

On the hunt for the perfect Windows 8 Convertible

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Whats Hot

- The United States has been charged with launching a cyberattack against France -- a claim the U.S. government has categorically denied. According to L'Express, a French news outlet, sources with knowledge of a cyberattack that occurred in May have said the U.S. was behind the attack. The news outlet claims that the attack occurred a few days before the country's presidential election and targeted "the team of [former French President] Nicolas Sarkozy."
- A hacker has been found guilty of breaking into an AT&T Web site and stealing data of more than 100,000 iPad users. Andrew Auernheimer, 26, was convicted Tuesday in federal court in New Jersey of one count of conspiracy to gain unauthorized access to computers and one count of identity theft. The jury reached its verdict within hours of beginning deliberations, according to Wired.



Laptop or Tablet? Why not have Both?

What device offers the best blend between being a tablet and a full-fledged laptop?

One of the most exciting things about Windows 8 is the emergence of convertible laptops. They can be tablets! They can be laptops! I've wanted this type of device for ages, and I've been exploring the possibilities.

Ever since I got a MacBook Air about two years ago, it's left me disappointed in one key area. I wish there were times I could just use it like a tablet. Soon after getting it, I abandoned taking an iPad around on trips. There was no need. The MacBook Air gave me the same instant-on access to the

Initial Thoughts

For me, it doesn't matter whether I use Mac OS or Windows. While I shifted to using the Mac full-time a few months ago, I'm perfectly happy working in a Windows environment. Instead, my chief purchasing criteria are display resolution and weight, followed by computing horsepower. I want a device that shows me as much screen real es-

Web that the iPad did. But that keyboard. I didn't always need it.



Laptop or Tablet?

So when I first saw some of the Windows 8 convertibles recently, my eyes lit up. Could one of these be a replacement for my MacBook Air?

tate (1440x900) as my current 13-inch MacBook Air does, that weighs just as little (2.96 pounds), and that has a fairly similar processor (Intel 1.8GHz i7), storage (256GB) and memory (4GB RAM).

Suggestions from Microsoft

My first stop in exploration was the Microsoft Windows site. When I

was there before Windows 8 launched, I found it disappointing in failing to give much guidance. My, how things have changed for the better! Right in the middle of a home page is a big invitation to "Explore new PCs" along with a picture of exactly what I'm after, a convertible laptop: Heading into the site, there's an entire area devoted to tablets

and convertibles:

First Elimination : Windows RT devices

Step one from here was to eliminate some of the candidates that look appealing, like the Lenovo IdeaPad Yoga 11, because they are Windows RT. I'm after a Windows 8 device. That means I can't run the full range of Windows applications, as I ultimately want.

Round Two: Eliminate the Connectables

Next, I had to eliminate what I call the "connectables." The Asus VivoTab is a good example of this. Sure, it converts into a laptop, if you slide-on a separate keyboard. I've used that type of keyboard with my Asus Transformer Prime. It's a pain to put on, and there's no easy flipping it away to shift into tablet mode. Similarly, the HP Envy x2 and the Samsung Ativ Smart PC were both initially appealing until I realized they also had non-integrated keyboards. Of the recommendations from the Windows site, only the Dell XPS 12 was left standing. However, I knew there were other options beyond this, thanks to having previously read CNET's own Windows 8: The complete new PC launch list. Here's my shortlist of convertibles I felt might do the job.

Dell XPS 12

The Dell XPS 12 was the most appealing to me, at first. A screen that could rotate and close over the keyboard, in order to convert into a tablet, seemed to make a lot of sense. It offered more screen real estate (1920x1080) than my MacBook Air and the base model's processor and solid-

state hard drive both were upgradable to match.



Dell XPS 12

But at 3.35 pounds, it came in almost a half-pound heavier than my MacBook Air. At a cost of \$1,199 to \$1,699, was there a better, lighter option?

Sony Vaio Duo

The Sony Vaio Duo was attractive as it's just a bit lighter than my MacBook Air, coming in, according to Sony, at 2.87 lbs. It only has an i5 processor, but it offered more screen real estate (1920x1080). As with the Duo, this is across a smaller physical screen of 11.6 inches than my Air has. Priced \$1,099 to \$1,499, it's slightly more affordable than the



Sony Vaio Duo 11

Dell. But I didn't like the idea that my screen would get locked to one angle.

Lenovo Yoga 13

The Lenovo Yoga 13 would probably be my top pick if it were available right now. There's lots

to love with the specs. At 3.4 pounds, there's the same drawback with the Dell, in that it's about a half-pound heavier than the MacBook Air. But it has the same 13.3-inch screen as the Air and displays more on it (1600x900). It currently sells for \$1,099 for the i5 processor version, going up to \$1,299 if you want an i7 processor and \$1,449 to increase storage from 128GB to 256GB. If you want a convertible laptop, this seems to be a standout. But you'll have to



Lenovo Yoga 13

wait. Shipping is still more than 4 weeks off, according to the Lenovo web site

Bringing Up The Rear

Others worth considering are the Lenovo ThinkPad Twist or indeed the Microsoft Surface, which we looked at not long ago.

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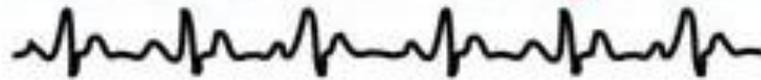
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