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Dear [fname]

Last month's travelling provided plenty of opportunities to assess the reliability of Australia's live human trade, otherwise known as the budget airline services – a few days in Melbourne for our son's wedding, a week in Bali and then four days in Adelaide.



An NDA Excel class (OK, we lied - Bali schoolchildren on their morning break)

Because we were flying Jetstar I thought we had dodged a bullet when Virgin Blue shut down for two days while we were in Bali, but no such luck. Our 11pm Jetstar flight from Bali to Sydney was cancelled and the hapless passengers shuffled onto a variety of alternative flights. We ended up on a 2am flight to Brisbane, ironically on Virgin Blue; arrived in Brisbane at 8am; hitched a ride with Qantas to Sydney; couldn't get a flight to Melbourne or Launceston so took a 7pm Jetstar flight to Hobart, and finally a hire car from Hobart to arrive back in Launceston at 11pm.

A day later it was off to Adelaide for the Australian Orienteering Championships. This time the flights passed without incident, however I experienced what might be called a 'wardrobe mishap'.

Normally I can just about manage to pack the correct equipment and clothing but when I dressed for the long distance event and looked for my black Speedos, all I could find in the sports bag was a flimsy pair of black nothings - my wife's silk knicks, packed by mistake. So I had no option but to wear them. As it turned out the small reduction in weight (and, ahem, rather pleasant tactile sensation) possibly accounted for the winning margin of exactly one second. Fortunately we weren't tested for cross dressing.

Orienteering is a brilliant sport that exercises both the mind and body at whatever level you choose. If you would like to try it there are events every Wednesday suitable for beginners in both [Hobart](#) and [Launceston](#) over the next few weeks. Let me know if you would like more information.

And Bali – yes, we had a fantastic time, courtesy of my brother and sister-in-law visiting from the USA – see [Operating Instructions for Bali](#) if you are interested in this beautiful island. I took an iPad on this trip to test whether or not it is an adequate substitute for a laptop. Please see below for how it worked out.

Kind regards

Nigel Davies
Director, NDA

BTW - Virgin Blue shut down for two days because, when its reservation system failed, the recovery took 15 hours rather than the planned 90 minutes. This demonstrates the importance of having a regular test restore built into your disaster recovery plan. There is not much point in saving daily backup tapes if you can't easily recover the data from them.

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iPad vs Laptop for the Traveller

Sales of so-called netbooks (small format laptops) have plummeted since the release of Apple's iPad, even though the iPad is more expensive than most netbooks. I took an iPad to Bali instead of the usual laptop with the following results.

Email was great. The accommodation offered Wi-Fi that gave fast and reliable service, even on the remote east coast. In fact, as my device does not have the 3G wireless option, free Wi-Fi has become an important consideration in selecting accommodation. Think for a moment about what you want to be able to do with emails. You want to be able to open attachments, perhaps edit them, save them and return them to the sender or forward them to a third party.

Microsoft Office and PDF attachments to emails can be opened and read on the iPad but not edited without acquiring additional software. It is possible to select, copy and paste from Word or PowerPoint attachments but the content of Excel and PDF attachments can not be selected and copied.

There are many apps, including some free ones, which let you create and edit text, spreadsheet and presentation documents on an iPad. These include Apple's own applications, such as [Pages](#), and third party applications such as [Documents to Go](#).

An alternative approach to document creation, storage and editing is to use [cloud](#)

[computing](#) and free apps such as [Google Docs](#). I have not tested this yet, although it may well be an interesting topic for another article.

The biggest limitation of the iPad is that there is no simple way of printing documents - there is not much point in being able to book airline tickets online when you can't print your boarding pass. There are apps you can buy that claim to print wirelessly to a Wi-Fi or Bluetooth printer but, to quote PC Mag's review: "*iPad printing apps claim to do a lot, but in our testing, many of them simply didn't work*" – not what you want to hear. The most reliable way to produce hard copy from an iPad is to sync the device with your PC and print from the PC – but that's printing from the PC, not the iPad.

In summary, the iPad is probably better suited to the recreational traveller than the business traveller:

- Lots of apps to make life easier – currency conversion, weather information, maps and travel directions, restaurant and hotel reviews, films and music for the flights and daily ABC podcasts to keep in touch with news back home.
- Instant on. No mouse to plug in, no waiting for Windows to boot – just press the power switch and it's ready to go.
- Superb battery life. While the best laptops and netbooks have a battery life of around 4 – 6 hours you don't even think about battery life with an iPad. Mine gets a recharge every week or so, depending on usage.
- Small size and weight. Smaller and lighter than all laptops, you don't even have to remove it from your bag (as you do with laptops) when passing through security at airports.
- More robust and less to go wrong. No hard disk drive and the only significant moving part is the power switch.
- Simple operation. The touch sensitive screen is easier to use for most people than a trackball or touchpad.

The lack of connectivity to other devices, especially printers, is a serious handicap. The virtual keyboard would also be a handicap for anyone with banana fingers or a serious typing workload, although I found it adequate for emails and short documents.

Some Recommended eNewsletters

There are many worthwhile, free newsletters available on the web. Here are some you might find interesting.

Smartbrief's daily social media newsletter: numerous snippets of advice for anyone interested in promoting their business through social media. Smartbrief also publish newsletters in many other technical and business disciplines – see <http://www.smartbrief.com/index.jsp>.

Office Watch is a weekly newsletter with tips, insider information, complaints and scuttlebutt on Microsoft Office – see <http://news.office-watch.com/>.

New Scientist publishes a monthly newsletter that gives access to articles from the

world's most accessible science magazine – see <http://www.newscientist.com/>.

Gizmag – a daily newsletter on emerging technologies – see <http://www.gizmag.com/>.

Van Tharp's weekly investment newsletter offers advice on share trading. Of particular interest is his monthly analysis of the US and world economy. This is where you will learn that the US unemployment rate is not the published 9% but more like 22% due to changes in the way statistics are calculated to mask the bad news – <http://www.iitm.com/regform.asp>.

The Pinot Shop is Launceston (and Australia's) pre-eminent retailer of Pinot Noir. Their weekly newsletter is an object lesson in design and copywriting, quite apart from the excellent wines they sell - <http://www.pinotshop.com/>.

Cool Wine is a good source of interesting wines in Hobart and runs excellent Friday after-work tastings – some free. They don't have a website yet but you can subscribe to their weekly newsletter by emailing shop@coolwine.com.au.

Upgrade Your Training and Assessment Qualification (TAA)

The Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104) has been superseded by a new qualification - Certificate IV in Training and Education (TAE40110). This is the qualification of choice for:

- Private training organisations
- Trainers and assessors in a workplace or industry context
- Independent training contractor
- TAFE trainers

To meet the new Australian Qualification and Training Framework (AQTF) standard and work in the industry you **must either have the new TAE40110 qualification or be working towards it**. RTOs have until June 2012 to ensure trainers hold the new qualification.

NDA can upgrade your old Certificate IV in TAA (TAA40104) to the new Certificate IV in Training and Education (TAE40110) quickly and painlessly through an RPL process for only \$295 - [see here for details](#).

Please note that you cannot upgrade from the even older BSZ40198 Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training.

If you require further information please call Kristina on 03 6334 4910 or email kristinac@nda.com.au.

Office 2007/2010 Conversion

Office 2007 and the ribbon marked a complete departure from previous versions of Office, causing skilled users to look like novices as they scrambled to find familiar commands in the new interface.

If you are moving from an earlier version of Office to either Office 2007 or Office 2010

you will want to get your head around the new interface and the ribbon as quickly as possible. NDA offers a half-day [Office 2007/ 2010 Conversion](#) course that may be just what you need. The course can be attended as a hands-on public course or presented as a show-and-tell seminar at your premises. **Call 1300 765 736 for details!**

Forthcoming Training Courses

NDA is now able to release the following courses for stand-by enrolment, some at significant discounts on standard rates (**to obtain the discount, please phone Jodie on 1300 765 736** and mention this email when making bookings):

Hobart – IT Courses

[Introduction to PCs with Windows and Office](#) 25/26 Oct - \$480

[Excel Basics 2003](#) 3 Nov - \$240

[Excel Introductory 2003](#) 3/4 Nov - \$480

[Excel Intermediate 2003](#) 4/5 Nov - \$480

[Word Basics 2007](#) 12 Nov - \$240 **two for the price of one**

[Word Introductory 2007](#) 12/15 Nov - \$480

[Word Intermediate 2007](#) 15/17 Nov - \$480

[Word Advanced 2007](#) 17/19 Nov - \$480

[MYOB Advanced](#) 30 Nov - \$285

Hobart – Business Skills Courses

[Managing Successful Projects](#) 24/25 Nov - \$570

Launceston – IT Courses

[Excel Basics 2003](#) 2 Nov - \$240

[Excel Introductory 2003](#) 2/4 Nov - \$480

[Excel Intermediate 2003](#) 4/5 Nov - \$480

[Excel Advanced 2003](#) 5/8 Nov - \$480

[PhotoShop Basics](#) 15/16 Nov - \$570

[Outlook](#) 17 Nov - \$240 **two for the price of one**

[Word Advanced 2007](#) 18/19 Nov - \$480

[Crystal Reports Introductory](#) 22/23 Nov - \$570

[Access Advanced 2007](#) 26 Nov - \$240 **two for the price of one**

Launceston – Business Skills Courses

[Conflict Resolution and Assertiveness](#) 29 Oct - \$285 **two for the price of one**

Devonport – IT Courses

[PC Basics with Windows 2007](#) 26 Oct - \$240 **two for the price of one**

[Excel Introductory 2003](#) 3/5 Nov - \$480

[Word Basics 2007](#) 12 Nov - \$240

[MYOB Setup and Operation](#) 16/18 Nov - \$570

[Access Introductory / Intermediate 2007](#) 29/30 Nov - \$480

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