



Digital Connect Hot Products: July 2006

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GET SMART Rarely do vendors improve on a previous generation of their product and charge the same amount for the new release. Well, Smart Technologies has done just that with its newest generation of the Smart Board 600. The new interactive whiteboard has been given a sleek design with a larger screen, additional functionality, and a hardware expansion slot—and the price has remained the same as previous versions. The most recent design also offers an optional pair of 15-watt speakers, volume control and an integrated two-port USB hub for a more collaborative multimedia experience. The Smart Board 600 costs \$999 and includes a two-year warranty.

A BRIGHTER IDEA Hewlett-Packard has added a new and improved LCD to its arsenal. Released less than a month ago, the 24-inch wide-screen LCD is extremely bright and offers an image crisp enough for any environment. The LP2465 LCD includes a 6-millisecond response time, height-adjustable base, 90-degree pivot rotation, 178-degree viewing angle and an integrated power supply to hide the bulkiness of traditional LCD power supplies. The LP2465 LCD unit has an estimated street price of \$999 and is ready to use right out of the box.

NO GLASS CEILING HERE Chief Manufacturing released a slew of new accessories designed to add practicality and convenience to the home while also serving as the entry point to much larger digital deployments. Designed for simplified monitor-to-ceiling affixing, the new line of accessories aim to minimize installation time of digital devices while adding a touch of class to any room. The two most recent additions to the lineup are the CMS445 ceiling kit, which retails for \$169, and the CMS115 ceiling plate, which has an MSRP of \$49. The extension columns will range in price, depending on the length. Chief Manufacturing says it works closely with installers, system integrators and designers to accommodate each customer.

EXTREME GAMES For all gaming customers, this is something to really get excited about: Systemax has released the Wildcat desktop gaming system featuring breakthrough technology. The gaming system features the new AEGIA PhysX 128-Mbyte GDDR3 Accelerator. It also features AMD FX-60 dual-core processing, SLI graphics, and the Asus A8N32-SLI gaming edition motherboard. The biggest improvement to the new system is that the advancements provide gamers with extremely fast frame rates and cause-and-effect motion interaction, which should become the new hot selling point in the gaming industry. The new system comes at a costly premium, however. With all of the aforementioned goodies, the PC costs \$4,499.

HIGH-END CHATTER A high-quality, full-duplex USB speakerphone is now available for digital integrators servicing the mobile space. ClearOne's Chat 50 is the first duplex device ever tested by CRN Test Center engineers that allows for simultaneous two-way communication rather than simply permitting one speaker at a time. Not only does it provide high-quality hands-free audio communication, but it also combines that same outstanding voice quality with MP3 players and iPods. The Chat 50 will work with most VoIP software on the market today. Test Center engineers reviewed it using Skype, and it worked seamlessly. The unit ships with a USB cable, cell phone and telephone audio cable, power supply and installation CD for \$149.99.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE Rotel Electronics is now debuting the RLC-1080, a new power conditioner, which will protect home theater and audio/video systems from abrupt changes in voltage. In addition, the unit is capable of providing continuous backup power with the inclusion of a battery pack. Rotel provides complete protection at all three pairs of its coax jacks. It also includes a low-insertion-loss splitter to facilitate splitting a coax line to both a CATV box and a cable modem. The RLC-1080 costs \$1,599, and the backup battery pack, the RBB1080, costs an additional \$699. There is a five-year warranty on the RLC-1080.

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