

Integrating Home Theater/Automation: Touchscreen/Digitizing, Mistake of Eliminating Smart Display/Thin Client, HELP!

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Many people are using Tablet PC's and Smart Displays/Thin Clients for use as a wireless control solution to control their Music Server/HTPC (usually running Main Lobby, Music Lobby, DVD Lobby).

Many people have been using the Pro Gear 10" passive TFT (touch screen—reiring no stylus) which has a slow 400 MHz processor and runs Windows 98, but apparently works fairly well to very well as an RDP client, i.e. as a 10" touch screen remote control in 1024 x 768. The problem is that the Progear is only useful for this purpose and they are hard to come by on EBAY unless they are refurbs (having been discontinued 1–2 years ago I believe). Price on EBAY about \$600.

One solution would be to just spend more money and buy an up to date 12" Tablet PC (\$2,000–\$2,400 shipped) which ships with Windows XP Tablet edition. The problem is that nobody wants to be bound to a stylus for home theater use, otherwise, using a current Tablet PC would be a done deal (justifiable in cost by the fact that it is a useful device and that the docking station sits in the HT. Many people leave there Tablet PC's on in the docking station (for instant on/off capability). One could easily justify the cost if they needed a tablet PC/notebook solution. Not to mention Crestron/Panja is not a cheap solution, and IR control is not always reliable due to directionality (non—reliable macros, etc...).

There are 2 manufacturers that make passive touch screen tablets Fujitsu 4120p Lifebook and Paceblade: Sahara model. The Paceblade is the only one who offers the dual book which is capable of passive touch screen and active digitizing, however, it figures: 900 Mhz only, docking station requires physical 2 wire hook up, \$2900 shipped,

Well, I really have needed a notebook/tablet PC for a while now, so I'm very interested in buying a tablet PC, but now I'm more concerned if I'm spending that kind of money, should I get an active screen and digitizer along with XP tablet edition. Tablet edition is only going to improve and applications

are going to be written for it... Seems like no one device can do everything correctly as you said, so for me, it is a matter of knowing just how much I would miss not having tablet XP and solid digitizing capability. I'm just not sure and I don't see an easy way for me to find out, without getting lucky and making the correct choice, or finding out the hard way.

Sure, I was thinking seriously about getting the dual-book by paceblade which has both touchscreen and digitizing capability, but that isn't perfect either: USB 1.0, slower, battery life sucks even with expensive long life replacement batteries, and requires an additional PCMCIA card for WiFi (more energy usage), and the docking station requires 2 manual pluggins.

The bottom line before I can move forward is to figure out if digitizing and having Windows Tablet PC Edition would be beneficial enough that I would just have to live with using a pen... it could be worse right--> at least your not dealing with the small pocket PC... The alternative is to just go for the Sahara and give up the ability to run XP tablet edition... The other thought is to get the Sahara and try to get a copy of XP tablet Edition and live with suboptimal digitizing. My understanding is that if you can get a copy of XP Tablet (which you can thru MSDN) the touch screen Sahara is 'just as good' with the caveat that you cannot put your hands on the passive screen while writing (awkward)...

Could always get a digitizing tablet and take my time finding a Progear for just remote use.

PLEASE READ THIS THREAD. I think it is CRUCIAL and absolutely NECESSARY for Microsoft Marketing and RELATED personnel to read this thread. Please forward this thread and information to any required people:

<http://www.avforums.com/avs-vb/showthread.php?s=&threadid=346048&perpage=20&pagenumber=1>

MCX is a networked client which connects to your TV. For information on MCX, please see <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/...es/extender.asp> How will this change anything???

Smart Display vs. Thin Client

The main difference between a Smart Display & Thin Client is the setup experience and user interface. A thin client can run different embedded applications, including an RDP client. While in contrast the Smart Display is optimized to function simply as an RDP client. By limiting the functionality to RDP client, a Smart Display has a simplified UI. If this is all you want, you may be happier with a Smart Display. If you want to download and run arbitrary WinCE programs for example, a Wyse thin client may be a better bet.

Note that a Smart Display can run WinCE programs, but the OEM has to add this program to the runtime image, such as the Nevo universal remote control Viewsonic was shipping for a while. http://www.mynevo.com/nevo_smd.htm

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