

## Tips, Tricks and Advice from your local “IT Guru”

This month I want to do a general round up of what's been happening in the tech world.

As most of you know, Windows 10 has been out for a while and things are beginning to settle down. I still think it's a good upgrade, and for home users there is little to worry about. There are a couple of things that may catch you out though. I have come across a few older printers that are not happy with the new Windows and some older programs might not work. If you are using Windows 8.1 then it's likely that you have modern enough hardware and software, so everything will be fine. But if your PC is still on Windows 7 and the printer is from the same era, then you may have some problems.

Apple has just announced a new line-up of iPhones, iPads, and TV boxes (as they do every year at this time). The phones are an incremental update – nothing too radical, even though Apple's tagline is “The only thing that's changed is everything!” They have slightly better cameras, a slightly faster processor, and are slightly stronger to resist bending. One new feature is 3D Touch, which means that different things happen depending on how hard you touch the screen. The demos shown of this look quite interesting, but I'm not sure it's life changing! There is now an iPad Pro, which has a 13-inch screen and the option to accessorise it with a stylus and keyboard. In this respect, Apple are definitely trying to copy Microsoft's Surface. I'm not sure who this is going to appeal to... at that size a laptop makes more sense to me, and at over £1000 it looks to be firmly in the CEO/Boardroom territory. IOS 9 is now available as a free download for most iPhones and iPads. Again, it's not a major update, just an incremental improvement on IOS 8. Lastly on the Apple front was a new Apple TV box. Whilst this doesn't look much better than the existing product at the moment, it now supports 3<sup>rd</sup> party apps, so once developers get going it should be a much more versatile piece of technology.

Samsung, Sony, and Motorola have all announced new Smartphones in the last couple of months, which are all flagship phones with correspondingly high prices. The only exception is Motorola with the Moto G, which at around £160 is still my favourite bargain buy.

Microsoft is still promising Windows 10 Mobile before the end of the year, and they will hopefully announce new hardware to go along with the upgraded operating system. With any luck, these devices will be top of the line phones that support new features like Continuum. This allows for the device to adapt to the way in which the user wants to interact – as a 'PC' with a keyboard, or as an ordinary phone with touch capability. In essence, this will make Windows Mobile a valid choice for power users once again.

I have also been playing with what looks to be the 'must have' toy this Christmas. The Sphero BB-8 is a tiny Star Wars robot that is controlled with an app on your phone. It also has some built in intelligence so it learns the layout of your room and can wander around on its own. A quick Google search will turn up plenty of information and videos showing this amazing robot in action and, if you have children (or want one yourself), I would get your order in quickly.

If you have any questions or anything you would like me to cover in this column, email me at [look@4-11consultants.co.uk](mailto:look@4-11consultants.co.uk)

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