

LEGAL MANAGEMENT

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New Tech from CES 2015

Once again, we made our annual trek to Las Vegas, Nevada for Consumer Electronics Show 2015.



BILL & PHIL

*The Bill and Phil Show
Tech News & Reviews*

We cannot overemphasize how big this event is for anyone with a geek-index as high as ours. We were not disappointed. Here are some examples of the latest gadgetry that caught our eye.

The ZUtA Pocket Printer is a small device about the size of a wedding ring box. The printer is so small that you can put it in your pocket, yet you can print on any size of paper.

Another gadget with a wow factor was The Dash Headphones by Bragi. These headphones are completely wireless. Together they hold about 1,000 songs and, by the way, they can audibly coach you while you are exercising, track your movements and capture biometric data.

We also loved the Netatmo Welcome, a small, cylindrical camera that can detect a person's face and then inform you of who has come into your house or office. We were also intrigued by Ricoh's new Theta camera that uses a pair of fish-eye lenses to capture 360-degree spherical images.

And these gadgets are just the beginning. After day two at the show, we quickly saw that there were some basic themes emerging from this year's CES.

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1. Drones

There were so many drones that they had their own section at the convention center. Today's drones can not only be used for photo and videos, but also for surveying, package delivery, law enforcement and gathering weather data and traffic information. While Parrot continues to be a leader in this genre, we really liked the Ghost drone made by EHang, Inc. You can use it right out of the box, equip it with a GoPro cam, and control it with an app on your smartphone.

2. PCs are here to stay

In recent years, electronic manufacturers have tried to take our laptops and desktops away from our warm, live fingers. They wanted us to start using tablets and smartphones. Apparently, they have realized the folly in this strategy. Laptops and desktop personal computers were everywhere. The trend, as always, is toward lighter devices with more powerful performance and longer battery life. We really loved several of the computers in the Lenovo line such as the

X1 and the LaVie Z ultrabook that weighs in at an impressive 1.72 pounds. We also drooled over the new Samsung ATIV Book 9, a highly portable and almost weightless computer that does not need a cooling fan because its processor is based on Intel's new Broadwell-Y power-efficient design. Consequently, it is very quiet.

3. Connected and automated vehicles

We saw the BMW that drove itself to CES. We saw the electronics packages in Volkswagen, Lexus, Toyota and Mercedes Benz. But perhaps the coolest and most impressive display was the Audi section. Audi is perfecting technology that is not fully driverless, but merely assists drivers with things like a crash-avoidance system. We were really impressed.

4. Wearables

We saw every type of wearable you can imagine. Almost every device could tell time, track your GPS coordinates, and measure your bodily attributes, such as skin temperature and heart rate. There were even devices that had voice and facial recognition. Our favorite wearable, Motorola's Scout 5000, was a smart collar to track and train your dog.

5. Smart home products

Almost every major company at CES had connected-home products. There were products that connected all of your appliances to the Internet, connected your lights and your music systems into one network that could be controlled over the Internet and, of course, many devices, such as the Nest Learning Thermostat, that would allow you to control the temperature in your home. Perhaps our favorite smart home system is the Savant system that acts as a much more user-friendly version of the Crestron products. The system allows you to separately control lighting, temperatures establish themes each room.

6. Higher and higher definition television

All of the television manufacturers had the new 4K models available in almost every size — up to screens as large as nine or 10 feet. And these video screens were not just for entertainment. There were also screens for surgeons, design artists, architects and similar professions. We even found ourselves drawn to the curved computer monitors that appeared to make a more attractive and viewable work space. Samsung made some of our favorite curved computer screens.

7. 3-D printing

There appeared to be more than 100 manufacturers of three-dimensional printers displaying their wares at CES. One of our favorites was the XYZ 3D Food Printer that uses food ingredients to produce and decorate uncooked cookies or cakes. You can design your decorations for food items, determine their size and the ingredients that they will be made out of, and, voilà, you have a perfectly decorated cake (or even pizza pie). XYZ Printing also makes ones of the most affordable traditional 3-D printers with its Da Vinci model.

8. Internet of things or Internet of everything

Every tech company involved in networking at the CES proclaimed 2015 as the year of Internet of Everything, a world when virtually every consumer product will be connected to the Internet. This will be a world where there is hardly any privacy. The volume of digital data in this new world of Internet of Everything will generate a bazillion terabytes of data and make all the networking and computer storage device manufacturers rich beyond their wildest dreams. Let's hope this does not happen.

9. Robots

There were robots of every kind at CES. There were robots to take care of your elderly parents; robots to clean your house; robots to provide security in your home; and even robots to shine your shoes. The most interesting (and eerie) robot was what we would call a “cyborg” that poses as a cheesy lounge singer. The cyborg, a very attractive looking woman, sang the Louis Armstrong song, “What a Wonderful World” while being accompanied by a live pianist. The cyborg had very real looking facial expressions and was able to stay in tune and in time with the piano accompaniment. It was at the same time really creepy and interesting.

With our gadget appetites fully satisfied and our little tech bellies bloated, we boarded our flight and came home. We can’t wait until retailers have these brand-spanking new tech gadgets on the shelves so we can try them out ourselves.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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