

## 'Unveiled' event displays a wide range of new gadgets

From customized massage chair to a talking BBQ thermometer

By Dean Takahashi Mercury News

Article Launched: 01/06/2008 01:35:27 PM PST

LAS VEGAS - The CES Unveiled reception for the press kicked off the first official event of the Consumer Electronics Show on Saturday night. The event drew a lot of the estimated 4,000 journalists who are expected to cover the show.

The products, all of them awarded some kind of innovation award for good design, ranged from the familiar to the silly. One was a massage chair from Human Touch. The chair reclines and boosts your feet so that they are above your head. The company describes this as the same 'zero gravity' position that astronauts assume when they're taking off. With a remote, you can press a 'scan' button that reads your body's muscle structure and then comes up with a customized massage routine. The chair can massage any region of your body you choose. It costs \$3,999. It is available now from [www.humantouch.com](http://www.humantouch.com).

One invention will be useful to the deaf and blind. NPR, Harris Corp., and Towson University teamed up to provide transcripts or presentations of NPR radio broadcasts so that the hearing impaired can read them and the visually impaired can hear. The technology will leverage HD Radio and will involve a variety of manufacturers. More details will be out Monday.

Polk Audio's quad-speaker HD Radio turned out to be impressive. The radio receives higher-quality HD radio signals and has a 'tag' button on the front for marking a song that is currently playing on the radio. If the radio has an iPod

plugged into it, it could transfer that 'meta data' about the song from the tag and the radio station it was playing on to the iPod. Then when you sync the iPod with iTunes software, the tag information gets transferred to iTunes so you can buy the song that was marked. The radio station benefits through a revenue-sharing program since it can be identified as the source of the purchase.

Yoggie Security Systems showed a hardware security device in a USB (universal serial bus) flash drive that allows you to bypass the installation of security software on your home computer. Christophe Korfer, head of sales for the Israeli company, said that it attaches to a computer through a standard USB port and serves as a hassle-free security filter between your computer and the Internet. It provides anti-phishing, anti-virus, anti-spam and other protections that normally require you to install software on your machine. The good thing is that this hardware solution doesn't slow down your computer the way that software does, Korfer said. It is available now on the company's site for \$100 and will be out in stores in the first quarter, Korfer said.

Oregon Scientific had a Grill-Right talking barbeque oven thermometer. You stick a metal thermometer in any kind of meat. The thermometer is connected by wire to a handheld device outside of the oven. You plug in what kind of meat you have and it will tell you via synthesized speech, 'Your meat is almost ready.' It is available now and sells for \$59. It works on everything from turkey to ham.

Oregon Scientific also had on display a helmet for a motocross biker dubbed the ATC2K Action Camera. The product is a Web cam that could wireless broadcast images from the wearer's helmet. It's been selling well for a few months and is available for \$129.

Kreative Power had a well-designed surge protector. It was circular, with six plugs around the circle. And it had a button on top to turn it on or off, glowing with the color of your choice. The Powramid sells for \$17 to \$25.

Flash chip maker SanDisk showed the company's new Cruzer Titanium Plus USB flash memory device that stores four gigabytes and can automatically upload its contents to an online backup site. And it also showed a new Micro SD flash card that could hold eight gigabytes on it. All in a chip the size of a baby's fingernail.

Haier Ibiza showed off a new twist in music at the Real Networks table. This MP3 music player stores 30 gigabytes for the \$299 version. The cool thing is that it has built-in Wi-Fi that allows it to connect and synchronize with Real's Rhapsody subscription music service. You can use the handheld to cruise through new releases of songs and download them on the fly to your Ibiza.

Westinghouse Digital and Pulse-Link showed off how they could transfer HDTV signals wireless over ultra wideband radio signals. Pulse-Link says it has an FCC-certified UWB chip set, dubbed CWave, which can transfer data at 1.35 gigabits per second. That's a lot faster than 802.11n, which transfers at a few hundred megabits per second, and plenty fast to do high-quality video transfer.

And Digeo showed off its Moxi HD DMR Home Cinema set-top boxes and a variety of other gear that uses the Moxi interface for viewing interactive TV. Jodie Cadieux, the marketing guru there, wasn't ready to commit to when the boxes would be available in retail. But she said it would be soon. Digeo delayed the launch of its retail cable set-top boxes last year to finish up the products. Cadieux said various cable networks have about 400,000 Moxi boxes in place now.