

Tips To Help Keep Electronic Gizmos From Becoming Obsolete

(NAPSA)—People searching for a more positive economic outlook need look no further than the consumer electronics industry, as smartphones, LCD TVs and video games and consoles continue to show relatively strong sales. The video game industry was particularly successful in 2008, seeing a 19 percent revenue increase over 2007.

The great news for consumers is that many of today's popular electronic gadgets will go on to last a very long time due to their multi-purpose designs. This new trend in consumer electronics design means that these new singular devices can easily replace several devices you may have lying around your home, and that your investment in these gadgets will go further.

Multifunctional devices

- Smartphones provide consumers with more than just a cell phone, giving them a portable video and MP3 player, Internet access and communication device outside of just phone calls.

- Gaming consoles provide more value than just playing video games, as most consoles provide additional entertainment value. The PlayStation 3, for instance, provides a Blu-ray Disc player for high-definition movies, video-on-demand options, ability for MP3 playback and music streaming, digital photo sharing and more, making it the ultimate home entertainment system.

- Digital cameras have added many new features, including Internet connectivity to allow shuttbugs to upload their photos to Web sites like Flickr, adding an instant social networking and communication aspect to photography.

- GPS tracking devices are set to be released with improved Web access, meaning that users can



New electronic devices are designed with new features and should be updated periodically.

access sites, like a local business's Web page, through their GPS.

Read the manual and go online

If you received an electronic device as a gift, chances are you may not have done all the research into what it can do:

- Familiarize yourself with the owner's manual; also check out the manufacturer's Web site for the latest information. PlayStation 3 owners can visit the PlayStation site (www.us.playstation.com) or the official blog (blog.us.playstation.com) to see videos and demos of new features and the latest content.

- Find out what additional features your new system has beyond the core functionality you bought it for, and figure out how you can best use them to maximize your entertainment value. For example, most people buy a PlayStation 3 to play games, but you can also use it to watch high-definition Blu-ray movies, listen to music files, display digital photos and browse the Internet.

- Technology isn't static anymore, meaning that devices you purchase today will continue to evolve and get better the longer you hang on to them. Get famil-

iar with various consumer tech publications and news sites to stay abreast of any updates, and look for online communities of enthusiasts who are users of the same electronics as you for more information.

Stay tuned to the newest updates

Through Internet connectivity, manufacturers are able to keep electronic devices fresh and up-to-date with the latest advances in technology by offering periodic updates to consumers:

- If your new device offers Internet-enabled features and has an Ethernet port or Wi-Fi (wireless Internet) capability, chances are that it's intended to be updated periodically.

- Most updates are free to the consumer and, in the case of some devices like the PlayStation 3, are offered regularly and provide amazing added value for years.

- As a consumer, you should make it a habit to stay aware of new updates and those on the horizon. Think of it as regular maintenance that you'd do on a car or other machine, except that these device updates are free and provide amazing new features that weren't available previously.

- Updating your electronics is important because it helps to future-proof them. The days of replacing old electronics with the next big thing are over because many new devices update themselves to stay ahead of the pack. In the case of some products like the PlayStation 3, consumers will find that their purchase actually appreciates in value over time as new features are added periodically at no additional cost.

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.playstation.com.