

TECHNOLOGY & YOU

THE HERALD'S GUIDE TO THE HIGH-TECH WORLD, POWERED BY WHATSYOURTECH.CA



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TUESDAY, JUNE 28, 2011 B3

Get plugged in with our new high-tech feature

Welcome to the debut of Technology & You, a new feature for the Calgary Herald in Tuesday's print edition and updated online at calgaryherald.com/technology.

The Herald has partnered with the editorial team at WhatsYourTech.ca, Canada's top blog site dedicated to personal technology. Each week, we promise to deliver high-tech content that is the

most relevant to readers, with news and product opinions about Apple, RIM and Microsoft; mobile and Web technology; digital photography — and much more.

The coverage will come from the experts at WhatsYourTech.ca, a grassroots compilation of some of Canada's most recognized technology bloggers. The desire for high-tech

devices increasingly dictates buying decisions by Calgary consumers. Consider this 2010 survey data:

- More than 538,900 Calgaryans purchased hardware in the past two years;
- Some 632,000 adult Calgaryans own a digital camera;
- 620,500 of us have purchased home entertainment items in the past two years.

WhatsYourTech.ca is the

brainchild of one of our nation's foremost technology trend spotters, Yasmin Ranade, publisher and editor-in-chief of the blog site, who has held senior roles with IT World Canada, Metro Canada, Telus, Sprint Canada and Digital Equipment.

We hope you enjoy our new feature Tuesdays in the Herald, and updates on calgaryherald.com/technology.

bits & bytes

Undersized smartphones make sense in tablet economy

GADJO CARDENAS SEVILLE
WHATSYOURTECH.CA

While many of the high-end smartphone manufacturers are supersizing their handsets with large 4.3-inch and even 4.5-inch screens and hefty form factors, we're seeing an emerging trend with undersized smartphones that offer the best features of the line in a smaller size.

With tablets quickly becoming a viable mobile computing option, some users may need only basic smartphones that can share their 3G data with the tablet devices. In this case, a smaller smartphone that is easy to carry offers most of the functionality of larger models and can serve as a mobile Wi-Fi hot spot makes sense.

Here are three undersized smartphones that come up big on features.

Sony Ericsson Xperia Mini Pro

This mighty-mite offers up all the Google Android goodness found on the larger Sony Ericsson Xperia X10 but with a multi-functional 2.5-inch 240 x 320 resolution screen and a slide-out QWERTY keyboard for when quick text input is required.



Motorola DEFY

While small in size, Motorola's DEFY Android smartphone is big on features. It has a decent 3.7-inch screen, astounding battery life and has the advantage of being dust proof, water resistant and shock resistant. The DEFY is one of the toughest and most resilient personal electronic devices in the market today.



HP Veer

The upcoming HP Veer is unique because it is the smallest smartphone in the market with a slide-out thumb board, and it is also one of HP's new webOS smartphones. True multitasking, wireless charging and the ability to work as a mobile hot spot for tablets, including HP's own Touchpad, are the Veer's most intriguing features, but its tiny size is unmatched.



Telus halves data roaming

Fees now more in line with other nations

TED KRITSONIS
WHATSYOURTECH.CA

If you're a Telus customer, they've cut your data roaming fees when you travel and also eliminated cancellation fees when you want to get out of a contract with them.

Data roaming rates for Canadians are among the most expensive in the world at \$25 per megabyte.

To put that in perspective, just one megabyte would be equivalent to downloading 10 photos to your phone from Facebook.

Travellers coming home from vacation were stunned to find inflated phone bills because their phones were still taking in data while roaming during their trips.

The new move puts Telus more in line with countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, where the average ranges between \$9.48 to \$13.52 per megabyte.

In addition to the roaming fee cut, Telus also announced that it was getting rid of cancellation fees by not charging customers looking to upgrade to another handset.

This is an extension of the move made in November 2010 when the carrier launched its Early Device Upgrade program.

Customers who signed up after Nov. 21, 2010, will see the remaining balance of the phone they bought displayed on their monthly bill.

The balance goes down in equal increments each month until the contract expires.

So, for example, if you bought a phone at the subsidized cost of \$200 under a contract, but the device sells for \$700 unlocked, the balance would be \$500.

Assuming it's a three-year contract, that \$500 is split evenly over a 36-month period amounting to \$13.88 per month.

If you were to want an upgrade after 12 months, the balance left over would be \$333.44.

Well, that plus the \$50 administrative fee account closure charge Telus is tacking on.

There will also be no cancellation fee for leaving one carrier to go to another.

Neither Rogers nor Bell have commented on when they might follow suit and implement similar policies.



Courtesy, Whatsyourtech.ca

Explaining the cloud in a nutshell: Many devices, one central information repository.

Cloud computing and what it means for you

Easy access to music and movies

LEE RICKWOOD
WHATSYOURTECH.CA

Yes, "the cloud" is forecast as the latest and greatest tool for personal and business computing.

But there's still confusion about the cloud, and what it means for you.

Basically, the cloud is another term for the Internet.

The cloud is a collection of computers, hooked together to provide much more power or storage space than just one computer.

These computers in the sky (really, huge data server farms physically sprinkled across the country) can be accessed from almost any device with an Internet connection.

Cloud computing means you are accessing files and programs on the Internet, not your own desktop PC.

Take Facebook (www.facebook.com) — your pictures are stored in the cloud, and the program that allows you and your friends to add comments to them is in the clouds, too.

It's the same with business data — the information you put into a spreadsheet resides in the cloud,



Courtesy, Whatsyourtech.ca

Canada's Privacy Commissioner is cautioning users about privacy and security in the cloud.

not your office PC. The program you use to analyze that information also lives in the cloud, and you connect with it to get your work done.

That means a travelling salesperson can access important company data, such as product inventory, no matter where they are — with permission, of course, and with an Internet-connected device.

So the cloud is a way to improve productivity, collaboration and communication among co-workers and clients. With processing power and storage space in the cloud, companies can reduce costs in the office.

Google Docs (docs.google.com) and Microsoft's Office 365 (www.microsoft.com/en-ca/of-

office365/online-software.aspx) are business-oriented tools in the cloud.

For consumers, the cloud promises easy access to personal files like music and movies. Once they're in the cloud, you don't have to sync or copy them from one device (such as your desktop PC) to another device (such as your smartphone and/or laptop).

Apple's new iCloud service (www.apple.com/ca/icloud/) is just one example of how digital media is moving to the cloud. Nothing lives on your device — it's in the clouds, spread across multiple computers owned or operated by someone else.

That's where some concerns over the cloud first appear.

Privacy and security for

personal files is important; for business, it's mission critical.

Storing valuable data "out in the cloud somewhere" may not be as safe and secure storing it on a device you can put your hands on.

The worries are not unfounded — in the recent Sony PlayStation network breach, millions of personal records stored in the cloud were compromised.

When Amazon's cloud network crashed last April, it was unable to provide valuable services that other companies and individuals relied upon.

Well before these breaches took place, Canada's Privacy Commissioner was cautioning people about "Reaching for the Cloud" in a report of the same name. (www.priv.gc.ca/information/pub/cc_201003_e.cfm)

Privacy and security, jurisdictional authority and data protection are among the commissioner's concerns over cloud computing.

So while predictions for the future of cloud computing are bright and sunny, careful computer users may want to carry an umbrella just in case.

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