

High-tech, low-price toys top toy list

September 29 2010, By MAE ANDERSON , AP Retail Writer



Carly Kalafus, left, Ben Spremulli, center, and Duran Visek perform on Paper Jamz guitars, Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2010, in New York. The \$24.99 guitars from WowWee Toys were named to Time To Play's Holiday 2010 Most Wanted List. The musicians are part of the group Kicking Daisies, which has released its first single "Keeping Secrets" featuring Paper Jamz guitars and drums. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

(AP) -- This year's hot holiday toys are high-tech - and low-price.

From tiny remote-control cars from Mattel to nearly paper-thin electronic guitars and drums from WowWee Toys called Paper Jamz, technology is infused in many of this year's projected hot toys. But that doesn't mean the return of \$100 price tag, which seems to have been for the most part banished since the recession.

Many techie toys are wallet-friendly at under \$30.

Jim Silver, an analyst at Time to Play Magazine, which offers an influential list of hot toys each year, says toy prices overall have come down, but technology has gotten better. The highest-priced toy on the list is \$69.99.

"This year's toys are about great play tied in with value," said Jim Silver. "Not necessarily the price point."

A case in point: Paper Jamz, thin electronic instruments that offer three modes of play, including freestyle. Silver said the toy's \$24.99 price point is impressive.

"It's unbelievable value, a ton of toy for \$20," he said.

Silver said he and his team conduct research and analyst point-of-sale retail trends to develop their annual "Most Wanted" list, which was released Tuesday. Other tech-heavy toys that made the list:

- Spin Master's Air Hogs Moto Frenzy, \$24.99 4-inch remote-control motocross racing bikes.
- Mattel Inc.'s Hot Wheels remote control Stealth Rides, \$24.99 remote control cars that are about the size of a deck of cards.
- Mattel Inc.'s Loopz game for \$29.99 that uses motion detection technology as the basis for memory games.
- Hasbro Inc.'s Scrabble Flash, a \$29.99 electronic game with five cubes with digital screens on them that click together to form words.
- VTech's V.Reader, a \$59.99 [electronic-book reader](#) for kids that works with VTech software.

- LeapFrog's Leapster Explorer \$69.99, an electronic device with games, e-books, a video recorder and other features.

Toys have been fairly resilient during the recession, and retailers are banking that toy sales will be strong. Toys R Us, for example, is opening up 600 temporary stores for the season and hiring 45,000 seasonal staffers. Other stores such as Sears are expanding their toy aisles.

Silver said if the stock market remains steady, he expects toy sales to rise 1 percent to 2 percent during the season compared with last year.

"The average price point of the [toys](#) has come down, but units will be up, so overall dollars should be up," he said.

More information: <http://www.timetoplaymag.com>

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