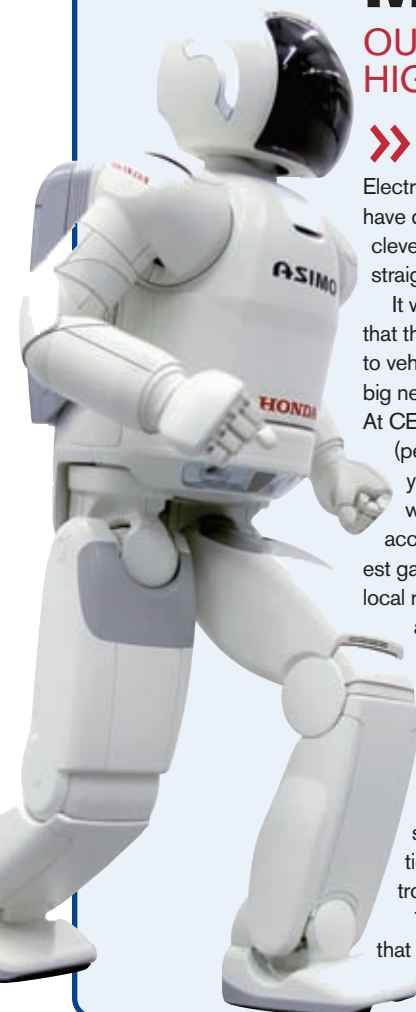


MY KINGDOM FOR A ROBOT!

OUR ANNUAL AUTOMOTIVELY WEIGHTED PEEK AT THE HIGH-TECH WORLD OF CONSUMER ELECTRONICS



» There was so much news to cover at this year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, we have decided to dispense with the clever lead paragraph and get straight to it:

It was less than two years ago that the addition of real-time traffic to vehicle navigation systems was big news. Well, it's here now, folks. At CES 2007 it seemed every PND (personal navigation device) you could suction-cup to a windshield offered immediate access to movie times, the cheapest gas, the local weather and/or local restaurant and hotel ratings in addition to directions for getting there that included real-time traffic. There were too many of these devices to list, but each had its own twist to the features-saturated technology. Suffice it to say, no one will buy a navigation system that is just an electronic map and guide anymore.

There are 30 states with laws that will soon require hands-free use of mobile phones. The

obvious thing is to expect many more Bluetooth-enabled mobile phones, right? But as long as you're using Bluetooth wireless connectivity for the phone, why not have it connect all the other stuff?

At the Detroit auto show, and at CES, Ford and Microsoft announced a coming joint product called Sync that connects your car to various mobile electronic devices. You control it all through steering-wheel buttons or via voice commands. The connection is done via either Bluetooth or through a USB 2.0 port, the latter of which also charges the devices. Sync will be factory installed in 12 Ford, Mercury and Lincoln models this year and will eventually be available across the board.

But what about mobile satellite TVs, you ask? TracVision introduced its A7 model in August and had it on the stand at CES. Satellite TVs are those manhole-sized pizza boxes you see on the roofs of the most blinged-out sport/utility vehicles, bringing satellite television to your drive. The A7's big improvement is it

can also deliver live local TV to the mix. Turns out a regular antenna can't do that very well because the Doppler shift as you drive fuzzes up the picture. The A7 is \$2,995 plus the contract from DirecTV. The Moto SAT t3 also delivers DirecTV to your car and for just \$1,995 in hardware but does it through a humper domed receiver instead of TracVision's flat array of 220 little dishes spinning around in a furious attempt to stay aimed at satellites orbiting above the equator.

Sirius said it will be satellite-casting kids' movies on its bandwidth this spring, aimed at rear-seat entertainment systems.

Finally, Honda's ASIMO robot showed off some new moves at CES. It ran in a circle and kicked a soccer ball, which is more than we would have been able to do after walking the 1.7 million square feet of CES floor space this year. Maybe we should go bionic.

—MARK VAUGHN

Go to autoweek.com for a complete report from CES 2007

AUTO SHOW NO SHOWS

BAIT AND SWITCH, AUTO SHOW STYLE

» WE HATE IT WHEN THIS KIND of strange stuff happens.

Remember that beautiful Jaguar C-XF concept featured on our Jan. 8 cover (Sexy Kitty!) and named our Editors' Choice Best in Show car from the North American International Show (see page 18)? Well, if you happen to be in Detroit for the public days (ending Jan. 21), don't go looking for this S-Type replacement on the Jag stand—or anywhere else in Detroit, for that matter.

Jaguar officials, for reasons we're not sure we completely

understand and we're quite sure we don't like, pulled this favorite out of the Detroit show after press week in the Motor City—and prior to the general public getting to drool over it. We hear it's headed first to Miami, as part of an eight-city tour before returning to the United Kingdom in early February. If we hear more about the car's public appearance schedule, we'll post it on autoweek.com.

You also might have read or heard about Chrysler's great new minivans, the Town & Country and the Dodge Caravan. But their big

news, the new Swivel 'N Go seating in them—a throwback to our favorite travel vans of the past with rear-facing second-row seating



plus tabletops—isn't accessible to the general public. If Chrysler has its way, buyers won't get to play with Swivel 'N Go until the vans hit the market six months from now. Chrysler officials say they're trying to keep competitors' prying eyes, measuring tapes and cameras away from this hot new feature.

Dodge is also keeping its redone Magnum SRT8 out of the public eye, maybe so buyers don't get their hearts set on the much-improved 2008 model before dealers can sell out the rest of their 2007 stock. Of course, those same buyers could just as easily buy something else, from some other manufacturer, in the meantime. Hey, we didn't say this made sense.

—BOB GRITZINGER