

We're turning Japanese with gadgets that'll have you rushing for your yen, from a wireless TV to the highest definition video recorders, the smallest hard disk and a 1GB Secure Digital card



SanDisk 1GB SD card
Secure Digital card

SanDisk says this is the world's first 1GB Secure Digital card and reckons it should be good for storing up to 1,000 high-resolution digital images. This will please digital camera enthusiasts, but a word of warning: while it should be compatible with all devices that support the SD format, there might be one or two problems with software that isn't able to recognise a card of this capacity.

- > www.sandisk.com
- > \$500 (about £275)

Aiwa Pavit AZ-ES256 and AZ-RS256
USB key music players

In last month's News section we reported on Sony's new Hi-MD music players. Aiwa, itself a part of Sony, has now produced a digital audio player that uses a USB key rather than a memory card. Aiwa's Pavit and Sony's GigaPocket and MicroVault memory cards are all compatible with the AZ-ES256 and AZ-RS256 models, which only have to be inserted into a PC's USB port to transfer music on to them.

- > www.aiwa.com
- > AZ-ES256: ¥23,000 (about £120); AZ-RS256: ¥26,000 (about £135)



Toshiba 0.85in hard disk drive
Miniature hard disk

This device is still some way off mass production, but Toshiba has recently been demonstrating a working 2GB prototype and it should have a 4GB capacity when it is commercialised later this year. It's about the same size as SanDisk's SD card (above), but just a millimetre or so thicker. Pricing information hasn't been released yet but Toshiba estimates it will be producing about 200,000 to 300,000 units per month.

- > www.toshiba.com
- > Price TBC



Sanyo Tu-Ka TS41
Mobile phone

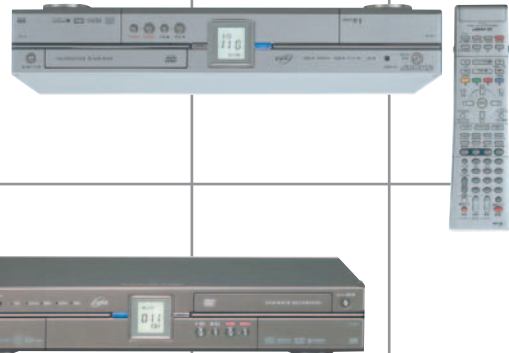
We're sorry to disappoint you if you like the look of this phone - it's only available in Japan on the Tu-Ka network and won't work anywhere else in the world. It uses what Sanyo calls a 'sonic speaker' which is located in the top half of the phone. This speaker produces vibrations that travel along the user's facial bones into the ear, so you can easily hear who you're speaking to, even in noisy environments.

- > www.sanyo.com
- > ¥10,000 (about £50)

Sony LF-X1 Airboard
Wireless television

Unlike other portable TV sets, the Airboard receives a digital video signal sent across a wireless LAN link from its companion base station. The TFT screen measures 12.1in but what's really interesting about the Airboard is that it's not a new idea. Sony has already tried this concept three times and it didn't catch on. Will it be fourth time lucky?

- > www.sony.com
- > ¥148,000 (about £770)



Sharp HDTV DV-HRD2 and DV-HRD20
Video recorders

Recording high-definition broadcasts at their original quality is currently the holy grail of Japanese DVD and hard disk recorder manufacturers. According to Sharp, the HDTV DV-HRD2 and DV-HRD20 will put an end to this quest. With a 160GB hard disk on the former model and 250GB on the latter, there should be room for a few hours of recordings even at the highest video mode settings.

- > www.sharp-world.com
- > DV-HRD2: ¥180,000 (about £935); DV-HRD20: ¥200,000 (about £1,040)