TOOLS ‹‹‹‹‹‹
›››››› of the TRADE

Dell XPS 13 Ultrabook

Now that Dell has entered the ultrabook arena it's experiencing some difficulty keeping up with the demand. Ultrabooks are laptops with the profile of the classic Macbook Air—lightweight and super thin. The Dell XPS 13 is about a quarter-inch thick at its thinnest point and 0.71" at its thickest. The body is composed of silver machined aluminum with a carbon fiber composite base and magnesium palm rest. The gesture-enabled touchpad is glass, and the screen is bonded Corning Gorilla Glass. It weighs just under three pounds, and its footprint is approximately the same as a conventional 11-inch laptop despite its 13.3" HD screen. The processor is a 2nd

Generation Intel Core (1.60 or 1.70 GHz) with Intel Rapid Start Technology that will boot the system in as little as eight seconds, or in just one second if the ultrabook is in sleep mode. While the XPS 13 is in sleep mode, Intel Smart Connect Technology will use your Wi-Fi connection to automatically update your e-mail, work contacts, favorite apps, and social networks so that when you open the lid, everything is current. As with most Dells, the XPS 13 is available in several configurations. Complete specs and pricing at www.dell.com.

Samsung Galaxy S111

The Samsung Galaxy S111 has a large, brilliant 4.8-inch HD Super AMOLED screen and a number of intelligent enhancements that some say will qualify it as an iPhone killer. The larger screen format might become a future standard as recent rumors about screen
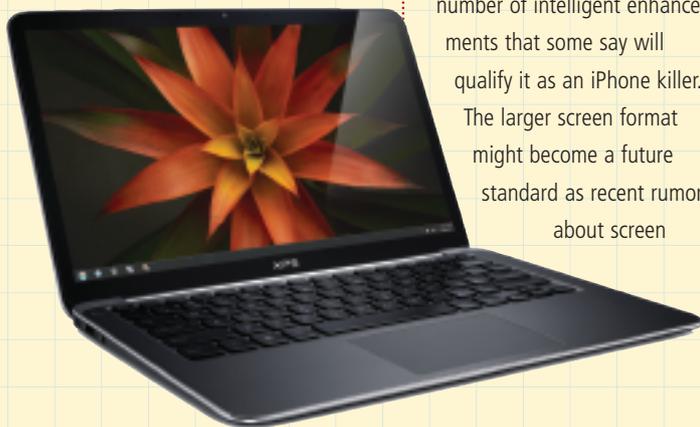
orders from Apple for its iPhone 5 purport also to be for an increased size—from 3.5" diagonal on the iPhone 4 to at least 4" on the next model. The smart features previewed by Samsung for the Galaxy S111 include smart stay—the screen doesn't go to sleep until you stop looking at it—and smart alert, which Samsung claims will let you know you have missed calls or messages when you've been away from your phone by way of a vibrating nudge. With S Voice, the Galaxy accepts spoken commands to wake up, answer, and even take a photo. S Beam allows two Samsung Galaxy SIIIs back-to-back to transfer pictures, music, videos, and more. It has true multitasking that will let you watch a video while you're e-mailing, and the best photo function will let you take a burst of eight

photos in a continuous scene to edit later to choose the best ones. www.samsung.com/global/galaxys3/index.html

Change-Pro for Excel

Litéra produces applications that provide content life-cycle management for creating, coordinating, and auditing changes throughout a document's collaborative processing. The Change-Pro for Excel is designed specifically to let you track every change made to your spreadsheets, including values, formulas, and row and column edits, while maintaining all layout aspects of the original document. You can even see changes to formulas that didn't result in changes in values. The record of changes, when and by whom, is readily accessible in the control panel, which has three scrolling panels—one displays the original, another the modified document, and the third, the redlined version. You have control over the formatting so you can decide how changes should be shown—for example, choose to use cell highlighting or a text color change to depict a deletion or addition. Output choices

Cirrus-lined
File Cabinets

By Michael Castelluccio, Editor

The piece of computer hardware that has evolved the most is memory—storage memory. Unlike RAM, stored memory is still there when you shut down the computer—it's recorded on the concentric rings of the platter of your hard drive or removable flash drive.

When you think of the progress made from the first floppies—those micro-thin five-inch LPs that spun inside floppy plastic sleeves—to the installed flat bricks of flash memory that have no moving parts, the journey from the days of the IBM PC Jr. has been a long-distance trek. Today, memory has taken the last step away from the computer's hardware system: out of the computer, out the window, and into the clouds.

The idea of cloud computing is actually as old as e-mail and external networks. What's new are the personal storage lockers out there that will open when you send a request or a file from your phone, laptop, tablet, desktop, or TV. Or even someone else's computer.

But why would you need another network to send your work or photos to when you have a hard drive, a network at work, and that jangling necklace of USB drives? Perhaps an apocryphal tale from the founder of Dropbox will help answer the question. In a recent interview in MIT's *Technology Review*, Drew Houston told of his own epiphany: "I went down to Boston's South Station to ride the Chinatown bus to New York. I was thrilled to open my laptop and have four hours where I could finally get some work done. But I had that sinking feeling that something was wrong, and I started feeling in my back pocket for my thumb drive, and, of course, I could just see it sitting on my desk at home." On that bus ride, Houston started working on some code in Python to address his problem. The gestation of Dropbox had begun.

Houston was a student at MIT and was able to access Athena at school. It was a campus network that let you sit down "at any of the thousands of workstations and your

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include the conversion of any Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, including the redlined version, to a PDF file, or you can e-mail changes with attachments of the original, modified, and/or redline in multiple formats, including a ZIP package of the attachments. Change-Pro is compatible with Windows 2000, XP, 2003, VISTA, and above and Office 2000, XP, 2003, 2007, and above. More information and a demo are available at www.litera.com/change-pro_for_excel.aspx.

Logitech Solar Keyboard Folio

It's a protective case with a keyboard that doesn't require batteries—it recharges in sunlight and any other light. When the keyboard is fully charged, it will last for up to two years based on an average use of two hours per day. The connection to the tablet is via Bluetooth 3.0, and the Folio fits the iPad 2 and the third-generation iPad. The slim, book-style case has two stand positions that provide two viewing angles—working and media. The first open position fully exposes the keyboard. The second, at a lower angle, leaves the first keyboard row available so you can use its one-touch media playback controls for play, pause, and to change volume. The Folio automatically wakes up the iPad when you open it and reverts to standby when you close it. Without the tablet, the Folio weighs 460 grams (16.2 ounces).
www.logitech.com

whole environment follow[ed] you around." You never thought about "backing anything up because the network was ubiquitous and it was taken care of for you."

That's what Houston wanted to design into his Dropbox offering.

Ever lose a thumb drive that had important data or have a laptop stolen or crash? You might want to look into some of the personal cloud offerings. There are many, but we'll look at just a few.

Here are a few considerations that might guide you. All of the services offer free space, and all have premium upgrades. Check the prices and try to think ahead to what you'll need. It's better to get started and stay with a program that becomes second nature through use. If the size of the uploads that are allowable is important to you, look at that specification. If you're going to frequently upload large files, such as movies, find a solution that will allow those. Check the operating systems and browsers your choice can handle. Some cloud products limit themselves to serving particular platforms and devices, which, in the case of Apple's iCloud, can be a plus for someone who prefers Apple computer hardware and phones. Size, compatibility, and ease of use should be your beginning benchmarks. The entry level on all of these is free—most require just a valid e-mail address—so you can download them and try them out on your computer, phone, and tablet.

Dropbox (www.dropbox.com)
Popular, easy-to-use service that has a low entry that you can upgrade free to 16GB at 500MB increments for every friend who joins at your invitation. Maximum upload file size is 300MB via browser and no limit from your desktop. Compatible with Windows, Mac, Linux, browsers, iOS, Android, and BlackBerry. Can be set up for automatic sync.

Amazon Cloud Drive
(www.amazon.com/clouddrive/learnmore)
If you have an Amazon account, you have access to Cloud Drive. No maximum on file uploads. The storage is compatible via browser with the added advantage of free storage of any MP3s bought through the Amazon store—these don't count against your base 5GB limit. Doesn't have automatic sync.

Google Drive (www.drive.google.com)
This is the youngest of all the major offerings. Released two months ago, there still might be a delay for those signing up. It will augment the Google Docs space with room for pho-

PERSONAL CLOUD STORAGE	FREE SPACE	UPGRADE	DATE RELEASED
Dropbox	2GB	100GB	Sept 2008
Amazon Cloud Drive	5GB	1,000GB	March 2011
Google Drive	5GB	16TB	April 2012
SkyDrive	7GB	125GB	Aug 2007
iCloud	5GB	55GB	March 2012
SugarSync	5GB	500GB	March 2008
Evernote	60MB monthly upload limit	1GB monthly upload limit	June 2008

tos and video. Google Drive is compatible with Web, Android app—iOS apps for phone and tablet are promised to follow soon. Has automatic sync.

SkyDrive
(http://windows.microsoft.com/en-HK/skydrive/home)
Microsoft's cloud service has been around since 2007 and has recently been updated. The basic free limit is now 7GB. It's compatible with Windows, Mac, Web, and mobile access. Has automatic sync.

iCloud (www.icloud.com)
The service is already enabled on iOS 5 devices, and it's compatible with iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad, Mac OSX Lion, and browsers. The maximum file upload size is 25MB for the free 5GB version and 250MB for the paid upgrade. Will back up your iPad or iPhone and all your iTunes purchases as well as other documents and media files. You can enable automatic sync.

SugarSync (www.sugarsync.com)
Very popular cloud service with a free 5GB account that has no maximum file size for uploads. It's compatible with Windows, Mac, iOS, Android, BlackBerry, Symbian, Windows Mobile, and Outlook. It backs up automatically, and the upgrades include up to 500GB additional space.

Evernote (www.evernote.com)
One of the most popular apps on the iPad, this service offers free space for up to 60MB uploads per month or 1GB monthly maximum for an additional $5 a month. It has a great interface and sorting system, and it's compatible with Windows, Mac, Android, BlackBerry, iOS, Palm, Web, and Windows Phone. Files can be automatically synced. Evernote is less for heavy-duty storage and more for notes and ongoing work that can be picked up on all your devices. **SF**