

GPS SATELLITE UPGRADE: Worth the expense?

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It's hard to swallow that pill, but if you look at all that relies on this technology you really have to ignore all those zeros and just accept that this upgrade has to be done. The two primary beneficiaries of this \$8 billion upgrade are: Boeing Co.'s Space and Intelligence Systems in El Segundo, building 12 satellites, and Lockheed Martin Corp. in Denver, assembling 18 others. Twenty-four will go into orbit and six will be reserved as spares.

Phase 1 is more than three years

behind schedule, costing taxpayers roughly \$1 billion. If you want to blame someone, you can blame the Air Force and their demands for new features such as the ability to upgrade the satellites' software while they are in space. Unreasonable or rational?

The new satellites are going to triple the amount of signals available for commercial use. Atomic clocks will be even more precise — keeping time to a fraction of a billionth of a second. I suppose that's a fraction of a bil-

lionth of a second for every dollar spent.

"GPS has truly become the lighthouse of the world," said Parkinson, 75, who is now professor emeritus at Stanford University. "It's just remarkable how the system has evolved over the past 30 years. It'll be just as interesting to see what will come in the next 30."

NTRAISSER@greystonetechnology.com | 720-496-1378

RECYCLING: Ways to donate or dispose of your old equipment

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would be much easier to just dump old computers or broken accessories in the trash, however, this results in either the poisoning of US landfills or the polluting of foreign countries.

Even more concerning is that many recycling center simply ship electronic waste to

foreign countries to harvest the useful but toxic parts inside by the poor. As a result, these areas have the world's highest levels of dioxins in the air. The pollution has caused elevated rates of cancer and miscarriages, as well as a variety of respiratory, skin, and eye ailments.

Whether you donate or recycle, please remember that while it takes extra time and planning to dispose of your electronics responsibly, you are following practices that save the environment as well as the health and well-being of others.

JSTANISLAV@greystonetechnology.com | 720-496-1376

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f. 303.362.8085
contact@greystonetechnology.com

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Comments? Suggestions? We would love to hear from you! Email Jamie Stanislav at jstanislav@greystonetechnology.com

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Responsibly Recycling Your Electronics

Disposing electronic equipment while protecting the environment and others

by Jamie Stanislav

We often receive calls from our clients and even the general public about how to dispose of electronics. Whether it be a concern for safely disposing of the hazardous materials computer equipment can house or a concern for one's privacy and security contained in old hard drives, many people don't know how to go about recycling their equipment. With a surge in green living, recycling and aiding the environment, we want to help you make the best decision when it comes to being a responsible. Luckily, depending on the state your electronics are in, you have several options for recycling.

If you plan to simply recycle your electronics, several programs can also be found in the area. Best Buy is currently supporting a Greener Together e-cycle program that offers free recycling of various equipment regardless of brand, age or where it was purchased. Simply bring in the used electronics to the store to have the equipment safely disposed. Go to BestBuy.com/recycling for detailed information about items accepted in your state.

If you would like to donate old electronics, there are several programs set up in the Denver area. Our favorite is a partnership program run by Dell & Goodwill. They accept almost all types of electronic equipment,

broken or usable, free of charge at numerous drop-off locations along the Front Range. Visit reconnectpartnership.com to see a list of items that can be accepted, find a drop-off point or read more about the program.

Another highly recommended recycling program is MeTech Recycling in Denver. Metech

recognized that data security is an on-going concern for individuals. Unlike Goodwill or BestBuy who will not accept hard drives, Metech Recycling will physically destroy your hard drive by sending it through our giant shredder when you drop it off. They completely de-manufacture& shred the electronics so that no one can gain

access to information that was once stored on the hard drives. However, MeTech does charge fees based on the type of equipment being disposed to help underwrite the cost of the responsible recycling process. Call them at (866)479-4920 for further details about their program.

You may be surprised to learn that electronic equipment is made up of more than just plastic and metal. Aluminum, mercury, lead and other hazardous materials and also main components of electronic parts. These materials poison the landfills they sit in as well as the soil underground, harming the land and water sources. You may think that it

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Blog Spot

Can Windows Phone 7 Save Microsoft's Mobile Platform?

by Matthew Lindahl



Given Microsoft's mixed history with the Windows operating systems, coupled with the recent success of Windows 7, the fate of the newly released Windows Phone 7 remains to be determined. In the past, the company was notorious for advertising a product then falling short of expectations by consumers. Just recently, Microsoft released the "Kin" mobile phone, running a "close cousin" of the yet-unreleased Windows Mobile 7. While I can't speculate the exact reason for its demise, Microsoft has discontinued the Kin as of June 30th, 2010. Some say because of limited functionality, others say too much data leaves the phone and goes who-knows-where.

The Windows Mobile family has always filled the corporate gap of

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The \$8 Billion Upgrade

Satellite-based navigation system being replaced for federal and commercial industry use

by Nate Traiser

The year is 1972 and a young Colonel by the name of Bradford W. Parkinson was called upon by the Pentagon to begin developing the first satellite-based navigation system. This crazy new idea was met with a lot of naysayers; folks in Washington were calling this project a waste of tax payers' money. But Parkinson and his team pushed ahead and in 1978, successfully launched their first satellite. By 1993, 21 satellites were in orbit and this new satellite-based navigation system was partially working. It wasn't long before

the military saw the value in this technology and began to incorporate it into their operations. The military now uses this technology endlessly from controlling drone planes, missiles, tracking soldiers and th list goes on.

Currently the Pentagon operates and controls this satellite navigation system used in every

country. Knowing this dependency, other countries are investing billions to develop their own system just in case the Pentagon decides to flip the switch and disable their access. This technology is used for more than just military purposes. Other industries have been using satellite intelligence like those in banking, mobile phone operations, and even control of power grids. All are facilitated by the accurate timing provided by GPS. Every industry is getting in on this new technology; farmers, surveyors or even geologists perform their work more efficiently, safely, economically, and accurately using the free and open GPS signals.

Commercial development of GPS technology has accelerated exponentially and there's no sign of stopping. Practically all new cars and mobile phones are equipped with GPS and that number is only going to continue to rise as the cost of manufacturing goes down.



Smartphones were once the de facto device for the traveling business man or woman and now that standard has expanded to practically all consumers. Given the advent of the iPhone and Droid equipped with hundreds of thousands of mobile apps, consumers have become more dependent upon GPS whether they realize it or not. ATM transactions, package tracking and emergency service dispatches are some of the everyday applications you wouldn't immediately associate with GPS.

However, there is a problem with the satellite-based navigation system, the existing GPS satellites will need to be replaced and upgraded. Consumer grade GPS receivers will be updated to within an arm's reach (3ft). Currently, the best measurements can only come within 20ft or more.

Unfortunately, this upgrade is going to come with a hefty cost. Are you ready? How does \$8B sound?! You read that right, \$8,000,000,000,000.00

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BLOG SPOT

New Windows Phone 7

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control by IT administrators, while still maintaining a consumer-like functionality. RIM's Blackberry showed it could handle email delivery, but with the lack of applications to install, it fell short of an all-around success as a mobile phone. Apple's iPhone, with its support for corporate email, has given Apple a definite jump to being on par with Microsoft. There are still features (as mentioned above, control by IT administrators) needed before it becomes a huge player in the game, though. With the overall success as a consumer-directed mobile phone, Apple may want to keep an eye on Windows Mobile 7. As long the success-train can bring the Windows Mobile OS family on board, Microsoft will continue to be the leader in corporate email environments. If it cannot, there are definitely some powerful contenders; however, only time will tell.

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Tabnabbing: A New Security Exploit

Infected websites threaten personal online security, putting account information at risk

by Scott Kerr

One of the latest phishing vessels to set sail has been christened "Tabnabbing" by web designer Aza Raskin. Here's how tabnabbers target unsuspecting victims: Let's say you visit an infected website. The malicious agent will wait, biding its time until you open a new tab or minimize your browser window. When you're not looking, your window will then be redirected to a carefully crafted copy of a website you frequent, Bank of America, Facebook, Hotmail, etc. Unwittingly, you think you've just left a tab open, you enter your login credentials and just like that, they have sensitive personal information. The truly alarming part is that the technology detects the sites you regularly visit (even sites you're currently logged into), making the threat far more targeted and potentially successful. Raskin's article is actually a working example of this technique, though the user name and

password fields on the fake phishing page will not let you enter any information.

Since the attack comes from compromised websites, the virus need not infect your own computer. It uses java script on the web page itself to redirect your browser. Unfortunately, this renders your anti-virus useless in this scenario. The forthcoming Account Manager for Firefox promises to prevent this and other phishing threats, but it is still in beta testing. For now, your best bet is to always start with a new browser tab/



window when you're about to enter sensitive information and close any windows/tabs you're finished with.

SKERR@greystonetech.com | 720-496-1374

Jailbreaking Your iPhone Just Got Easier

New laws allow device interoperability

by Matt Larson

Recently the first iPhone4 jailbreak was released. For reference, jailbreaking is a process that allows iPad, iPhone and iPod Touch users to load their own applications or apps unapproved by Apple on their devices by unlocking the operating system and allowing the user root access. Once jailbroken, users are able to download extensions and themes previously unavailable through the App Store. Some users feel their devices have been held back by Apple's restrictions like limited customizability, text message privacy issues, and a lack of multitasking capabilities.

You might think that this doesn't sound legal. Hacking devices automatically raises red flags, right? However, The Library of Congress added the following passage to

"Computer programs that enable wireless telephone handsets to execute software applications, where circumvention is accomplished for the sole purpose of enabling interoperability of such applications, when they have been lawfully obtained, with computer programs on the telephone handset."

the DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act):

In short, jailbreaking is now legal under state and federal law. However, there is a clause in

the phone contracts that will void warranties if this is done to your phone. For those who find the advantages of breaking this warranty and freeing your device from the parent company worthwhile, it's important to also keep in mind that there are consequences to adjusting your device that may or may not be greater than the cost of severing your contract. Any iPhone user running the iOS version 4.0.1 and earlier can go to www.jailbreakme.com from their iPhone browser, read more about the jailbreak and then follow the instructions to set your phone free.

MLARSON@greystonetech.com | 720-496-1381



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