Tips for Buying a Business Notebook PC

your corporate network or any server for that matter where you run applications, or are accessing large database files, you will be disappointed. It is better to get a notebook that can access both 802.11b and 802.11g. Ideally, it would be able to access any of the three wireless standards including 802.11a.

If you take your notebook with you frequently, weight is a consideration. Today's mainstream notebooks have travel weights between 3.5 and eight pounds. The lightest weight notebooks frequently have a smaller 12" display and some require you to carry your floppy and optical drive separately and plug them in as you need them. This gets to be a bit of a hassle when you end up with many external devices. But once you hit the five plus pound mark there are many notebooks with a full 14" and 15" display and built-in devices.

Battery time ranges from two to 5.5 hours depending on the model you chose. It is best to try to find an independent review of the system that has tested the manufacturers claims. Be sure to follow the instructions that come with your new notebook to get the most out of your battery life. There are some experimental notebooks out now that are running on fuel cells that will last eight hours on a charge but you probably want to wait a little on this technology to mature.

ATI and nVidia are developing graphics cards especially for notebooks and if you are into digital editing, gaming, or 3-dimensional graphics, you will want to pay special attention to the video card that is built in.

Be sure to get a hard drive with at least 30GB of storage space but go for the largest and fastest one you can afford. Get Windows XP Pro (not XP Home) for your operating system. Get a minimum of 256MB of RAM and 512MB if you can talk the boss into it. Get a DVD ROM / CD-RW combo optical drive so that you can play DVDs and burn CD's which is especially useful for backing up data if for no other reason. For ports get a 10/100/1000 NIC, two pc card slots, and three v2.0 USB ports (SD & FireWire are nice extras). And seriously consider the extended warranty offered with the notebook to cover you for a full three years if the notebook you want comes with a one year warranty.

For brands we recommend you first look at IBM, Toshiba, and HP Compaq and stay with their business models. We have found the consumer models to include too much unneeded software that just slows down the pc over time and creates problems.

See you at the local hot spot! ✦

Beachwood Systems Consulting

Management Letter

In the stone age, people thought the spear was a pretty good tool. It made life better because it was now easier to bring home dinner.

This issue of The Next Wave is chock-full of information age tools. New notebook pc's allow you to be productive anywhere and increasingly work with a connection to the internet where not dreamed possible even a decade ago. Two very easy to use report writing tools are described that are specifically designed to work with GoldMine. Macola offers functionality to streamline your distribution operation. And Microsoft's new tool that improves the sales management and customer service functions is covered.

While these tools won't let you bring home dinner more easily, you sure will have more time to enjoy it.

Adam

The Next Wave

Looking to Buy a Business Notebook PC?

Notebook style pc's make a lot of sense. With the latest models you get desktop pc performance in a computer you can take anywhere, video equivalent to flat panel displays, and affordable prices although you always pay a slight premium for the portability. Prices have come down to the point that even high-end notebooks are no longer budget busters.

So what should you look for in order to make a smart purchase that will last for several years? Remarkably, Intel now has five different processor families that can be found in notebooks. The "Mobile Intel Pentium 4" is similar to the regular "Intel Pentium 4" except it has SpeedStep technology to reduce the wattage required to power it when the processor is not being used heavily. If you want the highest performance available in a cpu truly designed for a notebook this is the one to get. The Mobile Intel Pentium 4 comes in speeds up to 3.06 GHz, with a front-side bus of 533MHz, and can use 333MHz DDR RAM memory. Not quite as fast as the fastest Pentium 4 but darn close. We would recommend this cpu for someone that keeps a dozen applications open at once and at least one of them is a heavy duty app requiring serious processing power like AutoCad, Visio, or Visual Studio. The tradeoff between this cpu and the Pentium M, to be described next, is the power it consumes. You simply will not get as much run time on battery unless you purchase a notebook that permits the use of a second battery (and the weight that goes with it).

The "Intel Pentium M" is Intel's latest technology and is the one the typical business user will want to have in his or her notebook. Its architecture allows it to be much more efficient than the Mobile Intel Pentium 4. A Pentium M running at 1.4 GHz is roughly equivalent to a Mobile Intel Pentium 4 running at 2.4 GHz but uses only a third of the power. Performance is very good with its 400 MHz front side bus and use of 266 MHz DDR memory. Don't confuse the Intel Pentium M with the "Mobile Intel Pentium 4 Processor-M" which is being discontinued primarily because it lacks hyper-threading.

When shopping for a notebook you will see the term Centrino. Is Centrino good? Should you buy a notebook with Centrino? Not in our opinion. Here's why. Centrino is a brand name permitted to be used if a notebook includes three Intel components: the Intel Pentium M (good), Intel's chip set (good), and Intel's wireless card (bad). Its not that Intel makes a bad wireless card, it is because it only supports 802.11b which is the slowest of the three standards for wireless local area network connectivity. If you just plan to use your notebook in wireless mode to connect to the internet then the slower speed is not a factor. But, if you plan to connect to

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Look Inside…

Report Writing Tools for GoldMine

There are a few third-party products that have been developed that make writing reports for GoldMine easier than with GoldMine's built-in report writer. Two of these tools are MasterMine Software and Stonefield Query.

MasterMine, an add-on product available from MasterMine Software, gives you the ability to create GoldMine-integrated reports simply. Little training is required for report generation as reports are generated in the familiar Excel environment. With MasterMine users can:

- See daily reports of activity in GoldMine
- See information from many different angles to make business-critical decisions.
- Easily change report parameters.
- Segment the database with easy-to-create, easy-to-use overviews.
- Make GoldMine Groups from any data segment, bypassing filter-creation. Use groups to target e-mails, mailings, field updates, and assign accounts to GoldMine users.
- Make tables, charts, graphs and lists in seconds.

Stonefield Query is another reporting tool that can be used to easily generate reports out of GoldMine. Stonefield Query works with a wizard that allows you to generate ad-hoc listing reports. With Stonefield Query you can quickly generate a listing of your database contacts that match a specific criteria. Once the report is generated the result can be exported to Microsoft Excel, HTML, Microsoft Word, comma-delimited, PDF or other types of files.

Stonefield Query eliminates the need for users to create complicated table links and the need to know table structures.

Confused about which reporting tool will be right for you? Beachwood Systems Consulting can analyze your needs and help you to decide which product best fulfills your set of requirements. Some things to keep in mind are that Mastermine reports work well if you need to summarize or analyze your data whereas Stonefield Query reports are best for ad hoc listing reports. Please call us at (216) 823-1800 for further information on Mastermine or Stonefield Query. ✦

<div style="background-color:yellow">
See our web site for training available on all aspects of GoldMine usage.
</div>

Improve Business Productivity with Microsoft CRM

Microsoft CRM helps management make informed business decisions. With Microsoft Business Solutions CRM, managers can view all sales and service activities, as well as work with a comprehensive set of reporting tools to measure business activity and forecast sales. They can run and view reports for sales activity and quotas, closed and pending orders, support incident management and resolution, financial summaries, and more. All reports are designed to help your business identify the opportunities, trends, and problems that guide business decision-making

processes. Report data also can be easily exported to other applications, such as Microsoft Excel.

Microsoft CRM allows your Sales and Service Departments to see the information that they need at the right time. Microsoft CRM lets your business offer consistent and efficient sales and service, with integrated Sales and Customer Service modules and a centralized information database that works across your existing business systems. Employees can view, update and share information, including complete views of sales and service

activity, orders, and customer history.

Microsoft CRM gives your sales reps an effective way to track and manage leads from multiple sources, and your managers the ability to evaluate which leads result in closed sales. Information can be imported from a customer-facing Web site, marketing lists, and more. In addition, sales reps can send e-mail messages or direct mail materials to prospective customers, offering a special promotion. Any leads that turn into customers and sales opportunities can be tracked through the system. ✦

Macola's Advanced Distribution

Macola Advanced Distribution Package (ADIS) helps your organization run more efficiently and effectively, ultimately bringing more profits to the bottom line. It does this by better customer service, reducing administrative costs and overall better control of product distribution. Although a separate module, it does not show up in the list of applications. When ordered the ADIS functionality is activated in the inventory module and other applications become available such as RMA.

Macola's ADIS application consists of a set of six specific functions: *Landed Cost, Multi-Bin, Return Material Authorization, Confirm Picking, Hard Allocation, and Material Inspection*. This functionality, described below, provides added benefits and value to the way you run your business. These modules have the capability of improving customer service and controlling administrative cost. Remember, your competitor may be providing this capability to his customers, shouldn't you?

Landed Cost - Landed Cost capability enables you to calculate all costs of the product normally associated with purchasing and receiving materials for resale or production. These costs called landed costs include such items as freight, import duties, custom charges, insurance and other handling costs. The Landed Cost Tracking system ensures that landed costs are capitalized against the inventory item allowing for accurate ROI and Cost of Goods Sold.

Multi-Bin- A Multi Bin system supports a tightly controlled stockroom, as you create and maintain multiple bins within a location. Multiple items may reside in the same bin and the same item may reside in multiple bins within a

location. The benefits are clear. Parts can be located easier and faster. Warehouse space is better utilized and labor cost can be reduced.

Return Material Authorization (RMA) gives your customer service and sales representatives the power to track authorizations for return of products. It also provides the ability to track "cross-ships" which provides better customer service. RMA provides the means to enter, track and resolve customer returns. RMA's are entered on line and a system created authorization number is given to your customers. This application has the potential to reduce labor cost associated with managing returns.

Confirm Pick- Confirm Pick updates the quantities on-hand and allocated items by location. It adjusts the quantities when you enter the information after picking and assembling the order. More accurate on-hand information is now available to your customers.

Hard Allocation- ADIS allows you to use hard allocation as well as soft allocation. Using hard allocation, you commit specific serial, lot and/or bin numbers to an order during order processing. This is beneficial when specific lots must remain together.

Material Inspection - When material arrives at your dock, not all of it may be in acceptable condition. Items tagged for inspection are received in an inspection warehouse. The material is in your inventory but not available for distribution until inspected and made available for sale or manufacturing. Detail statistics are maintained for rejected items and rules for inspection can be established.

For more information and to schedule a demonstration, call Gary Baum at 216-823-1800 ext 103. ✦

Macola Training

<u>SPECIAL DISCOUNTS</u>
10% off 2nd attendee, 20% off 3rd attendee, 30% off 4th+ attendee*

Accounting
11/04 – 11/06
Day 1: General Ledger &
    Month End/Year End
Day 2: Accounts Payable
Day 3: AR/Bank Book

Distribution
11/18 – 11/21
Day 1: Inventory Management
Day 2: Order Entry
Day 3: Purchase Order & Receiving
Day 4: Order to Cash Cycle &
    Purchase to Pay Cycle

Manufacturing Planning and Control (MPC)
11/11 – 11/13
Day 1: Inventory & BOM &
    Production Order Processing
Day 2: Master Scheduling / MRP
Day 3: Processing Transactions

ERP Manufacturing
10/13 – 10/16
Day 1: Inventory & BOM
Day 2: Standard Product Routing
Day 3: Shop Floor Control
Day 4: Manufacturing Cost Acctg

System Administration
10/22 – 10/23
Day 1: System Manager
Day 2: Database Tips, Client Setup,
    File Purging, & Troubleshooting

Crystal Reports for Macola
10/29 – 10/30
Day 1: Creating Reports & Selecting
    and Sorting Records
Day 2: Creating Formulas &
    Formatting Sections &
    Presentation Quality Reports

*Please see our web site,
www.beachsys.com for details
and current schedule information.