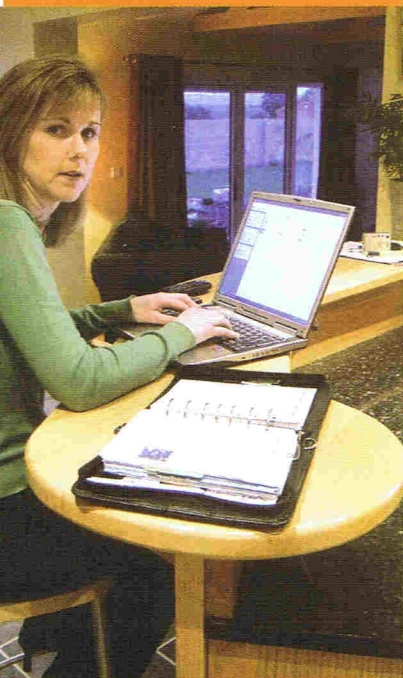


CAN'T WORK WITHOUT ...

Laptop	Fujitsu Siemens Amilo M7400
Printer	Brother MFC5840-CN multifunction device
Phone/PDA	XDA 2 Smartphone



Bernie Browne roadtests the Amilo laptop

IN THE LAST ISSUE of Smart Company we gave Bernie Browne, a self-employed marketing consultant a number of IT tools so she could evaluate and report on their usefulness to her daily working life. The equipment we gave her included a Fujitsu Siemens Amilo 7400 Centrino notebook computer; a Brother MFC 5840CN multifunction printer; and an XDA 2 Smartphone from O2.

Out of her home-based office in Gort, Co. Galway, Bernie offered the following assessment of the equipment after using each of them intensively for a loan period of 2 months.

Her main comment on the Amilo 7400 laptop is that it provides 'an excellent solution for dramatic demos and high powered presentations'. But that a user of this laptop would have to purchase a second battery if they are to take the laptop on the road with them. The Brother multifunction printer is in Browne's opinion a 'super compact all-in-one device'. It also delivers a colour print speed of 15 pages per minute while the control centre panel offers what Browne thinks is an excellent function – the user could easily view ink levels and estimate usage. While Browne had to replace the black ink

cartridge after roughly 500 pages of printing which she thought was very good. Less so was the fact that she found the printer's paper trays quite flimsy. Browne concludes that the Brother makes a good multifunctional device for the small business user especially because of the fact that the ink cartridges are moderately priced ranging from €15 for colour ones to €26 for black. She concluded that return on investment from the printer was considerably high when she considered the number of occasions she was able to scan documents to send to clients for review, as opposed to send them by snail mail.

The XDA 2 Smartphone from O2 was Browne's favourite device; she found it user-friendly because of its Windows look and feel and with the benefit of the sizable screen, she found it a suitable device for web browsing. She also found that the hybrid device had excellent mobile phone capability and great text messaging facilities. Having quickly mastered the handwriting recognition capability, Browne found the inclusion of a QWERTY keyboard on the device as overkill. In saying that, she did find the device a plausible alternative to a notebook while the battery life of three hours talktime and 21/2 hours standby was found to be sufficient although not on the same level of the more basic Palm Pilot organisers. The surprisingly useful feature for Browne was the camera functionality in the smart phone which she used for work-related PR shoots and also the microphone functionality which she used to record messages, more often adding to her 'to do' list for when she got home.