

BUDGET STRETCHING IDEAS TIPS TO HELP YOU

New Electronic Products The Inexpensive Way

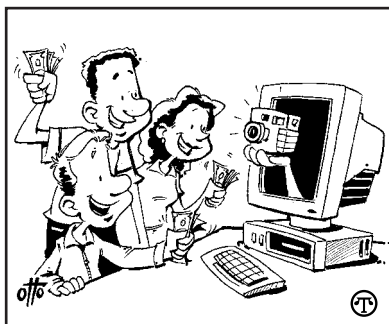
(NAPS)—If you're nuts for gadgets and gizmos, you're not alone. Americans just love all the devices that bring us information, entertainment and connections from anywhere and everywhere.

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) reports that 58 percent of Americans own a personal computer; 39 percent own a camcorder; 23 percent of all households own all the audio and video equipment needed to create a surround-sound movie theater experience in their home; and 15 percent own a DVD player.

To capitalize on demand, consumer electronics products have now gone "trendy" by infiltrating the fashion industry. There's now a market for devices that allow consumers to express their individuality. Apple was one of the first manufacturers to offer consumers a color choice when it introduced its iMac computer. (If you can't stop bragging about your blueberry iMac, you know the phenomenon.)

These gadgets are cute and appealing so it's hard not to go overboard. But before you blow your savings, determine what you really need. It may not be the most expensive digital organizer or laptop computer with all the bells and whistles. A less expensive model may offer all the functionality you require.

For example, do you need a desktop or laptop computer? How important is portability? Some laptops let you add full-size monitors and keyboards for home or office use. What do you want your computer to do: word processing; home finances; games? What other features do you need: sound-card; modem; CD-ROM? Decide what features and software you need, and then start comparison-shopping.



Every two-seconds a computer, photo or consumer electronics product is sold on eBay. The site offers some of the best selection and value on all computer-related products.

PC Magazine and beststuff.com are great resources for finding "best in category" ratings. [Consumer REVIEW.com](http://ConsumerREVIEW.com) offers thousands of product reviews all written by consumers, and by simply answering a handful of questions, [Active Buyer's Guide](http://ActiveBuyer'sGuide.com) (www.activebuyersguide.com) will provide a product recommendation based on the information you provide and the requirements you identify.

Once you've decided on a product, finding the best deal may not be that tricky. Many Americans are surprised to learn that eBay has grown to become the largest online marketplace for computers and consumer electronics.

More than 400,000 computer, photo and consumer electronics products are up for sale daily on eBay at some of the best prices available. More than 50 percent of these items are brand new. You'll find computers, home theater systems, car stereos, PDAs, digital cameras, camcorders and more at www.ebay.com.

You might just save some serious money while you're grabbing the gizmo of your dreams.