

# In the Driver's Seat

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**L**ocating hardware drivers is one of those pesky but necessary tasks that most network administrators dread. This process usually involves scouring one web site after another for the exact file you need—like looking for a needle in a haystack. Fortunately, the web sites featured in this article can take most of the headaches out of locating drivers. After you have updated the drivers on your company's network, you can check out this month's network resources and games. You can also read about the new products I have found. (See "Product Snapshots" on p. 50.)

## WEB SITES

Patchlink.com (<http://www.patchlink.com>) is an amazing web site that greatly simplifies the process of locating and downloading hardware drivers. Patchlink.com offers just about every driver you can imagine for just about every platform you can imagine, including NetWare, Windows NT, 98, and 95, Linux, OS/2, and DOS. You can download drivers directly from Patchlink.com.

If you want to ensure that your server or workstation is running all of the latest drivers, you can download Gravitix, a free web-based utility that does the work for you. Gravitix analyzes your server or workstation and locates the drivers that need to be updated. You can access the Gravitix interface through a standard web browser, viewing reports and choosing drivers you want to update. Gravitix then locates, downloads, and applies these drivers automatically. (Gravitix is available for NetWare, Windows NT, 98, and 95.)

DriverGuide.com (<http://www.driverguide.com>) is another useful web site that offers one-stop shopping for hardware drivers. To locate the driver you need, you can search DriverGuide.com by category or by manufacturer. You can also search a database of drivers that have been uploaded by other users. You can then download some drivers directly from DriverGuide.com. If the driver you need is not available in this way, you can take advantage of links to each manufacturer's web site.

Unlike Patchlink.com, DriverGuide.com requires you to complete an online registration form before you can start downloading drivers. Registering is worth the trouble, however. When you register, you receive a free membership to Internet FileZone (<http://www.i-FileZone.com>), which allows you to store up to 10 MB of files. You can then access these files through a standard web browser.

## NETWORK RESOURCES

Instead of looking all over the Internet to find updates for Novell products, you should check out Novell's minimum patch list (<http://support.novell.com/misc/patlst.htm>). From the mini-

mum patch list, you can download the latest updates for NetWare, GroupWise, ManageWise, BorderManager, and ZENworks—including year-2000 updates. You can also download Novell client software and network management tools.

If you need updates for multiple Novell products, you can download Novell's Consolidated Support Pack (NCSP). The first NCSP, which was released in May 1999, contains the latest updates for NetWare 5, NetWare 4, and ManageWise 2.6. Future versions of NCSP will contain updates for even more Novell products.

## STANDALONE GAME OF THE MONTH

Might and Magic VII: For Blood and Honor from The 3DO Co. is the latest game in the Might and Magic series of role-playing games. As the game begins, you lead a party of four characters competing against other teams in a scavenger hunt that takes place in the land of Erathia. The winners of the scavenger hunt become the new lords of the province of Harmondale. You must ensure that your party wins the scavenger hunt so you can defeat the necromancers, who are planning to conquer Erathia by striking at its weak link, Harmondale.



*Might and Magic VII: For Blood and Honor from The 3DO Co.*

To prepare yourself for war, you must repair the castle at Harmondale and construct defenses. You must also travel throughout Erathia, looking for opportunities to help the characters that you encounter. As you complete each quest, you strengthen your existing skills and acquire new ones.

You can choose the characters in your party—any combination of elves, dwarfs, goblins, and humans. You can also choose whether each character is a monk, a cleric, a thief, a druid, an archer, a knight, a ranger, a paladin, or a sorcerer.

## Product Snapshots

When I am surfing the Internet, I often find new and interesting products. Product Snapshots gives you a quick overview of the most useful products I have found during the last month. (Please note that these are first-look reviews.)

### SMART-UPS 5000

Smart-UPS 5000 is a new UPS solution from American Power Conversion (APC) Corp. Because Smart-UPS 5000 uses either 208 or 230 volts, Smart-UPS 5000 is ideal for high-power server farms or data centers. Smart-UPS 5000 both provides power in the event of a power outage and regulates voltage in the event of a power spike or brownout.

Smart-UPS 5000 is available in a tower model and a rack-mount model. With each model, you can choose from a 208-volt configuration or a 230-volt configuration. Both models feature APC's battery management system, which extends battery life by offering overcharge protection and by using continuous, non-pulsed charging. When the battery is low, Smart-UPS 5000 sounds an alarm. You can then swap batteries without shutting down Smart-UPS 5000.

Smart-UPS 5000 includes two expansion slots that allow you to add features, such as environmental monitoring and web-based management. If you purchase Smart-UPS 5000 on or before September 30, 1999, you will receive a free Web/SNMP Management Card. You can then manage Smart-UPS 5000 through a standard web browser and through management platforms that are compatible with Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP).

Smart-UPS 5000 also includes APC's PowerChute plus software, which you can use to configure and manage the UPS from a central location. For example, you can specify how Smart-UPS 5000 should react to various changes in power, and you can perform an unattended shutdown.

You can purchase Smart-UPS 5000 through retail channels at the suggested retail price of U.S. \$3,750 for the tower model and U.S. \$3,950 for the rack-mount model. For more information about Smart-UPS 5000, visit APC's web site (<http://www.apcc.com>). You can also call 1-800-877-4080 or 1-401-789-5735.

### TESTOUT! FOR NETWARE

TestOut! for NetWare from TestOut! Corp. is a set of six CD-ROMs that help you prepare for the NetWare 5 or NetWare 4.11 CNE exams. These CD-ROMs are broken down into modules that correspond to each exam. For example, TestOut! for NetWare 5 consists of the following modules: NetWare 5 Administration, NetWare 5 Advanced Administration, Integrating Windows NT, Design and Implementation, Networking Technologies, and Service and Support.

TestOut! for NetWare uses a variety of multimedia materials to illustrate networking concepts, including technical drawings and audio and video clips. The audio and video clips feature Shauna Hunt, a Certified Novell Instructor (CNI), who guides you through the learning process on a step-by-step basis.

TestOut! for NetWare provides hundreds of activities that simulate a hands-on environment. TestOut! for NetWare also provides sample questions for each CNE exam and a glossary of networking terms.

In addition, TestOut! for NetWare includes a three-user version of NetWare 5 or a two-user version of NetWare 4.11. You can use this software to follow along with the CD-ROMs and to further prepare for the CNE exams.

You can purchase TestOut! for NetWare at the suggested retail price of U.S. \$1,595 for the NetWare 5 version and U.S. \$1,495 for the NetWare 4.11 version. For more information about TestOut! for NetWare, visit TestOut's web site (<http://www.testout.com>). You can also call 1-800-877-4889 or 1-801-785-7900. ●

These character classes possess unique abilities. For example, knights can wear any type of armor, and they excel at using weapons, such as swords and spears. Sorcerers, on the other hand, excel at performing magic and are ill equipped to participate in hand-to-hand combat.

Might and Magic VII supports Windows NT, 98, and 95. You can purchase Might and Magic VII through retail channels at the suggested retail price of U.S. \$46.95. For more information about Might and Magic VII, visit 3DO's web site (<http://www.3do.com>). You can also call 1-800-336-3506 or 1-650-261-3000.

### NETWORK GAME OF THE MONTH

Links Extreme from Microsoft Corp. is the latest game in the Links series of golf-simulation games. Previous games in the Links series focus on providing a realistic golf experience. Links Extreme, on the other hand, reinvents golf. Links

Extreme is a kind of fantasy golf game that is graphically intense, injected with a perverse sense of humor. In fact, Links Extreme is what you would expect if professional wrestlers rewrote the rules of golf to make the game more fun.

Forget traditional golf etiquette: Links Extreme includes a variety of courses that put a hilarious spin on golf. For example, Armadillo AI's Demolition Driving Range requires you to hit exploding golf balls onto a course that is populated with animatronic cows and flamingos. You can also visit Mojo Bay Resort and Country Club, an exotic 18-hole course with tropical foliage. And you can stop by Dimension X, a nine-hole course set on a WWI battlefield with smoking ruins and crashing airplanes.

You can play Links Extreme against the computer or against one other person over an Internet connection through Microsoft Gaming Zone (<http://www.zone.com>). You can choose from a number of standalone

and multiplayer modes, such as Deathmatch and Extreme Golf. Deathmatch features golf-ball bombs that you can use to eliminate your opponents; the last player standing on the course wins. Extreme Golf features golf balls with unusual characteristics, such as the ability to turn left or to make a slam dunk in the hole.

Links Extreme supports Windows NT, 98, and 95. You can purchase Links Extreme through retail channels at the suggested retail price of U.S. \$49.95, and you can download a trial version of the game from <http://www.microsoft.com/games/linksextreme/downloads.htm>. For more information about Links Extreme, visit Microsoft's web site (<http://www.microsoft.com>). You can also call 1-800-426-9400 or 1-425-882-8080.

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