

## TECHNOLOGY ROUND-UP

### SAMSUNG LAUNCHES BIGGER GALAXY TAB

SOUTH Korean consumer electronics giant Samsung presented on Sunday a new version of its tablet computer, with a larger 10.1-inch screen, four months after launching its first Galaxy Tab.

The Galaxy Tab 10.1, which uses the latest version of Google's Android operating system, weighs 599g and is just 10.9mm thick.

AFP

### SONY ERICSSON TO MAKE 'PLAYSTATION' PHONE

SONY Ericsson will make a mobile phone called the Xperia Play that will run PlayStation games, The Seattle Times reported the phone-maker as saying yesterday at the Mobile World Congress.

The Xperia Play will run on the Google operating system Android 2.3 Gingerbread. This means Sony PlayStation is going with Android as its mobile-gaming marketplace.

### 1ST WINDOWS NOKIA PHONE TO GET RELEASE DATE SOON

THE target release date of the first Nokia smartphone to use Microsoft's Windows Phone operating system could be set within days, with the company aiming to have it on the market by this year, senior executives said on Sunday.

Nokia chief Stephen Elop defended the tie-up with the United States software giant, saying it would bring billions in value to the Finnish company.

AFP

### MOTOROLA MOBILITY BUYS SOFTWARE FIRM 3LM

MOTOROLA Mobility Holdings said it had acquired Three Laws Mobility Inc (3LM), a developer of mobile enterprise-security software and mobile device-management products for the Android operating system, for an undisclosed amount.

The agreement was completed late last year but terms of the transaction were not disclosed, the company said in a statement.

REUTERS

### CHINESE PC USERS WARNED OF VALENTINE'S VIRUSES

CHINESE technology experts yesterday warned computer users to be alert against Valentine-themed computer viruses, Xinhua reported.

China National Computer Virus Emergency Response Centre issued a circular warning computer users not to open spam with Valentine messages in the title line as it may contain worms like "Worm-Blebla.B", "VBS-ILoveyou" and "Vbs-Valentin.A".

## BETWEEN THE LINES

# Telcos eye mobile-payments pie

By LEILA ABOUD  
REUTERS

PAYING for your morning coffee or newspaper by swiping your mobile phone, instead of fumbling for cash or a debit card, could be just around the corner.

For telecom firms like Vodafone and France Telecom, this is the innovation they hope may finally enable them to steal a march on Apple and Google, which dominate the mobile market with devices, applications and software.

The telecom firms have suffered for years from the "dumb-pipe" phenomenon, whereby operators spend billions building the networks on which data travels, only to watch Google and Apple pocket the profits as smartphone and tablet computer users

download millions of applications and ring up transactions.

Mouth-watering amounts of money are at stake in this new market, estimated at US\$1.1 trillion (S\$1.4 trillion) globally by IE Market Research. One in every six phones will be equipped with the new technology by 2014.

But to succeed, the telcos will also have to take on credit-card giants Visa and MasterCard, which are pushing the technology hard as a way to boost transactions and fees.

"There is a game-changing opportunity here for the operators to effectively displace credit cards and banks," said Mr Dan Hays, partner at global management-consulting firm PRTM.

"Mobile payments are arguably the next major change in the mobile industry."

At the Mobile World Congress, which opened yesterday in Barcelona, telecom operators will be talking up a technology known as near-field communications (NFC), which allows consumers to buy items by tapping their phone on a specialised reader at the cash register.

This payment method already exists in Japan and South Korea, but has so far been held back from mass-market adoption by a lack of handsets and confusion around the business model.

This year is set to be a turning point, say analysts and industry executives, as about a dozen NFC-enabled phones hit the market, and operators across Europe and the United States launch wide-scale mobile-payment projects.

The competition is already cut-throat. Google and Apple are working on mobile-payment systems that would marginalise

operators by using software, instead of a phone's SIM card, to process secure payments.

This year, Google plans to integrate mobile payment into its Android mobile operating system, which is the world's most popular smartphone software.

Apple is weighing putting a NFC chip in its next iPhone and could tie it to its widely used iTunes payment system, to control the mobile-payment value chain like it has with music and magazines on the iPod and iPad.

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## HELPDESK 我的字典

Software: 软件 ruǎn jiàn

Displace: 取代 qǔ dài

Cash register: 收银机 shōu yín jī

Cut-throat: 拼命的 pīng míng de

## HOT GIZMOS

# This compact gives SLR-class pics

By YEONG AH SENG

### Olympus XZ-1

THE XZ-1 is the flagship of Olympus' compact digital-camera line-up.

Its i.Zuiko 4x zoom lens, with a large f1.8-2.5 aperture for maximum brightness, is a first for a point-and-shoot digital camera.

The CCD sensor (1/1.63 inches) is pretty large for a compact camera. It also comes with the TruePic V image-processing engine, which is similar to that used in the Olympus PEN series



of Micro Thirds cameras.

Add the three features together and we have a camera that can deliver SLR-class pictures, and is a class above other digital compacts.

This is one camera for users who seek the quality of pictures taken by SLR cameras, but are averse to the hassle of changing lenses and lugging around bulky cameras.

For those who are still partial to manual controls, manual exposure and focusing are possible with the control ring on the lens and the control dial on the rear panel.

One more thing – the 3-inch OLED screen is simply brilliant. **How much: \$748**



# USB camera that's also a projector

### IPEVO Point 2 View USB Document Camera

THE IPEVO Point 2 View is a more versatile USB camera than most.

Apart from its use as an accessory for Skype-type messaging and video chats, the camera can also function as a projector of sorts: By pointing it at a document, picture or object, it will display the image on a screen.

The pedestal base with a multi-jointed stand that comes with the camera makes this task possible. It is also possible to zoom in on an object (up to 5cm in macro mode) and examine details close up.

The software for this camera offers auto-focus, snapshot and review options.

Version 2, the information-technology company behind the product, hails from Hong Kong.

The IPEVO camera is both Mac- and PC-compatible.

**How much: \$99.** Order at [www.version-2.com.sg/estore](http://www.version-2.com.sg/estore)

# Mikey turns iPod into capable recorder

### Mikey 2

APPLE'S iPod is well known as a music and video device, but relatively little is mentioned of its capability as a recording device.

Add on a good microphone and the iPod can function as a mobile recorder that is as good

as some dedicated SD-card recorders.

Mikey, from Blue, can be attached to the bottom of the iPod.

It works with free app Blue FiRe, available from the App Store, which provides CD-quality stereo-recording capability, plus file management and touchscreen



editing, on the iPod.

Mikey also works with many other recording applications, but it works best with Blue FiRe.

It also has two recording capsules for stereo recording, a line input, a USB pass-through and a 230-degree rotating design.

There are three gain settings for different sound settings.

A Mikey-equipped iPod can record lectures, voice memos and interviews.

It works with the iPod touch (first, second and third generations), iPod classic, iPod nano (second to fifth generations) and iPod (fifth generation).

**How much: \$118**