

Wii at the gallop

Wii Corks are no doubt popping at Nintendo HQ, with the company this week confirming that the Wii has sold 1 million units Down Under. It has taken the console only 111 weeks to reach the milestone, smashing the previous record of 152 weeks, held by Nintendo's hand-held console, the DS, which, incidentally, was the highest selling console in Australia for the third year running.

Ready for a killing

PS Sony's highly anticipated first-person shooter, Killzone 2, finally has a confirmed Australian release date. The game, which has received rave reviews in the US for its explosive gunplay and jaw-dropping visuals, will be deployed on February 26.

Turtles on march

Wii Publisher Ubisoft has confirmed a new Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles game is in development for the Wii. TMNT: Smash Up, an action-oriented browser developed by Game Arts, who worked on the popular Super Smash Bros. Brawl, will be released in the second half of this year to coincide with the series' 25th anniversary.

No worries

Publisher Capcom has reassured Australian gamers they will be unaffected by distributor Red Ant going into receivership last week. Capcom, whose titles are distributed in Australia by Red Ant, have confirmed that the release of upcoming titles such as Street Fighter 4, Resident Evil 5 and Dead Rising: Chop Till You Drop will not be affected. Konami, who also distributes its wares through Red Ant, won't suffer either. It has signed Atari as its new distributor.

top 10 selling games

- 1 Wii Fit Nintendo Wii
2 Mario Kart Wii with wheel Wii
3 Mario Play with remote Wii
4 Guitar Hero World Tour Super Wii
5 Skate 2 Xbox 360
6 Brain Training Nintendo DS
7 Guitar Hero World Tour Super Xbox 360
8 Skate 2 PlayStation 3
9 Lord of the Rings: Conquest Xbox 360
10 More Brain Training DS

SPORTS SKATE IT Platform: DS/Wii (PG) Price: \$80



IN SHORT: Poor controls cause this skate spinoff to spin out.

This spin off from 2007's successful Skate on 360 and PS3 gives Wii owners the opportunity to grind, grab and flip like a professional skateboarder. Gamers must enter competitions and complete street challenges to become the best and gain the respect of other skateboarders. As you develop your character, you are able to unlock additional clothes and boards and, as you gain experience and notoriety, sponsorship and media coverage will follow. There are a variety of tricks to try and you can create your own for better scores. The game can either be played by flicking, twisting and shaking the Wiimote, or used in conjunction with the Wii Fit Balance Board for simulated skateboarding action. Sadly, either way, it takes too long to perfect your tricks and the similarity of many moves, combined with the peripherals' poor input recognition, can cause your skater to perform the wrong trick, resulting in many an unfairly failed challenge. In the long run, this game will only hold the attention of skateboarding enthusiasts.

PETER GUSS

THOROUGHLY MODERN STUDENTS

While exercise books and pens are still the mainstay of back-to-school booklists, every year more hi-tech gizmos are added. And, though items such as anti-virus software and portable hard drives are yet to make most lists, they are quickly becoming indispensable tools for modern students, writes SAMANTHA AMJADALI



Kaspersky internet suite 2009 Price: \$100

With students constantly swapping files or copying data between USB drives, school PCs and their home computers, infection is virtually inevitable... Kaspersky's excellent internet suite bundles robust anti-virus software with a firewall... as well as a virtual keyboard for secure entry of passwords and parental controls.



Kensington Ci75m notebook mouse Price: \$60

About 30 per cent thinner than most notebook mice, the squat Ci75m can be used as a wireless mouse, but also as a wired device. A retractable USB cable allows use of the mouse even if its two AAA batteries die or you're in a spot, such as a plane, where wireless mice can't be used.

Micro USB Bluetooth dongle Price: \$40

Also from Kensington is this nifty, almost thumbnail-sized Bluetooth adaptor that gives any non-Bluetooth computer or laptop the ability to send and receive files from PDAs and mobile phones via Bluetooth. It also allows your PC to remain wire free, by using Bluetooth-enabled devices such as keyboards and mice.

Smiggle calculator Price: Big (\$15), Mini (\$10)

Smiggle's funky range of desk gear includes two solar-powered plastic calculators. A mini solar powered calculator which performs standard functions is slim enough to slip into a pencil case, while the chunkier 2020 calculator (pictured, right) allows higher-end features such as the ability to switch between a selection of decimal modes (rounding up, rounding off and rounding down) as well as decimal digits.



Electric eraser/electric sharpener Price: \$8, \$20

Smiggle's electric eraser (below) removes the elbow grease from errors made in pencil. Two AAA batteries and a feather light press start the eraser's head rotating, erasing errors as it goes. All you need do is guide the eraser in the right direction. It comes with nine replacement rubber heads. The electric sharpener (right) does the same for pencils, sharpening them with barely any effort.



Notebook power adapter with USB port Price: \$200

This device is brilliant for students and business users alike. Aside from providing emergency power to your laptop, this Kensington power adaptor comes with a USB port for charging items such as MP3 players and mobile phones - without ever needing to plug them into a computer. It comes with a range of tips for various notebooks, including Dell, Sony and Acer machines and also includes an in-car charger, providing yet another way to power-up devices on the go.



IN SHORT: New controls and game modes make for fantastic frozen fun. The newest instalment of EA's ice hockey franchise is one of the better updates and superbly recreates the fast-flowing action of the sport. Ice hockey has never looked so good. The artists have done a tremendous job and the character models, environments and animation are all exemplary.

REUBEN LEES



Dell Inspiron 1525 Price: \$1000

Dell's Inspiron 1525 offers an affordable and seriously funky means of entry into the notebook market for students. Available in a gorgeous range of colours, this laptop is aimed at a younger, style conscious market and features an Intel T4200 processor, 4GB RAM, a 160GB SATA hard drive, 8X DVD burner and 15.4-inch screen. That's muscle enough to run all the usual school-related applications and to surf the net, but also to have a little fun on the gaming front.

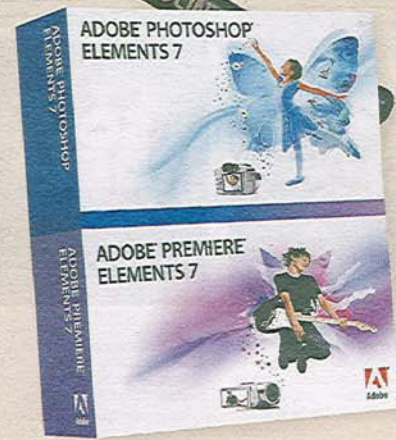


Speakers Price: \$30

Smiggle's iPod speakers are clever devices that allow you to listen to lectures out loud without those pesky and often painful headphones. They're also shower-proof, allowing you to listen to your music, or lectures, in the shower, which is equally perfect for students who don't want to waste time, or those cramming madly. The speakers are built into a see-through case of the iPod and allows you to read the screen or watch videos. Though it works with other MP3 players, it is built for use with an iPod or iPhone (hence the shape) and comes with a built-in stand in case you want to transcribe notes - or listen to your favourite tunes in the bathtub.

Olin mobile notetaker Price: \$150

We couldn't get our hands on Olin's mobile notetaker, but the idea is a brilliant one. According to the distributors, the digital pen allows users to write notes, as per normal on paper, and the pen will translate the writing and digitise the words into text that can be archived or edited in a word processor. The pen has space for up to 100 A4 pages of the written word and, even if the handwriting recognition software isn't as clever as it claims to be, the ability to write and store lecture notes digitally is brilliant for archiving - or just flicking back through your notes at exam time.



Adobe Elements 7 Price: \$245 together, \$165 individually

If your studies require the use of Adobe's video editing software, Photoshop or Premier Pro, but you don't want to pay upwards of \$1400 a piece, Photoshop Elements or Premier Pro Elements may suffice. They're both cut-down versions of the full retail products allowing students to learn the interface and use all the most commonly needed features of both products. Only high-end tools, functions and extras that a student or beginner will not likely require have been cut from each product.

Adobe Creative Suite 4 Price: Standard (\$2500)

A \$2500 suite of high-end electronic design tools may seem irrelevant for even the most ardent of VCE art or design students, but they are the tools of the trade and it's never too early to master them, especially at 80 per cent off the recommended retail price. Scholastic offers high school, TAFE and tertiary students up to 80 per cent off all versions of Adobe's Creative Suite 4, which includes full copies of Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Dreamweaver, Flash and Fireworks. For more information: 1800 665 774