



TOYS



The Fly Pentop



Star Wars Transformer



Zoombox

Superfly

The **Fly Pentop Computer** by Leapfrog makes what you draw come to life, (e.g. draw a calculator and solve equations. Doodle drums then play them on the page!) The pen also plays MP3's, helps you keep track of your social life and plays cool games like Flyball, where you can create a fantasy baseball league and compete against your friends.

Basically, the pen contains a computer chip, speaker and a tiny camera that reads software off special paper whose surface is imprinted with nearly invisible micro-dots. If that means nothing to you, check out their awesome website at flypentop.com and get a feel for this gadget that is sure to get tweens hooked.

Jedi's in disguise

Star Wars seems to be bigger with kids than it ever was and this month Hasbro introduces **Star Wars Transformers**. Darth Vader transforms into a Tie Fighter, Obi-Wan into a Jedi Starfighter, General Grievous into a Wheel Bike and Luke Skywalker becomes an X-Wing Fighter. They look amazing so collectors young and old will probably clamour for them!

Zoombox

Kids have always wanted the same items their parents have—used to be wooden ironing boards, plastic tools and kitchens, but these days techie items like kid-style cell phones and DVD players are hot. If mom and dad are into home theater systems, junior might want a **Zoombox**. Giving kids that large screen faux-theater experience, Zoombox can project video games on the ceiling or show a movie on the wall! A DVD/CD player and speakers are built right in, so kids can watch – and listen to - their favorite movies, music and videos, digital pictures and more at the touch of a button.

In other News

Disney has a lot to celebrate this year with Winnie the Pooh turning 80 and Kermit the Frog hitting the half-century mark! Expect lots of hype and birthday-themed promotions cuz this party will probably last at least 12-18 months.

FASHION

- Converse, Vans, cowgirl fringe, short shorts, vests, tweed, ruffles and lace – these are just a few of the trends that have come full circle (yet again!). The trick is incorporating multiple pieces into one outfit (ie. lace + vans + tweed short shorts = style).
- Boys are still all over the preppy skater look, especially layering cool retro inspired tees over long sleeves.



Vegetarian T

Pick it or kick it!

Clothes kids will be kicking to the curb in 06'...

Low-rise jeans; ponchos; cheeky T-shirts ("Team Jolie" and "Team Aniston" T-shirts are over); Cowboy boots (this may be a slow process); sequined everything; skinny heels and hair extensions.

Stuff they'll want to pick up...

Classic cardigans; mid-rise pants and skirts; socially and environmentally conscious clothing; slouchy (or sweater) boots; stacked heels; gold jewelry and eyelash extensions.

Holla at Hollister

Popular American clothing chain, Hollister, has finally found a home this side of the border. The cool threads (similar to American Eagle) are available now at select malls (Eaton Centre & Sherway Gardens). Look out for Abercrombie & Fitch soon too!

MOVIES

More Fantasy?...Fantastic!

Kids who were consumed by the world of Narnia this Christmas won't have long to wait for more fantastical worlds to hit the big screen. Based on the worldwide success of Narnia, Harry Potter and the Lord of the Rings trilogy, studios are chomping at the bit to put the cameras to the fantasy flicks.

Number one on the list of anticipated properties is Phillip Pullman's *His Dark Materials Trilogy* including the books, "The Golden Compass," "The Subtle Knife" and "The Amber Spyglass." Dealing with a parallel world to our own, the books have daemons, polar bears, and Dust...a substance you may look at differently after you've entered this fantasy world.

In addition; the success of *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*, has already sparked rumors of a sequel and it's a given...*Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* is already on it's way with Vera Drake's amazing Imelda Staunton rumored to be playing the most hated Potter villain in the series, Dolores Umbridge.

VIDEO GAMES

Land of the Rising Fun

Generally speaking, technology has a much firmer foothold in Japan than in any Western culture. As a result, Japanese gamers can look forward to far more variety when choosing what to play. Japan has spawned games about polar bears singing karaoke, games about peeking under schoolgirls' skirts on the subway, and one very strange arcade machine where you poke a big rubber with a pointing metal hand to "punish" on-screen characters. Needless to say, many of these games have happily stayed in Japan.



But the recent success of stranger and more original games like Katamari Damacy has publishers re-thinking their strategy. In 2006 and beyond, we can expect to see some of Japan's stranger offerings arrive on our shores, including **Chibi-Robo**, in which you play a tiny android doing chores and defending your family's house from thieves, and **Odama**, a microphone-controlled pinball game that takes place on the battlefields of feudal Japan. The success of these atypical titles may be due to the rampant staleness and sequel-itis plaguing North American and European gamers.

We Built this Controller on Rock and Roll

Look closely in your favourite game store and you may spot a large-ish, black box emblazoned with flames and the words "" splashed across the front. Plunk down nearly a hundred bucks, and you'll be able to take the box home ... and unleash the hot, stinky rock-awesomeness inside. Guitar Hero comes with a special electric guitar-shaped controller that encourages players to rock out to some of musicdom's finest finger-lickin' tunes, including Deep Purple's "Smoke on the Water" and Megadeth's "Symphony of Destruction." Hell yeah.

Novelty controllers are nothing new. Few can forget Nintendo's failed PowerGlove or Dance Dance Revolution's dance mat. The Sega Dreamcast boasted a game that used a fishing rod controller and Samba de Amigo, another music game played with a pair of maracas. A few years back, MechCommander famously employed a gigantic console replete with a slew of buttons and an eject panel. More recently, Nintendo released a plastic drum peripheral for Donkey Konga, and Resident Evil fans can pick up an entirely unnecessary glass-encased controller shaped like a bloody chainsaw. If Guitar Hero lives up to its killer review scores, we're liable to see at least a few more novel controller ideas before the year is out.

To be continued? No? Say hello to my little friend... the videogame!

Not every film deserves a sequel, but some do have lives beyond their theatrical runs. We're not talking about cult, rice throwing, Rocky Horror midnight showings here, but uber-geeks are getting their fill of filmic landscapes in new video games based on movie characters. This year alone we've seen video game-only sequels for Evil Dead, The Nightmare Before Christmas, and everyone's favourite sociopath Tony Montana in Scarface.

It's the perfect way to continue a franchise without having to fork out the dough for increased production costs or having to worry about Pacino's increasing tendency to yell his way through a movie. Plus, video games now regularly earn more revenue than movies do, with top titles outselling the most popular films of the year.

Upcoming titles include: Jaws Unleashed, Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest, Taxi Driver, and a Dirty Harry game. Well ... do you feel lucky enough to find one of your favourite movie franchises live on as a game? Well do ya...punk?!

MUSIC

Sounds like another teen idol...in spirit

Chris Brown "Young Love"

The debut CD from this 16 year-old wonder is generating comparisons to MJ. The combination of his dance moves, catchy beats and charming smile have all the girls wanting to be sung to and all the boys wanting to learn his tricks. The best part? He's not pretending to be older than he is, which makes parents love him too!

Music Comparison: Usher



B5

B5 "B5"

The boy band is back in a big way. The older and married Backstreet Boys no longer trigger the hearts of teen girls so it is up to new groups like *B5* to get girls screaming. This quintet of brothers have created massive chaos across the U.S. and are soon to hit Canada. Did I mention that they are a product of Diddy? Can we say GOLD?

Music Comparison: B2K

Wolf Parade "Apologies to the Queen Mary"

The newest Canadian product to be getting international recognition is none other than *Wolf Parade*. These four boys from Montreal are heating up the Indie scene in Canada and they credit their music to their 'lack of anything else to do'. Boy, are we glad they were bored!

Music Comparison: The Arcade Fire

The Click Five "Greetings from Imrie House"

There's a new look and sound to pop and it's totally encompassed by *The Click Five*. Their music will make you want to jump in your convertible and head to the beach. And their matching suits and Beatlesque looks will have girls swooning. They are cute, oh so cute!

Music Comparison: 21st Century Beatles



Hedley

Hedley "Hedley"

Fronted by ex Canadian Idol finalist, Jacob Hoggard, Hedley is the latest Canadian mega rock band. These Vancouver natives have two major singles topping the charts and are currently touring the country with uber group, Simple Plan. Hedley already is and will continue be a force to be reckoned with.

Note: You can catch Hedley on YTV's upcoming *Big Fun Party Mix VII* along with other Canadian superstars k-os and Sum 41!!

In other News

- Look out for UK indie rock band **Arctic Monkeys** – their album hasn't even released yet (Jan 30th) but their debut single is already at #1 on the UK charts. We'll know soon whether North Americans will go equally bananas for these Brits.
- Other **2006 album releases** worth noting: Nelly Furtado, Eve, Fugees, Good Charlotte, Keane, Linkin Park, Outkast, The Offspring, Pharrell, Prince,
- **Lavigne goes LaSheen** – Everyone's favorite punk princess, Avril Lavigne, has ditched her rebel sk8ter gurl style (including the goth eyeliner) for something much less "complicated" --- look out for her lovely new mug on covers of high-end mags.

TECHNOLOGY

Online Communities within Online Communities

Message Boards and online communities attract thousands of kids who post messages every day. But what exactly are they doing there? Yes, they're talking about their fave toys, games, TV shows, music, etc., but they're also getting organized. Much like the schoolyard, they're forming smaller groups to discuss their niche interests, but there's more freedom to form a club or group for something you might get chastised for at school. Things like a reincarnation club, zodiac club, and a security guard club aren't likely to form groups at the local junior high, but they are likely to find an audience somewhere, like...say...the [YTV Message Boards!](#)

TELEVISION

There's a tonne of talk about non-linear nowadays: with downloadable music videos and TV shows for Video iPods to streaming webcasts and Video On Demand, many people are bypassing the traditional lines of TV for something that gives the viewer control—allowing them to create their own lineups and viewing schedule.

Video On Demand is a relatively new alternative to Blockbuster that is starting to gain momentum. Digital Cable subscribers just click on their remote, pick the show they want to watch (when they want) and presto – it appears! You can stop, pause, rewind etc. Very cool. YTV and Treehouse TV have hit the VOD bandwagon with **Treehouse on Demand** and **YTV Anime On Demand**. More On Demand channels will appear in the near future.

A similar trend is appearing on the **Internet**. Nick has launched TurboNick (only available in the U.S.) where you can watch new episodes of your favourite Nickelodeon cartoons, including behind the scenes footage, bloopers and special podcasts. Of course there are plenty of folks procuring these shows from illegal websites, but that's not something we care to comment on.

The concept of **Television that you can take anywhere** is also growing. Devices like Video iPod, PSP, VideoNow, Mobi TV and even your laptop, help bring entertainment with you when you need a fix. Sick of sitting on the subway with nothing to do? Watch Yu-Gi-Oh! Flight delayed? Watch Desperate Housewives on your laptop in the terminal. A few questions surround these portable entertainment devices. For example, do people really want to watch something on that small of a screen when even computer screens continue to get bigger? And how will this affect "prime time" TV, advertising and rights management?





Share the laugh

In other On Demand news, the **sharing of show highlights** is another growing trend. If it's funny/intriguing/good content it will be passed on and shared—across numerous mediums or devices. A recent online viral campaign by Saturday Night Live is a good example. On December 19th SNL aired a short video called “Lazy Sunday” starring Chris Parnell. The next day, the digital short was instantly uploaded by millions and everyone was talking about it. Has this improved SNL ratings? Only time will tell, but here is what it provided them for free – instant media publicity and exposure! The sketch had people forwarding to friends and talking at the water coolers. And instead of people thinking, “dang, I missed it,” then waiting for it to air again, it's now easy to find and download—prompting you to surf for other SNL sketches.

DISCLAIMER: The trends that the YTV Trend Huntaz comment on come from the buzz on the street, the mall, the Internet, and numerous publications. YTV does not guarantee that all of the above information will come to fruition, but you can pretty much believe us as we are obsessed with this stuff.

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