

## Turn PC into TV without taking it apart

By Ian Tan

DVD recorders are tempting stuff. Record TV programmes straight onto DVDs or built-in hard disks? Or record shows with ancient, mould-friendly video cassettes?

It's a no-brainer.

However, such recorders are still out of my reach.

No way am I going to pay over \$1,000 for a recorder when the money could be used to please the wife in so many other ways.

Thankfully, I just found out about a more affordable solution.

The \$199 SnaZio Pocket PVR (personal video recorder) is a locally-made device that fits into the palm of your hand.

It is from V One Multimedia, a Singapore firm that has been making waves globally with its Snazzi and Dazzle video-editing products.

Plug the Pocket PVR into a USB 2.0 port in your computer and voila, your computer is turned into a video recorder instantly.

What it really does is to act as a television tuner, transmitting programmes straight to your computer when you connect it to any TV antenna cable.

**This is a leap forward from the traditional way of enabling your computer to receive TV shows. Usually, you need to open up your computer casing to install a TV tuner card.**

Obviously, it will also transform any laptop into a portable goggle box.

You can also transmit video from sources like DVD players and camcorders.

### **EASY TO RECORD ON PC**

In order to start recording, you can use the two bundled software - Snazzi TV or Honestech's TV Plus.

The Snazzi TV software is very user-friendly, allowing you to do basic functions like watching and recording television programmes.

The quality of recording was pretty good - clear images, smooth frame-rates and clean audio.

You can save the video into a variety of formats like AVI (resulting in uncompressed and huge files) and the popular DivX which is the current choice for Internet movie downloads.

As for the TV Plus program, it touts the ability to do 'time-shift' recording as well as normal recording.

Time-shift refers to the ability to watch earlier parts of the programme while the current scenes are being recorded.

This also allows you to pause scenes or fast forward through boring commercials.

**It works as advertised but before it could, I spent a few hours trying to set the channels correctly.**

**Blame that on the skimpy manual and useless TV Plus help files.**

### **NOT AS GRAINY**

Also, I felt that Snazzi TV produced better quality video files than TV Plus - Snazzi's videos were not as grainy.

Despite the software's shortcomings, the Pocket PVR is undeniably useful, and is another step towards making the computer a more complete home entertainment centre.

- **For more information, log on to [www.snazio.com](http://www.snazio.com).**

Copyright © 2004 Singapore Press Holdings Ltd. All rights reserved.