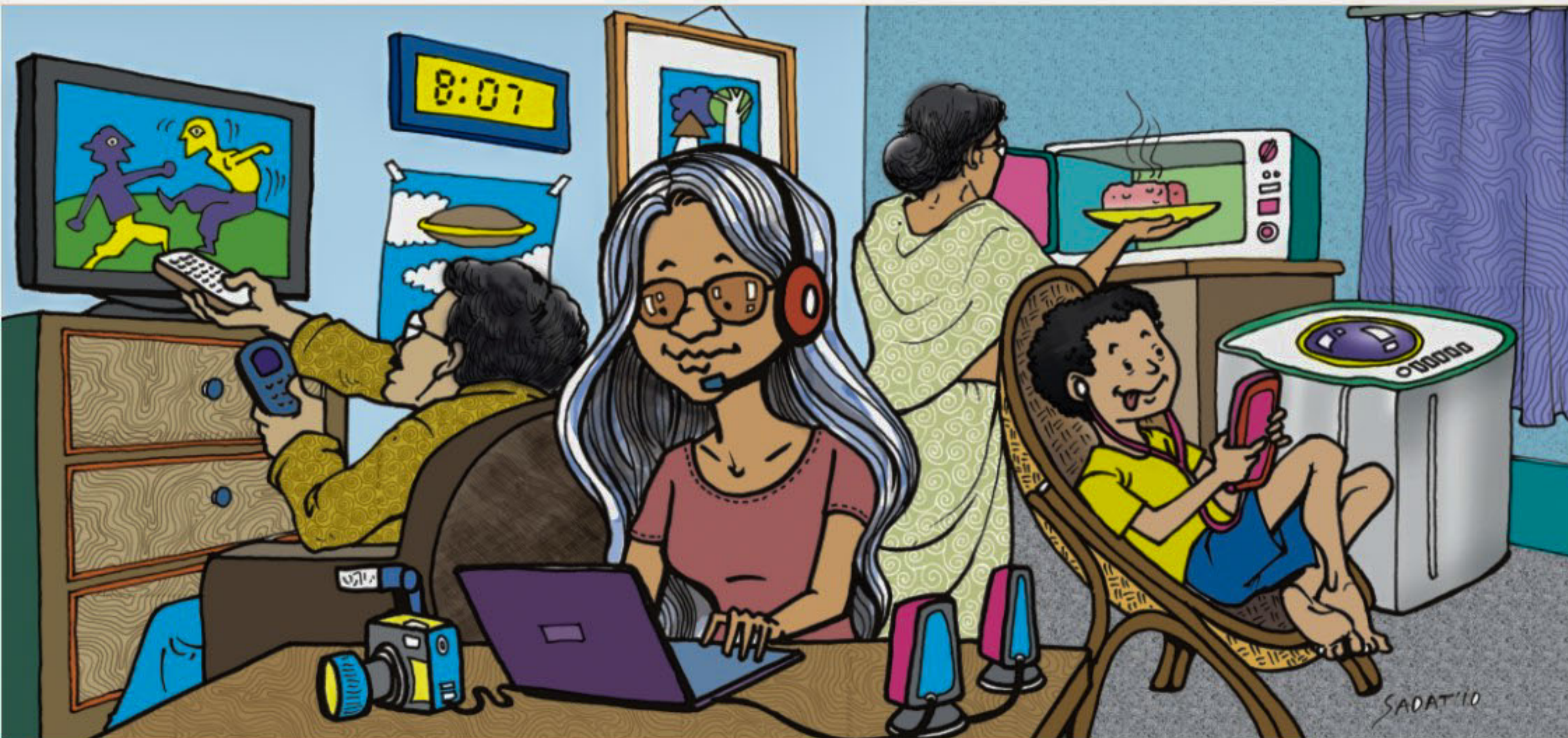


# IT & TELECOM

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## Digital distractions



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Imagine you are sitting in your living room, looking at your friend's new photos on Facebook. Old friends start to send instant messages, and you have your email account open on a different window. Other links are also open, where you are browsing for information. Your television is also switched on and your cell phone rings, you pick it up, and while conversing, you try to read and send a text message. Looking obliquely from the corners of your eyes at the computer screen and someone enters your room and you finish your important family talks.

You must be thinking that this is exactly what you do. It doesn't take much imagination to conjure up this scenario, because in this era of technology, all of us go through this situation. But a growing body of research suggests that people are paying a mental price for their addiction to electronic gadgets.

Today's office workers face a lot of distractions. There are some with a Facebook obsession and others who check multiple e-mail accounts throughout the day. Inside office cubicles, workers can surf the web or text without worrying about whether anyone is looking over their shoulder.

It is also common for students to browse the internet with their cell phones in classrooms and while riding CNGs three-wheelers or rickshaws.

Digital distractions are everywhere.

We have so many ways of communicating that it's nearly impossible to simply answer a call, research something online or jot down a note without transitioning to other tasks.

PC World recently published an article saying the biggest digital distracters are calls and texts from our cell phones, emails, instant messages and social networking sites, like Facebook and Twitter.

The article is great because so many of us don't realise how much

time we drain on these forms of remote communication. They've become so deep-seated in our day to day lives that, for some of us, it's hard to imagine what the world would be like if we didn't know whether someone has changed his/her profile picture or not, or what your cousin and friends abroad are doing.

In 2009, David McCandless, a writer, conducted a survey, The Hierarchy of Digital Distraction, to spot the attention-grabbers. The iPhone and e-mail topped the list.

The hierarchy showed the entries at the top of the pyramid wins attention over the lower levels. Landline still has a place, but it is thoroughly trumped by anything coming in on your iPhone.

Facebook makes a surprisingly low showing, occupying only the lowest two levels of the hierarchy.

At the very top of the pyramid is the ultimate arbiter of them all: significant other closing the laptop lid on your fingers. At the very bottom? Any kind of actual work.

Nevertheless, we cannot controvert the fact that rapid advances and continuous innovation in technology have made the world a smaller place. The internet has made it possible to access information and communicate free of charge with a person sitting at the other end of the world at the click of a button.

It is amazing how technology has slowly entered our lives and become a part of our daily activities, even without our conscious knowledge.

When using technology, we should keep in mind the best and worthy use of it. Our goal is a harmonious balance between our daily productive lives and feeling like we are still clued in on the world around us being completely digitised.

Let us see whether the points below can help us come up with ways to take away the distraction part from the equation.

Schedule your surfing -- Give yourself a block of time to catch up on all your Facebook contacts, personal email, and news feeds.

### Bronze for Bangladesh at WCG

IT.TELECOM DESK

Bangladeshi Arafat Jani made sure that the team returned home from the WCG 2010 Asian Championship with something to smile about after the youngster bagged the bronze medal in FIFA 2010 play.

Arafat's third place finish and subsequent medal was the first time ever that Bangladesh has been awarded in the World Cyber Games arena. Arafat started off in Group B facing off against Australia and China. He convincingly defeated Australia, 5-2 and 3-2, home and away before suffering a minor hiccup against China. He qualified for the quarterfinals as group runnerup where he decimated Thailand 4-1 at home and 3-2 away. Arafat's fantastic run ended in the semifinal after he narrowly lost out to Singapore by 1-2 at home and 1-1 away. But his disappointment at not making the final was alleviated after he did away with China, making sure of sweet revenge after the first round upset. Arafat defeated his Chinese counterpart by 3-1 in his home match, and drew the second game.

Arafat's medal made up for a disappointing performance from Team ShadowPlay who lost both their matches in the group stage of DOTA. Ashik, playing Forza, put up a brave show and muscled his way into



the quarterfinals defeating Korea and Thailand, before falling to Malaysia in the last eight.

The World Cyber Games (WCG) is an international e-sports event (or "Cyber Games Festival") operated by Korean company World Cyber Games Inc. and backed by Samsung and, since 2006, Microsoft.

The World Cyber Games were set up in 2000 with the first festival being held in 2001. The festival is influenced by the Olympic Games with a players village for competitors and since 2004 a different host city every year.

## Facebook hits 500 million mark

AFP, San Francisco

The number of people using Facebook hit the 500 million mark on Wednesday, meaning one in every 14 people on the planet has now signed up to the online social-networking service.

"As of this morning, 500 million people all around the world are actively using Facebook to stay connected with their friends and the people around them," Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg said in a blog post.

"This is an important milestone for all of you who have helped spread Facebook around the world."

To celebrate, the California-based firm introduced an application that lets members of the online community "tell the incredible stories of the moving and interesting ways they've used Facebook."

Examples given by Zuckerberg included Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen jogging with Facebook fans during his term as Danish prime minister and a US woman using the service to battle breast cancer.

"Our mission at Facebook is to help make the world more open and connected," Zuckerberg said.

"I could have never imagined all of the ways people would use Facebook when we were getting started 6 years ago."

Zuckerberg has pointed to Facebook's unrelenting growth to rebuff criticism of feature changes or privacy safeguards at the website.

Americans are increasingly obsessed with Facebook and many young women check their page even before using the bathroom in the morning, according to a poll released last week.

However, a US study released on Tuesday indicates that while people may be addicted to Facebook they rank it near the bottom when it comes to customer satisfaction.

Facebook landed with notoriously despised airlines and cable television companies in the bottom 5 percent of private companies ranked in a 2010 American Customer Satisfaction Index E-Business Report produced in partnership with ForeSee Results.

"Our research shows that privacy concerns, frequent changes to the website, and commercialization and advertising adversely affect the consumer experience," ForeSee chief executive Larry Freed said in a release.

Zuckerberg openly advocates Internet firms releasing innovations quickly and "iterating" with improvements.

"It's clear that while innovation is critical, sometimes consumers prefer evolution to revolution," Freed said.

Facebook recently overhauled privacy controls in the face of a barrage of criticism that it is betraying the trust which has made it the world's biggest social network.

Facebook is growing despite criticisms because "there really isn't a strong alternative and Facebook is relatively sticky, migrating off is a ton of work," said analyst Rob Enderle of Enderle Group in Silicon Valley.



## Samsung to unveil 'super smartphone'

IT.TELECOM REPORT

Still wondering which smartphone to buy? Which could best assist you in office work and provide best entertainment service at a time? Those,

who are thinking of iPhone is the best solution, think again.

Samsung, one of the world's leading consumer electronics brands, is about to introduce the Samsung i9000 Galaxy S, which is going to hit the local market by the end of this month.

The Daily Star had an exclusive privilege to take a very good look at the device, which could be argued as most endowed, packed full of features Android device so far. And after thorough examining, the writer has to finally admit that the tagline is quite admirably true to some extent.

The first thing that will come to a user's mind after buying the phone is, "Finally I got something that will give me the ride of a lifetime." The 9.9mm smooth and thin phone is displaying an AMOLED (Active-matrix organic light-emitting diode) screen - the most sophisticated technology so far in display science.

And that's not all... the Galaxy S has got stainless steel trim and a central "home key" below the touchscreen. At the back of the phone, there is a large square, five-megapixel camera lens at the top-left corner.

Like all Android phones, the Galaxy S comes with a suite of Google apps

pre-installed, including Google Maps, Google Talk, Gmail and Google Buzz. It can also be connected to an MS Exchange mail account and sync contacts with Facebook, Twitter and MySpace and view updates using a Samsung-designed home screen widget.

Packed with DLNA streaming, the Galaxy S is capable of connecting to a compatible device, like a Play Station 3, Desktop computers or flat panel TV, and can stream media stored on the internal memory or microSD card.

For Movie buffs, the Galaxy S supports DivX and XviD video formats, alongside the standard MP4 and H.264 files we see on all Android phones.

The Galaxy S could definitely do with a sprinkling of individuality, especially for customers looking for a viable iPhone alternative. The Android system will appeal most to tech-savvy people, who will likely to appreciate the attention Samsung has given to this phone's multimedia capabilities. The Galaxy S could well be everyone's upper-midrange Android phone.

So guys, keep your finger crossed till the launching of the phone!

### TECHPHOTO

#### Space derbis

This handout illustration image created by Australia's Electro Optic Systems (EOS) aerospace company shows a view of the Earth from geostationary height depicting swarms of space debris -- approximately 50,000 of the half-million or more debris objects greater than 1cm -- in Low Earth Orbit (LEO). An Australian company said on July 20, that it had developed a laser tracking system that will stop chunks of space debris colliding with spacecraft and satellites in the Earth's orbit. Electric Optic Systems said lasers fired from the ground would locate and track debris as small as ten centimetres (four inches) across, protecting astronauts and satellites. Debris on the eastern side of the image are in the Earth's shadow and so not visible to the eye.

PHOTO: AFP



be it a birthday or an anniversary,  
timer SMS ensures that your  
special message gets there on time!

to activate timer SMS:

write message

recipient's number  
<space>DDMM  
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<space>Message

8899

go to the message option

e.g. 019XXXXXXX  
1802 1000  
Happy Birthday!

send SMS to 8899

