

Touchjet Pond

It's no surprise the phrase "death by PowerPoint" exists. For me, most presentations tend towards the David Brent end of the spectrum, achieving little more than accurately illustrating – sometimes actually amplifying – the dullness of the subject matter. Projecting interesting material can be exceedingly distracting, while repeating the words you are saying in bullet points on screen, I think, just reduces the impact of your message. And I've certainly noted an ironic cheer from London to Rome to Helsinki to Istanbul every single time I've presented my PowerPoint-free talks.

That said, if you're out and about giving a necessary business presentation, this new portable pico-projector beats anything else I've seen because it offers something quite unique – you and two or three others can interact with what's being projected using a Teflon-tipped stylus, or waving the stylus around just in front of the image. Alternatively, from a few metres away, people can externally share the presentation using the included air mouse, or type onto it with a Bluetooth keyboard.

The Touchjet Pond, which was born of a successful campaign on funding platform Indiegogo (it raised \$1m from more than 3,000 investors) is, in effect, a way of turning any white wall, ceiling or tabletop into a giant communal Android tablet – as big as 80in diagonally, although it becomes a bit blurry and dark at anything

above 50in. (Running it from the mains rather than the two-hour battery boosts the light level, but you still need moderately dimmed room lighting to get the full benefit of the machine.)

With 800,000 Android apps available for the Pond, from business aids to games and movie players, it clearly has the ability to make a splash at work and at home. You can also show material saved on a USB pen.

With interactive whiteboards costing around £2,000, plus complex set-up and maintenance, the £600 Pond is a relatively cheap way of showing your presentation. But it's not just that; the office whiteboard will typically be in one fixed spot, while the Pond can be set up in a moment anywhere on your premises, or out in the field. It's perfectly compact, at 108mm x 98mm x 33mm and 276g, although the sound, if needed, is squeaky and minuscule, so you may also need to hook up a good, loud Bluetooth speaker. Do ensure it is loud, too; a speaker that's fine at home can be drowned out by office noise. £600, from www.touchjet.eu.



SleepPhones Wireless headphones

The idea of listening to anything from educational material to get-you-to-sleep music using headphones is nothing new, but the wireless technology to ensure you don't end up semi-strangling yourself with the connecting wire is relatively so.

SleepPhones' "pyjamas for your ears", as its label describes them, are a practical and slick execution of this new concept. They use a flexible Bluetooth module, which slips in and out of the soft and comfortable washable headband. The headband also houses some clever, flat mini-speakers, which are just loud enough to hear clearly whatever your phone or tablet is playing wirelessly, but not so loud you'll be kept awake at night.

One caveat: SleepPhones seems to be a homespun little business in Pennsylvania, and while the product is excellent, everything from the website, box, model differentiation and instructions is muddled and confusing. So be sure you're choosing the best and latest model – and be patient to avoid getting so irritated you can't sleep.

£60, from www.amazon.co.uk and see www.sleepphones.com for other stockists.

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TEAC AI-101DA amplifier

Here, from the venerable Japanese maker TEAC, is an outstanding and elegant way of coaxing from your computer or Bluetooth-equipped smart device the best possible sound to enjoy at a desk. I am ever more persuaded that, with increasing amounts of marvellously recorded and preserved music available for computers, having quality music-while-you-work is the way forward.

The AI-101DA is a precision-engineered aluminium mini hifi unit measuring just 18cm x 5.3cm x 19cm – the size of a hardback book – but it's more than just a headphone amplifier. It hosts twin 26-watt Class D power amplifiers (hence will drive quality desktop speakers and top-class headphones) and has a BurrBrown DAC (Digital Analogue Converter) that will upscale lesser quality audio. The TEAC is supremely adaptable and can be configured to do almost anything from streaming the highest-quality, 24-bit/192kHz tracks via aptX Bluetooth to taking a wired connection from your computer before it's been maltreated by the PC's run-of-the-mill soundcard.

The AI-101DA comes with specialised TEAC high-resolution audio playback software suitable for Mac and PC (just download from TEAC's website), is available in silver, or black (I think I prefer the silver) and can be placed horizontally or vertically. £250, from www.teac.com.

technopolis

Cruise the highways and rat runs of Gizmo City with **Jonathan Margolis**, the grand wizard of gadgetology

Punkt MP-01

The genius of the best gadgetry is often simplicity. Many busy, sophisticated people either don't want or truly need a smartphone. The panoply of features on even a moderately specified modern phone can be a distraction, even rather stress-inducing. There's a remarkably strong case, indeed, for something that is small, makes high-quality calls (audio quality is often terrible on smartphones), sends texts, stores contacts, is a reliable alarm clock, doesn't require charging very often, and looks a bit interesting when placed on a table in a meeting or restaurant. The ideal simple phone would also refrain from spending its spare time relaying your location and everything else about you to the internet, as smartphones do.

Cue, then, this exceptionally designed (by Jasper Morrison), classically simple, technically minimalist, credit-card-sized phone by Punkt, a clever Swiss company run by a Norwegian from Italy. For anyone in need of a fashionable digital detox, the Punkt MP-01 is a breath of fresh Swiss/Norwegian/Italian air, especially as it costs just £229. The sound is superb, the custom-made operating system excellent, and the battery life – nearly five hours' talk time and four weeks' standby – should satisfy the most demanding feature-weary globetrotter. £229, from www.punkt.ch.

