

## New Toys

*by Dick Selwood, Embedded Technology Journal*

When you are exposed to around 40 companies presenting their latest and greatest products or philosophy, it is sometimes a little difficult to keep the b.....t filter in full-on mode. On your behalf, I tried to be as cynical as possible at the Globalpress World Summit in San Francisco, trying to see through each professional presentation and slick use of PowerPoint to establish whether there was a grain of truth in its heart. (Of course all of us at Techfocus are experts in finding that grain of truth – but normally we get more than a few minutes between presentations to restore our sense of perspective.)

There were enough grains of truth amongst the chaff to make it worth giving you two reports: this one will look at some of the new gizmos or technologies that seem to be fun or whose impact on the world is still a little way out, while the next one will look at some of the more serious...

Another toy was demonstrated by Sensor Platforms Inc. The company brings together “leaders in the fields of accelerometers, micro-magnetometers, algorithms and precision analog technology to address the rich opportunities ... for location-aware sensors”. At one end it is producing products similar to the heart of the hand sets for Wii, bringing them into commercial applications such as creating or navigating 3D graphics. It also includes location awareness on a larger scale -- for example, supplementing GPS in areas where the signals are blocked or infrequent such as the urban canyons of high rise city centres or inside large buildings. Applications could include a kid tracker – in a shopping centre or an amusement park for example, or a car locator – in the car park of a shopping centre or amusement park or at an airport. The technology is packed in standard chip packaging, making it easy to handle in production and interface to other devices.