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## CES 2002 Picks and Pans

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### Digital Odds 'n' Ends

#### A Cumbersome Traveling

**Companion:** Most of us would probably take a stab at speaking sentences from a foreign phrase book when overseas. [Ectaco](#) goes one step further with its handheld device--but it's overkill. The new \$250 Universal Translator UT-103 translates more than 3000 English phrases into French, German, and Spanish, out loud. After scrolling through the on-screen categorized menus, you speak the phrase you want translated and it will read back the appropriate equivalent using speech recognition. Depending on the noise level around you, the Translator can get confused. And there's no way to tell if the phrase you want is on the list; you either consult the manual or dig through the on-screen text. If your needed phrase isn't included, you're on your own. (Try gesturing frantically with your hands.) -- *Aoife McEvoy*



**A Real Yawner:** Handspring and JetLog debuted a new \$100 Springboard plug-in called the 24x7 PowerNapping module. Here's the premise: The light sleep of a quick power nap can refresh you; but fall into deep REM sleep, and you're a goner. Here's how the JetLog helps: You hold the Visor in your hand and place your thumb over two metal contacts. During a light nap, your muscles remain firm; but when you slip into deep sleep, your muscles relax, your thumb slips off the contacts, and an alarm sounds. But the sound of the device falling out of your hand and smashing on the floor is probably enough to wake you anyway. --*Sean Captain*

**Got a Cordless Phone You Love?** If you want to make calls over the Internet, [PhoneBridge](#) by MHL Communications will let you yack online using your trusty cordless phone. You don't have to be tethered to a PC headset, just plug your regular telephone into the \$130 PhoneBridge gadget and then hook up PhoneBridge to your PC's sound card. You can start making Net calls using either Windows Messenger or an existing service such as Net2Phone or DialPad. But \$130 is pricey--so you'd need to really love that cordless phone of yours. --*Aoife McEvoy*

### Floor Flushers

AUGUST 26, 2003

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**Best Floor Show:** Those who couldn't get tickets for Cirque du Soleil's "O" water show at the Bellagio could still get a taste of the action at the Sharp Electronics booth. To highlight the latest models in its Aquos brand of pricey LCD

televisions, Sharp brought in a giant glass water tank and hired a crew of buff men and shapely women in gold swimsuits to perform Olympic dives and water ballet for a cheering crowd. --Sean Captain

[Dave Johnson's tips](#) will enhance your digital camera, printer, and image editing expertise.



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**What the ...?** A very tall and lanky character in turquoise armor was prancing around, talking in robotic tones. Behind the clunky armor was a real female person--standing head and several shoulders above the average CES delegate. Taking on a role similar to that of the Pied Piper, it seemed, the robotic human attempted to lead bemused attendees to Samsung's booth. However, the connection to Samsung was anybody's guess. --Aoife McEvoy

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