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## IPOD ESSENTIALS

By the time Apple's iPod got into the hands of celebrities, it was too late. The stylish portable MP3 player had already earned street cred among aficionados who didn't need endorsements from Britney Spears, U2, Moby and Shaq. The iPod's following is still growing, particularly on the Net, where its fans post homemade programs to exploit the iPod's capabilities and discuss the best ways to accessorize it. Here are a few of the must-haves we've found. Pay attention, Moby.

**(1) Burn Out 0.1:** A free program burns a CD directly from tracks that are stored on your iPod. It's cheaper than buying replacement copies of the discs your ex won't return.

**(2) Shure E Series:** Upgrade to a set of these canal earphones that fit inside your ear. Designed to help musicians hear their performances onstage, they'll seal out obnoxious noise, including the guy in the next cubicle (\$100 to \$160).

**(3) PodNews:** This free program downloads headlines, weather reports and lyrics to your iPod from more than 300 sources. It also lets you compose notes.

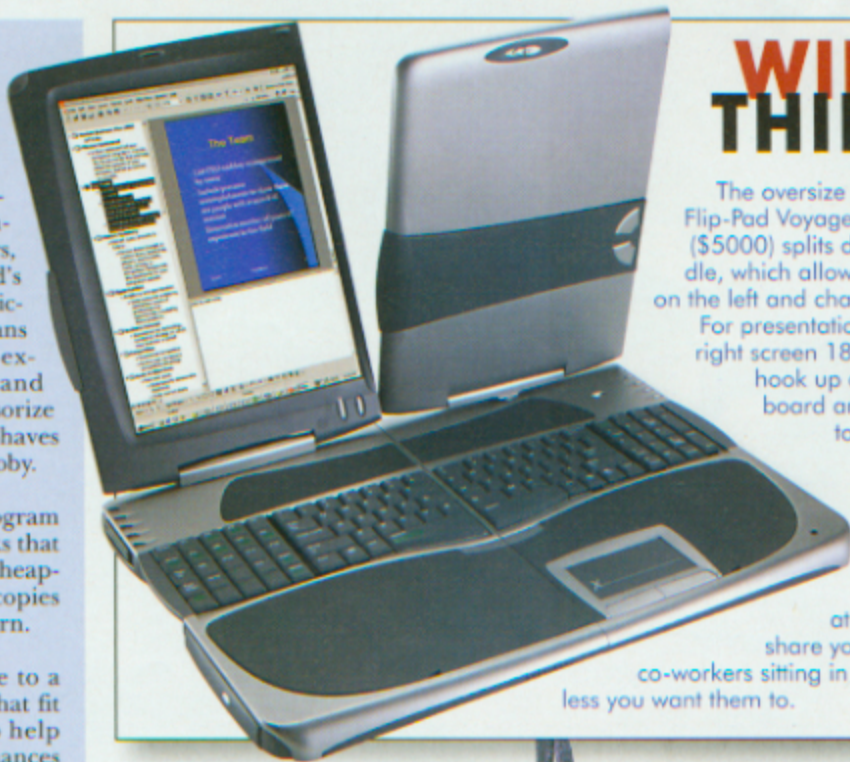
**(4) Transfer tool:** Free programs such as Xpod and iPod move songs straight from the iPod to your Mac's hard drive, a maneuver that Apple prevents in an effort to thwart music swapping.

**(5) Protective cases:** God bless silicone and all its uses. The iSkin case (pictured here, \$20) is made

from flexible silicone to keep your iPod safe.

**(6) TransPod:** Mounted on your dashboard, the TransPod (\$100) will transmit songs from your iPod to any unused frequency on your car stereo. It won't complain about your driving.

—JASON BUHRMESTER



## WILD THING

The oversize screen on the Flip-Pad Voyager from Xentex (\$5000) splits down the middle, which allows you to work on the left and chat on the right.

For presentations, rotate the right screen 180 degrees, or hook up a second keyboard and play head-to-head games with a friend.

The Voyager is a bit heavier than other laptops, but

at least you can share your PC without

co-workers sitting in your lap. Unless you want them to.

—LAZLOW

## HOCUS-POCUS

It sounds like clubhouse voodoo to us, but pros on the PGA Tour swear by the QLink pendant. According to developers, the charm sharpens the wearer's focus, increases stamina and reduces stress. It also helps with jet lag and heightens the wearer's ability to recover from bad shots. The QLink accomplishes this by blocking out electromagnetic fields that are generated by computers, cell phones, televisions and other electrical devices. These fields can reduce your ability to cope and will wreak havoc on an airplane's navigational system—which explains why the captain asks you to shut

off your electronic devices. In the past two years, pros wearing the QLink have won a combined 51 tour victories, including the 2002 British Open. Roughly 250 pros sport it, including Sam Torrance, Ernie Els and Corey Pavin. The pendant's parts sound like *Star Trek*: a resonating cell, a 14-karat gold-plated tuning board and an amplifying coil (75 feet of copper wire wound into a one-inch circle). Users are instructed to wear the QLink so it hangs at the middle of the chest at heart level. We're just happy it's waterproof so we can fish our ball out of the drink (available in acrylic, sterling silver and 14-karat gold, \$130 to \$800). —J.B.

## games

If a fighter can't stand, he can't fight, so sweep the leg in **Tao Feng: Fist of the Lotus** (by Microsoft, for Xbox). As one of 12 martial artists, you'll square off against opponents in interactive environments. Punch holes in walls, swing around poles or slam enemies and watch the floor tiles crack underfoot. Realistic damage lets you tear the clothes off your opponent's back, pepper him with bruises or pound on a limb until it goes limp. Tao Feng was designed by John Tobias, co-creator of *Mortal Kombat*, so expect it to be vicious.

—DARREN GLADSTONE

How many games in the Unreal series can we stomach before it gets unreal?

The past few months we have obsessed over *Unreal Tournament 2003* and *Unreal Championship*. Now we've become hooked on **Unreal 2: The Awakening** (by Infogrames, for PC), the official sequel.

