

Technology News this Week

I know many people find technology news very boring. This week however, I have decided to highlight a few technology news stories from the AP website that I found very interesting.

First up, the Apple iPod made primarily in Southern China. Apple subcontracts the building of the iPod to an un-named factory that employs nearly 200,000 workers. This factory is accused of ignoring the minimum wage and forcing workers to work overtime. In Apple's investigation no instances of forced overtime were found, however Apple did say that many workers exceed the maximum overtime limit of 60 hours per week about 25% of the time. Apple's investigation also found that all workers were paid the minimum wage of at least \$100 per month. No instances of harsh treatment of employees were found however the factory was cited for poor living conditions in the dormitories and is being forced to add new facilities.

Next in the news, a program created at the Massachusetts institute of Technology last year called "One Laptop Per Child" announced that they would be sending out the first 500 laptops to Thailand children in October and November. The organizations goal is to send out 5 to 7 million laptops to the children of 3rd world countries by the end of 2007. The cost of each laptop is expected to be about \$100 each. The laptops will be manufactured using the free software Linux and will use low cost flash memory and will also be equipped with a hand crank to provide its own power. Although the initial cost of the laptops will be high, the countries that are participating in this program expect to see a cost saving in the long run because books will be able to be transmitted electronically.

Perhaps the most interesting story this week has to do with the largest electronics recall in US history. Or as I like to call the headline; "Dude, your laptop's on fire." Dell recalled over 4 million batteries this week made by Sony Corporation. Apparently, due to a flaw in the manufacturing process, metal shards are floating around the inside of these batteries causing overheating and even fires. Laptops manufactured between April 1, 2004 and June 18th of this year may have an affected battery. All Dell owners are requested to go to www.dellbatteryprogram.com to find out whether their laptop battery is affected. If your battery is affected by the recall you should remove the battery from your computer immediately and use your power cord until your replacement battery arrives.

Well there it is, technology in the news this week. No matter the technology subject matter you can count on the techs at Computer Depot to keep you abreast of what's going on in the tech world. Do you have a tough tech question that needs an answer? Call Thomas, Roger, or Aaron at Computer Depot, 947-0749; or e-mail me at computerdepotonline@att.net.