



Islander June 2008 Technology Update Midsummer Gadget Madness

After the dry old copy in my last few editorials, it must be time for the annual hot summer gadget fun!

Finally, the 3G iPhone will be available locally in July from Movistar and from Vodafone in Italy. The only new thing about this iPhone is that it will have 3G capability, whereas the existing model is only GPRS. So to all of you who couldn't wait and purchased one at great expense from elsewhere, "yours is now an old model!". However, one can only admire the extraordinary marketing hype, effort and organisation behind the Apple organisation, as every single day this product features in the GSM news describing some activity somewhere in the world.

Watch my phone?

However, so much for the iPhone, what about this? The ZTC-F1 wristwatch phone! It is truly the size of a watch, only 16mm thick, but apart from being a watch it is a Quad band (850/1900 & 900/1800) phone that vibrates when a call comes in and you answer on your Bluetooth headset. It even features a 1.3 mega pixel camera, music MP3, wav, video MP4, FM radio, 2Gb memory, multi lingual, SMS, contacts, alarms, games, voice recording and touch screen with stylus in strap!! According to the information, the battery life has 120-160 minutes talk time and 80-100 hours on standby. Definitely the ultimate hands-free phone!

Thirst-Quenching Thong!

Needless to say, this item caught my attention by its name alone, and it does indeed turn out to be the ideal "must have" midsummer accessory. I first found it under "Henry's Tackle" as a "Fanning Thong". Be honest, when you read those words, what picture did your mind conjure up? On further investigation I found it was a basically a "flip-flop" so my interest did wane briefly. However, it turns out to be something pretty special. It's a Reef flip-flop (or thong to you Antipodeans), and this latest design incorporates both state of the art polymetric moulding techniques and innovative "thirst quenching" technology. What's the secret? Well, the Reef "Fanning" conceals a neat bottle opener perfectly nestled in its sole, making it the ultimate lifesaving accessory for any beach or poolside barbecue! The word "fanning" is the surname of Mike Fanning the Australian Surfer, we obviously all know a thong is a flip-flop, and "Henry's Tackle", well I guess that's just Henry's tackle!

It's difficult to follow on from a "thirst quenching thong" but the next innovative gadget is a cracker.



The all-in-one boat hook, bilge pump and massive water pistol!

This is the Swiss Army knife of boat hooks.

According to the sales blurb, this product is one of the most durable boat hooks on the market today, all the way from its lexan hook to its anodised aluminum shaft. As a telescopic boat hook, it collapses nearly in half for storage and automatically locks firmly when fully extended. Two non-slip grips ensure a solid grip when fending off other boats, hauling in a mooring or fighting on the greasy pole.

It then turns into a bailer. Easy to operate, the 2.5 metre model drains nearly a litre per stroke, and it reaches into spaces few bailers can. Simply place the hook under water with the boat hook collapsed and then pull it open. The nitrile piston draws the water up a small hole located at the end of the hook. Don't worry about the oil and scum found in the bottom of most bilges as unlike some rubber washers the nitrile piston is not broken down by such substances, instead it serves as a healthy dose of lubrication.

Water is expelled from the boat hook approximately thirty six times faster than its operating speed, giving it a firing range of over 15 metres and the power to clean. It can be used for cleaning hulls, cleaning decks or when needed you can secretly hose down your neighbours, children or other yachts as you stand there innocently holding the boat hook.

Numerous other uses have been reported for this versatile product from filling water balloons to hanging and watering hanging plants. One of the more popular, non-traditional drinking games is the "no hands at 10 metres beer drinking competition".

Underwater gadgeteria

This summer I have noted a large number of gadgets targeted at sub aquatic lovers. After the development of scuba and re-breathers combined with the education to enable us to survive under the waves, it is clear that that is not enough, we now need some toys to play with to enhance our fun.

Music whilst you dive

The Oceanic is an accessory that lets you use your MP3 player on a diving or snorkeling trip. The kit provides waterproof housing for any i-series player and earphones made specifically for underwater listening, so you can hear your favorite tunes or take an audio-guided tour of wreck sites, sea life or even yellow submarines!



The Guinness Book of Records world record holder for the longest underwater submergence, Jerry Hall (not Mick's ex) used all sorts of underwater electronics to entertain himself. He used an MP3 player with powerful underwater speakers. Hall said. "I can't describe what it's like to be able to listen to music underwater. That alone makes a tremendous difference." An interesting niche market for this product!

Radio gaga

The Aqua FM Swim Snorkel Radio from Aquanaut uses no earphones and instead it uses bone conduction to pass the audio signal through your teeth right into your dome. If you want to test the range of FM underwater, feel free; the radio snorkel is waterproof to 10 metres.

In-pool fun with your iPod

The manufacturers tell me that the only thing better than lounging on or playing in the water is having your iPod music right there with you. Just slip your MP3 player into the tightly sealed compartment and snap shut. Can this really be true?

A waterproof click wheel navigates your playlist, and dual full-range neodymium drivers provide high-quality sound. The shatterproof case protects it from water damage.

It features a fold-out stand, protective rubber bumper guards, shower mount, plus adjustable wrist and shoulder straps and loads of technical words so it must be good.

To add to your pool comfort how about.....?

The world's most advanced (ridiculous) self-propelled pool inflatable

This state-of-the-art pool lilo features two whisper quiet but ultra-powerful motorized propellers (safely enclosed) that speed you around the pool effortlessly. Independent joysticks give you total steering control while the large armrests and built-in drink holder deliver ultimate comfort.

To complement this, you'd better not be without your radio controlled snack float.....

No need to paddle around or even get out of the water for a cold drink or snack. This motorized tip-proof float operates by remote control – just press a button and it zips right to you. Can hold up to 5 cans and a snack bowl!

I could go on an on, but hopefully I've covered the best, the most fun and the most absurd of this summer's gadget collection.



Lie back and enjoy....

Roger Horner of E3 Systems

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