

GADGET GUY

THE GADGET GUY GIVES YOU THE 411 ON THE LATEST HIGH-TECH GADGETS.

By Charles House

Kill the Noise

It's a given that air travel is stressful enough without listening to the other passengers all the way across the country. And, traditional noise-reduction headphones can be uncomfortable and are not made to suit your own specific ears. The Comply NR-10 earphones (\$79) use passive noise-reduction using the same technology employed by U.S. Army helicopter crews and Special Forces. The patented Comply Foam Tips use ultra-soft memory foam that conforms to the user's ear canal, offering personalized noise reduction and comfort. I found the foam to also be remarkably secure, and was able to wear it for long periods of time, even while sleeping. Which, in a plane, is a feat of its own.

www.complyfoam.com



Morning Wild Thing?

To see just how bad traffic really is, Navigon, a leading GPS manufacturer, questioned commuters, and a full 25 percent of these folks were willing to give up their morning sex if they were guaranteed a traffic-free commute. It's a given that they interviewed some women in this group, so I'm not sold that any men would really give up sex for anything, but the Navigon 7200 (\$499) is a great gadget all the same. Voice recognition allows you to holler "help" and get some extra assistance without stopping to fiddle with the device. Real-time traffic alerts route you around problem areas for the lifetime of the product. Reality View Pro™ lets you see the actual road sign – no more guessing what is meant by cryptic directions. Lane Assistant Pro™ gives you clear guidance about which lane to be in – before you need to be there. It takes less clicks to enter your location because of the SmartSpeller feature and the built-in Zagat ratings and reviews help you pick restaurants and other attractions. DirectHelp is a touch away for instant directions to hospitals, police stations and other emergency services. In short, your GPS device just became user friendly.

www.navigon.com



Organize the Chaos

The bad thing about having so many gadgets is the mess they make. Keeping the wire bundle organized is a job in itself, let alone trying to find the right charger for each device. The Sanctuary (\$130) gives you a simple and compact way to charge everything in your gadget arsenal. Compatible with over 1500 devices, plus a USB port, you can customize the unit for whatever you need to charge. The Sanctuary also holds your wallet, keys and other pocket items, keeping your bedside table neat and organized.

www.cableorganizer.com



Downsizing Goes Hi-Tech

If your office is anything like mine, space is at a premium. Yet, you still need the old desktop for some specific uses and your laptop needs to be front and center most of the time as well. The Iogear USB Laptop KVM Switch (\$99.95) lets you ditch the extra monitor and keyboard, and use your laptop to control the desktop with one easy, plug and play cable. It comes with built-in file transfer utility software that lets you drag and drop files and create backups between the machines. As if you needed an excuse to recycle the old CRT monitor hanging out in that dark corner.

www.iogear.com



Optimal iPhone Performance

Get the most from your iPhone by listening to music wirelessly with Wi-Gear's iMuffs wireless headphones (\$149). Seamless switching between music playback and voice calls, all from up to 40 feet away, if necessary. The integrated microphone gave decent call quality to my call partner, and the seamless transition was great – especially when traveling. I also like these for Skype as they are comfortable for long periods of time when working and/or talking.

www.wi-gear.com



Tailgating Perfection

There are probably a lot more noble uses for this gadget, like hiking in the unspoiled wilderness or exploring the outback or something. But, this is my tailgating dream. No matter how much I pack, I never get really good coffee. Until now. Brunton's Brewfire (\$99) lets you choose propane or butane to brew great coffee – literally anywhere. No cord or plug required. The coffee also brews into a vacuum-sealed stainless-steel carafe that keeps it hot for a couple of hours while you party. And you thought you had it all?

www.brunton.com



Sign Your Work

Everyone knows first impressions are important, make yours stand out with the DYMO DiscPainter (\$279). Three print-quality modes print up to 1200 DPI, full-color images directly on printable CDs or DVDs. Compatible with both Macs and PCs, you can print your own photos using the photo collage tool, or choose from ready-made designs. Whether it's your resume or your latest playlist, make it professional.

www.dymo.com

Green Your Laptop

The new elf from enano (\$599) bills itself as an eco-friendly laptop alternative, but I think this is where laptops will all be going in the next couple of years. First, the elf (I played with the lf2400 model – there is a less expensive model with fewer options as well) is light and easy to carry in book bags and purses. If you don't have a lot of need for anything past office software, this is great. It has integrated WiFi, a card reader and Bluetooth. That pretty much covers 80% of the laptop users out there. At 9" by 6" and two pounds there's not much to love – and the price is affordable, a huge plus from the original enano which I think was very overpriced. The keyboard is small and might be hard to use for some people, but there's a definite use for this (especially using Linux) for many people.

www.enanocomputers.com



Never Loose Sight

It's frustrating to have the perfect beach bunny in sight, only to lose her when you switch magnification and adjust the visual field. With the Leupold Golden Ring Binoculars with Switch/Power Technology (\$849-899) that won't happen. Switching from 7x to 12x or 10x to 17x is as easy as flipping a switch, and the binoculars make the instant transition with minimal need to refocus. It's called Switch/Power Technology and Leupold is the only optics company to currently offer it. The binoculars are still extremely light at 21.4 and 23.9 ounces, respectively, and 5 or 6 inches long. And, of course, they are covered by Leupold's full lifetime guarantee.

www.leupold.com



Relax & Put Your Feet Up

Let's face it, men are easy. We just want to watch the game with plenty of food, plenty of alcohol and a comfortable place to sit back and enjoy the food, alcohol and said game. The Coffee Table Ottoman (\$60) takes care of the comfort factor, without worrying about having your feet on the furniture. Because let's face it – we also want to keep our women happy. Made from green Eco Foam, the Coffee Table Ottoman can also be personalized with your favorite team logo or fabric color.

www.relaxationdesigns.com

