

new products

As ever, there are some great new gadgets on the market this month, so you might want to consider adding some to your home or office setup. To help you sort the duff from the desirable, we share our views on some of the more interesting product releases

Amstrad E-mailer Plus

Email phone

Amstrad's emailing devices have been around for a couple of years now and, while we at *New products* have never really seen the attraction, some people obviously like them. Their main advantage is for those who don't want to cope with (or splash out on) a PC, but need email and web access. Amstrad has built in a so-called revenue model, which involves paying an insane 12p plus local call charges for email pick-up. In addition, the E-mailer has a mind of its own, phoning home in the middle of the night and downloading adverts, which some might find intrusive. The Amstrad features limited websurfing and can download games but, hilariously, it has been fixed up to play simulated ZX Spectrum games. For one-time Sinclair owners, this taste of nostalgia could be irresistible.

Amstrad: 01277 208 811

Website: www.amstrad.com

Price: £99.99



GN Netcom headset

Bluetooth wireless headset

Netcom's Bluetooth headset is aimed at the hands-free mobile phone market. This is a departure from GN's previous devices – that is, landline phones. Weighing less than an ounce (28g) and measuring just under 5cm in diameter, you could almost forget you were wearing this wireless headset. The disc-shaped body features a slender 'flip-boom' microphone that folds neatly into the headset. To answer a call, simply flip the boom open, and then close it to turn the unit off. The boom also has a secondary job of protecting the microphone when the unit is in transit. In addition, GN Netcom's 'volume orientation' technology senses when the user switches from ear to ear and automatically reorients the volume.

GN Netcom: 01784 220 140

Website: www.gnnetcom.co.uk

Price: TBC



Sharp VL-AX1

Digital camcorder

Sharp's first digital camcorder has been designed for 'serious enthusiasts'. The VL-AX1's viewcam has a monster 23x power zoom lens complemented by a microphone which adjusts its sensitivity according to the lens in order to pick up remote sounds. Pictures can be downloaded to a PC for editing and then uploaded back to the camcorder with the DV-in and out options, but the supplied memory is a paltry 8MB. The Sharp weighs a minimal 635g, it measures 65x82x211mm, and features a compact foldaway screen and viewfinder.

Sharp: 0800 262 958

Website: www.sharp.co.uk

Price: TBC



Toshiba Portege 2000

Notebook

Measuring just 1.9mm at its widest point, the Portege 2000 is Toshiba's thinnest notebook to date. At just over a kilo, it's also extremely light.

However, despite its tiny frame, the Toshiba still manages to cram in support for wireless networking and more besides. The Portege 2000 features Intel's low power voltage Mobile Pentium III processor, running at 750MHz, and 256MB of RAM. Toshiba has used the latest lithium-polymer batteries to keep the form factor small – other batteries are usually cylindrical, but these cells can be made flat and thin. Toshiba has also added a SD (Secure Digital) flash memory card slot to the notebook for multimedia capabilities. There is no DVD or CD drive within the notebook, so they must be attached separately via the USB port.

Toshiba: 0870 444 8944

Website: www.toshiba.co.uk

Price: £1,669

