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this year on hardware that could improve mobility. For most accountants ...

Roman Kepczyk • Feb. 17, 2017



2017 marked the 50th Anniversary for the International Consumer Electronics Show (CES) and our 13th year on the show floor to peruse and discover the latest technologies that could be showing up in our accounting firms in the near future.

With CES Showcasing 3,800 vendors spread out over 2.8 Million square feet of show floor (43 football fields), it was impossible to see everything, so our efforts focused this year on hardware that could improve mobility. For most accountants, having a 15"-17" laptop with a full keyboard/number pad is the standard selection, but new features and form factors are giving desktop users and consultants more interesting options than ever. In this article we feature the laptops, prototypes and head scratchers from our four days on the CES show floor. (Picture

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display and minimize the clutter around the screen in the working area, but the current video camera configuration is really only useful in tent mode where it would be closer to eye level. (Picture: Dell XPS 13 in Tent Mode)

Lenovo X1 Carbon: Lenovo has always presented well at CES with their X1 Yoga, Yoga Book, and the ThinkPad X1 Carbon which my more technical friends usually rate as their number one Ultrabook choice. The X1 Carbon laptop has a slightly larger 14" screen and is listed as the lightest 14" Ultrabook at 2.6 lbs and fairly thin at .65 inches. The Carbon is also one of the toughest on the market as they are designed with satellite-grade carbon fiber and tested against some of the harshest (military grade) conditions for those accountants that are more accident prone.

HP Spectre: Listed as the world's thinnest laptop at a mere .41 inches and one of the lightest laptops we found at CES, the Spectre would be included in our top three Ultrabook options as it comes with the more powerful Intel Core i5 and i7 processors. While you get the full processing power, the offset is that this laptop can put out more heat due to the fan system that constantly pulls in external air to flow over the processor and out the back. The Spectre was built with security in mind with a biometric fingerprint scanner, Windows Hello-compatible camera, and a screen that has integrated privacy capabilities (similar to our 3M privacy filter which eliminates the view from side angles). To make it the thinnest laptop, the Spectre also was designed with a "piston" type hinge which unfortunately limits how far it can open (120 degrees) compared to the 180 degree hinge in Lenovo's X1 and 360 degree hinge the Dell offers. However, from a look and feel perspective this is one of the most elegant devices we handled at CES and the one that will be most noticed by clients. (Picture: HP Spectre)

Razr Project Valerie: We have talked about multi-screen laptop prototypes for years, but at CES 2017 Razer got the most attention with their Project Valerie laptop having three 17" screens (two that fold out from the center when closed). The screens

support resolutions up to 4K and weighs in at 12 pounds, which is not so bad when

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this is currently an Indiegogo project, Ockel already has a track record of success with their first Sirius B device sans the screen and shows “how small can you go.”
(Picture)

Miraxess MiraBook: Most of today's smartphones have much of the functionality and power of PCs but are lacking the larger screen and keyboard input which makes laptops the standard working tool. However, if you are one of the few running a Windows 10 phone and you want to run them from your smartphone, a company called Miraxess has given your smartphone a laptop shell with a massive battery to plug into and function like a laptop for up to 24 hours. If Miraxess starts making these Android or iOS capable and as thin as an Ultrabook, this could become really interesting product niche. (Picture)

Mobility is, and will continue to be, one of the key differentiators of great accounting firms. Whether you are a consultant, field auditor, or tax person primarily working on a desktop it will be increasingly important to work from any place and any time. Today's mobility options give you that opportunity.

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