

# The KCS Enquirer

**Information about the Computer Revolution**

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## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

*Less is More*

*The Blackberry Advantage*

*Have a Great Holiday Season*

*The KCS family wishes you and your family a Very Happy Holiday Season.*

*Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We have enjoyed working with you.*

### **KCS News**

*Small, Affordable & Powerful Nobi Notebooks*

We are now featuring a new line of small but powerful notebook computers based on the Intel Atom 1.6GHZ processor chip. The Atom chip is Intel's newest processor designed specifically for small office or mobile computers sometimes referred to as nettops or netbooks respectfully. The Nobi comes with either an 8.9" or 10.2" screen. It has a smaller keyboard than a full sized notebook but it is not difficult to use. These computers are not intended as desktop replacements but as utility computers designed to integrate well with the Internet. Both models have 10/100 Ethernet LAN ports, wireless B and G capability, card reader and Web cam. The 10.2" unit has 1GB memory and 120GB hard drive. The smaller unit has

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512MB memory and a 30GB drive. No optical drives are built in but external USB units can be used. The units come with either Linux or Windows XP Home but can be upgraded to XP Pro or Vista at an extra charge. Microsoft Office can be installed. These computers work great on the road for tasks like using the Internet, communicating with the home office, word processing and spreadsheet work. They are less than 3 pounds, easy to pack, easy to use in crowded places such as an airplane, and less likely to be damaged due to their compact size. All this is

available at a very attractive under \$500.00 price.

*Life in the Fast Lane*

We are often asked how long a can a new computer be expected to last or if a broken computer should be replaced or fixed. As a rule you should expect at least three to four years of service from a desktop computer. This assumes you bought a quality computer with adequate capacity and then current components. Notebook computers usually are not as long lived as desktops because they run hotter due to their compact size. Servers, especially high

end models, generally enjoy a longer run because they have a more rugged design, better cooling, higher performance parts and processors designed for 24/7 high demand usage. Once a computer is past its projected lifespan then it gets questionable whether a repair is cost effective. Unless it is a minor problem you may end up spending money on a computer that is aging and more prone to fail with each passing day. A new computer with a warranty may be the most cost effective option. When dealing with computer equipment the

Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) which includes initial cost and maintenance is the best yardstick. TCO is greatly reduced by buying quality equipment. We at KCS would never recommend equipment that would not minimize your TCO.

### *Web 2.0*

I'm sure you've heard the term Web 2.0 bandied about lately and were wondering what it means. Well you're not alone. Even the people who talk it up usually aren't clear on a definition. Simply put Web 2.0 is a more interactive and open Internet experience. It is used for collaborative projects, social or business networking, and on-line services. Web 2.0 types include Blogs (Web Logs), RSS (Rich Site Summaries) which feed information to you automatically, wiki (means "quick" in Hawaiian) sites such as Wikipedia that compile information from Internet users and mashups which are Web sites that combine information from two or more other sites to present a different product. Examples of Web 2.0 sites are eBay, YouTube, and Face Book. Web 2.0 sites can provide software services that allow the user to use for example, accounting or word processing programs on-line - sometimes for a fee or paid subscription. Businesses can have a site to facilitate communication and interact on projects with their customers. Accessing these sites usually does not require IT department setup or permission. It is a rapidly growing segment of the Internet.

### *Blackberry Software*

We are now authorized dealers for Blackberry software. This software will allow you to seamlessly integrate your in-house e-mail, contact management, business data systems, organizer information and Internet access with your remote Blackberry phone users. Centralized management eases setup, changes, and system management. IT policies allow

centralized control for phone access, Internet usage, calling parameters and phone usage. Data can be remotely deleted on lost or stolen phones. Security encryption is included.

Blackberry software comes in two versions. Professional is for small, less than 30, phones systems and Enterprise Server for large systems up to 2,000. Both versions feature Web based Instant Messaging (IM), Personal Information Management (PIM) and enterprise and personal application support. Enterprise Server also supports Enterprise IM. Both integrate with Microsoft Exchange programs as well IBM Lotus Domino. Enterprise Server also works with Novell GroupWise. Blackberry Professional can run on the same hardware server that hosts Exchange but Enterprise Server requires a separate machine.

### *Mozilla Firefox Browser*

We have been using the Mozilla Firefox 3 Internet browser at our office for quite some time and we are very happy with it. It is much faster than Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE), easy to use, more stable than IE and works on virtually all Web sites. It has top notch security and privacy features including alerts that warn of potentially harmful Web sites and downloads. The speed and security features are the ones we appreciate the most. If you want to try it out go to [www.mozilla.com/en-US/](http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/) and download it free. It is well worth a look and once you try it I think you will stay with it. Note that it will automatically pick up your bookmarked items (favorites) from IE.

## **MS News**

### *Windows 7 Release Accelerated*

Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain. Regardless of Microsoft's press releases promoting Vista and

downplaying Windows 7 or the ads touting the virtues of Vista or the artificially enhanced sales figures of Vista, Microsoft has seen the light and is pushing the development of its next operating system Windows 7. The multitude of problems with Vista and the stubborn reluctance of the business community and developers to upgrade to Vista and abandon XP have caused Microsoft to accept that Vista will not be the business operating system (OS) of choice and it better get a new system out as quickly as possible. As you know we have not been recommending upgrading to Vista even after a spate of fixes and a Service Package release. We are now recommending staying with XP until the new OS is released. Microsoft has extended the life of XP, albeit clumsily, until it appears it will still be available up to the release of Windows 7.

### *Security Fixes Galore*

On December 9 Microsoft released 28 patches, nearly all of them marked "critical". The patches were issued in eight updates covering Windows operating systems, Internet Explorer, Office, SharePoint, Windows Media, along with fixes to its development tools, Visual Basic and Visual Studio. Information and downloads are available at [technet.microsoft.com/en-us/security/bb986181.aspx](http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/security/bb986181.aspx). Those running Windows XP Pro should also make sure they have downloaded and installed Service Pack 3 (SP-3). Downloads are available at [www.microsoft.com/downloads/search.aspx?displaylang=en#](http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/search.aspx?displaylang=en#). Click on "Windows" section lower right hand on page under "Product Families" for the XP service packs. If you need any help or information give us a call.