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TECHNOLOGY

Gadgets, Gizmos & Gifts Galore

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Dec. 01, 2007

The holidays are here and whether you have a large clan with little ones running amok around the house or your shopping list is just a few adults, there are always those people for whom it is difficult to shop. I won't try to give ideas for the tots, but if you're looking for a gift for a business professional (or even yourself), well, I've got a few ideas in my stocking cap. Some are business focused and a few are for either work or personal use. Then there are the uh ..., let's say "unique ones." And if you do have kids running around, they can always play with the boxes these gadgets came in. Don't we all know that the boxes are what the little ones would rather play with anyway?

WORKHORSES

Slice & Dice

Whether at home or in the office, the Fellowes P-57C is a hungry machine that can shred up to eight sheets of letter or legal-sized paper at a time and up to 85 per minute. In addition to crosscutting sensitive client documents, the shredder can chew up credit cards and staples, too, and includes the Exclusive SafeSense Technology that stops the shredder immediately when hands get too close to the paper opening. (www.fellowes.com)

160GB In Your Pocket

The product managers at Memorex must have been using the same Looking Glass as Alice, because they keep thinking smaller and smaller and smaller. The company's Ultra TravelDrive is the latest in its line of portable hard drives that weigh a half-pound, can fit in your hand and have up to 160GB of storage. That's more than most computers come with. It connects to any PC or laptop using a simple USB for transfer and power supply. Several cool faceplates are available, too. (www.memorex.com)

Signed, Sealed, Protected

Almost every document in a professional accounting or tax office is confidential and may contain highly sensitive financial data, so keeping that information safe has long been an important role of office staff. Now there's additional help. The AbsoluteProof Desktop provides users with the ability to digitally timestamp and seal electronic documents and records so that users can objectively defend the credibility of electronic documents. This allows users to be confident in the security and legal credibility of their electronic records. (www.surety.com)

Maximum Mini

You've got work "stuff," and you've got personal "stuff"..., and now pretty much all of it is going digital. From client QuickBooks data files, to family photos and videos, and even your favorite music. The Maxtor OneTouch 4Mini portable hard drive is the latest from Seagate, offering a very easy-to-use solution for storing or transporting your must-have files, and it can be used on-the-go or for total PC backup. (www.seagate.com/maxtor)

I Need More Power, Scotty

It seems like no matter how many hours a cell phone, iPod, iPhone or gaming device's battery lasts, it inevitably dies when you need it most, and without the Starship Enterprise's Chief Engineer, what are you to do? Well, with the new Turbo Charge TC2 from Voxred you can fully charge almost any portable device battery wherever you are and never worry about finding a wall outlet or car lighter again. The TC2 is a reusable, portable charger that can add hours of power, and is operated by two standard AA batteries. (www.turbocharge.com)

All Together Now

Your phone's ringing, but which one is it? You reach for your cell, your

landline, your Internet phone. With the Calisto Pro Series, life for the multi-phone person is about to get easier, especially for home office workers. Unlike most home phones that just answer landline calls and you have to hold up to your ear, the Plantronics Calisto Pro lets you remotely answer landline, cell and Internet calls with a touch of a button, and it has a professional wireless earpiece/microphone, freeing up your hands, neck and shoulder.

(www.plantronics.com)

GOING MOBILE

Flip Out

The FlipStart is a new, super compact full computer running on Windows — not some mini-gadget running a new system. Created by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, the revolutionary new computer weighs less than two pounds; has full wireless, Wi-Fi and 3G LAN support; includes a high-resolution display and sports a regular QWERTY keyboard. (www.flipstart.com)

Comfortable Bluetooth

Wireless headset devices are convenient, but generally not so comfortable. That's because most wrap around the earlobe or stick down in the ear. But not so with the new Flamingo, a sleek new Euro-design headset that uses an EarClick system to firmly wedge in the ear. It comes in a variety of sizes and won't interfere with glasses, earrings or long hair. (www.happyearheadset.com)

Get it Back, Jack

You just realized that your laptop is missing. Perhaps it was in your car or you briefly left it at your lunch table, but it's gone and excuses won't bring it back. Or the data on it. Or appease your boss. But with LoJack for Laptops, you can get it back. The system periodically reports its geographic location, helping the user and support specialists quickly recover it.

(www.lojackforlaptops.com)

Road Trip?

Whether you spend your workweek going between client locations or you're

mostly a weekend traveler, the new Cobra Nav One 2100 offers an affordable GPS navigation system that can be easily moved from car to car and comes loaded with U.S. maps and millions of points of interest. The Nav One features iASAP Intelligent Accelerated Satellite Acquisition Protocol technology for fast, uninterrupted updates to steer you in the right direction. (www.qvc.com)

Mobile Intelligence

GPS systems are quickly becoming the brains of automobiles, and the new LG LN740 is a Roads Scholar (pardon the pun) in this field. Its 4-inch display and slim design provide a brilliant and easy-to-read map display while maintaining a high level of portability for simple transport among multiple family vehicles. The display also automatically changes from “day mode” to “night mode” for clear visual recognition in any lighting condition. With its turn-by-turn text-to-speech voice guidance, its highly accurate pre-loaded USA and Canada map with millions of points of interest, access to traffic data service via a supplied RDS-TMC antenna, as well as photo and music file playback ... well, navigation, information and entertainment are more accessible than ever. (www.LG.com)

Spot-On

Great for people on the go in remote areas or for children who don't have a cell phone of their own, the SPOT Satellite Messenger is a handheld device that allows users to contact family, friends or emergency services with the touch of a button. It is not a phone, but instead can send pre-programmed messages to tell loved ones that you're okay, will be late or need help. It can also alert 9-1-1 emergency responders with an exact location. And since it uses the GPS Globalstar network for transmissions, it can work where cell phones can't get a signal. Users/parents can also track progress with Google Maps, identifying exactly where the device is. SPOT costs \$99 per year, along with the initial purchase. (www.findmespot.com)

You Can Take it With You

Work documents, client data files, music, photos, videos and anything else can be easily stored on Western Digital's Passport portable hard drive. Great for work or personal use, the Passport can be used to backup data from a work PC or used for moving information between points. Models are available with capacities of up to 250GB, more than twice the hard drive space of many new PCs. Plus, the Passport plugs in with a simple USB cord, it fits in your hand,

and users can select from a variety of colors. All data is protected with 128-bit encryption. (www.wdc.com)

Clearly Superior Protection

Whether you have one mobile gadget or four, keeping the screens on these \$100 to \$500+ tech items from getting scratched is a challenge. You toss them on the desk and on your nightstand, then cram them in your purse or pocket. But there is hope: the invisibleSHIELD. Made from a clear, high-strength material, the wrap product offers screen protection for more than 1,000 different gadgets on the market and was the first to develop versions for the iPhone and the latest generation of iPods. So protect your valuable MP3 players, phones and other devices with invisibleSHIELD. (www.shieldzone.com)

Expand Your Reach

Laptop users rejoice! Now you can expand your wireless reception up to 1,000 feet using the Wi-Fire integrated adapter, which connects with a simple USB plug. So if you're too far from an access point or you're just not getting the speed you want, the Wi-Fire amplifies it and improves speed, and shows you when you've reached maximum signal strength. (www.hfield.com)

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PERSONAL TECH GIFTS

Winter Weather Blues?

Feel the need to check the weather? The Bushnell ONIX 400 with XM weather technology is a handheld GPS device with a built-in weather tracker. Using the same XM weather technology used by airplane pilots and Indy 500 drivers, the ONIX 400 provides advanced information on current and upcoming weather conditions. (www.bushnell.com)

Cool Under Pressure

Replacing a set of tires can be costly, especially on big SUVs and high-performance

sports cars. But that's only one reason to make sure they are inflated properly: Tire pressure is also important to your safety. Enter the Accutire Digital Set Point air gauge, a tire gauge for the 21st Century. With programmable features for recording factory recommended pressure, an LED flashlight and an LCD display, the Accutire will help keep you safely on the road. (www.tirerack.com)

Satellite Sound

So you've got XM Satellite Radio in your car, but you still listen to an antenna-based analog system in your home and office? How 1980s of you! You could take high-quality reception and premier programming everywhere with the XpressRC, the first Plug & Play satellite radio with 60-minute pause and replay, and large full-color split-screen display ... and the ability to save 10 favorite songs to listen to later. (www.xmradio.com)

Candy for Your Ears

Just as television stations have been ramping up their high-def programming, radio stations have been doing the same. And just as you need an HDTV to get the HD signal, you need an HD radio to get the vastly improved radio program, which also provides digital music information, alerts, sports scores and weather. Unlike the TV version, there are no subscription fees — just the one-time cost of purchasing a radio. At less than \$100, the Radiosophy HD100 is the most affordable HD radio on the market. (www.radiosophy.com)

Shhhh!

As earphones have evolved into tiny little buds, the noise of our busy world increasingly seeps in, which makes the earphone wearer turn up the volume more, even to dangerous levels. But noise-cancelling headphones like Sharper Image's "quiet place" Noise-Cancellation Headphones let you turn off the noisy world with the push of a button and either escape to a quiet place or listen to music. With ambient noise practically removed from the mix of music, you're treated to excellent audio fidelity at much safer volume levels. The system features both "active" noise cancellation and "passive" noise reduction. (www.sharperimage.com)

DEFINITELY "UNIQUE"

Kookie, Lend Me Your (Laser) Comb

If your hairline has been depreciating a little too fast over the years, here's something that will let you throw away the snake oil and miracle creams. The Hairmax Lasercomb miniaturizes the technology of laser hair care. It has FDA

approval for the regrowth of hair in men with male pattern baldness. “Baby, you’re the ginchiest.” (www.lasercomb.com)

Green Machine

The new Vectrix is billed as the world’s first high-performance, two-wheel, zero emission vehicle. The highway-legal, eco-friendly bike can hit 50mph in 6.8 seconds and maxes out at 65mph. Classified as a maxi-scooter, the Vectrix is all-electric and plugs into a standard 110 outlet to recharge in two to three hours). It was designed to provide reliable and affordable transportation for commuting and recreational needs, helping relieve traffic congestion, pollution, parking hassles and inflexible public transportation. (www.myvectrix.com)

Enjoy the Holidays!

Technology • Article

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