



### TECH REVIEW

## 2009: A tech year

As the year 2010 begins, here's a roundup of the best technologies of the year 2009. We start with top strategic technologies that include:

**Cloud Computing:** Cloud computing is all the rage. Some analysts and vendors define cloud computing narrowly as an updated version of utility computing; basically virtual servers available over the Internet.

**Advanced analytics:** This is a technology that's being helped along by increases in processing power. It involves giving businesses the ability to model every single action and create models. In security, for example, that could mean looking at patterns and detecting fraud as it happens.

**Client computing:** This is being reshaped by virtualization, cloud technologies and new approaches to corporate IT in which companies provide employees with stipends to purchase their own systems and then give them the ability to access business applications through a virtualized environment.

**Green IT:** This includes anything that reduces energy consumption and a company's carbon footprint.

**Reshaping the data center:** This encompasses new approaches to data center operations, including a new way of designing them that involves building out facilities incrementally using pods and adding power, chillers and generators only as needed.

**Social computing:** such as the business activities on Facebook and other networking venues.

**Security Activity Monitoring:** A variety of complimentary (and sometimes overlapping) monitoring and analysis tools help enterprises better detect and investigate suspicious activity -- often with real-time alerting or transaction intervention.

**Flash memory:** This is faster and uses less energy than rotating disks. It costs more than a disk drive, but the price gap is narrowing.

**Virtualization for availability:** VMware calls its entry in this arena VMotion; Microsoft calls its offering Live Migration.

Recently InfoWorld gave the best of the year awards this year to some best products that they reviewed. Apple and Microsoft attained the maximum awards in different categories.

**Smartphone:** Apple iPhone 3G. The iPhone 3G outran cheaper competitors with free native code development tools, regular and major firmware updates, and the Application Store.

**NoteBook:** Apple MacBook Pro. The notebook is drop- and crush-resistant, user-expandable, user-serviceable, and power efficient, with switchable low-power/high-performance graphics.

**Mobile Workstation:** Dell Precision M6400 Mobile Workstation. Its three-spindle configuration allows



users to outfit the unit with both a two-disk RAID (a major advantage during disk-intensive tasks) and an integrated optical drive, while four DIMM slots support up to 16GB of RAM.

**Workstation:** HP xw4600 Workstation. The xw4600 boasts unyielding performance, low cost, easy tune-up, and good expandability, save for being limited to a single quad-core processor.

**Web Browser:** Mozilla Firefox 3. You can say that Google Chrome is the browser of future but Firefox is the king of today. Firefox 3 provides rich extensions and security with fastest browsing capabilities.

**Office Alternative:** Zoho Writer, Sheet, Show. Zoho can give both personal productivity and business back-end applications, and with Google Gears, you can keep working on documents even if you can't find the Internet. Zoho is the only Microsoft Office alternative we know that you could simply use to run a complete business. It's also the only one that can run virtually all the Excel macros you might have developed.

**Database:** Oracle Database 11g. Oracle Database and Microsoft SQL

Server, both had significant releases this year. Oracle Database 11g is richer in features and more configurable than SQL Server, giving skilled DBAs more powerful capabilities. Among the top new features, the killer combination of Active Data Guard and Real Application Testing make Oracle Database a winner DB.

**Data Integration Platform:** Talend Open Studio. This platform boasts broad reach via Java and Web services, a highly distributed and scalable architecture, a library of connectors supporting a wealth of data sources, and a central metadata repository that encourages reuse.

**Mashup Server:** Denodo Platform. Denodo provides a rich set of tools to unify both structured data from relational databases and unstructured data from Web sites, e-mail boxes, and other sources. A recording button helps simplify building code, while frequent "test" buttons help you debug as you go.

**Web Based Application Builder:** Coghead. Coghead uses an Adobe Flex-based GUI for creating database-driven applications on the Web. The interface is very clean, the setup time is very fast, and minimal ASCII-based coding is required.

Anyone can whip up a Web application by dragging and dropping some form widgets onto pages.

**Server Virtualization Platform:** VMware Infrastructure 3. VMware underlined the supremacy of its V13 platform with the cooperative release of ESX Server 3.5 and VirtualCenter 2.5 in 2008. Performance and scalability improvements, along with new features such as integrated capacity scheduling, patch managing, and live migration of virtual disks, filled important gaps and marked the advent of virtualization as the rule in datacenters.

**Cloud Platform:** Amazon Web Services. Amazon Web Services (AWS) is a great Cloud computing service with unlimited compute, storage, and communication amenities. The Amazon Relational Database Service makes it easier to set up, operate and scale relational databases in the cloud. New monitoring, auto scaling and elastic load balancing features for Amazon EC2 are also made available.

Compiled by: Nahid Akhter  
Sources: Gartner, techtoggle.com

## Smartest phones of 2009

A roundup of the past year's favorite smart phones has been enlisted below. Unfortunately, some of these are not yet available in Bangladesh. But it could pay to keep a note of these.

**Nokia E71:** It has a Slim design with full QWERTY keyboard and includes Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, HSDPA and GPS. Voice, messaging and productivity tools are also strong. This, teamed up with an excellent battery life makes the Nokia E71 the winner, hands down.

**Palm Treo Pro:** Beneath its iPhone-like exterior lurks a very capable business phone.

**i-mate Ultimate 8502:** Market newcomer i-mate have recently released Australia's first HSPA enabled smartphones in an exclusive deal with Telstra, the i-mate Ultimate 8502 and 9502. It flaunts a slim and solid build and provides TV-out Telstra services including Foxtel.

**Blackberry Bold 9000:** The Bold



is what BlackBerry fans have been waiting for. It is feature-rich and sharply designed, let down in small measure by some cumbersome software. It has a simple e-mail setup and excellent battery life.

**HTC Touch Pro:** The Touch Pro is a step in the right direction for HTC. It's still a bit sluggish but overall it performs better than the Diamond, plus the posh keyboard design is a winning touch.

### TECH NEWS

## Microsoft shows off Windows tablets at gadget show

AP, Las Vegas

MICROSOFT CEO Steve Ballmer showed off a new touch-screen, tablet-style computer from Hewlett-Packard Co., the first of several such devices expected to be unveiled this month.

The tablet also known as a slate, a one-piece portable computer without a physical keyboard was one of several new PCs Ballmer demonstrated Wednesday as he delivered Microsoft Corp.'s customary keynote presentation on the eve of the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

During the talk, which was shown live over the Web, Ballmer said the HP tablet will be available later this year. He also gave a glimpse of two similar devices from Archos and Pegatron Corp.

Tablet-style computers that run Windows have been available for a decade, but HP's new machine is bound to draw extra attention thanks to expectations that Apple Inc. will launch a similar device later this month.

Apple, notoriously secretive about

upcoming products, has not commented on the matter. But given the iPhone's success, which propelled competitors to come out with copycat touch-screen phones and centralized "app" stores to sell add-on software, all eyes are on Apple

to define what a slate or tablet-style computer should look like and how it will be used.

Robbie Bach, president of Microsoft's entertainment and devices division, announced that Natal, new technology that lets video game players control the action by moving their whole bodies instead of using a joystick, will go on sale for the Xbox console in time for this year's holiday shopping season.

Bach said in an interview that devices built for touch, gestures and other so-called natural user interfaces will become much more mainstream in the next few years. While Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates has for years said the same thing, Bach says computer science and hardware technology are now sophisticated enough to support Gates' and other visionaries' big ideas.



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## Top 10 websites of 2009

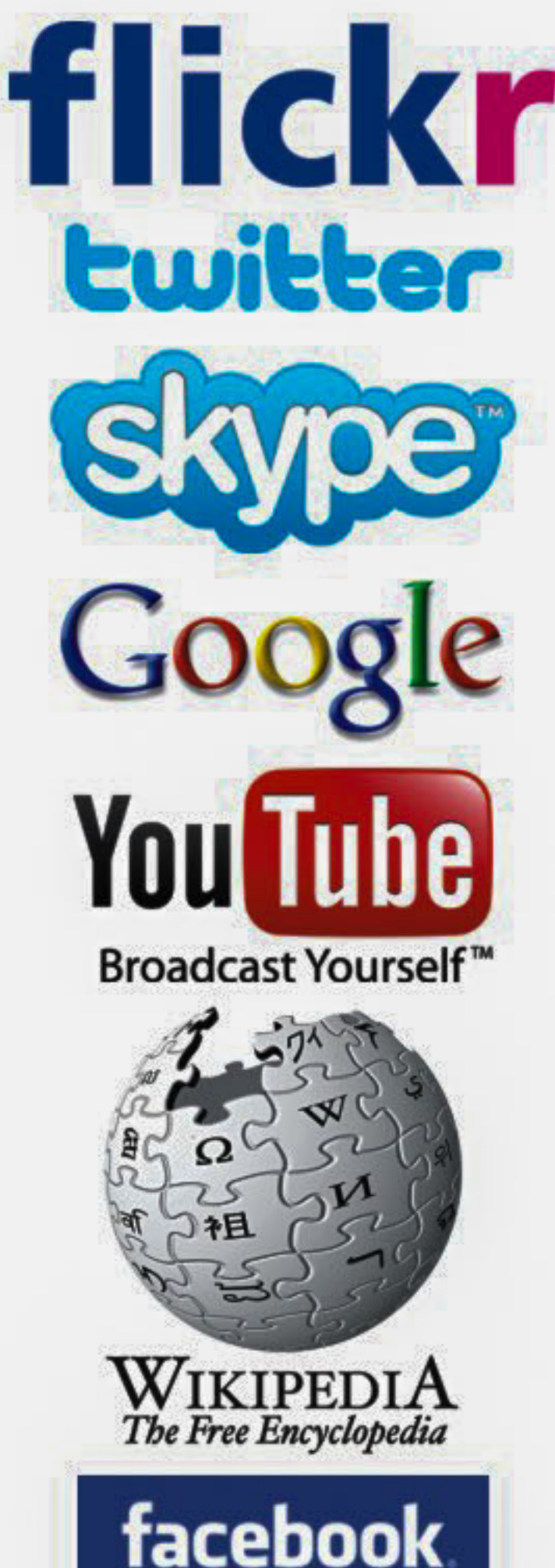
The Daily Star, with the help of some international publications, has picked up some websites, which were considered as the top rated websites based on the popularity in Bangladesh throughout 2009. Those are as follows:

**Flickr:** It's an image and video hosting website, web services suite, and online community. It's also been used to share and embed personal photographs. (Time rating: 1)

**Twitter:** Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as tweets (text-based posts of up to 140 characters). (Time rating: 6)

**Skype:** Skype.com, owned by eBay, provides a popular VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) computer telephony program called 'Skype'. (Time rating: 7)

**Google:** The most-used search engine on the web. Google receives several hundred million queries each day through its various services. (Time



rating: 11)

**YouTube:** It is the most popular video sharing website on which users can upload and share videos. (Time rating: 12)

**Wikipedia:** It is currently the largest and most popular general reference work on the Internet and also considered as the largest encyclopedia.

**Facebook:** Facebook is one of the most popular social networking website that is operated and privately owned by Facebook, Inc.

**Blogger:** Blogger is a blog publishing system, owned by Google and blogs that do not publish to their own websites are hosted by Google at subdomains of.blogspot.com.

**WordPress:** Free blogs managed by the developers of the WordPress software. Includes custom design templates, integrated statistics, automatic spam protection and other features.

## Secret mobile phone codes cracked

BBC ONLINE

A German computer scientist has published details of the secret code used to protect the conversations of more than 4bn mobile phone users.

Karsten Nohl, working with other experts, has spent the past five months cracking the algorithm used to encrypt calls using GSM technology.

GSM is the most popular standard for mobile networks around the world. The work could allow anyone - including criminals - to eavesdrop on private phone conversations.

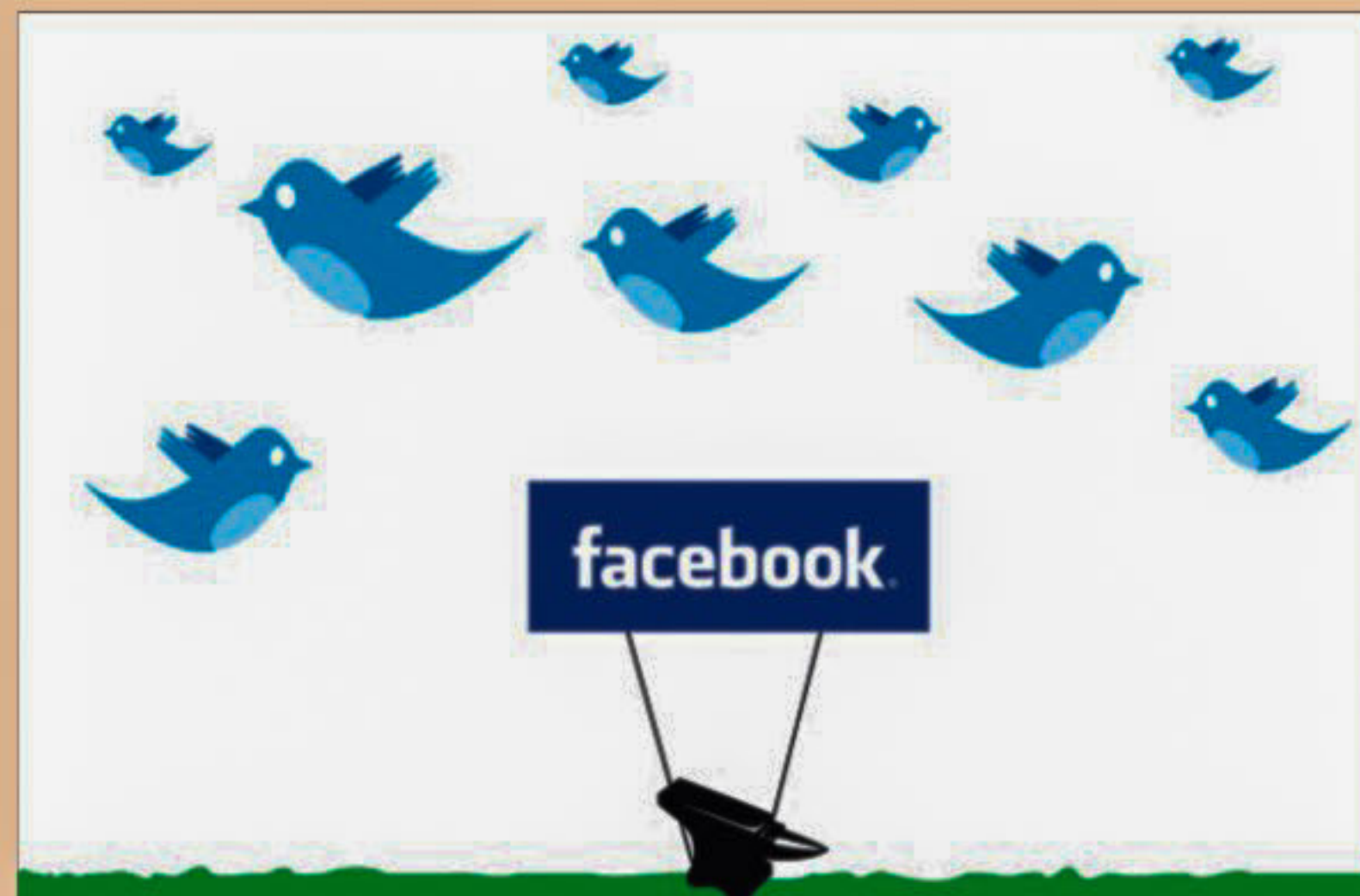
Nohl told the Chaos Communication Congress in Berlin that the work showed that GSM security was "inadequate".

"We are trying to inform people about this widespread vulnerability," he told BBC News.

"We hope to create some additional pressure and demand from customers for better encryption." The GSM Association (GSM), which devised the algorithm and oversees development of the standard, said Nohl's work would be "highly illegal" in the UK and many other countries.

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## The year of Twitter and Facebook



AFP, Washington

TWITTER, fueled by smartphones and online bursts of 140 characters, soared to lofty heights over the past year while Facebook eclipsed MySpace to become the world's leading social network.

"Those are the big winners," said Jason Keath, a North Carolina-based social media consultant and founder of SocialFresh.com, an organizer of social media conferences. "Facebook more or less tripled their size this year."

"Twitter grew immensely," added Keath. "I think there were somewhere

around maybe two to four million users at the beginning of the year. Now there are near 40 million."

With 350 million members, "if Facebook was a country it would be the fourth most populous nation," said Scott Stanzel, a former deputy press secretary to president George W. Bush who has also worked for software giant Microsoft.

"Going back one year ago I don't think people would have thought Twitter would have had the influence it's had," added Stanzel, who now runs Stanzel Communications, a Seattle-based public relations consulting firm that offers social media planning amongst its services.

"It was gaining popularity but it has really exploded this year and it's done so in a way that's become incredibly pervasive," he said.

Twitter has reportedly spurned takeover offers worth hundreds of millions of dollars from Google and Facebook, and its influence as a communications and news-breaking tool has been validated in a number of ways over the past year.

In June, the State Department asked Twitter to delay scheduled maintenance on the service because it was being used by protestors angered by the results of Iran's disputed presidential election.

More recently, Google and Microsoft began integrating Twitter messages into their respective search engines, a new feature described as real-time search.

Rampant adoption of smartphones has much to do with Twitter's growth, according to Jack Levin, co-founder and chief executive of ImageShack, an online media hosting company which runs yfrog.com, a service for sharing images and video on Twitter.

"The explosion of smartphones in the United States and many other countries has led to the success and ease of communication between people and Twitter is certainly in the middle of that," Levin said.

"People obviously want to communicate and Twitter is really a communications platform," he said.

"It's a hybrid between instant messenger and email," Levin said.