

By Brandon Koehler

Many people think that a cell phone is a cell phone. You make calls on them, you talk to people on them, and some times, if you're really geeky, you might change your ring tone to a song you thought you loved, until you made it your ring tone, and now you can't stand to listen to it anymore. Not anymore. A cell phone must be able to do anything, and that's why we're

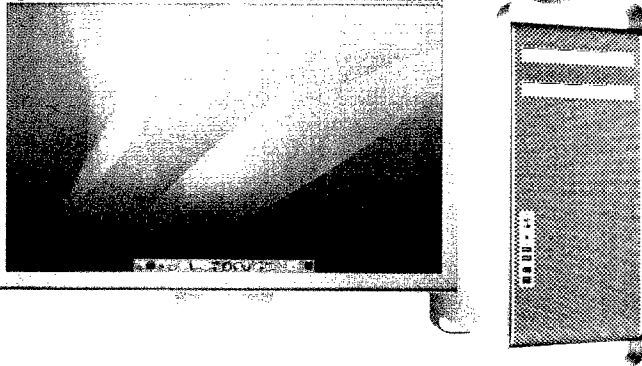
going to get a **Blackberry 8703e**. Bluetooth capable with 64 megabytes of flash memory on board, the real story is its famous e-mail capability, able to keep the neediest urbanite connected to his or her office. Available now at Verizon for around \$250, depending on the service plan.

Intel has come back swinging after years of placing second to AMD in the CPU performance race with its Core family of processors. With several branches of the Core tree, clocked anywhere from 1 GHz to well over 2 GHz and containing one (Solo), two (Duo), and soon, four (Quad) cores, there is a chip here that will meet your needs.

In case you're wondering, a core is equivalent to an entire CPU on the chip, so a two core chip literally has two CPUs on a single chip. This translates to quite a performance boost, noticeable in even ordinary use. Every Core two Duo chip is certified 'Vista Capable' meaning that it is ready to take on Microsoft's latest and greatest operating system when it is released for general consumption next year. I would recommend that anybody seriously looking at a PC today try and find a PC with an Intel Core Duo or Core 2 Duo chip inside. Tell them Brandon

sent you, and they'll give you a quizzical look **free!**

As for its "core," Apple has relied



upon PowerPC processors since the early nineties. With their recent change to Intel processors, they have bitten off a huge coup for Intel. The just released **Apple Mac Pro** has only the juiciest bits of computing inside, with no seeds! With Dual 2.0 GHz Xeon processors, 1GB of RAM, a 160GB hard drive all contained within the iconic Apple enclosure, this is as good as it gets for home users. And hey! It even runs Windows, with either the Apple supplied **Boot Camp**, or the third party **Parallels** programs. I recommend using Parallels, which allows you to run Windows as a program in Mac OS X, rather than having to reboot every time you wish to switch. Starting at just under \$2000 and ending up at just under the exosphere, with enough configuration options to make Steve Jobs blush, there is a Mac Pro with your name on it.

Even in this wireless world you need to carry around your laptop charger, your camera charger, your cell phone charger and the San Diego Chargers. Now, when you open your laptop case,

instant spaghetti! (How the tomato sauce got into my laptop bag, I'll never know.) That is, unless, you have a **Cable Turtle!** This little donut of rubber will keep your laptop bag organized, and is even useful around the house. Your Cable Turtle will need a small pond to live in when he's not in your laptop—What? Oh, never mind, it's not a real turtle. Simply string the cable into the donut, and leave two ends sticking through its mouth. Cable Turtles are available online and cost \$5.99 for the small size and \$9.99 for the large size at <http://cableorganizer.com>. I have a terrarium to clean up when I get home.

On a more serious note, Sony makes batteries for nearly every manufacturer of notebooks on the planet. Some of these batteries have defects built into them that can cause catastrophic failure of the battery. If you are using a laptop, you need to check your manufacturers website to see if your laptop has been affected. Several laptops have exploded, causing injuries and small fires. Most manufacturers have the battery recall information on the front page of their website. Five minutes now could save a lot of trouble in the future.

Brandon Koehler received his Senior Network Administration degree from a North Iowa Area Community College in 2005, and his A+ Certification the same year. He is currently the technical coordinator for a computer shop in North Iowa. E-mail him with ideas, tips or gadgets you think are worthy of mention in this space at [techtipster@gmail.com](mailto:techtipster@gmail.com)

