

The Colossus machines were early computing devices used by British codebreakers to read encrypted German messages during World War II. Colossus was an early electronic digital computer. Colossus was designed by engineer Tommy Flowers at the Post Office Research Station, Dollis Hill. The prototype, Colossus Mark I, was operational at Bletchley Park in February 1944. An improved Colossus Mark II was first installed in June 1944, and ten Colossi had been constructed by the end of the war. The Colossus computers were used to help decipher teleprinter messages which had been encrypted using the Lorenz SZ40/42 machine.



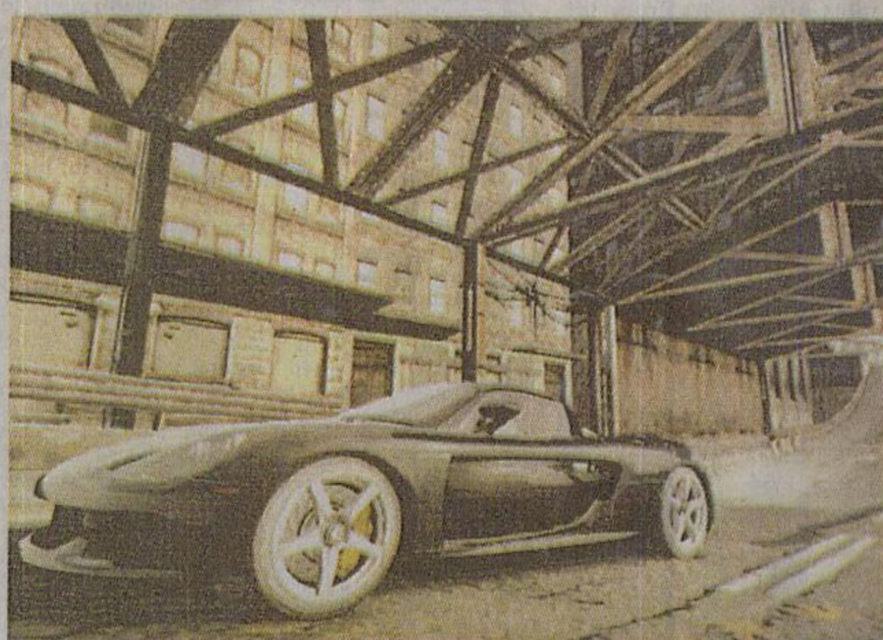
TECH FOCUS

War of the consoles

Xbox-360 and PS3 go head to head



A boxing game designed by EA Sports, left, that gives vivid details like other PS3 games is likely to hit the market along with the console sometime in April. While, in right, a racing game being played on Xbox 360 shows how high-definition its graphics is.



SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

THIS will undoubtedly be one of the best years for gamers all over the world. Why, you ask? Well, simply because gamers can now buy Xbox 360 and Playstation 3, hitting the market in the first quarter of 2006. Not to mention the already established gaming consoles like Xbox, Gamecube, Playstation 2, PSP and others.

Game developers like Electronic Arts, EA games, Microsoft game studios, Activision, Square Enix and others are already working overtime to develop state-of-the-art games for the latest craze - Xbox 360.

In the USA alone, 400,000 units were sold since the con-

sole's launch on November 22 last year. The overwhelming and ever-growing demand of gamers was appeased by the release of the console over the month of December in USA, Canada, Puerto Rico, Europe and Japan.

For other countries in the waiting list will have to wait till February and March this year, the scheduled date for Xbox 360 launch. But according to rumours, these dates may very well be delayed due to the supply shortage.

This overwhelming demand for this console does not come as a surprise. Microsoft had been pushing hard to market the product's unique feature, which, as the name suggests, allows gamers to have a 360 degree gameplay.

The console has 3 different Central processing units, each with a speed of 3.2 Ghz. A 500 Mhz ATI graphics processor enables the console to facilitate four times more polygons and pixels per second than the original Xbox console.

The console also has a 512 MB Random Access Memory, High definition 16:9 wide-screen viewing ratio and a 20 GB detachable hard disk drive.

Sound good? Wait, there's more! The console is wireless and can easily detect up to four lightweight controllers without any extra perip

herals or plug-n-play hassle. Also, the console can support DVDs, CDs, DVD-ROMS, DVD R/RW, MP3, and also comes with three USB ports, through which gamers can add accessories.

The Xbox Live Marketplace, moreover, allows Xbox 360 owners are always connected through their internet connections. No wonder, Xbox Live, the online console gaming service, currently has 2 million+ users.

Although these features gives Xbox an air of invincibility in the gaming market, Playstation 3 (PS3), may very well be all this and more.

Rumours surrounding PS3 launch date, have already spread through the chatrooms, TV, net and print media gamer magazines. But gamers may expect the PS3 out by April this year.

Although PS3's Nvidia graphics processor may not be up to par with Xbox 360's ATI, 256 MB XDR system and video memory, it will have 550 Mhz graphics speed and can support up to 7 bluetooth controllers.

Despite keeping the hard disk drive specification under wraps, Sony has made sure PS3's external appearance is sleeker than the Xbox 360, giving it greater market pull, with an additional blu-ray drive compared to Xbox-360's DVD drive.

However, PS3 players can also run PS2 titles, edging out Xbox-360 in the 2006 gaming war.

PS3 will also have a 25.6 GB/sec main memory bandwidth, compared to Xbox 360's 22.4 GB/s bandwidth.

Another crucial factor that might incline gamers towards PS3 is the price as Xbox is currently priced at US\$ 342, while speculations are that PS3 may be sold at PS2 price range of

around US\$ 300.

Disturbing reports have also been circulated that some Xbox 360 units crashed after its launch, which has cautioned Sony into making all its units crash-proof before the PS3 launch.

Gamers would also be considering the game contents and quality of each game title released through each of these boxes. Currently, Xbox 360 games like Call of Duty 2, Final Fantasy VI, Dead or Alive 4 and others. The gameplay and details are awesome and larger than life.

PS3 games would surely have to work hard to keep up. But the race is not over yet. Nintendo, the other gaming giant, has also announced the launch of its latest gaming console, the Nintendo Revolution (NR).

Not much is known about the console as of yet, but it has been reported that the long line of games, released on earlier consoles of Nintendo can all be played on this.

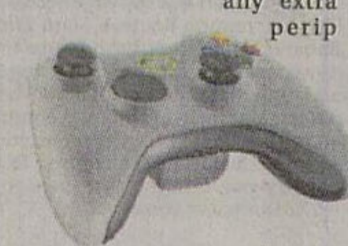
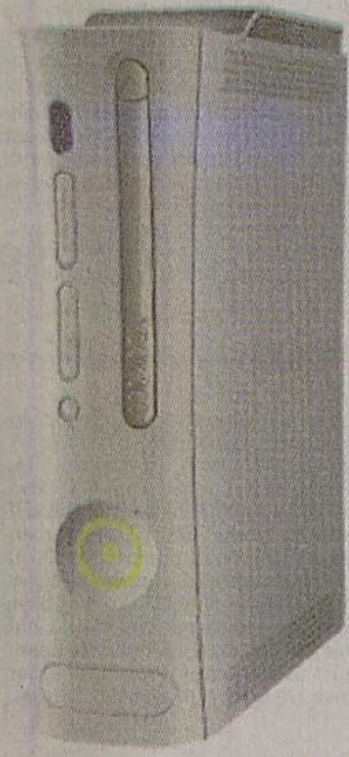
The console will be able to load Gamecube discs directly, but Nintendo will offer a broadband line service from which gamers

can download Nintendo Entertainment system games.

There would also be a wand pointing control-system system, which can detect movements of all sorts.

There are also rumours that the console will have a giant holographic screen, which will enable gamers to play games in 3D. The controller may also provide inertia effects to improve gameplay.

Now which next generation console will win the war is yet to be seen, as the world awaits the launch of the next two consoles after the Xbox 360. But it is certain, whichever console it is, the gamers would be the ultimate winner, no matter what.



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TECH NEWS

Intel creates 'new norms' for mobile work and play

STARTECH DESK

INTEL Corporation unveiled the Intel Centrino Duo mobile technology, designed in India, for a new generation of laptops on January 10 in Mumbai, says a press release. The new platform represents a new brand aimed at advancing the emerging digital lifestyle at home, work, and on the go. It delivers breakthrough capabilities to make entertainment truly mobile for people on the go and improves responsiveness and efficiency of mobile workers.

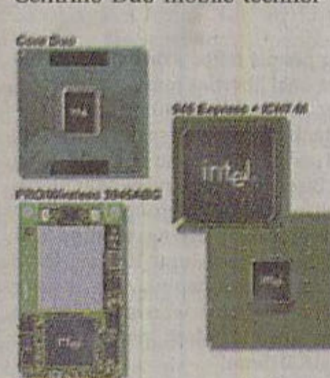
Developed at the Intel India Development Center by a 500 strong team, the Intel Centrino Duo mobile technology has been designed to meet the increasing global need for smaller form factors. Under this project, which started in June 2004, the team has achieved smaller form factor, more battery life and less power consumption. South Asia's contribution in developing this innovative technology for global use is a path breaking effort.

"Intel is focused on creating an innovative mobile computing platform that ushers in a new era of working, playing and living," said Anand Chandrasekhar, vice president, director, Sales and Marketing Group, Intel Corporation. "The Intel Centrino Duo mobile technology platform developed in India, creates a 'new normal' for work and play, taking advantage of a new generation of uses and experiences."

The Intel Centrino Duo mobile technology is powered by the Intel Core Duo processor (formerly codenamed

"Yonah"), Intel's new, mobile dual-core processor manufactured using the company's leading 65nm process technology. It boasts a unique design with two processors in a package roughly the size of a large postage stamp, coupling new levels of performance with breakthrough energy-efficiency to inspire innovative laptop and PC designs.

Intel Platform on the Go Whether for the family taking movies, music and games on vacation, or a business traveler always on the move, Intel Centrino Duo mobile technol-



ogy delivers dramatic performance improvements, while also reducing component power up to 28 percent over previous generations. The result enables increased system responsiveness and improved battery life in a wide variety of innovative laptop designs.

As an on-the-go, all-in-one entertainment device, Centrino Duo mobile technology features enhanced three-dimensional graphics (up to two times previous generations), and the option to view high-definition (HD) TV. When

enabled with Intel High Definition Audio, it also features up to 7.1 surround sound with support for Dolby Digital. Using laptops based on Centrino Duo mobile technology, people can immerse themselves more completely in music, games and HD movies and TV, whether in the car, a coffee shop or on the plane.

Platform components of Centrino Duo mobile technology are 30 percent smaller than the previous generation, enabling a wide variety of laptop sizes and innovative designs. The components also enable a 1.5 watt-average platform power savings relative to previous generations, making it more energy efficient.

The Centrino Duo mobile technology platform is comprised of the Intel Core Duo Processor with dual-core processing and the mobile Intel 945 Express Chipset family.

The platform also includes the Intel PRO/Wireless 3945ABG Network Connection, Intel's next-generation wireless network connection advancing WLAN performance of standard Wi-Fi networks, and supports enhanced features that make applications more aware, connected, and responsive, ultimately delivering a better mobile experience.

Platform Component Pricing The Intel Core Duo processors T2300, T2400, T2500 and T2600 are priced at US\$241, US\$294, US\$423 and US\$637 respectively, in 1,000-unit quantities. For information on platform component pricing and availability, one may visit www.intel.com/intel/finance/pricelist/.

TECH NEWS

Kingston launches microSD to support new Smartphones

STARTECH DESK

KINGSTON Technology Company, Inc. announced its major support of the growing multifunction mobile or "Smartphone" market with the release of microSD expansion memory cards as well as larger capacity miniSD and MMCmobile cards on January 6, says a press release.

"New multifunction mobile handsets are just starting to touch the market and Kingston is ready with multiple formats of expansion memory to support these advanced wireless devices," said Dave Lee, digital media product manager, APAC Business Division, Kingston. "There are numerous expansion card platforms and therefore, many choices. Consumers need a trusted resource to help them optimise their Smartphones and they can count on Kingston to provide the necessary storage for mobile devices to run better and access files quickly and easily whether it's data, images, music or video," continued Dave.

"You can't have too much storage with all the advanced services and features available to mobile users nowadays. And with many handsets including Smartphones continuing to measure onboard memory in the tens of megabytes, expansion memory continues to be an invaluable tool to get the most out of these devices," said James Alan Miller, managing editor, PDASmart/Smart PhoneToday.

New Offering: microSD Kingston's new microSD cards ship bundled with an SD adapter for use as a full-size SD card. To protect against accidental data loss, the adapter has a built-in write-protect switch. The 256-MB card is the first offering in the microSD product line, with larger capacities to follow.

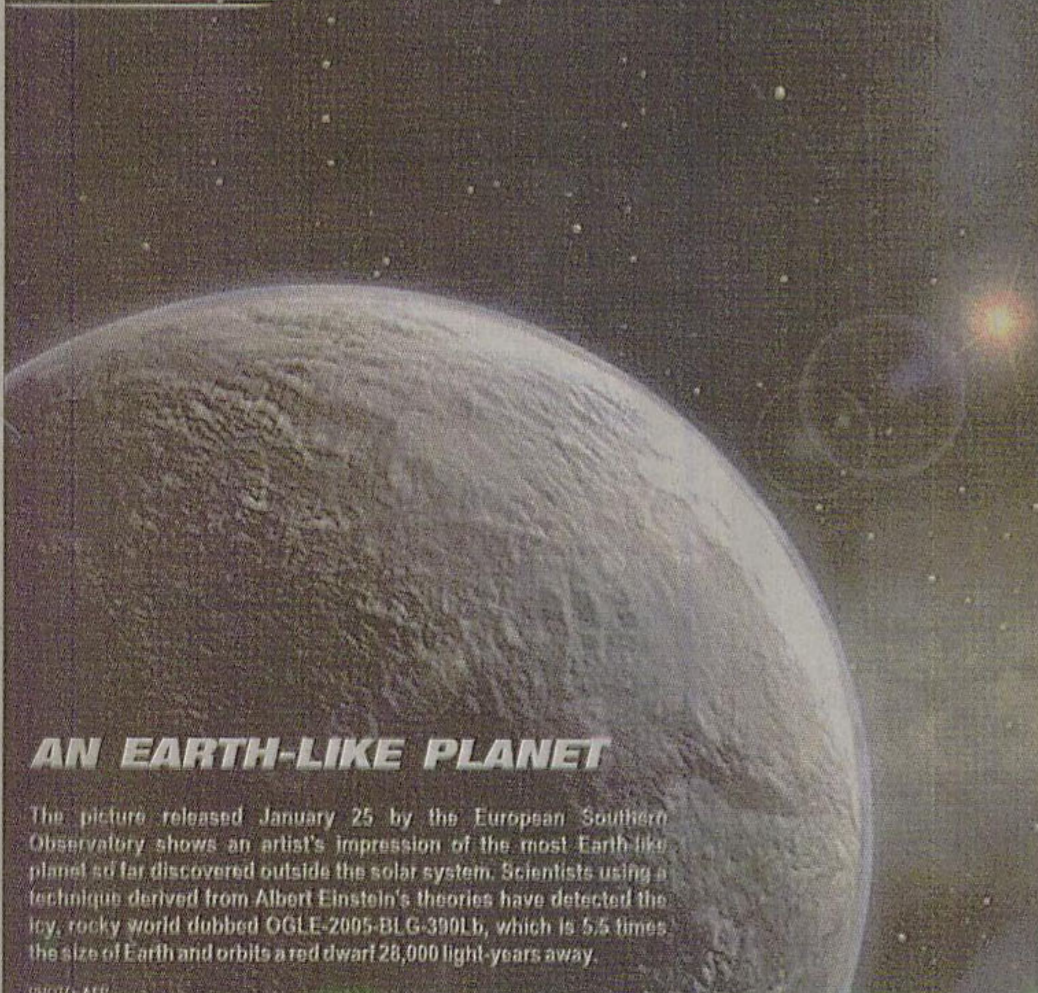
Bigger Capacities: 1-GB MMCmobile, miniSD Cards Anticipating the need for greater storage capabilities as new multifunction phones emerge, Kingston is offering 1-



GB versions of both its MMCmobile and miniSD cards. The 1-GB cards will provide increased storage capacity for new feature-rich multifunction mobile devices.

Given the myriad of expansion memory formats selected by wireless handset makers, Kingston is offering a variety of mobile memory solutions, ranging from miniSD, microSD, and MMCmobile cards, in addition to the standard SD and MMC cards currently used for expansion memory purposes in some multifunction cellular phones. As new advanced wireless devices are introduced, Kingston will produce larger capacity mobile memory solutions to support them.

PHOTO



AN EARTH-LIKE PLANET

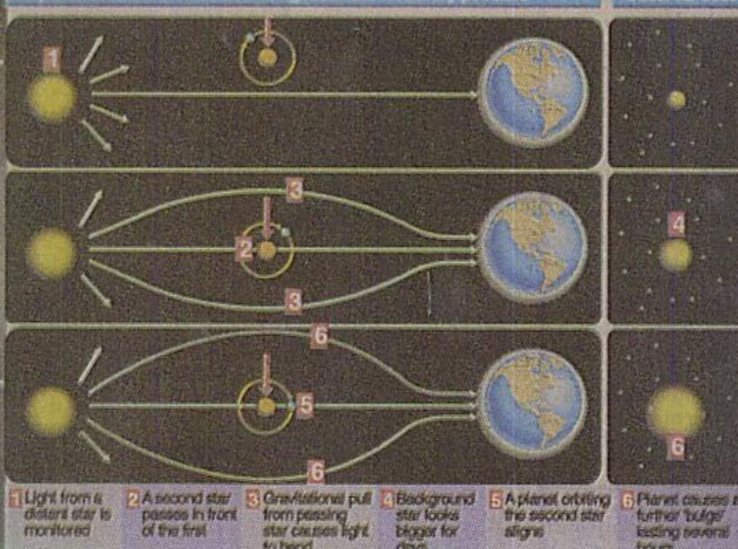
The picture released January 25 by the European Southern Observatory shows an artist's impression of the most Earth-like planet so far discovered outside the solar system. Scientists using a technique derived from Albert Einstein's theories have detected the icy, rocky world dubbed OGLE-2005-BLG-390Lb, which is 5.5 times the size of Earth and orbits a red dwarf 28,000 light-years away.

Ogling the planets

An international team of scientists has discovered a new planet outside the solar system, raising the possibility that many other earth-like planets exist in the universe

<p>Planet name: OGLE-2005-BLG-390Lb</p> <p>Distance from Earth: 28,000 light years</p> <p>Distance from its star: 390 million km</p> <p>Orbit: Around 10 earth years</p> <p>Temperature: Around -220°C</p> <p>Mass: 5.5 times mass of Earth</p> <p><i>Smallest exoplanet discovered</i></p>	<p>OGLE: Optical Gravitational Lensing Experiment.</p> <p>Discovery team: Astrophysical Institute of Paris</p> <p>Number: 73 scientists</p> <p>Leader: Jean-Pierre Beaulieu</p> <p>Micro-lensing was predicted by Albert Einstein in 1912</p>
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A phenomenon called microlensing made the discovery possible. **Observer sees**



AKTEL TELE-INFO SERVICE

Accessing a GSM network:

In order to gain access to GSM services, a user needs three things: A subscription with a mobile phone operator: This is usually either a Pay As You Go (Pre-Paid) arrangement, where all GSM services are paid for in advance, or a Pay Monthly (Post-Paid) option where a bill is issued each month for line rental, normally paid for a month in advance, and for services used in the previous month. A mobile phone: It is GSM compliant and operates at the same frequency as the operator. Most phone companies sell phones from third-party manufacturers. A SIM card: This is issued by the operator once the subscription is

granted. The card comes pre-programmed with the subscriber's phone "identity" and will be used to store personal information (like contact numbers of friends and family). Accessing the Network: After subscribers sign up, information about their phone's identity and what services they are allowed to access are stored in a "SIM record" in the Home Location Register (HLR) which is used to answer queries like, "where on the network is the device that associated with this phone number?" and "what services is this subscriber paying for?" Once the SIM card is loaded into the phone and it is powered on, it will

search for the nearest mobile phone mast, also known as Base Transceiver Station or BTS. If a mast can be successfully contacted, then there is said to be coverage in the area. Stationary phones are always connected to the same part of the phone network, but mobile phones can "visit" any part of the network, whether across town or in another country via a foreign provider. Each geographic area has a database called the Visitors Location Register (VLR), which contains details of all the local mobiles. Whenever a phone attaches, or visits a new area, the Visitors Location Register must contact the Home Location Register.

To know more about GSM, keep an eye on next week's content on the same page. AKTEL aims to share its expertise and knowledge of developments in the GSM World with the people of Bangladesh. If you have any queries or comments regarding GSM, please send them to AKTEL Tele-Info Service, c/o G3 Communication Ltd, House 20/C, Road 26, Gulshan-1, Dhaka 1212. AKTEL reserves the right to amend, modify or change, rules and regulations of this program at any time. AKTEL - Clearly ahead in providing you telecommunication solutions.