

# TOOLS of the TRADE

## Social Phones: Microsoft KIN and the Motorola DEVOUR

At a Communications Forum on Cell Phone Culture held at MIT, participants began with the basic premise: “No contemporary cultural artifact embodies the genius and the disruptive excess of capitalism as clearly as the cell phone.” That was five years ago. Last month, Microsoft, with only 13% of the market, decided to jump into the deep end of the pool with the KIN, Microsoft’s next-generation “social phone.” It will join the chase with the likes of Motorola’s DEVOUR with MOTOBLUR™, a cell phone operating system that organizes and expedites your texts, posts, tweets, and feeds. Both phones are part of a subspecies designed to serve those whose

social networking on the phone goes far beyond speech. Microsoft has partnered with Verizon Wireless, Vodaphone, and Sharp Corp., which designed the hardware. The head of Microsoft’s Entertainment Division said, “We built the KIN for people who live to be connected, share, express and relate to their friends and family.” Hence the name, I guess. KIN uses Loop as its home screen design—a collection of feeds from services such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter. There’s a section on the Loop interface called Spot, to which you can drag texts, videos, photos, websites, and other items you want to share. Others can join you at the spot.

[www.kin.com](http://www.kin.com)

The Motorola DEVOUR also is partnered with Verizon Wireless. It’s the second Android-powered phone from Motorola that will run on the Verizon Wireless 3G Network. The DEVOUR home screen is customizable, and you can load it up with feeds and widgets. With five screens visible, you have texts, e-mails, and social network messages arrive all in the same space. This simultaneity will allow you, as the Motorola ads pronounce, to



“Say it once, say it everywhere.” MOTOBLUR has Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter synced together and visible on the same screen. Running Google’s Android 1.6, the DEVOUR can deliver Gmail, GoogleMaps, GoogleTalk, Google Search by Voice, and YouTube. And there’s a direct connection encouraged with Android Market, which sells apps like Byte Squared (a spreadsheet program) and Pandora (the Internet radio program that tracks your musical genome). [www.motorola.com](http://www.motorola.com)

## MacBook Pro

Apple has updated its MacBook® Pro Line of laptops with faster processors, next-generation NVIDIA graphics, and improved battery life. The Pro Line family includes 13-inch, 15-inch, and

17-inch monitors. About three hours have been added to the battery lives, with the 13-inch boosted to 10 hours on its built-in battery and the 15- and 17-inch models delivering eight to nine hours on a single charge. The faster processors include Intel Core 2 Duo processors in the 13-inch model, and the 15- and 17-inch versions are up to 50% faster than the older systems—up from 2.66 GHz to 3.06 GHz for intensive dual-core processing, and up to 3.33 GHz for single-core tasks. The graphics processors on the large screens are more than twice as fast as the older NVIDIA cards, and the 13-inch also features an NVIDIA GeForce 320M, which Apple touts as the fastest integrated graphics processor on the market. And along with the increased processing speeds and impressive graphics, each of the models is enclosed in an elegant housing that’s carved from a single block of aluminum. On-board storage is 250GB, 320GB, and 500GB, respectively, for the three models. [www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)

## Casio

Casio America announced its new Green Slim Projector line



# TECH FORUM

## PART 2 – LAUNCHING Joomla!, Drupal, and WordPress

By Michael Castelluccio, Editor

Last month we looked at the need for secondary websites and blogs at times and in places where funding is scarce. The inexpensive alternatives to Web teams and big budgets that we came up with included WCMS (Web Content Management Systems) and blog development offerings. The solutions included WordPress for blogs and Joomla! and Drupal for WCMS.

### WHO, ME?

Whether you've been picked because you're in a small shop and get tagged since it's assumed you know more about computer stuff—after all, you spend all day massaging spreadsheets—or you're in a larger company setting and often get asked to draft the financial proposals for small projects like these, let's climb a decision tree.

**Cost.** You can set up and run a WordPress blog for free. Either run it on the WordPress servers, or set it up on your own hardware with updates to the program arranged to come from the WordPress people. You, or someone else in-house, will supply and post the content for your blog.

Joomla! and Drupal take a little more to set up, but not much. You can run your website either on a variety of inexpensive services or the conventional ISPs (Internet Service Providers) that offer graduated menus of service for businesses and individuals. The cheap or free hosting for these kinds of websites usually requires some of your page for their advertising, so be sure to consider that. Or, as with a blog, you can run the website on your own company servers.

**Skills Needed.** All three of these programs can be managed by people who know word processing and are

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of mercury-free, high-brightness projectors at this year's Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas. The projectors have a unique hybrid light source that replaces conventional mercury lamps. The "solid-state" light source combines two lasers and LED technology for a long-lasting (up to 20,000 hours), economical, earth-friendly projection device. The lamp-free projectors are designed for business and classrooms and are capable of images up to 100 inches. Now Casio has launched a new website devoted to the environmentally responsible projectors at [www.GreenSlimProjector.com](http://www.GreenSlimProjector.com).

The site will feature 3D interactive tours of the projectors with plans for adding virtual environ-

ments that allow visitors to demo the projector in different circumstances. Besides the new lamp technology, these projectors have wireless connectivity that will accept input from four laptops simultaneously. A USB port on the projector will accept input from a thumb drive that contains the presentations after they have been converted by the convertor software, included with the projectors. The EZ FA Convertor software will reformat PowerPoint, Excel, Word, and PDF documents so you can take them along and leave the laptop home. Specifications for each of the models are available at the site, and you can download the manuals for further information.





willing to spend a little time learning the programs' menus and controls. WordPress is the easiest, but the others are



manageable.

Although the initial training is available on the



home pages of each of these services, I would suggest the purchase of a good manual and a few hours with the Lynda.com video courses for these programs. For \$25 a

month, you can take as many courses as Lynda.com offers, and there are several offerings for each of these programs. In fact, you might want to ante up the \$25 and take the courses beforehand to see if you have a preference or the motivation to set up your own blog or website—they're all videos, and the trainers are good. (At [www.Lynda.com](http://www.Lynda.com) you can try a few sample lessons in each course free before you sign up.)

Support for these sites is available online in the user forums and blogs of those who have developed the programs and those who use them. The Joomla! help site provides examples of how these communities work—<http://help.joomla.org>. Usually, specific problems are searchable, or you can post a question to a forum and get responses fairly quickly. Just keep in mind, though, that you won't be calling Eddie from IT to come over and fix what's going on. A good basic rule to follow is: Keep the site simple, and there's less to break or fix.

**Blog or Website.** We touched on this last month. Blogs and websites can be indistinguishable once online, but if your site will be relying on a database, you'll be better off with one of the WCMSs. If you aren't sure, you might want to start with a WordPress presence because it's so much easier to launch and manage. You can always shut off your blog and shift your content to a Joomla! or Drupal website if you need more flexibility or power. As we mentioned last time, a blog usually performs better as a dialogue, and the content of a website resembles a monologue pushed out to readers. Check out the variety of uses for blogs at <http://technorati.com/blogs/directory>, and see if what you're planning shows up in the examples.

### PUSH THE BUTTON

In a nutshell, here are the first steps for setting up a blog or WCMS site.

**WordPress.** Go to [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com). Click the Sign Up Now button at the top right of the page. Fill out the form with your blog's name and password, and then click "Gimme a Blog." That's it—you now have a blog. Answer the confirming e-mail they send you to activate the account. Log in, and you'll be at the Dashboard, from which you add content and make all changes. Set the privacy setting so the world and the search engines can see it, or create the list of people, say from your workgroup, who will be the only ones to see it, or check Private, and wait until you have it set up and completed before anyone else can see it. Now run the tutorials at Lynda.com and/or read the manual.

**Joomla! and Drupal.** For these programs, the content is stored in a database instead of HTML files, so you need a database set up to get the programs running. This creates a two-step process, during which you'll set up a server on your own computer with a free copy of WAMP or MAMP (Windows or Macintosh) server. It's available at [www.wampserver.com](http://www.wampserver.com), and it will load copies of Apache, MySQL, and PHP software in a single package on your computer. Then you download the latest version of Joomla! or Drupal at [www.joomla.com](http://www.joomla.com) or [www.drupal.com](http://www.drupal.com) and move the program onto your new local Web server. It's many more steps than WordPress, but, like that system, you aren't dealing with code or programming languages. When you finish the installation, you can log on to the back end of your new website and select what you want to do from the icons (Joomla!) or lists (Drupal) displayed on the page. For both programs, click on the new content to be taken to a word-processor-like panel where you will be composing in English, not in code.

If the process seems complicated, try this perspective experiment first. Go to <http://lawoftheland.wordpress.com> (an elegant WordPress legal blog that covers land use) or [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com). Right-click on the page, and then select View Page Source. Scroll through the new window that opens up. The thousand lines of code you're looking at aren't the formatting shadows of the pages—the colorful Web pages are actually the shadows of these drifting accumulations of code. Creating Web pages that way, writing line by line, is complicated. WordPress, Joomla!, and Drupal are far easier, cheaper, and, when they become familiar environments, much more fun. **SF**