

top gear

There's a new take on old ideas this month. First up is Sony with its updated mouse. Who could have though such a simple peripheral could look so good? Then there's the high-tech Aspar notebook bag – ideal for clumsy travelling execs

→ Creative Muvo NX

MP3 player

The NX is the latest generation of Creative's dinky USB pen drive MP3 player. It has 128MB of memory that can hold up to 30 of your favourite tunes.

There's a special M-Port connection which you can plug into compatible Creative speakers to build a tiny hi-fi system. For easier playback the Muvo also has a backlit LCD display and scrollwheel. For a full review see page 40.

■ www.europe.creative.com ■ £120



← Airbag Aspar

17in notebook bag

The Aspar takes inspiration from in-car safety and is equipped with a network of airbags to help protect your notebook. Interlocking air chambers mean that even if you accidentally drop the Aspar, your ruinously expensive 17in notebook will be kept cushioned from the impact.

■ www.airbag-protection.com ■ £70

→ Samsung SM172X

Flat-panel display

All Things Bright and Beautiful could be the theme tune for this gorgeous-looking 17in flat-panel. The Samsung boasts a brushed aluminium finish and super-slim bezel. It also promises bright images of up to 270 cd/m², while top resolution is 1,280x768 and the contrast ratio is 500:1. The SM172X should certainly have you singing its praises.

■ www.samsungelectronics.co.uk

■ £419



→ Toshiba Gigabeat MEG200J

Digital audio player

Toshiba is taking on Apple with its Gigabeat MEG200J, a digital audio player that's slimmer and lighter than the iPod. It uses a 20GB hard drive to store around 5,000 songs and at just 13mm thick it shouldn't ruin the line of your coat, although it looks so good you won't want to keep it hidden. The Gigabeat goes on sale in Japan in October and if sales are good it'll be launched overseas. Fingers crossed...

■ www.toshiba.co.jp/mobileav/audio

■ ¥50,000 (around £272)



← Microboss USB Datakuli

USB pen drive

Microboss' USB Datakuli will bring out the James Bond in all of us. It looks (and works) just like a ballpoint pen, but has a hidden 128MB of USB storage. Just whip it out from your top pocket and you can be downloading secret files within moments. Or that's what you can tell yourself as you load up spreadsheets to work on at home.

■ www.microboss.de ■ €89 (around £62) plus p&p

→ Sony SMU-WR1

Computer mouse

Sony has given the humble mouse its style overhaul. The result is the truly cuddlesome SMU-WR1. This optical, wireless device looks like nothing we've used before and comes in a range of cute colours. We're not sure how ergonomic it is, but it'll certainly look good on your desk. The down side? So far you can only get your paws on it in Japan.

■ www.sony.co.uk ■ ¥6,000

(around £33)

