TECHVIEW

IT industries swiftly moving toward 'Green Computing'

NAHID AKHTER

IN recent times, the term 'going green' has evolved to mean anything but 'becoming jealous'. The word 'green' today is not just used in conjunction with agriculture, but with other industries too. In recent years, companies in the computer industry have come to realize that going green is in their best interest, both in terms of public relations and reduced costs. Yes, there's a nomenclature for such a move. It's called 'Green Computing'- the study and practice of efficient and eco-friendly computing resources.

As machines get more powerful, requiring more cooling and therefore more electricity, the trend toward increased energy use is likely to continue. The huge amount of computers manufactured worldwide has a direct impact on the environment, and scientists are conducting numerous studies

program that centers on boosting more energy-efficient design in its products. Apple recently noted that it would be greening up its operations by removing toxic chemicals such as lead and mercury from its products and more aggressively recycling old products.

VIA Technologies, a Taiwanese company that manufactures motherboard chipsets, CPUs, and other computer hardware, introduced their initiative for "green computing" in 2001. Through this, they have been focusing on power efficiency throughout the design and manufacturing process of their products. Their environmentally friendly products are manufactured using various clean-computing methods, and the company has taken it up as a challenge to educate markets on the benefits of green computing for the sake of the

trees per processor is represented by VIA's TreeMark rating system.

In addition, VIA promotes the use of alternative energy sources such as solar power, so power plants wouldn't need to burn as much fossil fuels, reducing the amount of energy used.

Dell is a good example of a company with a green image, known for its free worldwide product-recycling program. Dell's Plant a Tree for Me project allows customers to offset their carbon emissions by paying an extra $2 to $4, depending on the product purchased. AMD, a global microprocessor manufacturer, is also working toward reducing energy consumption in its products, cutting back on hazardous waste and reducing its eco-impact. The company's use of silicon-on-insulator (SOI) technology in its manufacturing, and strained silicon capping films on transistors (known as "dual stress

products such as Auto Shutdown Manager, Data Synergy PowerMAN, Faronics Power Save, 1E NightWatchman, and Greentrac among others.

In many offices, PC's are only used for basic tasks such as writing letters and other administration, but they are built and powered to do much more. Therefore a lot of the computer power is permanently being wasted, as it is never needed for such basic tasks. There are programs and freeware tools available online, such as RMClock and Prime95 which allow the user to manually adjust the voltages supplied to the CPU, reducing both the amount of heat produced and electricity consumed. This process is called 'undervolting'. By doing this, you can feed your CPU less energy while still have it running at 100%. It not only makes your PC more energy efficient, but also extends your laptop battery

in order to reduce this negative impact. This may include prospects of installing energy-efficient cooling systems, addressing e-waste by promoting recyclability or biodegradability of defunct products and factory waste, lowering energy consumption and using alternative non-hazardous materials in the products' manufacturing process.

In 1992, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency launched Energy Star, a voluntary labeling program which was designed to promote and recognize energy-efficiency in monitors, climate control equipment, and other technologies. This resulted in the widespread adoption of sleep mode among consumer electronics. The term "green computing" was probably coined shortly after the Energy Star program began. Concurrently, the Swedish organization TCO Development launched the TCO Certification program to promote low magnetic and electrical emissions from CRT-based computer displays; this program was later expanded to include criteria on energy consumption, ergonomics, and the use of hazardous materials during manufacture.

Numerous companies have already joined the green bandwagon. HP already has a Green Technologies

environment, as well as productivity and overall user experience.

One of their initiatives is reduction of the "carbon footprint" of users the amount of greenhouse gases produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide (CO2). Greenhouse gases naturally blanket the Earth and are responsible for its more or less stable temperature. An increase in the concentration of the main greenhouse gases carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorocarbons is believed to be responsible for Earth's increasing temperature, which could lead to severe floods and droughts, rising sea levels, and other environmental hazards. The company, intent on introducing its first carbon-free devices, works with environmental experts to calculate the electricity used by its devices to conclude how much carbon dioxide they will emit into the atmosphere during operation. This estimate will serve as an indicator, and the company will pay regional organizations for the "sequestering," or offsetting, of the emissions. Offsetting carbon dioxide can be achieved in different ways. One way is to plant trees that absorb CO2 as they grow, in the region in which the processors were purchased. The necessary amount of

liner" technology), have contributed to reduced power consumption in its product

s.

So this was what the big companies are talking about. But as an individual what can you do in relation to green computing? Well, for starters, you can choose your products wisely when you purchase them. Look for the Energy Star rating. Choose operating systems that directly control the power saving aspects of its underlying hardware by automatically turning off components such as monitors and hard drives after set periods of inactivity. In addition, a system may hibernate, where most components (including the CPU and the system RAM) are turned off. Microsoft had been heavily critizied for producing operating systems that are not energy efficient, but with their Vista OS, they claim to have improved this by adding basic central power management configuration and developing several software

life.

Some CPUs can automatically undervolt the processor depending on the workload, this technology is called "SpeedStep" on Intel processors, "PowerNow!"/"Cool'n'Quiet" on AMD chips, and LongHaul on VIA CPUs.

Computer systems that have outlived their particular function can be repurposed, or donated to various charities and non-profit organizations. Computing supplies, such as printer cartridges, paper, and batteries may be recycled as well. NGOs in Bangladesh should think about taking on and promoting this kind of initiative.

It may not always be easy to go green, especially with the daily challenges and advances in technology. But some focus on the issue does pay off, both in lower energy costs and a happier Earth. Indian corporate enterprises have already started embracing green IT practice, not just for cost reduction purposes but also for improving the organization's environmental standing. It is about time that Bangladeshi industries also set their goals towards greener initiatives for better business and a better environment.

PHOTO: AFP

TECHPHOTO

World's mobile phone!

In a handout picture released by Samsung Electronics on July 22, 2009, a model displays what Samsung claim to be the world's slimmest watch-shaped mobile phone, just 11.98 millimetres (0.48 inches) thick at a showroom in Seoul. Samsung plans to release the watch-shaped mobile first in France this month and then opening it up to other European markets.
PHOTO: AFP

TECHNEWS

Microsoft and Yahoo! announce Web search deal

AFP, New York

YAHOO! and Microsoft reached agreement on Wednesday on a long-awaited Web search partnership that would unite the two companies against market leader Google.

Under the no-cash deal, Yahoo! will use Microsoft's new Bing search engine on its own sites, while Yahoo! will act as the exclusive global sales force for the companies' premium search advertisers.

Yahoo!, which last year turned down a 47.5-billion-dollar takeover bid from Microsoft, said it stood to gain about 500 million dollars in annual operating income and 200 million in capital expenditure savings through the agreement with the software giant.

The Sunnyvale, California, company also estimated the deal would provide it with a 275-million-dollar benefit to annual operating cash flow.

"This agreement comes with boatloads of value for Yahoo!, our users, and the industry. And I believe it establishes the foundation for a new era of Internet innovation and development," Yahoo! chief executive Carol Bartz said in a statement.

The partnership, Microsoft said, "will improve the Web search experience for users and advertisers, and deliver sustained innovation to the industry."

Microsoft chief executive Steve Ballmer said the deal will enable Bing to better compete against Google, as well as attract more users and advertisers.

"Through this agreement with Yahoo!, we will create more innovation in search, better value for advertisers, and real consumer choice in a market currently dominated by a single company," Ballmer said.

"This agreement gives us the scale and resources to create the future of search."

The agreement, which has a 10-year term, will be subject to review by US regulatory authorities, the companies said.

It is restricted to Internet search and related advertising revenue, while the pair would retain full autonomy on other properties and products such as email, instant messaging and display advertising.

Calling the link-up a "significant opportunity," Yahoo! chairman Roy Bostock said the company's board backed it with its "full and unanimous support."

"Microsoft is an industry innovator in search, and it is a great opportunity for us to focus our investments in other areas critical to our future," he said.

According to research firm Comscore, Google has a 65 percent share of the lucrative search market, followed by Yahoo! with 19.6 percent and Microsoft with 8.4 percent.

TECHNEWS

Sony Ericsson introduces W995 Walkman phone

STARTECH DESK

SONY Ericsson, one of the world leading mobile phone set manufacturers has introduced its latest product- W995 Walkman phone- in the local market, says a press release.

Focusing on the entertainment, the new W995 Walkman phone comes with a unique feature Video on-the-go, which allows to organise, transfer and play videos, music and photos from PC to mobile phone, simply and effortlessly.

To experience movie clips, sports highlights, podcasts or music videos soothingly it has crystal clear resolution and 2.6" full colour screen.

With its extendable memory stick up to 8GB, it is even capable of playing full-length movies.

The W995 has an exclusive feature-Media Go, which automatically converts multimedia files to the format it requires to play on it during shifting files from PC to the phone.

With face detection capability the device comes with 8.1-megapixel camera which gives highly satisfied image quality.

The W995 also comes with powerful built-in stereo speakers, which allows experiencing music better than any other! In

addition to that it has powerful Snap-on Speaker Stand MS410 for giving a true stadium experience. It also has Noise Canceling Headphones HPM-88, which reduce external noise by 75 per cent.

With its 3G capability and easy access to online depending on the speed it lets downloading contents directly on the in just a few clicks!

The W995 Walkman supports GSM, GPRS, EDGE 850/900/1800/1900 and UTMS/HSPA 900/2100.

The latest device of Sony Ericsson has a price tag of Tk 45,500.

TECHNEWS

Toshiba launches NB200-A101

STAR TECH DESK

IOM-Toshiba has introduced new Toshiba Mini NB200-A101 lightweight notebook for the first time in Bangladesh, says a press release.

It carries the Intel Atom Processor N280, along with 1.66GHz clock speed, 10.1" Display, 1 GB RAM, 160 GB HDD, and high definition audio support. The Toshiba mini NB200-A101 companion notebook is perfect for on the go fun and convenience.

Its extended battery life makes surfing the web, keeping in touch with friends and family, or enjoying light games and music smooth. It has excellent connectivity suite with built in WIFI, three USB ports, wired Ethernet, Webcam, Bluetooth,

which allows users to have smooth net experience.

With 1-year regional warranty and quality service and support from IOM, the product is available in the market at a price tag of Tk 37,000.