

Dell Latitude D600



- Product: Dell Latitude D600
- **Price: \$3,595 direct**
- Specifications: 2.4-GHz Mobile Pentium-M, 512MB RAM, 80GB hard drive, 14.1-inch TFT display, CD-RW/DVD drive
- Company Info: 800-999-3355, www.dell.com

✓ Editor's Rating: ●●●●●

✓ Reader Rating: ●●●●●

This lightweight, fairly fast notebook delivers ample connections, battery life, and upgradability for business users.

If legacy connections and long battery life are what you need in a business laptop, the Dell Latitude D600 delivers. The slim Wi-Fi-ready unit weighs 5.4 pounds and has parallel and serial connections for old office peripherals. For typists, the D600 provides both a low-profile pointing stick in the center of the keyboard and the more popular touchpad. The two sets of mouse buttons cater to polar-opposite tastes: The pointing stick's buttons are squishy and deep-depressing, while the touchpad's buttons are extremely stiff. In our battery tests, the D600 lasted just over 4 hours, about an hour longer than the average laptop.

The keyboard feels springier than most, though the nice layout includes a set of press-and-hold volume buttons. The stereo sound emitted from the front speakers is powerful enough for small presentations or close-quarters entertainment. The 14-inch screen can be had in 1024-by-768- or 1400-by-1050-pixel resolution; we tested and priced a D600 with the higher resolution.

Nicely upgradable for a laptop, the D600 offers a hard drive that can be removed from the front of the case, as well as a modular media bay. The latter can hold an optical drive, a second battery (\$50 extra), or a second hard drive. The variety of available docking stations makes the D600 a viable primary PC. Options range from simple monitor stands to the \$279 D/Dock Expansion Station, which provides four USB ports and a DVI flat-panel port.

Other convenient touches include an external battery gauge and battery release latch. Also, a button on the optical drive pops out when pressed, making it easy to remove the drive, and status lights are placed prominently in the right-side screen hinge. Finally, though the cards and security software aren't included in the price, the D600 comes with an integrated Smart Card slot for protecting files and making Web logons more convenient; Dell sells the optional OtaniumSuite PKI software with two Smart Cards for \$60. In keeping with its business orientation, the D600 has no FireWire port or multiformat DVD burner option.

UPSHOT: The D600 offers a nicer design than many thin-and-light business machines, including dual pointing devices.

-- *Carla Thornton*