

# LANsultants Times

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## WHAT'S NEW

### SOFTWARE

Microsoft and Corel are scheduled to release major upgrades to their product lines this spring. Microsoft plans to release new versions of Windows Server, MS-Exchange and MS-Office. Corel is expected to bring a new version of WordPerfect to market.

MS Office 11 is scheduled for release in June. The major enhancement is better integration with corporate back office programs and more manageable e-mail. Contrary to earlier technical specifications MS-Office 11 will NOT be compatible with MS-Windows 95/98/Me and will ONLY run on MS-2000 Pro and XP Pro workstations.

Corel WordPerfect Office 11 is scheduled for release in late April. Enhancements include improved MS-Outlook integration and an option for using the blue DOS WP5.1-style interface. WP 11 also includes automatic Table of Authorities generation, eFilings enhancements, document mapping functions and improved MS-Word compatibility.

MS-2003 Server, formerly called .NetServer, is scheduled for release in April. It promises greater reliability and security, but the two most interesting new features are SharePoint, a collaboration tool, and a "shadow" feature that will allow users to retrieve earlier versions of documents.

Exchange 2003 is scheduled for release this summer and includes an enhanced web interface and better security, eliminating the need for a VPN. Exchange 2003 will also be faster and more secure.

For the adventurous, Sun's StarOffice 6.1 is scheduled for release in the fall of 2003. StarOffice runs on Linux, Solaris and MS-Windows workstations. StarOffice provides compatibility with most MS-Office files and is very inexpensive.

### HARDWARE

We expect that the most dramatic information technology advances in 2003 will be in the area of mobile computing.

Intel's Centrino notebook technology bundles a number of existing technologies into a single system that is the best solution for notebook performance, battery life and wireless connectivity. If you travel cross-country, you will want a Centrino Notebook for those long air flights. For more local travelers a tablet PC may be preferable.

Wireless networks continue to improve. The new wireless-54G (802.11g) standard is 5 times faster than WiFi (802.11b) and does not need as many access points as 802.11a. LANsultants still prefers category 5e cabling over wireless solutions because wireless networks still suffer from electronic interference due to cordless phones, microwave ovens, adjacent wireless networks and other devices sharing the 2.4 Ghz radio spectrum. Wireless-54G is only ½ the speed of 100BaseT cabled systems and with data encryption wireless-54G may be only ¼ the speed!

Of course, computers will also continue to get faster and more powerful. AMD is expected to beat Intel with the release of the first 64-bit processor for Wintel systems (PCs running MS Windows on Intel-compatible CPUs). AMD's Opteron CPU will provide 64-bit functionality and full 32-bit program compatibility. Although AMD CPU's have been accepted by gamers, corporate America has been hesitant to move away from Intel CPUs. The Opteron may change that.

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