

The Power of 3

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Driving the future further

Overview

Rechargeable consumer **electronics** are so commonplace since the turn of the century that most of us use them daily and take them entirely for granted.

Be they smart phones and watches, tablets, laptops, music players or any of myriad other rechargeable products (including electric vehicles), the success of such devices is due in no small part to the evolution of that which powers them: lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries. Currently, these are the world's fastest growing and most promising source of transportable power.

Today's Li-ion batteries suffer minimal memory effect (can be charged at any point during the discharge cycle) and store twice as much energy by weight as those first produced commercially by Sony in 1991. And they're ten times cheaper now, but still expensive.

With electronic innovation seemingly never-ending, the race is on to produce 'less with more' – Li-ion batteries that are smaller, stronger and pack more punch than ever before – and battery manufacturers the world over are scrambling to meet demand.

Suggestions for the gadget-inclined

As Christmas approaches, here are some carefully curated and covetable devices – practical, indulgent or simply out there! – for anyone passionate about, or simply intrigued by, current consumer technology.



Sound matters

Elipson's Lenny Speaker (above) is so Frenchy, so chic. Portable and cable-free (it can also be plugged in old-school style), it works with any Bluetooth-enabled Android or iOS smartphone, laptop or tablet, runs seven to eight hours between charges and sounds as good as it looks.

If your style runs more to the miniature, check out **Kakkoi's Loop'd Bluetooth Speaker**. Bright, tiny and playful, it's the ultimate portable musical accessory: loop it to your bike, your bag, your tent pole, your belt or the nearest tree ... in fact, pretty much anywhere you like.

Still in aural mode, wearable technology doesn't get much smaller or cuter than **Skybuds**, 'truly wireless premium ear-buds with a battery-boosting smartphone case for charging and storage'. Neat!



Sleep-deprived partners of snorers may take comfort from the **Silent Partner anti-snoring device**. Said to quell those intensely irritating zzzzzzzz sounds via noise cancellation technology, it's available for pre-order now – if you can bear to wait!



The Power of 3 is sponsored by Lithium Australia.
Enquiries to info@lithium-au.com.





Wearable art

Eyecatcher is a smart, super-charged bracelet that fuses art, fashion and technology to stunning effect. Use it to display custom images, slideshows, app notifications, news and more via an iOS or Android smartphone ... the possibilities are endless.



Lights, camera, action

Ligbo (pictured above) is a small, powerful and versatile LED cube designed to light up your life ... on bike rides, at parties or just chilling at home. Easily programmed, it's Bluetooth-enabled, so can be fully controlled via an iOS or Android smartphone. It looks great too!



Budding auteurs can capture the action with a **Ronin-M** 3-axis hand-held gimbal stabiliser. Light, compact and boasting 'astounding power', it helps 'capture the world' by 'professionally stabilising' hand-held video cameras.



Vroom!

Rev-heads young and old can smoke it up with **Anki Overdrive's** amazing self-driving toy cars. Described as 'Scalextric** for the 21st century', you'll need the track and the cars, and each person racing requires a compatible iOS or Android device.



Work that body

Fitness aficionados wanting to track their progress and exercise strategically need look no further than **Skulpt Aim**. This 'Ultimate Fitness Tracker' measures what matters in seconds – 24 different muscle groups, percentage of total body fat, muscle fitness – and sends the results to the wearer's iOS or Android Bluetooth smart device.



For those leading the pack environmentally, what could be better than:

- > an **E-Station** home or office electric vehicle charging station, or
- > a smart, two-wheeled, self-balancing **electric personal transporter?**



Beloved of celebrities the world over, the self-balancing scooters resemble Segways minus the handlebars and, with the right body aboard, are elegant and virtuous in equal measure.



No gadget-lover's arsenal would be complete without a drone (get one now before regulations tighten). Ben Popper of *The Verge* opines that DJI's **Phantom 3** is the best that money can buy, plus there's a range of nifty accessories to choose from.

And finally, a timely reminder...

With the festive season almost upon us, and without being alarmist, remember, please, that batteries can be *dangerous*. The lithium button batteries in novelty toys, calculators, key fobs and small remote controls, even musical greeting cards, can be **lethal** if swallowed by children – and **all batteries are toxic****, even deadly, if chewed or ingested by pets. Do those you love (and the planet!) a favour: be vigilant, keep batteries beyond the reach of children and animals, and recycle them responsibly.



* More in the next issue of *The Power of 3*.
 ** Brand name for a range of slot car racing sets that first appeared in the late 1950s.
 *** US researchers aim to develop an aqueous Li-ion battery with the power, efficiency and longevity of current Li-ion batteries but without the toxic chemicals and fire risk. Watch this space ...

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