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At CES, something for everyone Latest gizmos unveiled at Las Vegas show span just about all interests

Matthew Yi and Benny Evangelista, Chronicle Staff Writers Sunday, January 9, 2005

Las Vegas -- From tone-deaf karaoke lovers to chatty people whose cell phone batteries keep dying, there is help out there.

Last week, about 2,400 companies filled 1.5 million square feet of exhibit space at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas with thousands of devices, including the latest in cell phones, portable music players, digital cameras, video camcorders, TVs and DVD recorders. These were just a few of the devices on display.

For those who can't carry a tune, IVL Technologies Ltd.'s On-Key Karaoke System may be the answer. The system includes a wireless microphone that wraps around the ear and turns even a monotone voice into one that's in tune. The device also has a video camera that puts an image of the singer on the television.

The system is priced at \$199 and comes with 100 songs. Additional songs are available on the firm's Web site for 99 cents per tune. The device will be available this spring.

Or you can turn your PC into a Singing Coach with two Windows programs of that name from Carry-a-Tune Technologies of Tampa, Fla. The software adapts its program to your vocal range.

As you sing, the program displays how accurately your voice is hitting the notes, telling you when to pause or breathe and

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suggesting ways to correct any missed notes. The designers of the program, which is priced at \$49 for a basic version and \$99 for an advanced version, claim it can help "the hopelessly tone deaf," perhaps even some "American Idol" contestants, sing better.

### Gift of gab

Have you ever been left powerless with a dead cell phone? Charge 2 Go offers a lightweight, reusable portable charger that runs on one AA battery or a rechargeable battery.

Once it's plugged in to the phone, users get instant power -- up to three extra hours of talk time. The product, which won the show's Best of Innovations honor in the portable power category, sells for about \$20. Now you'll never stop yammering.

### Talking heads

If you want to see the person that you're yammering with, there is the Motorola Ojo Personal Videophone.

It's pricey, \$799 for the unit plus \$14.99 per month for the service, but the videophone does offer full-motion video on a small color screen.

The videophone, which received the Best Innovations honor for design and engineering, needs a broadband connection. However, it includes a standard phone jack for regular voice calls.

### PSP details

Gamers anxiously waiting for Sony's new PlayStation Portable, or PSP, will be able to get their hands on one in March. That was the word from Kaz Hirai, chief executive officer of Sony Computer Entertainment America.

The PSP started selling Dec. 12 in Japan, where the limited supplies have been selling fast. Hirai wouldn't give an exact date for the U.S. release. He also wouldn't say how much it will cost, although the price in Japan is about \$190.

The PSP is a multimedia entertainment device that some have called the iPod killer. The bright color screen measures 4.3 inches and offers 3-D gaming.

Electronic Arts, the world's largest video-game publisher, says it will release six new titles when the PSP hits the store shelves. Sony executives say the company will offer about a half-dozen games as well.

### All hands on deck

British firm Gizmondo Europe Ltd. will also start selling a handheld gaming device.

The rounded deck is also a multimedia entertainment player that runs on the Microsoft Windows CE operating system. Along with

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games, the device can play music and video. And just in case you get lost, Gizmondo also includes a GPS system.

The deck has 64 MB of internal memory and a single slot for a secure digital, flash memory card. The games will be sold on the cards. Gizmondo expects to offer 12 titles when it starts to sell the device in the United States for about \$399 by the end of March.

Can't sit still

Movie fans can immerse themselves in the experience with the D-Box Quest Integrated Motion Simulating seat. This high-end home theater recliner, which starts at \$5,300, is programmed to bump, rumble or sway the chair in sequence with events in a DVD movie. About 150 DVD movies have already been programmed. Monthly updates are available for a \$250-per-year subscription.

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## Page B - 1

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