

Relenting to pressure from the developer community, Apple has dropped the NDAs that developers were required to agree to when they submitted their applications for consideration on the iPhone App Store. In a statement on its Web site, Apple states, "The NDA has created too much of a burden on developers, authors and others interested in helping further the iPhone's success, so we are dropping it for released software."

- Arthur C. Clarke (1917-2008): Writer, Futurist, Visionary

http://www.gearlog.com/2008/03/arthur_c_clarke_19172008_write.php

Arthur C. Clarke, author of hundreds of books on science, science fiction, space, and even underwater exploration, died in his home yesterday at the age of 90. For many, Clarke embodied the future. He was a writer, the man behind epic tales such as "2001: A Space Odyssey," "Rendezvous with Rama," and a host of other sci-fi classics. He was an explorer, documenting his dives to the Great Barrier Reef in incredible detail. And he was a futurist, suggesting that satellites would be useful in making radio communication global long before Sputnik was launched, and predicting a world where we routinely watched men and women skyrocket into orbit long before anyone dreamt that such a thing was possible.

- Starbucks Getting Out of the Music Biz

<http://www.gearsandwidgets.com/?p=280>

... The move isn't entirely unexpected; Starbucks's financial position has floundered a bit last year, and executives and shareholders are eager for the company to focus on what it knows how to do exceptionally well, and that's make coffee. They're not particularly interested in being the potential harbinger for a new age in decentralized music sales, for example. ...

FEATURES

- Cisco + Apple = iPhone Love?

http://www.gearlog.com/2007/02/cisco_apple_iphone_love.php

According to various news sources (including "The Mercury News") this morning, the great debate over the name "iPhone" is finally over. The debacle began late last year, when Cisco released a VOIP device it called the iPhone. The debate peaked again at MacWorld in January, when Steve Jobs marched on stage and presented Apple's long-anticipated product with the same name. It's been pretty harsh on both sides, with ardent Apple defenders decrying the lawsuit as frivolous and claiming that Apple's trademark for the iPhone name abroad was stronger than Cisco's ownership here in the United States. Apple detractors lauded Cisco for standing up to Apple and challenging what they perceived as another example of Apple's legal aggression, especially in the wake of Apple's lawsuits against other companies over use of the word "iPod" in their own product names and trademarks.

All in all, the argument drew a lot of fire and heated emotions, but one thing is absolutely clear: It came to perhaps the most predictable yet anticlimactic conclusion possible, an amicable settlement by both parties.

- The Geneva Conventions of Character Naming

<http://azeroth.metblogs.com/2008/06/25/the-geneva-conventions-of-character-naming/>

Just about everyone has heard of the Geneva Conventions, but not everyone knows that they're actually four separate treaties detailing appropriate treatment and conditions for prisoners, wounded, enemy soldiers, and others during a time of war. They are, by most accounts, the foundation of international law during wartime.

Now I'm not saying that we need to declare war on people with ridiculous character names, but I think a little guidance might be in order.

REVIEWS

- Hands On with the Saitek Cyborg 5.1 Headset

http://www.gearlog.com/2008/02/hands_on_with_the_saitek_cybor.php

When it comes to computer headsets, I generally think of companies like Plantronics and Logitech for clear communication and ease of installation. Some headsets offer excellent mic quality at the cost of sound playback, and others offer good in-ear sound but have a terrible microphone. Now, Saitek has entered the game with the Saitek Cyborg 5.1 stereo headset. The Cyborg proved easy to use, easy to install, providing exceptional sound quality, both in my ears and over the microphone.

- Hands On with Paglo: A Search Engine for IT

http://www.appscout.com/2008/06/hands_on_with_paglo_a_search_e_1.php

One issue that a number of small and medium-sized businesses face when managing their IT infrastructure is keeping tabs on where everything is and what condition it's all in. From the condition of desktops across the organization to the types of servers in the datacenter and what they're all running to the number of mobile devices on the network, IT departments are organizations of any size need effective and efficient ways to gather information about their environment and changes in it at a moment's notice. Paglo can help.

- Hands On: the mAudio xSession Pro

http://www.gearlog.com/2007/11/maudio_xsession_pro_not_for_pu.php

I was skeptical when I unpacked the mAudio xSession Pro mixer and audio controller. It looked cool, but when I picked it up I realized it was incredibly light. My worries were soothed when I plugged it into my computer, installed the software, and wound up making some incredible mixes, all within minutes. It was a little easier for me to get used to since I'm a DJ, but even someone with no experience behind the turntables could plug this into a PC, import some music to a playlist, and get a party started with minimal effort. It may not take a lot of skill to use, but I was pleased to see that it did take some skill to use well. Even so, by the time I was finished with the review unit, I was so pleased that I had already begun shopping around for one.

- TheSixtyOne Makes Music Discovery Fun

http://www.appscout.com/2008/01/thesixtyone_makes_music_discov.php

Finding new tunes doesn't have to be a chore, and you don't have to listen to an endless number of bands that some engine says are related to your faves--but don't sound anything like them. TheSixtyOne wants to make music discovery more like a game, putting musicians and fans in a position to show off their favorite tracks and giving listeners a chance to rate them, promote them, and even download DRM-free copies of the music they like.

- The Grohe Ondus Digital Shower

<http://www.gearsandwidgets.com/?p=243>

... The Grohe Ondus Digital Shower, is a great example of a home gadget that would be perfect in the bathroom. The Ondus thinks for itself, and an LCD display on the shower controls allow you to digitally control the temperature of the water in increments of a degree.

You can also pause the water flow whenever you want, and you can restart the flow of water at the exact same temperature at which you stopped it. It's pretty cool, and the more customization it has the better. A device like this will likely be incredibly expensive for the new homeowner or bathroom renovator, but hey, we can wish.

LONG-FORM EDITORIALS

- Is Apple's Walled-Garden for iPhone Development a Case of History Repeating?
<http://www.gearsandwidgets.com/?p=334>

... Apple's behavior with regard to the App Store, especially when contrasted with Google's openness with regard to the App Market, is eerily reminiscent of the early days of the Macintosh, and if that's the case, then Google is setting itself up to be the Microsoft of the mobile world; producing a popular OS that runs on multiple platforms. This could be good or bad for Apple, depending on how they respond. ...

- Verizon Calls (read: Whines) for Broadband Incentives (read: Public Handouts)
<http://www.gearsandwidgets.com/?p=221>

Verizon claims that the federal government needs to provide some kind of grant package or set of incentives to accelerate the deployment of broadband access and availability to rural areas with few people. Some kind of fund...that provides universal services...to people who may not already have telephone or telecommunications services currently because of the remote locations in which they live...something like the Universal Service Fund, perhaps? That thing that Verizon's asking for...that already exists?

INTERVIEWS

- TechTV Forever Interviews Becky Worley; Star of Yahoo! Tech's Hook Me Up!
<http://www.techtvforever.net/?p=874>

It's been a while since we last had the opportunity to talk to the wondrous Becky Worley, and we're glad she took the time out to talk to us about her most recent work, including her new show on Yahoo! Tech, Hook Me Up! as well as her recent global travels hunting for fame, fortune, and treasure!

It's been a while since the days of TechTV, but Becky is still definitely at it; doing gadget and gear segments for Good Morning America, travelling the world hunting treasure for the Travel Channel, working on a blog for Yahoo! Tech and working on Hook Me Up!, and staying on top of her personal life and keeping active in the community!