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All the best buys are here

Sometimes you just want to know the names of the best products, when they were reviewed, how much they cost and where you can get them. That's where our new, no-nonsense buyer's guide comes in. Over the following five pages we've picked out the outstanding PCs, peripherals and software packages that we can recommend without hesitation. To make it even easier, we've included the current manufacturer's contact number and price (including VAT), as well as details about when and where we reviewed the product. For the full review, why not check out PCW on CD-ROM? Updated quarterly, PCW on CD-ROM contains the full editorial from the past 24 issues, in searchable Adobe Acrobat format — it even comes with a copy of Acrobat for viewing, searching and printing. Each CD costs just £9.95 including postage and packing, or £8.96 for subscribers.

Call 01795 414870 to order your copy, or turn to the PCW

Reader Offers on page 304 for further details. If you can't wait

for the new CD, then try out our new Faxback service [p716]:

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GORDON LAING

Editor

Personal Computer World Buyer's Charter

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Customer Relations Department
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London W1A 2HG

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While limited protection still exists when Internet purchases are made from companies based in the UK, no such protection exists — other than that afforded by certain major credit card companies — relative to goods ordered from overseas organisations' web sites. We would strongly urge all readers to consider the following before purchasing via the Internet: Advertised prices invariably exclude transportation charges, do not account for currency fluctuations, Customs & Excise duties, VAT, documentation and/or importation restrictions. Statutory rights are virtually non-existent, guarantees — if any — impossible to enforce, replacement of faulty goods and/or refunds difficult to obtain, no official regulatory organisation to call upon for assistance when things go wrong, and no protection under the "Buyers Charter".

ENTRY-LEVEL PC

Elonex MLX-6333/1

Despite its rock-bottom price, the Elonex MLX-6333/1 does not skimp on any necessary components. With its 300MHz Celeron processor and large 6.4Gb hard drive, this system's performance is actually higher than many others which cost much more. And with a good graphics card (the Diamond Viper 330) and good on-board sound, this will more than meet your expectations of a budget machine.

PCW January '99, p152



Price £700 **Contact** Elonex 0181 452 4444 **Also Recommended** Roldec Puma **Price** £700 **Contact** Roldec Systems 01902 456464 Linear Vantage XL **Price** £700 **Contact** Linear Direct 0181 408 9888 (both PCW January '99)

HIGH-END NOTEBOOK

IBM ThinkPad 600

Built for the road warrior, this thin, light notebook excels in its build quality. Based around a variety of processors, ranging from a Pentium 233MMX and going right up to a Mobile PII 266, it also has a huge 4Gb hard drive, 32Mb RAM and a 13.3in TFT screen.

PCW July '98, p79



Price £4,266.43 **Contact** IBM 0870 601 0136 **Also Recommended** Gateway Solo 9100 **Price** £3,876.33 **Contact** Gateway 0800 282000 (PCW June 1998)

MID-RANGE PC

Tiny Family Bonus

With an easily upgradeable BX motherboard, the Tiny Family Bonus should keep you happy for a while. And it comes with no less than three useful peripherals: the Umax 610P scanner, the Epson Stylus Color 300 printer and the Fuji DX-5 digital camera.

PCW January '99, p148



Price £1,056 **Contact** Tiny 0800 821333 **Also Recommended** Dan Xplora II Plus **Price** £1,018 **Contact** Dan 0181 830 1100 • Mertec XM300-K2 **Price** £999 **Contact** Mertec 01792 473700 (both PCW January '99)

MID-RANGE NOTEBOOK

Sony PCG-505G

Not only has the PCG-505G fabulous good looks, but it is also the ultimate in desirable equipment. It is incredibly small, thin and light for a fully fledged Windows 98 notebook, but also has everything you need to make working a pleasure. There is a floppy and docking station which connect to boost the functionality, and it even has 1394 built in as standard.

PCW December 98, p79



Price £2,300 **Contact** Sony 0870 2402408 **Also Recommended** Gateway Solo 2500 S6-300SE **Price** £2,173 **Contact** Gateway 0800 172000 (PCW October '98)

HIGH-END PC

Carrera Power Pro 2-450

In addition to being a speed monster, the quality of this machine's internal components far outstrips others. The SoundBlaster Live! audio card is a perfect gamer's card with its four speaker, surround-sound output. Similarly, the fast 450MHz Pentium II processor is a good companion to the powerful Diamond Viper V550 graphics card.

PCW January '99, p141



Price £1,550 **Contact** Carrera 0171 830 0486 **Also Recommended** Armari NBX-350 95 **Price** £1,498 **Contact** Armari 0181 810 7441 • Gateway G6-350 **Price** £1,397 **Contact** Gateway 0800 552000 (both PCW Jan '99)

PDA

Hewlett-Packard 620LX

For cutting-edge technology in your pocket, Hewlett-Packard's 620LX has to be the only choice. It's based on the latest Windows CE2 operating system and is the first PDA we've seen with a colour screen. It's utterly gorgeous and, at £799, a serious threat to many notebooks. PDA fans should also check out the Psion Series 5 and the 3Com PalmPilot.

PCW May '98, p262



Price £799 **Contact** HP 0990 474747 **Also Recommended** Psion Series 5 **Price** £429.9 **Contact** Psion 0990 143050 • 3Com PalmPilot Pro **Price** £229 **Contact** 3Com 0800 225252 (both PCW May '98)

COLOUR INKJET

Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C

As all-round colour inkjet printers go, Hewlett-Packard's DeskJet 890C is hard to fault. Equally happy with photos or business graphics, it's our choice for the home or small office. Meanwhile, those on a budget should look no further than Canon's BJC-250, but those wanting the bigger picture will not be disappointed with HP's Deskjet 1120C A3.

PCW September '98, p186



Price £317.25 **Contact** HP 0990 474747 **Also Recommended** Canon BJC-250 **Price** £116.33 **Contact** Canon 0121 6808062 • HP DeskJet 1120C **Price** £446.50 **Contact** HP 0990 474747 (both PCW September '98)

COLOUR PHOTO PRINTER

Epson Stylus Photo 700

Colour inkjets have split into two categories, with this type clearly designed to reproduce the most realistic colour photographic prints. Epson has for a long time been the undisputed leader and its Stylus Photo 700 is our choice for inkjet photo printing. However, Lexmark comes very close behind with its 5700.

PCW September '98, p188



Price £273 **Contact** Epson 01442 261144 **Also Recommended** Lexmark 5700 **Price** £229 **Contact** Lexmark 01628 481500 (PCW September 1998)

BUDGET LASER PRINTER

Panasonic KX-P6300

A decent laser printer at under £200 excluding VAT? That's Panasonic's KX-P6300, which not only turns out great results in fast time but also boasts one of the smallest footprints of any printer. Its unusual vertical design, along with being a great-value all-rounder, made it our Editor's Choice in our entry-level laser group test.

PCW February '98, p194



Price £217.38 **Contact** Panasonic 0500 404041 **Also Recommended** Kyocera FS-600 **Price** £280.83 **Contact** Kyocera 01734 311500 • Minolta PagePro 6 **Price** £351.33 **Contact** Minolta 01908 200400 (both PCW February '98)

BUSINESS LASER PRINTER

Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 4000TN

King of the laser printers, Hewlett-Packard has impressed us yet again with its latest office machine. Being 25 percent faster than the LaserJet 5, with 10,000-page toner cartridge, two 250-sheet input trays, network interfaces as standard and boasting superb output, the 4000TN should be the first choice as an office workhorse.

PCW February '98, p77



Price £1662.63 **Contact** HP 0990 474747 **Also Recommended** QMS DeskLaser 1400P **Price** £938.83 **Contact** QMS 01784 442255 (PCW March '98)

MULTIFUNCTION DEVICE

Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 3100

Good laser-print quality from this quiet machine. It's intelligent enough to detect a document dropped into its feeder and it will launch an idiot-proof menu for scanning, copying and emailing. Fast, accurate OCR and 2Mb memory for incoming faxes when the paper supply is exhausted, makes the 3100 an ideal multifunction device.

PCW June '98, p83



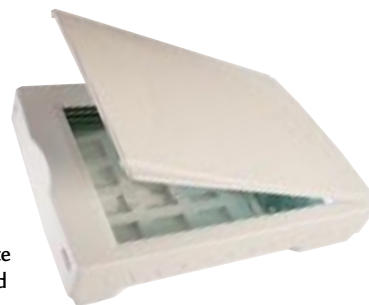
Price £629 **Contact** HP 0990 474747 **Also Recommended** Canon MultiPASS MPC20 **Price** £370.13 **Contact** Canon 0181 773 3173 (PCW January '98)

FLATBED SCANNER

Umax Astra 610P

Once again, the Umax Astra 610P parallel-port scanner has won our budget flatbed scanner group test, boasting an unbeatable combination of performance and value. Note that our three recommended scanners require enhanced parallel ports found only on modern PCs, so older systems, or users wanting top performance, should stick to SCSI.

PCW September '98, p229



Price £69.33 **Contact** Umax 01344 871329 **Also Recommended** Agfa SnapScan 310P **Price** £116.50 **Contact** Agfa 0181 231 4200 • Microtek Phantom 330CX **Price** £75.95 **Contact** Microtek 01908 317797 (PCW Sept '98)

DIGITAL CAMERA

Kodak DC260

Once again Kodak has produced the best digital camera for under £1,000. Not only does it have a high resolution, producing excellent images at 1536x1024 pixels, but it also has a 3X zoom. Add its advanced features, including scripting facilities and you have a highly desirable and indispensable camera.

PCW October '98, p226



Price £899 **Contact** Kodak 0800 281487 **Also Recommended** Epson PhotoPC 700 **Price** £587.50 **Contact** Epson 0800 289622 • Ricoh RDC-4300 **Price** £599 **Contact** Ricoh 01782 753355 (both PCW October '98)

MONITOR

Nokia Multigraph 447Za

No matter what you do, it's vital to get a good monitor with a clean, flicker-free display. In April 1998's group test we looked at 17in models and found Nokia's Multigraph 447Za to be the best in our entry-level category. Those with more to spend should check out the Mitsubishi (see panel, below) which was our Editor's Choice in the high-end section.

PCW April '98, p204



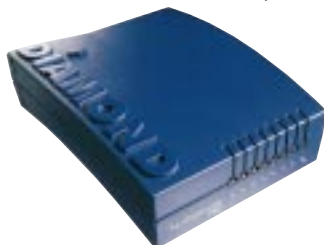
Price £440.63 **Contact** Nokia 01793 512809 **Also Recommended** Mitsubishi DiamondPro 700 **Price** £569.88 **Contact** Mitsubishi 01707 276100 (PCW April '98)

MODEM

Diamond SupraExpress 56e Pro

With ever-shifting goalposts, it makes sense to go for a modem which supports all the current standards, as well as simultaneous voice and data. Combine this with a roaring speed, superb ease of use and a low price, and you have the best-value modem around.

PCW December '98, p211



Price £75 **Contact** Diamond Multimedia 0118 944 4401 **Also Recommended** Zoom FaxModem 56Kx **Price** £89 **Contact** SCS Data Communications 01494 748904 (PCW December '98)

REMOVABLE STORAGE

Iomega Jaz 2Gb

With such different capacities, interfaces and prices there is no one removable storage device to satisfy all needs. With the large capacity of 2Gb, the Jaz drive from Iomega should act as both an overflow for your hard disk and a back-up device to store all your vital data. If you are looking for something smaller, try either the Iomega Zip, with a capacity of 100Mb or the 120Mb LS-120.

PCW August '98, p118



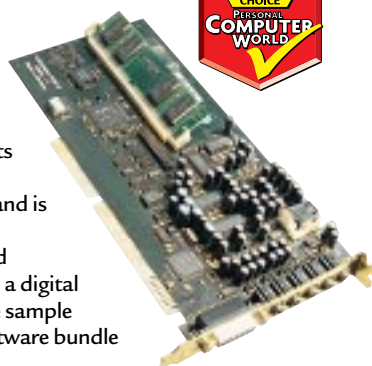
Price £270 **Contact** Iomega 0800 973194 **Also Recommended** Iomega Zip **Price** £70 **Contact** Iomega 0800 973194 • Imation SuperDisk 120 **Price** £105 **Contact** Imation 01344 402200 (both PCW August '98)

SOUND CARD

Terratec EWS64 S

A cut-down version of the heavyweight EWS64XL, Terratec's S model still boasts much of the same sampling and processing capabilities and is also a great games card with accelerated DirectSound and positional 3D audio. There's a digital I/O option and upgradeable sample memory, and the decent software bundle includes Cubasis AV.

PCW July '98, p210



Price £149.23 **Contact** Terratec 01600 772111 **Also Recommended** Creative Labs AWE 64 Gold **Price** £129.25 **Contact** Creative Labs 01245 265265 (PCW July '98)

GRAPHICS CARD

Diamond Viper V550

Sporting Riva's latest TNT chipset, the Viper V550 gives absolutely storming 3D performance, with a full 3D feature set and good image quality to boot. Its 16Mb of RAM gives ultra-high 2D desktop resolutions in standard Windows applications.

PCW November '98, p198



Price Approx £150 **Contact** Diamond Multimedia 0118 944 4400 **Also Recommended** MetaByte Wicked 3D **Price** £211.50 **Contact** Watford Electronics 01582 745555 (PCW November '98)

ACCOUNTING

Tas Books MYOB



Ideal for the owner-manager and good for bookkeepers too, Mind Your Own Business (MYOB) is our choice for accountancy software. We also recommend TAS Books which offers good bookkeeping and very powerful analysis.



► PCW June '98, p198

Price £229.13 **Contact** Bestware 01752 201901
Also Recommended TAS Books **Price** £116.33 **Contact** Megatech 01372 727274 (PCW June '98)

PERSONAL FINANCE

Microsoft Money Financial Suite 98

Microsoft Money Financial Suite 98 is our choice for personal finance. It offers online banking and updating facilities, plus Sage compatibility, all at a bargain price.



► PCW May '98, p196

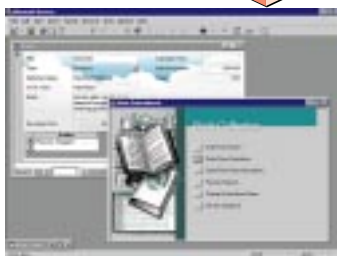
Price £49.99 **Contact** Microsoft 0345 002000
Also Recommended Quicken 98 **Price** £39.99 **Contact** Intuit 0181 990 5500 (PCW June '98)

DATABASE

Microsoft Access 97



The industry-standard database application is also the best. With its wizards, infamous Office Assistants and standard Windows interface, Access 97 is relatively easy for the novice. And its powerful relational features and VBA integration make it suitable for developers, too.



► PCW November '98, p220

Price £299 **Contact** Microsoft 0345 002000
Also Recommended FileMaker Pro 4 **Price** £169
Contact FileMaker 0845 603 9100 (PCW November '98)

DTP

Serif PagePlus 5



Inexpensive, easy to use and surprisingly well equipped, PagePlus 5 offers extremely capable desktop publishing. Those wanting the choice of professional publishers will have to fork out more for Quark XPress 4.0.



► PCW June '98, p132

Price £99.95 **Contact** Serif 0800 376 7070
Also Recommended Quark XPress 4 **Price** £1,169 **Contact** Quark 01483 454397 (PCW June '98)

IMAGE EDITING

Ulead PhotoExpress 2.0



Ulead has succeeded in removing the frustration factor often involved in getting to grips with digital pictures. PhotoExpress 2.0 is a pleasure to use, with a great, clearly structured interface and fast, in-depth tools. It has pre-set editing modes for the novice and custom adjustments for each editing function, so the power user will be kept happy, too.



► PCW January '99, p202

Price £34.95 **Contact** BIT 01420 83811 **Also Recommended** Adobe PhotoDeluxe 3 **Price** £45.83 **Contact** Adobe 0181 606 4001 • Paint Shop Pro 5 **Price** £69.95 **Contact** Digital Workshop 01295 258335 (both PCW Jan '99)

DRAWING

Corel CorelDraw 8

Not one of Corel's classic years, but this is still the Windows drawing package to own. Version 8 of the giant suite boasts better drawing and new interactive tools. Budget drawers should check out Micrografx Windows Draw 6.



► PCW October '98, p203

Price £464.13 **Contact** Corel 0800 581028 **Also Recommended** Adobe Illustrator **Price** £351.32 **Contact** Adobe 0181 606 4000 • Freehand **Price** £327.82 **Contact** Macromedia 01344 458600 (both PCW October '98)

INFORMATION MANAGERS

Starfish Sidekick 98



The best personal information manager boasts wide customisability as its greatest strength. For heavyweight contact management, look no further than Goldmine 4 (see panel, below).

► PCW August '98, p204



Price £39.99 **Contact** Starfish 0181 875 4455
Also Recommended Goldmine 4 **Price** £229 **Contact** AVG 0171 335 2222 (PCW August '98)

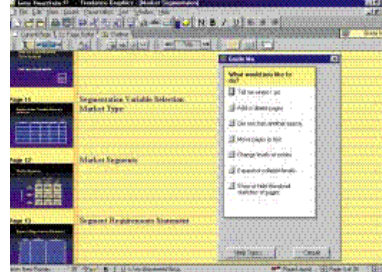
PRESENTATION GRAPHICS

Lotus Freelance 97



Our choice for electronic presentations. It may also come down to which office suite you own or are considering: as part of Microsoft Office 97, PowerPoint won't let you down.

► PCW March '98, p200



Price £49.35 **Contact** Lotus 01784 445808
Also Recommended MS PowerPoint 97 **Price** £325.47 **Contact** Microsoft 0345 002000 (PCW March '98)

REMOTE ACCESS

Traveling Software LapLink Tech

The high-end version of this extremely versatile product, LapLink Tech, has all the features of the standard version but also lets you print from the host machine on to a remote printer, or vice-versa, and talk to whoever is using the host machine. It includes anti-virus and hard-disk cloning utilities.

► PCW December '98, p233



Price £169.95 **Contact** Traveling Software 01344 383232
Also Recommended Symantec pcAnywhere **Price** £75.08 **Contact** Symantec 0171 616 5600 (PCW December '98)

WEB DESIGN

SoftQuad HotMetal Pro 4.0

An excellent all-rounder, HotMetal Pro 4 gets our thumbs up for web design. For a slick interface and Office 97 integration, Microsoft's FrontPage 98 is worth a look.

► PCW January '98, p196



Price £123.38 **Contact** SoftQuad 0181 387 4110 **Also Recommended** FrontPage 98 **Price** £116.30 **Contact** Microsoft 0345 002000 (PCW January '98) • Adobe PageMill 3.0 **Price** £92.83 **Contact** Adobe 0181 606 4001 (PCW May '98)

PROGRAMMING TOOL

Symantec Visual Café 2



Visual Café 2 is the most productive visual Java tool and has the option of native-code compilation for Windows. Windows developers should go for Borland Delphi 3 which, although more complex, comes into its own on larger applications.

► PCW April '98, p177



Price from £79 **Contact** Symantec 0171 616 5600
Also Recommended Borland Delphi 3 **Price** £95.18 **Contact** Borland 01734 320022 (PCW April '98)

ANTI-VIRUS

Norton AntiVirus 4.0



AntiVirus 4.0 is our choice for protecting your PC. It offers the best combination of features, ease of use and performance. Its virus detection rate is first class and there are free online updates for the life of the product.

► PCW April '98, p124



Price £49 **Contact** Symantec 0171 616 5600
Also Recommended Dr Solomon's HomeGuard **Price** £29 **Contact** Dr Solomon's 01296 318700 (PCW April '98) • F-Secure 4.0 AntiVirus **Price** £109.27 **Contact** Portcullis 0181 868 0098 (PCW April '98)

Faxback Service

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Updated every month, our easy-to-use Faxback service gives you instant access to a complete range of product reviews, features and workshops via your fax machine.

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Our service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. (The faxback service is not available outside the UK).

- 1 From the choices below, select the article(s) you wish to receive. Note the number of pages in the article.
- 2 Using the handset on your fax machine, dial 0660 600632. If you do not have a handset, press the fax machine's On Hook or Telephone button, then enter 0660 600632 on the keypad.
- 3 There will be a vocal introduction to the Faxback service which will ask you to enter the code of the article(s) you require. The voice will then ask you to press the Start / Send button on your fax machine.
- 4 The article(s) you have requested will now come through your fax machine.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

For the faxback service to work correctly, you must be referring to the current issue of *Personal Computer World*, and have your machine set to use tone dialling (you may need to switch your machine from "pulse" to "tone"). If you

have any problems with the *Personal Computer World* faxback service, please call 0171 412 3795. This helpline is open from 9:00am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday, and calls are charged at the standard rate.

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PCW Faxback number: 0660 600632

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