

Tech accessories can spice up holiday list

December 4 2009, By Etan Horowitz

As much as I love buying big-ticket items such as TVs, computers, cell phones and cameras, I also love buying accessories for those items just as much, maybe even more.

A good gadget accessory can make you look at a device you've had for a year or two with a newfound appreciation. Plus, you can find electronics accessories everywhere, and many cost between \$50 and \$100, making them almost guilt-free purchases. So while some people may head to a clothing store for a pick-me-up after a bad day, I head for [Best Buy](#) or Costco to find the perfect gadget add-on.

Gadget accessories also make great gifts for someone who's obsessed with their [iPhone](#), BlackBerry, laptop or electronic item. Here's some guidance, arranged by device.

Portable gadget companions

Powermat (\$100): As any gadget lover knows, having to deal with multiple power adapters to juice up your devices is no fun. The Powermat lets you "wirelessly" charge three devices at once with only one outlet by placing them on this skateboard shaped unit. You can use the included Powercube Universal Receiver and tips to charge one device, but to charge others, you'll have to buy a receiver or dock (\$30 to \$40) to charge a BlackBerry, iPhone, portable gaming system or iPod. Duracell makes a similar device called "myGrid," which costs \$80 for the wireless charging pad.

Kodak [Solar Charger](#) (\$28): This mini charger fits in the palm of your hand and has a USB port to charge BlackBerrys, iPhones, iPods, Bluetooth headsets and other devices. It uses the sun to recharge the two AA batteries inside, which you can pop out to use them in a digital camera or other battery-powered unit. It's got a hook so you can attach it to a backpack to soak up the sun while you walk around. Kodak says when the device is fully charged, it can deliver 1.5 charges to a cell phone (0.75 charges to iPhone/BlackBerry), run an MP3 player for 33 hours, or allow you take about 300 digital camera pictures.

Brookstone Charging Valet (\$25 or \$50): A stylish way to charge and organize cell phones, iPods and gadgets on your nightstand. A power cord is hidden inside the unit and the mini version powers two devices while the larger version has six outlets.

Computer gear

Wireless mouse: A good present for anyone who brings their laptop with them everywhere they go. For Mac users, check out the new Apple Magic Mouse (\$69), which incorporates some of the multi-touch gestures found on the iPhone and Mac laptops. For PC users, I like the Kensington SlimBlade line of wireless mice (\$30 to \$80), which also have buttons to control other things like music playback and PowerPoint presentations.

Portable hard drive (\$80 to \$120 for 500 GB): This may not be the sexiest gift out there, but if there's a person on your list who hasn't backed up the important data on their computer, giving them a portable hard drive is a thoughtful way of making this important task easy for them. Many hard drives come with some backup software and even a month or two of free online backup. To make the gift even better, pay for a year of online backup so they are covered even if something happens to the hard drive.

Cell-phone accessories

Incase Slider Case for iPhone 3G/3GS (\$35): This is the best iPhone case on the market because it does a great job protecting an iPhone, but fits tightly enough that it doesn't add a lot of bulk. It's sold at many different places, but by it in person at an Apple Store because it comes with a stand that makes it easy to watch videos.

Bluetooth headsets (\$130): With more states requiring drivers to use hands-free devices while talking on a cell phone, a Bluetooth headset can make a nice gift. Three good models are the Jawbone Prime, which has a stylish design and provides amazing sound, the MoGo Talk Bluetooth Headset for iPhone, which snaps into the back of an iPhone case so you never lose it, and the Jabra Stone, which comes with a small carrying case that doubles as a charger and can also play music wirelessly. While I loved the Stone's charger, it felt a little loose in my ear.

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Citation: Tech accessories can spice up holiday list (2009, December 4) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-12-tech-accessories-spice-holiday.html>

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