TECH TOOLS

CyanogenMod-7 Brings Android Mods Up to Date

Modders, start your engines! The CyanogenMod folks are at it again and are close to releasing CyanogenMod-7, which brings modded Android phones up to Android Gingerbread without waiting for sluggish carrier updates.

What's new in 7? It's not an enormous update over the previous Android release because Gingerbread itself isn't a major update when compared with 2.2 (Froyo), but the new features you'll get with 7 are compelling enough to upgrade anyway. This release includes "lockscreen gestures," which let you make a gesture on the homescreen to unlock and launch an application or activity. You'll also get OpenVPN in CyanogenMod-7, so if you need to connect to a VPN on your phone, you'll be able to do so.
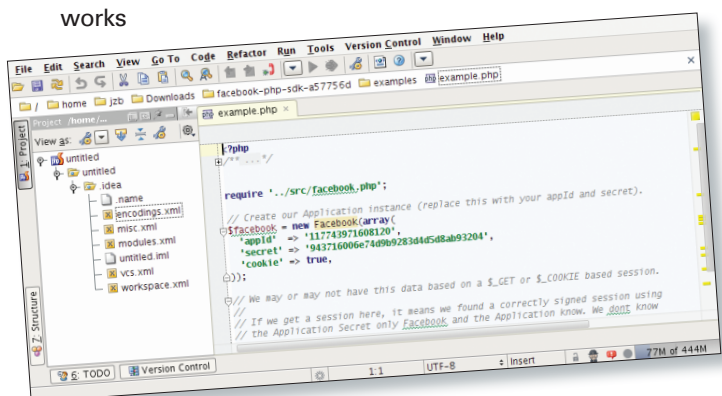
Chrome users have long had "Incognito Mode" to browse without leaving a history of the browsing sessions, but that hasn't carried over to the Android Browser. With C7, modders will get the Incognito Mode on their phone that they've enjoyed on the desktop for so long.

Theming and other features make it to C7 to improve the Android experience. Wondering if your phone is supported? The Cyanogen site has a full list of supported devices, ranging from Google's Nexus One to the Nook Color and Viewsonic G-Tablet (*http://www.cyanogenmod.com/devices*). It's a little extra work to root your phone and install Cyanogen, but it's well worth it if you want more control over your phone and features. Head over to *http://www. cyanogenmod.com/* and get started!

PhpStorm 2.0 IDE Released

JetBrains has released PhpStorm 2.0, "the intelligent PHP IDE." That might be overselling it a bit – I don't see PhpStorm competing on Jeopardy anytime soon – but the IDE does have a ton of changes and features that are likely to appeal to web developers working with PHP.

The new release includes support for PHP 5.3; the "use strict" support for ECMAScript (JavaScript) 5 now works
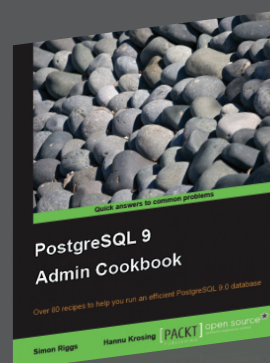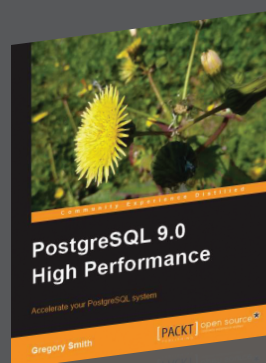

with Mercurial, and it includes integration with issue trackers for GitHub, PivotalTracker, and RedMine. GitHub lovers will also like the LogUI built into PhpStorm that allows you to see changes and differences right in the IDE.

This release also includes support for command-line tools, so you can run shell commands for debuggers directly from the IDE. It also has a better SQL console, so you can edit SQL queries that you're going to be using in your web application right from PhpStorm. You'll also have new code inspections, which will catch unreachable statements, type compatibility problems, and more.

PhpStorm is available for a free 30-day trial. If you like it, personal licenses run US$ 99 for individual developers and US$ 199 for companies and organizations. (The commercial licenses are per machine, not per user.) JetBrains provides free licenses for educational institutions and trainers, and they provide free licenses for open source developers as well. If you'd like to try PhpStorm, head over to the JetBrains site (*http://www.jetbrains.com/*) and give it a whirl.