

The best of CES 2010

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At the 2010 Consumer Electronics Show, 3-D was the name of the game. Everyone showed off their shiny new 3-D tech—be it 3-D ready TV's, 3-D movies, 3-D Blu-ray players, 3-D projectors, and even 3-D enabled netbooks. Yet there was far more to see at the Las Vegas Convention center. Though not as omnipresent as 3-D, tablet PC's made a huge impact. Many believe we're at the start of the "tablet revolution." But the coolest tech, IMHO, was the motion-sensing technology on display. The latter could literally change our lives. Read on for the veritable highlights of CES 2010.



At Microsoft's press conference, they unveiled a new demo video of Project Natal (seen below), their motion-sensing tech for the X-Box 360. They also announced a launch date—December 2010. To summarize, Project Natal turns your body into a controller. The Project Natal Sensor, a 9-inch wide horizontal bar (similar to the Wii's [sensor bar](#) [1]) recognizes motion, sound, and even images. Toshiba showed off similar tech, though theirs was strictly a demo, and there were no evident plans for commercialization. The initial application areas will undoubtedly be video games. But imagine the possibilities—picture doing office work without a mouse and without touching the screen. Or imagine controlling every device in your house without touching a controller or any switch. The tech is extremely exciting, and thus earns ECN's "Best of Show" award.

One of the most exciting product announcements was Toshiba's "Cell TV," the Swiss Army Knife of next-gen TV's. This 3-D LED TV sports built-in 802.11 wireless, an integrated Blu-ray player, a 1 Terabyte (TB) Hard Disk Drive, and a blazing-fast 480 Hz refresh rate (4x that of comparable 1080p units). If that doesn't whet your appetite, the Cell TV also features 3-D Tri Vector technology, which allows for real-time 2-D-to-3-D conversion. In other words, you can watch old shows in 3-D. Obviously, price is a huge factor. "Early Adopters" usually precipitate cost reductions, but if the Cell TV is exorbitantly costly, consumers may opt for more

humble, feature-less 3-D TV's.



Wireless charging is another burgeoning technology that's nearly ready for primetime. Powermat dominated that sector at CES. Their wireless charging mats drew large crowds on the show floor. And for good reason—the tech has lots of potential. Through magnetic induction, the mats transfer a charge directly to the devices' batteries. The mats themselves house a lithium ion battery with enough juice for 4-5 charges. The early mats required a special sleeve for the devices to accept a wireless charge (the extra effort nearly negating the convenience of no wires). But the newer models replace the device's battery with a special proprietary one that works directly with the Powermat. This opens up some possibilities, though good luck getting Apple to cooperate. The iPhone is notorious for its nearly-inaccessible battery, and unless you're handy, swapping it out requires a trip to the local Apple store. Things could really get interesting if Powermat secures agreements to include its batteries with *new* phones. See below for video of the Powermat in action.

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Links:

[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wii_Remote#Sensing

