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MATT SOBER



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# Yet another tempting Apple

By Matt Sober

TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Friday, January 12, 2007

Just when you figured life couldn't become any more like "The Jetsons," along comes the iPhone.

So much for the thrill of getting my laptop paid off.

Not to be confused with the PS3, Xbox, TiVo, MySpace or YouTube, Apple's awe-inspiring little iPhone combines the functions of an iPod, cell phone, camera and the Internet.

All on a device about the size of an Altoids tin.

So, yeah, good luck explaining this one to your parents.

After more than two years in development, Apple CEO Steve Jobs finally unveiled the iPhone on Tuesday at the Macworld conference in San Francisco. Having achieved world domination in just a few short years with the iPod, the iPhone marks Apple's quest to conquer a new strategic target: the gazillion-dollar-a-year cell phone market.

It's all kind of like the president's efforts to spread democracy in the Middle East. Only more carefully thought out.

Let's just hope Steve Jobs isn't harboring any nuclear ambitions.

As one might imagine, a combination cell phoneiPod-camera-computer doesn't come cheap: \$499 for the 4-gigabyte model -- or about \$125 a

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## gigabyte.

So perhaps it's good news that it won't be available until June. That way, we'll all have plenty of time to get out and shop for a low rate on a home-equity loan.

During Tuesday's launch, Jobs demonstrated how iPhone users will be able to make phone calls, use the Internet and exchange e-mail -- all at the same time.

Sounds a little hazardous, if you ask me. Rather than multitasking, wouldn't you want to focus your complete and undivided attention on the singular goal of not dropping your \$500 phone in the spaghetti sauce?

Coincidentally, news of the iPhone comes the very same week that Sharp has unveiled the world's largest flat-screen television: a mammoth 108-inch model with liquid-crystal display.

And you thought Bill O'Reilly was a big mouth on your 36-inch TV.

The Sharp TV -- whose size is so unprecedented that they can't even figure how much to sell it for -- purportedly surpasses in enormity a 102-inch plasma model from Samsung. So if you like basketball, you're that much closer to a life-sized Yao Ming dunking in your living room.

As exciting as all this consumer electronics news has been, it is tempered by the reality that I'm now, like, seven gadgets behind the tech curve.

Furthermore, when it comes to a combination cell phone-iPod-camera-computer, I still have only two hands.

Matt Sober is a copy editor for the Tribune-Review. E-mail him at msober@tribweb.com, and include the word "story" in the subject line.

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