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Pocket-lint's 2008 gadget and tech predictions

What we think is in store for consumer electronics fans

by Stuart Miles published on 1 January 2008

2007 is dead, long live 2008. Well another year gone and another year comes, but what do we have in store for us in 2008 from the gadget world? Plenty. Here are Pocket-lint's predictions for the year ahead.

Audio

If you live in the UK, get ready to be talk about the Zune. It might have been launched in the US for some time now, but that isn't going to stop Microsoft bringing its iPod wannabe to Great Britain in 2008.

As for other manufacturers, Creative is likely to impress with more innovative gadgets, most likely a touchscreen Zen and you can bet there will be a plethora of new headphones from Sennheiser offering you everything from more noise cancelling to waterproof designs.

Biz

The dot.com bubble that seems to be growing is still going to do so. Pocket-lint predicts sales of Facebook and Bebo.

CarAndGPS

On the GPS front there will be a move to include FM transmitters as standard allowing you to transmit the directions or music to your radio.

There will also be improvements to mapping software and possibly even the first Google Maps based standalone satnav device that connects to the Internet to give you all the benefits of the mapping service.

Likewise GPS will become, like cameras have for 2007, standard in all top of the range mobile phones. While car makers will finally (read hopefully) shift the cigarette lighter socket to the



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top of the dash board rather than buried down by the gear stick.

Gaming

It goes without saying that the latest iterations of Metal Gear Solid, Grand Theft Auto and Grand Turismo will be heading our way along with the yearly Fifas, Maddens and any other EA title with a '08 in it.

The UK is also likely to get Wii Fit before the summer's out and Microsoft will develop and launch a motion controlled element to their controller to compete with Nintendo.

Nintendo completely depleted of stock and 2 years after launch will use the excuse to update the popular Nintendo Wii adding in a DVD drive and other features.

Hardware

Lots will happen in the PC and Mac hardware arena in '08. There'll be updates to the Asus Eee as the company realises it's on to a winner, while Apple will launch an ultra-portable laptop. It won't be touchscreen as everyone predicts, that will be in 2009, however it will start to pave the way for the gadget to be embraced when it does launch next year.

Microsoft will slowly start to convince everyone that a home server in their cupboard is a good thing, while storage on a whole, be it hard drive based, Solid state or just memory cards will all grow in size. 1TB won't be so impressive come 1 Jan 2009.

HomeCinema

Format war, what format war? That's right, both parties will still carry on regardless spouting that Blu-ray is better than HD DVD and that HD DVD is better than Blu-ray. What both camps will fail to realise is that if they aren't careful a series of announcements by Microsoft, Apple, DivX and other players will mean that everyone is downloading content as they want it rather than

bothering to own it on disk. It happened to the music industry and it will happen to the movie industry with big players claiming they never saw it coming. Will we have movie rental store Blockbuster come 2009? Yes, but only just.

On the TV front there will be a move to OLED technology for screens, Canon's SED technology will be revisited and LCD will still continue but won't be the future of the goggle box.

Phones

2007 was clearly the year of the iPhone, 2008 is going to be the year of the Gphone. Although Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple, has promised a 3G iPhone in 2008, it will be Google's software platform that has big phone names like HTC launching new phones on the new OS.

Additionally following Apple's user interface there will be a great focus on usability and software rather than just design. Just as Motorola changed the way companies looked at how a phone was designed after the RAZR was released, companies like Nokia and Sony Ericsson will be trying to beat the iPhone, and with the size of their R & D budgets, it won't be long before we see something.

Photo

It's all going to be about sharing in 2008 not megapixels. Having seen that 12 megapixels on a compact camera doesn't necessary give you the best results we are going to see manufacturers look at ways of making sharing your images much easier.

Finally waking up to the idea that camera phones are becoming a threat, we will see new ways of getting your image off your camera on to your computer via Wi-Fi or Bluetooth.

Likewise there will be a shift to improving home printing even further and Wi-Fi digital photo frames will become the defacto rather than something special.

Likewise GPS allowing you to tag where you took

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your pictures will be introduced as we all strive for more information.

Finally expect everything to be labelled with HD. If it's worked for the television industry you can be sure that the buzzword for the photography industry is that everything is high-def.

Software

Vista will get its first service pack making it slightly easier to use, while Mac users will also get a new version of Office from Microsoft.

Online and there will be an explosion in review collecting sites that all promise to give you a round-up of everyone's content without you have to visit each site one at a time.

Facebook will lose its popularity following more intrusions from advertising mess ups and the fact that everyone will be bored with the "Stuart is..." status update. However not before the founder has sold it to some unsuspecting company who will try desperately hard to justify the billions of dollars they've just spent.

Expect LinkedIn to take its place as the social networking site everyone in the office will be talking about, especially now the site is accepting third party apps.

Cloud computing is going to be the big buzz phrase for the year ahead with the possible launch of the GDrive, online storage from Google, paving the way for a Google-flavoured OS.

Will we be right? Will we have got it completely wrong over what's in store over the next 12 months? There is only one way to find out. Regular visits to Pocket-lint, of course.

You can be sure we will keep you up to date with all the latest news, reviews, comments and much more from the world of technology and gadgets.

As we say on Megawhat.tv - stay tuned...