

Light-up cereal boxes powered by shelves on display at CES

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On display at CES, boxes of Honey Nut Cheerios light up in various places, powered by the shelves they sit on. Image credit: Oh Gizmo.

(PhysOrg.com) -- Cereal boxes with blinking lights may or may not be the next big thing, but the underlying technology could prove useful for many other potential applications. At the recent CES in Las Vegas, Fulton Innovation displayed its light-up boxes of General Mills' Honey Nut Cheerios and Trix cereals, which are wirelessly charged by the shelves they sit on.

The technology behind the luminous cereal boxes is called eCoupled, which uses inductive coupling to transform tabletops, shelves, and even parking lots into [power](#) sources for battery-powered devices. The surfaces are equipped with a primary transmission coil, which can provide power for multiple devices equipped with secondary receiving

coils.

The devices go beyond cereal boxes to kitchen blenders, smartphones, ebook readers, laptops, [electric vehicles](#), and more. Instead of plugging these devices into an electric outlet, you could power them by simply placing them on a surface equipped with the eCoupled technology (or in the case of the electric vehicles, driving onto an eCoupled [parking lot](#)).

At CES, Fulton Innovation demonstrated how the technology could be used to make a “self-heating” can of soup. The soup can had a heating coil built into the packaging. When placed on an eCoupled surface and an “on” button is pressed on the packaging, the soup would heat up and a light would turn on when it was ready.

The technology could also be used to communicate data from various devices to a smartphone. For example, a frying pan could alert you when your food is simmering. Or when you’re at the grocery store, you could use your phone to check how much milk you have left in your refrigerator.

Even if the light-up cereal boxes never take off, the same technology could be attractive for manufacturers as a way to wirelessly track quantities and expiration dates, or for stores to wirelessly manage inventory. Also, battery-powered toys could be charged by the shelves they sit on, so their power would never run down.

As demonstrated at CES, Fulton Innovation says that the technology is all there. The challenge now is to standardize the technology, and then sell it to stores. In 2008, Fulton Innovation helped found the Wireless Power Consortium, which is developing the international standard for wireless charging, called Qi (pronounced “chee”). With this universal standard in place, the company hopes that commercialization will soon follow.

More information: [Fulton Innovation](#) and [ecoupled.com](#)
via: [Pocket-lint](#)

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