



eAnswers

All Your Tech Problems Solved



A Techy Christmas Special

Christmas is big business—not only does it make companies like Nintendo, Sony and Microsoft very rich, but it's also a chance to marvel at what's coming up this festive season, and look back on the past year. The Nintendo Wii (left) has been the surprise best-selling console of



the year—I have several family members, friends of family members and friends generally who all want Wiis but can't for the life of them find one anywhere. It may not have the graphics of the PS3 or the XBOX 360 (far right), but it has an innovative control stick, a nice price tag and is something all the family can get involved with—which is more than you can say for Grand Theft Auto and Bioshock. Apple (not for the

first time) is definitely eyeing up the Christmas season and rubbing it's hands with glee. Not only do we have the (somewhat expensive) iPod Touch, but we also have the iPhone (below) and (for those of us with lighter wallets) the iPod Nano. Of course, you're still tied into iTunes and proprietary stuff, and if you hack your iPhone to get off 02, the Apple will release an update and render your device unusable. But either way, it's a great and stylish stocking filler—albeit at a price. Another nice Apple product is the Mac Mini (top right), which is ridiculously small and makes a great media centre PC—but it comes with...well...itself and a remote. No monitor, screen, or even a mouse. Also,



I wouldn't recommend buying it here at £500 when you can buy it over the net in the US and get it shipped

here by courier for £100-£200 less—but it's definitely a stylish addition to any living space.

The Past Year So, now comes the time of year to start summarizing things. For instance, my relationship with Vista is definitely a love-hate one. I love it's new features but I hate it's UAC prompts and Secure Desktops. I have the same thing with Office 2007—I love it's new way of doing things but hate all the questions I'm repeatedly asked by people (Covered below). AMD are behind Intel, but only because they're doing proper Quad Cores (Intel just stuck two dual cores together). 2007 was a big year for technology—I hope 2008 is even better!



The XBOX 360 Elite System is a stunning bit of kit—I just hope they iron out the problems...

GET INVOLVED!

Do you have a tech problems that needs solving? Do you have any suggestions for future workshops or articles?

EMAIL BOB MOSS ON THE COLLEGE NETWORK

GET INTERACTIVE!

Why not visit Bob's Tech site?

www.bjm1904.741.com



That's the general area you're looking for, with the circle being the file menu. It's a much more intuitive menu, but it definitely takes some getting used to

Office 2007 Solved—ONCE & FOR ALL!

As I said above, Office 2007 has a lot of confusing traits about it. These confusing traits confuse people. These confused people then come and ask me to unconfuse them. This is fine, but I am always asked the same questions, so I think it is time to put this situation to bed, and for you to be at peace with Office 2007... or something like that...!

Where's the File Menu?

It's the anonymous icon in the top-left hand corner. The menu's quite innovative. See the picture on the far right.

Why don't my Office 2007 files work with Office XP?

Because you're using the new file formats. I'll explain. Microsoft has introduced a new file format called 'OpenXML' which it's trying to establish as a new

standard (and has so far failed). What this means is that your file is like an archive and you could open it in WinZip if you really wanted to. In real terms to the user, it just means slightly larger, higher quality files. The best indicator of an Office 2007 OpenXML file is an 'x' at the end (i.e. a word document would normally end in .doc, the OpenXML version ends in .docx). Now, Office XP isn't natively compatible with this, so we have two options. One is to install an add-on for Office XP (downloadable from the Microsoft website) for the OpenXML standards (you'll also want the XPS toolkit as well), or you can go into File > Save and save in '97-2004 Format', so you just save them in the same formats you always used—but the second option is so much simpler when you're moving between two

versions of Office.

What are 'Ribbons'?

Those strange bars at the top of an Office 2007 app. Instead of your usual menu bar and tools, you've got a ribbon. For experienced Office XP users, we have to relearn where everything is. For new users, you're safe, as you'll be new to it anyway. It reveals lots of options which were previously hard to find, but this is one radical shift of interface.

Why doesn't my speech recognition work?

This is the only version of Office without it. You're expected to use Office 2007 on Vista (very optimistic), which has superb speech recognition. If you're using Windows XP, then you're screwed, really!