

# Best *of the* Year



2004 has been a year of “more.” More power, features, quality, versatility, portability, performance, and yes, in many cases, money.

From the editors of *PC Magazine*

#### ENTERPRISE SERVER:

#### Dell PowerEdge 2850

3.6-GHz Xeon processor, 1GB DDR SDRAM, three 36GB 15,000-rpm hard drives with RAID 0, 1, and 5, 8MB ATI Rage XL graphics, \$6,341 direct. Dell Inc., [www.dell.com](http://www.dell.com). Reviewed: 8/2.

The Dell PowerEdge 2850 is just the server for enterprises that require high availability, 24/7. The 2850 gets a performance boost from its fast hard drives and RAID controller with DDR2 memory, and its Intel Gigabit NICs with PCI Express are a nice touch. Lindenhurst memory mirroring allows you to keep an extra set of memory modules preinstalled in spare memory banks, ready to cut over automatically if the primary set fails. Unique among new Xeon servers, the 2850 has an LCD panel on the front to display messages from the system or the Dell OpenManage software suite.



OVER THE PAST YEAR, we've tested, reviewed, and reported on several thousand new and updated products—desktop and notebook PCs, handhelds, software, cameras, printers, networking equipment, games, phones, MP3 players, and much more. We carefully selected products worthy of our Editors' Choice award and cultivated dozens of personal favorites. Then we nominated, debated, and finally settled on those hundred we'll call the best of the year.

This year, the news is features and power: more and more. Desktop PCs are ridiculously powerful. Notebooks show a focus on multimedia, letting you bring your entertainment with you without sacrificing power or portability. Pocket devices do more than your first notebook

did. Digital cameras have caught up with their film counterparts—and are a lot more fun. And this year's software reminds you why you first got excited about computing.

We're also seeing convergence quickly becoming a reality, bringing your media library to your living room and sending your phone calls over broadband, with versatile networking options tying it all together. And weaving through all areas is security, an important issue that's getting hotter all the time: Security products are a sine qua non of modern computing, and they've only gotten stronger and smarter.

It's been an excellent year, technologically speaking. Read on to find out which products wowed us, simply by being the best.