

# CourseCast of the Week

*Episode 123, 10/18/2009*

*Title/Description:* Sidekick Data Loss, Google Editions and other News Headlines

Welcome to Course Technology's CourseCast of the Week, Episode 123, recorded October 18th, 2009. This is Ken Baldauf bringing you this week's technology news and information.

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And now the news...

## **Story 1: Sidekick Users Lose Data**

This week a server failure caused many owners of T-Mobile's Sidekick smart phone to lose their data including contacts, calendar entries, to-do lists, and photos. The popular Sidekick Smartphone was developed by a company, appropriately named "Danger" which was purchased by Microsoft last year. During work on their servers, the company somehow managed to delete its user's data, and apparently had no working backup copy. Sidekick users count on their data being stored on Danger's servers - in the cloud, so that the data can be restored when their batteries fail or run down. During the outage, T-Mobile suspended all sales of the Sidekick until the problem could be sorted out. Eventually, five days later, Danger and Microsoft were able to somehow restore much of the lost data. The issues once again emphasize the need for reliable backup systems for cloud computing systems. The incredible amount of user anger over the issue also serves to illustrate the growing amount of important data that is being stored on smart phones. The Sidekick is still listed as "Temporarily Out of Stock" at T-mobile and some analysts are predicting that Danger's mismanagement of user data may mean the end for the device.

- [Sidekick Data Lost -- And Vendors Say Oops, Sorry](#) [NewsFactor]
- [Sidekick Loss Heightens Fears About Cloud Computing](#) [NewsFactor]
- [Intelligence: Cloud's illusions I recall](#) [Engadget]
- [Microsoft loses Sidekick users' personal data](#) [Computerworld]
- [Sidekick users livid over Microsoft server failure](#) [Computerworld]
- [Sidekick fiasco highlights need for mobile backups](#) [Computerworld]
- [T-Mobile sidelines Sidekick in wake of data debacle](#) [Computerworld]
- [Microsoft recovers most Sidekick data](#) [Computerworld]
- [Sidekick's lesson: Back up your data](#) [Computerworld]

## **Story 2: Google Announces Google Editions**

Google will launch an online bookstore in early 2010 called Google Editions. The store will provide access to over half a million eBooks in partnership with publishers who will set the prices and take the lion share of the profits. Google Editions will have a big impact on the current eBook market dominated by Amazon's Kindle which can only access eBooks from the Amazon store. Google

Edition eBooks will be viewable on any device that can browser the Web. Besides being sold through Google's own online store, strategic partnerships will also make the eBooks available through online retailers such as Amazon, Barnes & Noble and others. With a more open platform Google Editions can provide more options to customers and opportunities for publishers. For example, you might read a Google Editions book on an eReader device on the way to work, continue reading on your lunch break using your notebook PC , read a bit more on your smart phone while waiting for a bus, and finish at bedtime utilizing your eReader once again. While Google has no plans to manufacture eBook readers itself, it is likely that the burgeoning eBook reader industry will provide numerous compatible readers - especially those that are planning to utilize Google's Android operating system.

- [Google sparks e-books fight with Kindle](#) [Reuters]
- [Google To Launch Google Editions Platform](#) [NewsFactor]
- [Google Will Challenge Amazon with E-Book Service](#) [NewsFactor]
- [Google to Step Into Wholesale E-Book Biz](#) [E-Commerce Times]

That brings us to news Briefs

- Sidekick users aren't the only one's steaming over lost data this week. Some 150,000 Facebook users found their accounts missing for over a week with little explanation from Facebook as to what happened.  
[Facebook deals with missing accounts, 150,000 angry users](#) [Computerworld]
- Google has implemented some improvements to Google Docs including "Shared Folders" that should make it easier for groups to collaborate on documents.  
[Google Docs Now Has Shared Folders for Collaboration](#) [NewsFactor]
- Twitter has added a new tool that allows its users to report other users as spammers. It is hoped that the tool will allow twitter to clean up its neighborhood and relieve its users of spamming tweets.  
[Twitter Sputters Over Spammers and Spitters](#) [E-commerce Times]
- Acer has moved up to the number 2 most profitable PC retailer spot bumping Dell to number three. Who reigns supreme? HP by far with 20 percent of PC shipments - almost twice as much as Acer.  
[Acer Topples Dell to Claim No. 2 PC Vendor Slot](#) [E-commerce Times]
- MySpace has replaced all of the hard disk drives in its servers with solid state disk drives that require 99 percent less energy in about half of the space.  
[MySpace replaces all server hard disks with flash drives](#) [Computerworld]
- Music publishers have been working hard to collect royalties for music used as ringtones on cell phones. This week a federal court ruled that a recorded song used as a ring tone does NOT constitute a performance of that song every time the phone rings and thus songwriters and publishers are NOT owed a royalty.  
[Judge: ringtones aren't performances, so no royalties](#) [Ars Technica]
- You've heard of Google's Streetview, well get ready for Microsoft StreetVideo. A revolutionary navigation system under development at Microsoft will allow users to zoom in on a map location to view a panoramic video that points out landmarks along the route for easy navigation.  
[Merging Video with Maps](#) [Technology Review]
- And finally my favorite headline of the week: "Missing dot drops Sweden off the Internet." Apparently, a typo made at the root level of DNS servers, caused all 80 million Swedish domains, those that end in .se, to disappear from the Internet for about an hour and a half last week.  
[Missing dot drops Sweden off the Internet](#) [Computerworld]

That's it for this week's CourseCasts. Email me with your comments and suggestions for the show at [coursecasts@gmail.com](mailto:coursecasts@gmail.com) Let me know how you use CourseCasts in your classes and I'll give you and your school a shout out on my next CourseCast. Until next time have a great week and be sure to take advantage of the Power -- of Technology!