

Sights & Sounds of Multimedia

George Harding,

Rebit

You probably couldn't tell from the name, but this is a clever back-up tool.

The name is an acronym for Ridiculously Easy Backup for IT. And it is easy. You just plug it in – that's it! A clever give-away at CES was a frog (rebit – get it?) that sticks out his tongue when you squeeze!

Let's start at the beginning. There were several products this year at CES that dealt with a very serious problem – we don't back up our PCs regularly. The problem seems to be lack of knowledge, lack of time or simple forgetfulness. We don't realize how important backing-up is until we need the back-up we should have made. And then it's too late.

When hard drives fail, there's usually not a lot to be done other than start over. That's a really painful and time-consuming process too. First, a new hard drive, then load the operating system (assuming you still know where your XP disk is), then getting updates for the system and all the peripherals (printers, video and so on) and finally reinstalling all the programs you rely on. There are probably updates required for those, too.

All this is a good afternoon's work or maybe longer. So, it's really worthwhile to do your back-up regularly. And Rebit is a great solution!

Here's what you do: (1) plug the cable into the Rebit unit, (2) plug the USB cable into your computer or laptop, (3) click OK. That's it! Everything's automatic from that point on.

The software loads on its own, catalogs everything on your hard drive, then copies it to the Rebit unit. Does it stop there? No way!

As files of any sort are changed, Rebit backs them up, so you always have the latest version of each. If you delete a file by mistake, you can simply open your browser and drag and drop the back-up file onto your PC where it belongs. When the Rebit drive is full, it deletes the oldest file in order to back up the new one.

Well, what if your hard drive fails, or you decide to get a bigger drive? Rebit comes with a recover CD-ROM. When you boot from that disk, it reads

the Rebit drive and copies all files, including the operating system onto the new drive.

There are only a couple of caution points. The first is that you need to get a Rebit drive at least as big as your C drive in order to be able to back up everything. Rebit comes in 160, 320 and 500 GB sizes. The second is that if you use the recover CD-ROM it must be for the same or an identical PC. Otherwise, the operating system and drivers may not work properly.

For those that have more than one PC there is a multi-PC version available.

This is a wonderful way to keep your PC backed up on a continuous basis with minimal impact on your day-to-day operations. Once installed, Rebit keeps everything up-to-date without any intervention.

About: *Rebit*

Vendor: Rebit, Inc.
www.rebit.com

Price: from \$170

Requires: XP or Vista, USB port, CD-ROM drive

iHarmonix

This company makes a series of high fidelity earphones. Their product line includes the Platinum, Pro, Style, XP and XS series. Each has comfortable ear tips that conform to your ear, and a couple of sizes of tips for those with small or large ears.



Platinum ev-Series model

The differences between the several products include appearance, balance between bass, mid- and high tones, and speaker design. Each product has further differences, such as an inline microphone for calls.

The Platinum-ev set I received has beautiful stainless steel and alloy housings and an

in-line volume control. Not many earbuds these days have a built-in volume control, a handy extra.

The ear tips are gel filled and are quite comfortable to wear. The kit comes with two alternate sets of ear tips for other ear sizes. The 3.5 mm plug fits most of today's devices including iPhone, Blackberry and other MP3 players.

The choice of the various products (there are nine in all) makes it difficult to make a choice. Prices range from about \$15 to about \$60, which may be the determining factor for many buyers.

The Platinum-ev set I received for review is advertised as "Advanced Sonic Accuracy," "Brushed Stainless Steel Casing," "Volume Control" and "Super Bass." My ears are not good enough to evaluate the "Sonic Accuracy" claim, although the packages state frequency responses from 20Hz to 20KHz.

The "Casing" claim and "Volume Control" claim are certainly true. The "Super Bass," however, is substantially lacking! I could hear little or no bass during my trials. I will contact the company about this to see if somehow I received a defective set and will so advise later.

About: *iHarmonix*

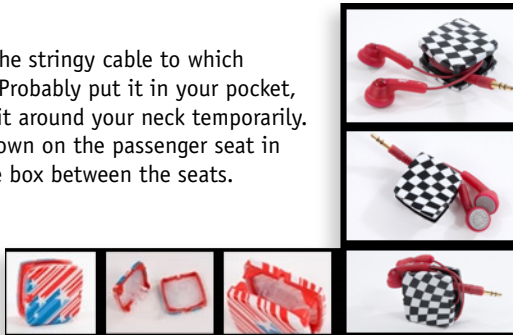
Vendor: iHarmonix
www.iharmonix.com

Price: Nine products in all ranging from about \$15 to about \$60

Earbud Yo-Yo

What do you do with the stringy cable to which earbuds are tethered? Probably put it in your pocket, right? Or maybe hang it around your neck temporarily. You could just set it down on the passenger seat in your car or the storage box between the seats.

And what happens? That cord winds up tangled in a way that is



incomprehensible! I think there's some movement going on while these things are stored, some life-like twiny motion!

Anyway, a solution to this problem is the Earbud Yo-Yo. It's a simple device about one inch square with two detachable halves. There is a central spindle that connects the two halves. The spindle has a small hook into which your cable end clips.

After you put the two halves together, you simply wind the cable cord around the spindle. There are small rubber corner pieces that hold the cable as you wind it up. When completed it makes a nice, small package that you can put in pocket or purse (or passenger seat) with no fear of tangling. Neat!

The device comes with colored outer panels with various designs to suit your mood or clothes. Get several so you can be both in style and match your outfit.

About: *Earbud Yo-Yo*

Vendor: Covington Creations
www.covington-creations.com

Price: about \$16 direct