



ITEON CONSULTING, LLC

Newsletter -- Holidays 2007



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As the holidays approach and good cheer abounds, children are laughing and parents are watching for great deals on consumer electronics as retailers gear up to sell lots of iPods. Ok, so the buying a 58" Plasma may not be the most important thing you'll do this year, but if you want to find out about the cool technology available this season, read on...

One important thing: hold off on buying that computer (laptop or desktop). If you do need to get one, plan on replacing Vista immediately--do not pass go, do not collect \$200 (in fact, plan on spending more than \$200). PCs and laptops are not a bargain, thanks to Microsoft's insistence that retailers market Vista. Also, retailers (Dell, HP) are making XP machines more expensive options (you may not pay much for the option, but you'll get a less good computer).

Garmin GPS



As predicted, the Garmin Nuvi 200 is on sale for \$200-\$250, although you may want to buy these early. Where they are less than \$199, they will likely sell out quickly. Garmin is having their best year ever, but will likely have some

challenges keeping up with demand this season.

External Hard Drives

Give the gift of piece of mind. High capacity hard drives (for backup) are extremely cheap now. 300GB external drives (not Maxtor, though!) are less than \$250. For that megalomaniac on your list, the 1TB hard drives (that is 1,000 Gigabytes or 1,000,000 Megabytes) have recently dramatically dropped in price to well below \$500.

New Palm Phone

On phones, if you use Sprint (or can use Sprint), go get the Palm Centro for someone special. It is the best smart phone



we've ever used. People have speculated that the small keyboard might be too small, but it hasn't proven to detract at all—it is . The touchscreen (although also smaller) is better quality than the 755/680

screens. This phone is way better than the iPhone. This might be the time to reward your excellent assistant, paralegal, or principal.

Hi-Definition DVD Players

HD and Blu-Ray DVD players are now down to \$400, but the raging war between the media giants (reminiscent of Beta vs. VHS) hasn't been decided (and like the war in Iraq will continue for a long time, as it involves lots of money). So what is a videophile to do? Combo. LG has a Blu-Ray/HD combo unit available for around \$700. Now this isn't quite as

cheap as a PlayStation (which also can do both for around \$400), and doesn't present the temptation that a PlayStation does.

22" Flat Panels

22" LCD monitors are cheap now. Excellent 22" flat screens are running less than \$350. Be very careful to get a good one. Look for name brands (Samsung and Viewsonic are always a good bet, LG has also been very good), and compare the specs. Most brands have a cheap model and an expensive model--get the better model (avoid the ones under \$250--they are usually much lower quality). Look for 2-5ms response, great contrast rate (1000:1 is good, 3000:1 is great), high resolution (1680x1050 is good, only 1280x1024 is bad).



Large LCD and Plasma TVs

Need 1080p? While there is not really a lot of difference between a high-end 1080i TV and the newer 1080p TVs, the 1080p standard is technically a little more perfect. The 1080p TVs started becoming very available a few months ago, and the prices started falling in November. Expect sales on 1080i and 1080p TVs during the holiday season. As we recommended, test drive the TV you choose--while the specifications can tell you a lot about a TV, you need to compare for yourself. Also, remember, you'll likely need to upgrade your Comcast or DirectTV package to at least "Digital" if not their more expensive HD package, which can cost \$30-\$50 or more extra per month.

LCD, Plasma, or DLP? Videophiles will argue endlessly about the latest technology, costs, and merits, and each have their own advantages. Generally, though:

- If you want 37" or lower—get an **LCD**
- If you want 42" or greater—get a **Plasma**
- If cost is a factor and space (depth) is not—get a **DLP**

Tivo

The Tivo HD is now \$250-\$300. You can get yours at tivo.com, Circuit City, and Costco (\$300 is list, but they go on sale). The new box can record 20 hours in HD (180 hours in regular mode), and will take an external drive (E-SATA only) that can give you 4x the capacity, and also has both HDMI and WiFi. This is way better than the set-top box from Comcast. Be sure to specify that you need a M (multi-port) card from Comcast (\$2/mo lease, but you no longer need their DVR). Subscription cost for Tivo is \$300 for 3 years. If you're comparing Comcast DVR to Tivo over a 3 years (all costs), Tivo is going to be \$5/mo more than Comcast (\$18/mo).



Iteon News

Happy Holidays from Everyone at Iteon!

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