



The One With the Coolest Toy Wins - GadgetFest 07 - 11/20/2007

CommNexus San Diego, the region's top telecom industry group, hosts GadgetFest each November as a showcase among evolving technologies. This year's event – part tradeshow, part competition – took place on Qualcomm's Morehouse campus.

CommNexus' annual GadgetFest "features all the new ideas before anybody else sees them," and "shows you what's hot now so you can vote on how hot it is," in the words of tag-team hosts Ken Rutkowski and Andy Abramson. This year's event was no exception, with plenty to impress, stimulate and baffle its 250+ attendees last Wednesday, November 14.

At the tradeshow-in-miniature, over a dozen companies displayed GPS-based crime prevention devices, USB cellular modems, mobile bar code scanners, bandwidth aggregation appliances, and in-home HDTV distribution equipment.

Bag of Phones and Defining "Hot"

Following the tradeshow, guests adjourned to the N-Lecture Hall, where GadgetFest began in earnest with the traditional "Bag of Phones" demonstration, performed this year by local telecom consultant Bo Hedfors. In rapid succession, Hedfors demonstrated phones variously capable of sobriety testing, do-it-yourself DJ/MP3 functions, blood sugar measurement, and 10-megapixel video recording.

Two on-stage judges made clear their criteria for a "hot" technology: Iain Gillott of iGillottResearch was looking for "something new and cool that I've never seen before," while Phil Baker of the San Diego Transcript claimed, "I have to understand it. It has to meet a real need for real people and not be mere tech for tech's sake."

Rutkowski and Abramson then took over as co-masters of ceremonies, prodding the presenters of the eight contending companies through 5-minute demonstrations, and asking each to summarize his technology in an 8-second "Speed to Cool" statement.

Gadgets on Parade

MOBIVOX - As a mobile application service provider, MOBIVOX bridges the gap among mobile phones, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and Voice over Instant Messaging (VoIM) by connecting the mobile, PC, or home phone to any network. Without the need to download software, the service handles international fixed-line and mobile calls, as well as VoIP calls over Skype, and offers extremely low-cost calling to any phone in over two dozen countries. Simply phone a local MOBIVOX number, announce the name of the person you're calling, and MOBIVOX completes the call using your pre-loaded contact lists (Skype, Outlook, Gmail). *Speed to cool: "Local calling service for everyone."*

Motorola MC17 – Since its acquisition by Motorola last year, Symbol Technologies has become the core of Motorola's enterprise mobility business. The MC17 is a handheld bar code scanner used by retailers to support customers' buying habits. You pick one up as you enter the store, swipe your card so that it remembers you, and it helps you find items you're looking for. It can offer coupons based on your purchasing patterns and suggest products on which you may be running low. Long checkout lines? No worry; you can scan your purchases while you wait and pay when you reach the front of the line. *Speed to cool: "Bar code technology saves consumers time and money, and makes more money*



for the stores.”

GPSit Find&See1 – Touting the use of Qualcomm’s MSM6050 chipset, GPSit is a location-based service provider selling tracking devices for vehicles, packages, people and assets. The Find&See1 transmitter lives in a small, rugged case which attaches (usually magnetically) to the tracked object. The company claims that several federal, state and local law enforcement agencies currently use this hardware in combination with its Find&See locator software to track down criminals anywhere within North America’s CDMA coverage. *Speed to cool: “Protecting your life and goods with GPS tracking devices.”*

Novatel Wireless MC727 – Novatel Wireless has brought the industry’s smallest USB-format, EVDO Rev.A wireless wide area network modem to market through both Verizon Wireless and Sprint. The MC727 features a rugged flip antenna, a MicroSD flash memory slot and support for GPS. Best of all, the device is capable of storing the required drivers and connection managers for all major operating systems (Windows Vista and XP, MacOS, Linux) in flash memory for automatic installation to the computer. Pricing is as low as \$149 through Verizon and \$79 through Sprint. *Speed to cool: “Wirelessly link devices so that you can connect from anywhere.”*

Your Truman Show - This free, web-based platform combines the best of social networking and online video in a personal channel. Your Truman Show aggregates and sits above all major social networks like Facebook and MySpace, allowing navigation and links to video among them. Indexing either by user or video category, its VideoMap widget makes it easy to discover video from friends, the friends of friends and beyond. Your Truman Show is also paving the way for new advertising opportunities in mobile social networks. *Speed to cool: “Better reach and targeting for advertisers to a quarter-billion PDA users.”*

Truphone – Think how much money you could save if your mobile phone calls were routed through the Internet. Truphone, “the world’s first software-only network operator and next-generation MVNO,” has built its network almost entirely using open-source technology (particularly Session Initiation Protocol, or SIP), to allow free mobile phone calling to other Truphone users and “very cheap calls” to everyone else. Truphone currently works with Nokia E- and N-series phones from any WiFi access point to any phone in dozens of countries. *Speed to cool: “Cheap calls – don’t get gouged while roaming.”*

Pulse~Link’s CWave – High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) delivers a high-quality experience with built-in content protection, but it is limited to single-room distribution. CWave allows you to distribute high-definition content from a single-room DVR, Blu-ray, HD DVD player, Media Center PC or set-top box and display it throughout the house over coaxial cable or Ultra Wideband (UWB) wireless connection. CWave also supports interactive capabilities (pause, fast forward, fast rewind) and menu navigation over the connection. *Speed to cool: “Stream high-definition video around the home.”*

WiseDV’s Lvis – “The dream gadget for die-hard sports fans and concert-goers,” Lvis supplements the live event with the features you most appreciate in the in-home viewing experience. The handheld device offers views from eight different camera angles, instant replay, slow motion and statistics. The US Tennis Association and American Express offered the Lvis at the 2007 US Open, where over 15,000 fans used 2,000 of the devices to keep tabs on multiple matches, view slow-motion replays and obtain player biographies. *Speed to cool: “Enhances the sports event view and activity for hard-core sport fans.”*

...And the Winner Is...

Using wireless voting devices, the audience rewarded the coolness in WiseDV’s Lvis with first place; however, the two judges preferred the utilitarian aspect of Motorola’s MC17. In the ensuing run-off, the audience voted 102-94 for Motorola’s product as the GadgetFest ’07 winner, and GadgetFest solidified its reputation as an entertaining, up-close look at emerging telecom technology and trends.