

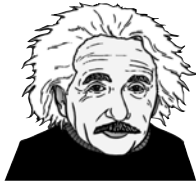


SPECIAL REPORT

Internet and Travel Software



SPECIAL REPORT... Internet and Travel Software



Ask the Experts: Top Internet and Travel Software

This year over 90 experts judged over 650 nominations for the *Smartphone & Pocket PC* magazine Best Software Awards 2006. Our judges had plenty to say about their favorite products. In this issue we are publishing their comments about the programs nominated for the Internet and Travel software categories. We will publish their comments on other software categories in future issues.

Edited by Rich Hall

The purpose of publishing the comments is to give insights into a variety of products—not to show how the judges voted. For the sake of brevity, we've included only one or two comments per product and edited them for clarity and conciseness. A listing of the 2006 winners and finalists can be found on our Web site (Smartphonemag.com/awards).

INTERNET SOFTWARE

BROWSERS AND WEB UTILITIES

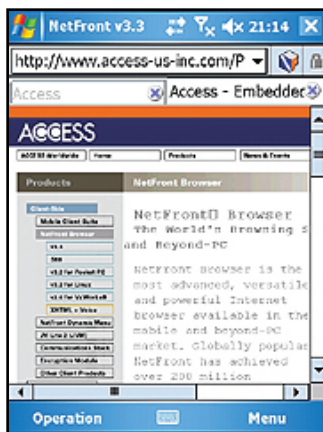
This category provided an interesting mix of approaches to accessing Internet content, including alternate Web browsers, enhancements to Internet Explorer Mobile, and online proxies that reformat Web pages for smaller screens. Many of the custom browsers had problems rendering complex sites. (Russ Terrell)

Hubdog

hubdog.com

Hubdog has a very nice user interface that allows you to fetch news via categories. It also has the ability to share feeds, play enclosures, and also has OPML import support. It is very easy to set up, and best of all, it's free. (Steven Hughes) Nice idea and interface, but it has strange content that isn't very useful. It needs more information on how to set the program up. (Russ Terrell)

(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)



NetFront is a good alternative to Internet Explorer Mobile.

NetFront 3.3

nfppc.access.co.jp/english

NetFront is a super Web browser that handles Java and Flash! (Carlo Guerrero) It's not as good as Opera Mobile, but still much better than Internet Explorer Mobile. (Werner Ruotsalainen)

Full installation occupies 10 MB, making it a must to install this program on a storage card. Also, it's much slower starting up than Pocket Internet Explorer. (Remzi Semsettin Turer)

(Available for Pocket PC only)

Multie

southwaycorp.net/multiie.htm

Adds loads of features to Pocket Internet Explorer, including an efficient URL maker that cuts down input time tremendously. I love the tabbed interface—opening new windows or going to active frames in Web sites has never been easier. However, the menu system needs



to be updated to take advantage of the two soft keys used on Windows Mobile 5 Pocket PCs.

(Carlo Guerrero)

(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

Opera Mobile is available for Pocket PCs and Smartphones.

Opera Mobile

opera.com

Hands-down, this is the best in its category. It has much better context menus and features. (Werner Ruotsalainen) It has a simple UI and renders Web sites fast. There are some issues on the Dell X51v, though, and more configuration options are needed. (Rishad Alam)

(Available for Pocket PC, Smartphone, and other mobile devices)

PIEPlus

reensoft.com/PIEPlus

A powerhouse of features with a great UI—best of its breed! (Paul O'Brien) PIEPlus really boosts the functionality of Pocket Internet Explorer with features like tabbed browsing, screen dragging, page optimization for small devices, and URL aliases. You have to have it!

(Alex Januschewsky)

(Available for Pocket PC only)

The Experts

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Rishad Alam | aximsite.com |
| Lutz Bendlin | pocketgpsworld.com |
| Rob Borek | pocketpcvision.com |
| Gianni Carfagno | solopalmar.com |
| David Conger | davespda.com |
| Jack Cook | experiencemobility.com |
| Helio Diamant | pocketpcfreak.com |
| Clinton Fitch | clintonfitch.com |
| Bradley Gillett | freewebs.com/smart |
| Dick Grier | hardandsoftware.net |
| Carlo Guerrero | theunwired.net |
| Tim Hillebrand | smartphonemag.com |
| Steven Hughes | bostonpocketpc.com |
| John Hung | |
| Alex Januschewsky | mobilitynews.net |
| Frank McPherson | pocketpchow2.com |
| Brandon Miniman | pocketnow.com |
| Geoffrey Moehl | |
| Paul O'Brien | modaco.com |
| Werner Ruotsalainen | winmobiletech.com |
| Steve Sande | gizmoranch.com |
| Jose Luis Kuri Segura | ob-center.com/ppcenter |
| Michael Sommer | firstcoastnews.com |
| Ben Stanley | smartphonemag.com/blogs |
| Russ Terrell | mozongoware.com |

SPECIAL REPORT... Internet and Travel Software

Skweezer

greenlightwireless.net

Skweezer is a very useful online service, not a program. It optimizes Web pages for small devices and reduces traffic costs. Go and use it! (*Alex Januschewsky*)

(Available for Pocket PC, Smartphone, and other mobile devices)

Toonel.net

toonel.net

This is a great proxy application, but the UI needs improvement. As is, it's more suited to tech users. (*Remzi Semsettin Turer*) A great bandwidth saver service, but it needs better stability and availability. (*Werner Ruotsalainen*) (Available for Pocket PC, Smartphone, and other mobile devices)



One of ThunderHawk's features is the ability to adjust Web page resolution.

ThunderHawk 2.0 PPC Edition

bitstream.com

A great Internet browser, especially the subscription based model. (*Paul O'Brien*) It does a fine job optimizing pages for smaller screens, but there are some incompatibilities with hardware buttons on Fujitsu-Siemens Pocket PCs. (*Gianni Carfagno*)

(Available for Pocket PC, Smartphone, and other mobile devices)

CHAT AND MESSAGING

Agile Messenger

agilemobile.com

Although still in Beta release, this is an excellent messenger that works rather well with all the leading messenger services. I hope the final version comes out soon. (*Rishad Alam*) Agile Messenger shows "away states," integrates multiple services intuitively, and comes with a Today screen plug-in. However, it needs to be made more stable. (*Brandon Miniman*) (Available for Pocket PC, Smartphone, and other mobile devices)



IM+ Mobile Instant Messenger supports many different chat clients in one program.

IM+ Mobile Instant Messenger

shapeservices.com

IM+ supports all the major chat networks, including MSN, AOL, ICQ, Yahoo and Jabber. (*Remzi Semsettin Turer*) It integrates WM5 notifications well. However, it is too expensive, the Smartphone version doesn't scale to QVGA, and it doesn't make use of WM5 soft keys. (*Brandon Miniman*)

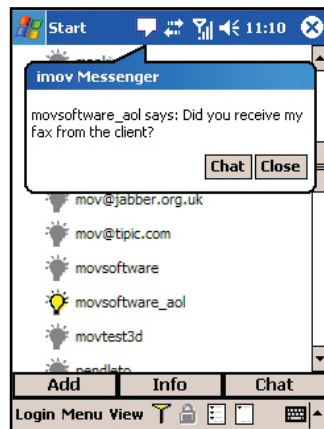
(Available for Pocket PC, Smartphone, and other mobile devices)

AOL Instant Messenger

aim.com; purchase from handango.com

It has a reliable connection to the AIM service and a familiar user interface. However, it hasn't been updated in ages, it doesn't connect to multiple services, and it doesn't take advantage of soft keys. (*Brandon Miniman*)

(Available for Pocket PC only)



imov Messenger supports universal instant messaging.

imov Messenger

movsoftware.com

A good universal messenger, but the interface has room for improvement. (*Rishad Alam*) Works well with Google Talk, but it doesn't make use of soft keys. (*Brandon Miniman*) (Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

E-MAIL

FlexMail 2006

webis.net

This is definitely the best alternative mail client around—the developer continually updates and improves it. (*Paul O'Brien*) I like the flexibility of being able to store e-mail on a storage card. I also like how you can maximize screen space by using tabs for To, CC, and BCC at the top of a new message window. It handles HTML mail well, but I can't figure out how to configure IMAP accounts to download more than just headers on a send/receive. (*Frank McPherson*)

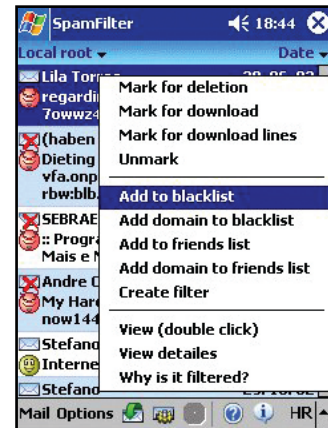
(Available for Pocket PC only)

Qmail

qmail.org; download pocketpcfreewares.com

Qmail has all the functions you need in an e-mail client. In addition, it supports RSS and News (NNTP), and lets you save messages on a storage card. Unfortunately, it doesn't follow the standard Pocket PC installation process, and the soft input panel covers up some input boxes during the account set up. (*Frank McPherson*)

(Available for Pocket PC only)



Pocket SpamFilter has hundreds of predefined filters and blacklisted domains.

Pocket SpamFilter

pocketpcsoft.net

It's the most useful program in this category. I like how it integrates with Contacts to automatically identify friends. It did a good job of identifying my test spam, but only works with POP3 accounts. (*Frank McPherson*) (Available for Pocket PC only)

Smartfeed

smartfeed.org

This one seems to be a "work in progress." I kept getting "NotSupportedException" errors and it took some time to determine that I needed to configure the program to save podcasts

SPECIAL REPORT... Internet and Travel Software

to main memory; the default is a storage card, which I don't have. Podcasts tend to be large, so you really need a storage card for this to be practical. (Dick Grier)
(Available for Pocket PC only)

NEWS READERS

News Reader programs automatically download headlines, sports, business, and other news to your Windows Mobile device, allowing you to stay up to date wherever you are. This was without a doubt the most difficult category to judge because many programs of true quality have been nominated. Each of the top nominees did 80% of what I wanted, and the missing 20% was found on one of the other programs. There isn't any real gap in quality among them. (Ben Stanley)

A6.Times

alien6tech.com

A6.Times formats and organizes information like a news paper. It is a very cool solution. However, the interface isn't as simple and intuitive as I would like. The buttons along the bottom are very small and should be sized appropriately for small screens. Also, A6.Times seemed to run slower than some other solutions.

(David Conger)

(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)



Egress can display all your RSS feeds.

Egress

garishkernels.net

Egress has a Today screen plug-in, supports RDF, and has a quick-view feature that automatically expands a news item when you click on it. It supports languages using different character sets, like Hebrew, Arabic, and Thai, and has recently added support for Podcasts.

(Helio Diamant)

(Available for Pocket PC only)

FeederReader

feederreader.com

I am very impressed with its overall performance, although it is not as intuitive as I would

like and requires some serious thought to understand all of its features. (Jack Cook)
(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)



NewsBreak brings you alerts, automatic updates, and unlimited news sources.

NewsBreak

iliumsoft.com

Easy user interface; has the ability to fit feed to screen and to control font size; support for all standards including RDF; support for non-Western characters like Hebrew; notifications when items are received; ability to use storage card for database; small today applet doesn't take more than 1 line. Support for Podcasts could be added. (Helio Diamant)

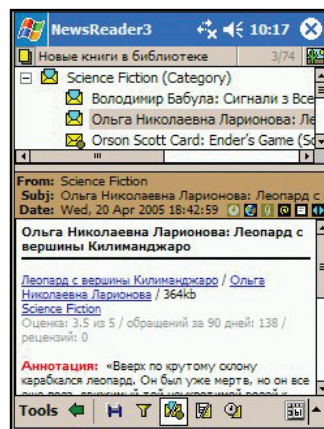
(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

PocketRSS

happyjackroad.net

One of the most feature-rich news readers out there, but the user interface takes a bit of getting used to. (Ben Stanley) PocketRSS is simple and easy to use, downloads content quickly, and has support for Podcasts. (Helio Diamant)

(Available for Pocket PC only)



NewsReader 3 lets you download NNTP news feeds to your Pocket PC.

Qusnetsoft NewsReader 3

qusnetsoft.ru

In terms of functionality, this is one of the best NNTP clients available. However, it was very difficult to install and did not work on most of my devices. When it does work, it's very good. (Helio Diamant) Like other applications from Qusnetsoft, NewsReader needs an overhaul. It could use more features supported by Windows Mobile 5 and larger icons when running on devices with smaller screens. (David Conger)

(Available for Pocket PC only)

pRSSreader

en.softonic.com

This one is packed full of features, has a good UI, and best of all, it's free. It's getting better with each version. (Paul O'Brien)

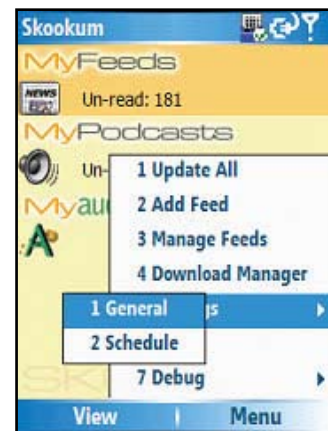
(Available for Pocket PC only)

RSSToGo

gomobilesolutions.com

The simple interface works well and it is a good value. Finding feeds is a pain though, so some help there would be great. (Dick Grier)

(Available for Pocket PC only)



Skookum is a free mobile RSS aggregator.

Skookum Subscriber

skookummobil.com

Skookum has a great feature that searches MSN, OPML, and Podscope for feeds and podcasts. It has a simple interface which is easy to use. It could use some extra features to really set it apart, such as the ability to search sites. (David Conger)

(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

WinMobile Fusion

adisasta.com

While it does have RSS capability, WinMobile Fusion also supports downloading content using BitTorrent (a peer-to-peer file distribution system). The user interface is very stylized and looks cool, but is confusing and difficult to

SPECIAL REPORT... Internet and Travel Software

figure out. Priced at \$25, this is the most expensive news reader. (David Conger) (Available for Pocket PC only)

TERMINALS

Terminal programs allow you to access a network remotely and quickly fix an issue with the network or a machine on it. (Lutz Bendlin) These programs are essential to many systems and network administrators. (Rob Borek)

Mocha Pocket TN5250

mochasoft.dk

It has good emulation for AS/400. Right now they sell separate emulation products for each platform. It's time to make one product that does it all. (Helio Diamant) They should put black text on a white background so it is easier to read, and add a direct serial connection as an option. (Lutz Bendlin) (Available for Pocket PC only)

mToken

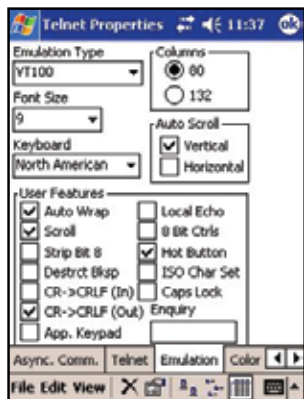
choung.net

It is a great application for Telnet, but the SSH support is very minimal. (Remzi Semsettin Turer) An excellent application. The custom-made font is great and the customer support is impressive. (Rishad Alam) (Available for Pocket PC only)

PockeTTY

dejavirusoftware.com

It supports SSH1, SSH2, SSL, Linux, Unix, and all text-based machines. They should add support for block-based machines like the IBM 3270 and 5250. (Helio Diamant) It uses a variation of ClearType to render small fonts more readable. It also has extensive file transfer options and can run multiple sessions in parallel. (Lutz Bendlin) (Available for Pocket PC only)



Remotely connect to devices and host systems using vxHpc.

vxHpc

cam.com

It's very dependable and has a good set of

customizable options, but the GUI could be better. (Rishad Alam) Originally designed for Windows CE Handheld PCs, it still has a lot of CE feel to it (e.g., you have to double-tap to activate a session). (Lutz Bendlin) (Available for Pocket PC only)

TRAVEL SOFTWARE

GUIDES

CIA World Factbook 2006 Handheld Edition

towncompass.com

It provides solid information; a good preparation for travel to unknown countries. It's very easy to find information thanks to the letter indexing. It also offers choices of fonts and font sizes, and you can scroll images smoothly rather than by page. (Lutz Bendlin) I hate to use up valuable storage space for data and would prefer to be able to access this data online with a screen optimized for a Smartphone. (Tim Hillebrand) (Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)



Fizz Traveller is a great travel companion, including world times, itinerary help, and currency conversion.

Fizz Traveller

fizzsoftware.com

From a traveler's perspective, this has it all, including the Home screen plug-in. It's very intuitive and easy to use, and the screens navigate quickly and easily. However, it can be slow when you're updating it, and the first time you use the software it updates everything, which takes a considerable amount of time. (Bradley Gillett) The program would benefit from a simpler UI. (Lutz Bendlin) (Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

MapKing

mapasia.com

It has lively colors, good coverage of Asian cities, and is reasonably fast. They should add house number data where applicable. Map scrolling is very slow. (Lutz Bendlin) It has some U.S. and European coverage as well. (Steven Hughes) (Available for Pocket PC only)

Mobile TimeSync

slipstreamolutions.co.uk

This program lets you sync your device clock

with reliable atomic NTP time servers on the Internet. By default, you have to register the program at startup, which I don't like. It also assumes that you have a direct Internet connection; it needs to support proxy connections as well. (Lutz Bendlin) (Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)



Explore an interactive 3D earth with Pocket Earth.

Pocket Earth

bluepointstudio.com

This program looks very good and its performance is astonishing, even on slower Pocket PCs. It holds a lot of useful information about countries and cities all over the earth. However, the menu buttons are not suited to the rest of the UI—a more modest look would improve their readability. (Lutz Bendlin) (Available for Pocket PC only)



Skyguide provides up-to-date flight schedules for a number of airlines.

Skyguide for Pocket PC

traveldesks.com

This is a very complete flight guide. If you are loyal to a particular airline, you can download their schedule for free. (Michael Sommer) (Available for Pocket PC only)

SPECIAL REPORT... Internet and Travel Software

Rough Guide Maps

visualit.co.uk

This one provides good coverage of items that are important for tourists, including transportation, museums, restaurants, and other points of interest. It helps you orient yourself before and during a trip. However, the trial period is too short to let you appreciate the features of the program. (Lutz Bendlin)

(Available for Pocket PC only)

Traffic Vizzion

vizzion.com

It has direct access to traffic cameras which makes it a good alternative to the sometimes unreliable traffic messages received through the radio (both verbal and TMC). It also keeps a list of previously viewed cameras. The speed of the application could be improved. (Lutz Bendlin)

(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

Vindigo City Guide

vindigo.com

Provides information and maps on over 70 major U.S. metropolitan areas and London. It even lists public restrooms. It looks like it has been around since the days of CE 1.0; a face-lift may be in order. Also, it only allows synchronization of information via ActiveSync; it should implement over-the-air synchronization too. (Lutz Bendlin)

(Available for Pocket PC only)



WorldMate provides up-to-date weather information, flight schedules, world time, and more.

WorldMate 2006

mobimate.com

Worldmate has a heap of useful features that come in handy when you are preparing for a trip, or when you need to change plans in the middle of one. The user interface is finger friendly and easy to operate. Data can be updated through ActiveSync, but also over the air while you are on the road. (Lutz Bendlin) The performance, information, and speed are great,

and the new port they have done for the Motorola Q works very well. (Bradley Gillett) (Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

The screenshot shows the Zagat mobile application interface. At the top, it says 'Zagat - Home' and 'New York City'. Below that, there's a table of restaurant ratings. The table has columns for Name, F, D, S, and C. The data is as follows:

Name	F	D	S	C
101	21	18	19	\$38
107 West	17	13	16	\$28
12th St. Bar & Grill	21	19	19	\$34
14 Wall Street	19	21	20	\$48
202 Cafe	-	-	-	M
21 Club	21	22	23	\$63
212	18	18	17	\$42
26 Seals	23	18	21	\$34
343	-	-	-	M
360	24	14	17	\$36
44	20	23	17	\$52
44 & X Hell's Kicc...	21	18	19	\$41
445	-	-	-	M

Zagat lets you access ratings and reviews of hotels, restaurants, and much more.

Zagat To Go

mobile.zagat.com

Zagat To Go provides Zagat guides to mobile users. Unfortunately, I found the coverage frugal at best. Many good restaurants in outlying parts of my city were missing. Also, when you access maps, they are fetched over and over again from Zagat; it would make more sense if they established a map cache on your device for these maps which would reduce transfer costs and make map browsing quicker. (Lutz Bendlin)

(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

INFO MANAGERS

EZGo for Pocket PC

tonaya.com

EZGo is a feature-rich application that lets you synchronize your Calendar with it and export travel, credit card, contact, and weather info. It also offers flight schedules and departure delay info. (Tim Hillebrand) This program provides a decent itinerary log where travelers can keep their trip-related info. The graphical resolution could use some improvements, and it would be nice to be able to add new cities easily. (John Hung)

(Available for Pocket PC only)

TIME

Pocket Watch

conduits.com

A nice and simple application that keeps track of world time. They need to introduce more features, though. (Rishad Alam) The Sunset guide is a nice touch. (Michael Sommer) (Available for Pocket PC only)

Spb Time

spbsoftwarehouse.com

Spb Time is a highly customizable and feature-

rich time program that integrates nicely with other Spb programs. The customized cities are a challenge to use sometimes, and it needs a better U.S. zip code database. (Clinton Fitch)

It has a number of great features, including a clock screen saver, world clock, a plethora of timing options, and great looking graphics.

(Steve Sande)

(Available for Pocket PC only)

CityTime

codicity.net

For a frequent traveler like me, CityTime is an excellent application. The ability to enter itinerary information for my trips is great, as is the ability to schedule meetings in other time zones properly. CityTime is a keeper!

Adding phone numbers for airlines as well as "live" links that would open the mobile Web sites for the listed airlines would make this program even more useful. (Steve Sande)

(Available for Pocket PC and Smartphone)

TRANSLATORS

MobiLearn Talking Phrasebooks, Multilingual

mobilearn.net

This "talking phrasebook" translates common English phrases to and from French, Italian, Spanish, or German. It also lets you quiz yourself and track your progress learning a language. The program's "voice" is very clear, but they need to expand the selection to include Russian and other languages. (Geoffrey Moehl)

(Available for Pocket PC only)

SlovoEd Multilingual Dictionaries

penreader.com

Overall, this is the best multi-language dictionary available. However, some of the European language databases need to be improved. (Werner Ruotsalainen) It would be nice to have a native speaker record the words so you can hear how they are actually pronounced. (Jose Luis Kuri Segura)

Speereo Voice Translator

speereo.com

This is a wonderful program for travelers, providing them with the most useful phrases to aid them in a foreign land. (John Hung) ■