



Dr Ng Yih Yng obtained his MBBS from the National University of Singapore in 1998. He is currently a Medical Officer with SAF. He is also Chairman of the SMA Medical Officers Committee.

Medical Uses of a Palm Handheld

By Dr Ng Yih Yng

Editor's Note:

The following is only an abridged version. The complete article is available at http://www.sma.org.sg/sma_news/newscurrent.html

I used to have a Palm Pilot in 1996, which was a very cool device ahead of its time. But I'd lost that accidentally, and so gave up using the Palm for quite a while, until recently when I received a Palm Vx as a Christmas present.

It was like having my old Palm back, only much lighter, slimmer, and sexier. But if you look past all that, it was still the same old friend I had, with all the same knobs and buttons and the user-friendly format I had known and loved.

I became a full-fledged Palm addict, subscribing to no less than 5 different palm related website mailing lists such as

- www.palmgear.com
- www.pilotzone.com
- www.palmbld.com
- www.pdamd.com
- www.geek.com/pdageek

All these sites provide information on new palm software and hardware, palm pilot related news and reviews. Amongst the five, only www.pdamd.com provides medically related palm information. Go for the digest versions, else you may be flooded with 10 to 100 new mails a day.

I was reading everything - web-related, Palm-related, medical and non-medical. After a month of intense Palm self-indoctrination I became a full-time Palm Convert. From my short but intense experiences, I will attempt to pass some of this knowledge to you, the reader.

REVIEWS OF A FEW SITES

1) Avantgo

www.avantgo.com

This is a website every Palm user has to

visit. Where else can you get the Straits Times, Business Times, USA Today, The Guardian, BBC News all into your Palm daily? Since its inception in 1997 this website has revolutionized the use of the Palm. Avantgo shrinks content to a Palm friendly format for thousands of websites. And the best part of this is that all of this is FREE! Waiting for buses and the MRT is a joy when you can sit down to read the latest news and abstracts from NEJM, BMJ and the Lancet. These can be subscribed via www.handheldmed.com after you have installed the Avantgo program on your palm.

2) Singapore Palm User Group www.spug.org

This is where Singaporean Palm users gather to talk shop. Conceived in February 1999, it has grown from strength to strength - now registering over 3000 members who call themselves Spugers. This is THE place to find out where you can find the best palm deals in Funan and Sim Lim Square. This is also where you can find downloads of local content that you can never find anywhere else in the world. Information like the bus guide, location of local petrol stations and even SingTel ICC dialup numbers are found on it. This site has a very active forum and IRC chatroom. All the reviews are written by locals and very comprehensively done. "SHOWTIMES" software hot syncs the entire movies page from the www.movies.com.sg into your palm. Given our extremely heavy movie watching habits in Singapore, this software is a must for all Palm users in Singapore.

3) Tucows Software Library www.pilotzone.com

This is another good download site which is similar to PalmgearHQ, slightly more crisp in presentation but a little less juicy. All software is neatly organised into categories, which are browseable from its front page. Its other notable features are its amusing cow rating system (courtesy of its Tucows owners) and the fact that its site is mirrored locally on the Starhub servers, which makes downloading a breeze (http://starhub.pda.tucows.com/palm/docs_medical.html). Medical applications include Clinical Neurology, Diabetic Flowsheet, Drug Book, DSM IV Axis I & Axis II Diagnosis, Folstein Mini Mental Status Exam, ICD9, Immunization Schedule, Lab Tests, NHLBI/ NAEP Asthma Guidelines, Orthopedics, Redi-Reference Cardiology Handbook.

There are tons of ever growing sites on the net with Palm related content. If you haven't gotten on the bandwagon yet, start today! Medical Information Technology is changing medical practice even as we speak and it is one trend that will last much longer than dot com companies, anytime.

Many thanks to Whei Chern (my fiancée who bought me a Palm and got me addicted all over again), Mr. Johann Annuar (my tenant/ entre-preneur who came up with the rating system), and the people from the Singapore Palm Users Group who have contributed their favourite websites - Coffee chip, Juragan, Trucido, and Joselle.

