



One2OneMate offers a Linux-based laptop for schools

One2OneMate, a division of California-based Alta Heights Technology Corp., has introduced what it calls the first Linux-based laptop for education. (The much-publicized One Laptop Per Child initiative, commonly known as the "\$100 laptop," aims to distribute low-cost laptops running on a customized version of the Linux operating system to students in developing nations, but as of press time only demonstration versions of this computer were in use.)

The StudentMate features a seven-inch color screen, a full-size QWERTY keyboard, Ethernet connectivity (with optional wireless), Flash, a web browser, Word- and Excel-compatible applications, a typing tutor, eMail, and a five-year warranty. It includes touch-screen functionality and comes with 128 megabytes of base memory, as well as a Secure Digital card slot and two USB ports.

"The StudentMate is designed to offer teachers and students the means through which affordable technology can be available and adapted to today's ever-changing [school] environment. Simple to use and compatible with all computers, the StudentMate offers every student a portable computing hardware and software solution, allowing for learning to occur anytime and anywhere," the company says.

The device is available starting at \$399.

<http://www.one2onemate.com/student.html>

New technology-based curriculum teaches students language arts and critical thinking

SRA/McGraw Hill has unveiled a new reading and language-arts curriculum for students in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. Called Imagine It!, the program uses technology to bring learning to life, while simultaneously teaching 21st-century skills such as critical thinking.

Imagine It! aims to inspire curiosity and boost literacy through virtual role playing. Students can pretend to be a reporter researching foreign lands, a fashion coordinator for an ancient society, or even an entrepreneur building a new business plan. Within each role, they are asked



to complete a task that involves research and writing.

In one example, students take on the role of a reporter for a nature magazine. Their job is to choose a place to explore—tundras, caves, forests, grasslands, or coral reefs—and then report to the class about the things they've seen. Carefully selected internet links lead students to online sites where they can learn more about their virtual destination, such as which animals, insects, rocks, or trees can be found there. Students gather these facts in their "Reporter's Notebook," then assemble their report.

Beyond computer-based games and inquiries, Imagine It! offers a comprehensive, fully integrated suite of tools to make planning, teaching, and assessment easier and more efficient, SRA/McGraw-Hill says. An online demonstration is available on the company's web site.

<http://www.sraonline.com>



Portable digital microscope attaches to a PC for easy viewing, storing of images

Carson Optical has introduced the ePix Digital Microscope, a device that is capable of magnifying and displaying specimens, photos, and objects as live images on a computer screen.

With an integrated camera and optical zoom magnification ranging from 26x to 130x, users can transfer images to a computer screen for immediate viewing, or capture still images with a click of the shutter button to save for future viewing, printing, cataloging, or pasting into reports or presentations.

Lightweight, portable, and operable with one hand, the ePix Digital Microscope plugs into a computer's USB port. It offers two options for examining specimens close-up: Either attach the specimen base, with a built-in stage, to observe prepared slides in a stationary position, or remove it to maneuver over live specimens and large objects or across flat images.

The \$99.99 package includes the microscope, specimen base, slides, forceps, eyedropper, PC driver software, USB cable, and a one-year limited warranty. The software is compatible with Windows 98, 2000, and XP operating systems.

<http://www.carsonoptical.com>

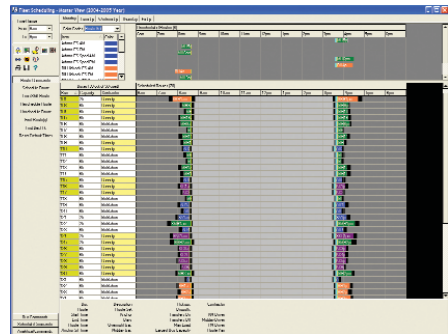
VersaTrans makes bus routing software more affordable for small districts

VersaTrans Solutions has released a new variation of its school bus routing software, VersaTrans RP, aimed specifically at school systems with limited enrollments.

The program, called VersaTrans RP Limited Edition, marks a new era in school bus routing software, according to the company: Vendors in the school bus software market typically specialize in geographic regions, address only specific district sizes, or fit only some budgets. With its newest release, VersaTrans says it now offers solutions to districts of all sizes and all budgets across North America.

Though the product is a scaled-back version of VersaTrans RP that makes some advanced features optional, Limited Edition reportedly has the same routing functionality and is accompanied by the same turnkey implementation service package that all VersaTrans customers receive. "VersaTrans RP Limited Edition customers will benefit from our outstanding implementation service model, which will find them quickly operational with the software," says Doug Hamlin, VersaTrans' president and CEO. "At the end of implementation, VersaTrans RP Limited Edition customers will have a map that has been well-honed by our mapping specialists . . . they will be fully trained, and they will enjoy the same top-notch technical support assistance."

<http://www.versatrans.com>



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