

## Dell Latitude CPx J650GT

- Price: \$2,552 direct
- Requirements: Mobile Pentium III/650,
- 256MB RAM,
- 8MB ATI Rage Mobility graphics,
- 17.3GB hard drive, CD-ROM drive,
- Wireless PC Card Ethernet,
- 14.0-inch TFT display



✓ Editor's Rating: ●●●●○

by [Cade Metz](#)

The [Dell](#) Latitude CPx J650GT and Dell Latitude LS rank among the leading notebooks in their respective markets. These very different machines, part of a broad series of Dell Latitude portables, share a common set of modular hardware components. The 6.8-pound CPx has a front drive bay that can accept any one of eight different removable devices, including a CD-RW drive and a secondary battery. With the help of a cable and an external drive bay, you can use any of the same devices (except the second battery) with the LS, an ultraportable model weighing a scant 2.7 pounds.

The larger CPx strikes a good balance between size and power. It comes with both a touch pad and a pointing stick, and each pointing device has its own set of mouse buttons, which also serve as scroll buttons in Windows applications that support scrolling. Our test configuration included Dell's TrueMobile [wireless network](#) card.

Performance was generally a touch above average, and the CPx lasted an impressive 4:11 on a single battery charge. Under Windows, we could readily connect to its docking station (\$649) and swap devices in and out of its front drive bay without powering down. Our only complaint: The touch pad's mouse buttons and the keyboard keys, though comfortable to use, are noisy (particularly the Spacebar). This can be annoying to those around you on planes and trains and in meetings.

The power management interface on both systems is still split between BIOS and OS, but when running Windows 2000, you need never enter the BIOS for such matters. Though Dell hasn't customized its power management scheme to the extent [Toshiba](#) has, we had no problems changing various settings, and the systems went in and out of standby and hibernation modes with ease. Alas, both machines performed relatively poorly on our Ease of Use script; in addition, Dell's documentation is below par, both on disk and in print. On the plus side, the company's Web site is ideal for purchasing and, if need be, servicing a notebook.