

the digital life



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▶▶ BITS & BYTES



Digital comics

Sony's PSP and PSPgo hand-held game consoles now double as kiddie Kindles for comic fans. More than 400 comics – mostly Marvel, but also Disney, IDW and Rebellion titles – can be downloaded via wi-fi for \$1.75 to \$2.45 a title from the PlayStation Store. More than a dozen free comics give PSP users a tempting taste to encourage purchases. First, update your PSP to firmware 6.20, then click the Digital Comics icon under the extras column on the XMB menu. View frame by frame, zooming in and out on strips including *Spider-Man*, *X-Men*, *The Fantastic Four*, *Mickey Mouse*, *Donald Duck*, *Transformers*, *Star Trek* and *2000AD*.
■ \$1.75 to \$2.45 from www.playstation.com

Cheap phone

Samsung's entry-level S3653 touchscreen handset has arrived here as the Boost Mobile Touch. This handset doesn't work on 3G networks and is locked to the Boost Mobile/Optus network. It runs only on the slow Optus 2G network, which Optus says is "great for people who just want to be able to make and receive calls and SMS messages". There's an FM radio and MP3 player, but no 3.5mm jack for your own earphones.
■ \$179 from www.boost.com.au



Tripod for mobiles

JOBY'S Gorillapod range of flexible tripods continues to extend its tentacles into new markets and now includes options for mobile phones and similar small devices. The Gorillamobile, \$42, and Gorillamobile for 3G/3GS, \$59 (above), have the same ball-and-socket legs as the Gorillapod, but are designed for mobiles, PDAs, media players, portable game consoles, mini video cameras and pocket projectors. Options for attaching your device to the Gorillamobile include a suction cup, two adhesive clips and a standard tripod screw. It stands 15cm high and weighs 46g.
■ \$42 and \$59 from www.maxwell.com.au

Websites are a breeze with Mr Site

Setting up your own website is easy, whether it is for a hobby or business, writes **STEPHEN FENECH**

HAVE you always wanted your own website but didn't how to go about building one?

Trying to establish your own domain name can be a minefield, then there is the drama of finding the right person to design the page and then manage everything when it is all in place.

A new all-in-one solution called Mr Site Takeaway Website Pro takes users through every step to establish a professional-looking dot com website from scratch, even if you're a beginner.

Once you enter the included activation code on the Mr Site website you are off and running.

One of the first tasks is finding a unique .com, .net, .org or .com.au domain name, so it's just a matter of entering your desired address into the directory and seeing if it's taken already.

If you already own a domain name it can also be used with Mr Site.

The next step is designing the look and feel of the site and hundreds of page templates provide an excellent starting point with the ability to customise features to suit your purposes.

It is here where users can decide on the number of pages



needed (users can have up to 99) within the site and if any other widgets, logos and other features like photo galleries are required.

Mr Site is powerful enough to produce everything from casual, hobby sites all the way through to ecommerce sites.

Each package comes with security and is PayPal compatible.

Being PC and Mac compatible, Mr Site makes setting up the site easy, but it is just as easy to manage and update the page whether it is adding a new blog entry

and pictures or uploading or removing stock and editing product descriptions.

Included with the price is up to 50 email addresses, 600MB of hosting space on the Mr Site servers for 12 months, plus phone and email support if you run into any difficulties.

There are also Meta and ALT tags which are used to let sites such as Google know what your site is all about so it can be placed higher in searches.

It is also possible to receive search engine results and statistics on the number of visitors that come to the site.

Extra features include an image editor to crop and arrange pictures in a photo gallery, along with a contact form and guest book to give visitors the ability to leave a message on the site.

Users can also create a forum where visitors can discuss chosen topics and developments and add-ons which can help incorporate Google maps and even a Twitter feed.

After the first 12 months, hosting the website will cost \$19.95 per month.

■ Mr Site Takeaway Website is \$249.95 from mrsite.com

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Borderlands
(360/PS3/PC – Gearbox)

MAKE no mistake, *Borderlands* is pretty. The broken-down, gang-riddled backwater planet of Pandora looks like a moving high-quality graphic novel. Every surface is hand-drawn or hand-painted with a bright and varied pallet.

GAME ON!
POWERED BY IGN.COM

But there's no involving story. Its "mercenaries hunting a cache of alien technology" plot gives players a reason to play hard and never takes itself seriously; every character is unhinged to some degree. Instead of providing sophisticated AI and complex battle arenas, *Borderlands* keeps combat simple and accessible.

Tactical depth comes from the role playing elements. Each of the four characters has a special ability and a set of skills. When you earn enough experience points to increase level, damage resistance improves and you can put points toward improving your skills.

Then there's the loot. Tougher enemies explode in fountains of cash, health packs, guns and gear when killed. *Borderlands'* procedural gear generator blends stats and "elemental" abilities to create guns of wildly differing capabilities. While stat-heads will enjoy deciding what to use, save for later or sell, you can never be sure what the next gangster will shoot at you with.

Borderlands' campaign is designed for co-operative multiplayer. You can recruit up to three others into a private lobby or open your game and see who drops in. The more folks on with you, the tougher the enemies are, but they drop better loot when killed.

Borderlands isn't perfect. My Xbox 360 had trouble loading textures when I entered a new zone; objects looked out of focus for a few seconds (high end PCs may not have this trouble with the Windows version). Solo play feels shallow and lonely sometimes. Finally, while its co-op nature cuts down on jerks, high-level drop-ins can kick the difficulty up unexpectedly and hog the action.

Nonetheless, the game is worth your \$99.00. Its stripped-down FPS/RPG hybrid action, unique looks, quirky humour, plethora of loot and downloadable new regions will keep you coming back to it, especially if you can get friends along.

■ Review by Rob Farquar