

SCI|TECH

THE BATTALION

Page 9A • Thursday, September 4, 2003

Review: New iPods fix old models' flaws

Apple's MP3 player serves as portable hard drive, featuring PDA and games

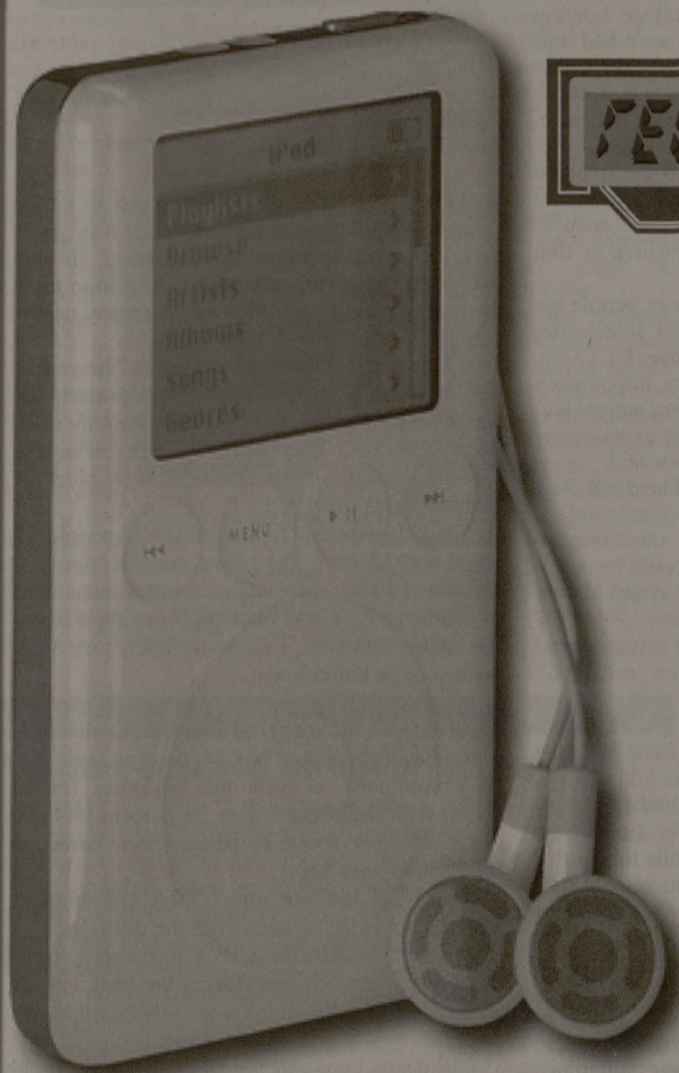
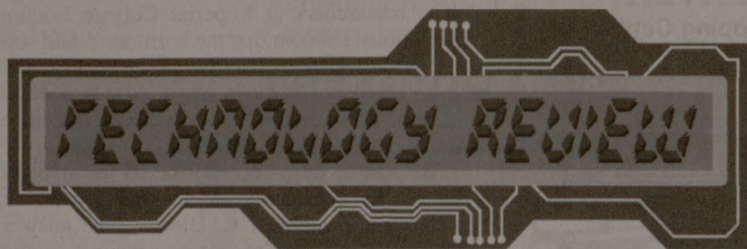


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Apple's new 15 GB iPod can hold about 3,700 MP3s, which is nearly 200 hours of music. It can also serve as a portable hard drive for transferring files across computers.



The iPod is Apple's latest entry into the fast-growing market of high-volume MP3 players. Launched in May of 2003, this model replaces the previous iPod and fixes a few of that model's more annoying flaws, such as separate units for Windows and Macs. The newest model also ups the ante with a smaller size, lighter weight and more space for those precious MP3 songs.

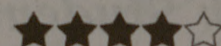
The iPod is an attractive little gadget. Aluminum accents mixed with a bluish-white backlit LCD screen give the iPod a high tech appearance usually reserved for Star Trek props. The face and button layout is well set up and intuitive, as only four buttons and a touch wheel are required to use it.

The iPod comes in three different flavors: 10, 15 and 30 GB. What does 10, 15 or 30 gigabytes mean to the average college student? Do the math. The 15 GB model can hold around 3,700 MP3s, which translates to about 200 hours of music. One would have to charge the battery many times before hearing the same song twice. The charge time is only three hours, so people should be back listening to their favorite playlists in no time.

In addition to playing music, the iPod has features any college student would enjoy. For those needing to transfer files to and from class, the iPod can serve as a portable hard drive, provided the computers used have USB or Firewire ports. Several simplistic games are included, such as "Solitaire," "Brick" and "Parachute." With the calendar and contact list features, the iPod can also serve as a PDA, keeping track of dates, assignments, text files and phone numbers. However, these cannot be updated directly; they have to be uploaded to the iPod via computer. If waking up for that 8 a.m. class is difficult, the iPod also features an alarm clock.

But, the unit is not without its flaws. Apple touts a battery life of eight hours, but that depends on several conditions. With the backlight off and the volume limited, one

may reach eight hours, but the average amount of life in one of these units is about six hours. Probably the biggest problem with the iPod is its price. Even the 10 GB model, which leaves many of the accessories out of the package, costs a hefty \$300. The 15 GB model is definitely the best deal, as it comes with all the same accessories as the 30 GB, but at a price of \$400 as opposed to \$500. Also note that users without Firewire must purchase a \$20 cable from Apple to connect to a USB port.



The Apple iPod is one of the best MP3 players currently on the market. However, such

--Seth Freeman

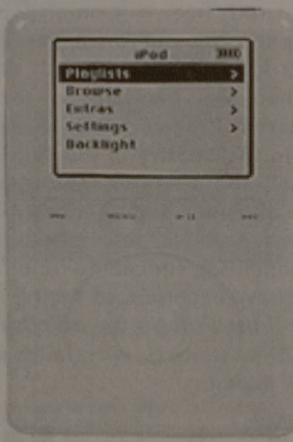
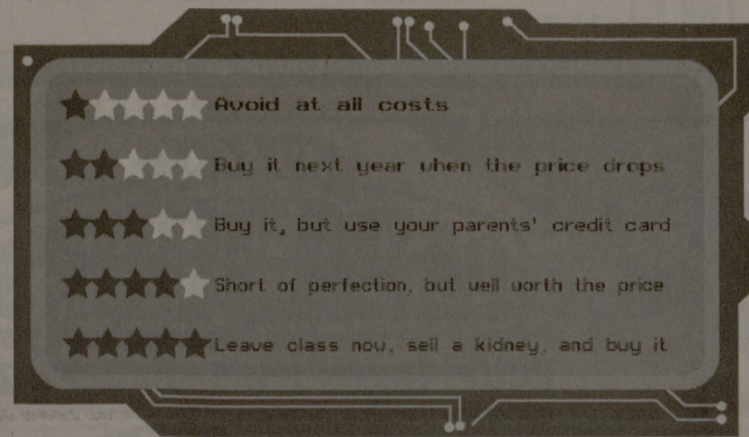


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