

# AWW

AUTOWEEK—LIVING THE AUTOMOTIVE LIFE

2009 DETROIT  
AUTO SHOW  
**FIRST LOOK!**  
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No-Bull Ford Taurus

Best of  
the Best

# Audi A7

2010 sedan  
proves Audi  
is one  
company  
to fear



Has  
Honda  
created  
a hybrid  
to out-  
Prius  
Toyota?

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auto tech to improve your life

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## BEST OF THE REST

2 MILLION SQUARE FEET HOLDS LOTS OF STUFF. HERE'S SOME MORE FROM THE CES FLOOR

### 1 Leggett & Platt Chargers

Charging any kind of mobile device used to require a specific wired charger that plugged into a wall outlet. That meant a lot of specific wired chargers. Last year, Visteon showed an inductive charging system that attached to the back of an iPod and worked in the center console of your car. Visteon is waiting until device makers add charging plates to the backs of those units before offering its charging system. Leggett & Platt will be out in mid-2009 with a full range of inductive chargers. We liked the automotive center console, which had a BlackBerry and an iPod

charging away. L&P also makes truck shelving that will store and recharge power tools with no wires. Other apps include a workbench and an end table with hidden chargers under the skin. The center console we saw is expected to cost \$300. You can see it at [www.leggettecoupled.com](http://www.leggettecoupled.com).

### 2 Parrot MKi9200

Parrot's new line of Bluetooth hands-free car kits works with any Bluetooth-enabled phone, including the iPhone. Voice recognition and voice synthesis do all the work. All you do is speak. The MKi9200 displays your phone's address book to identify callers and help you make

calls more easily. You just connect your iPod or MP3 player to control all of your music through the small screen. The MKi9200 is the top of the line and costs \$350, but the Parrot line starts at \$130 retail. Visit [www.parrot.com](http://www.parrot.com), but also check prices at online retailers.

### 3 Visteon Electronic Dashboard

Imagine a dashboard that looks completely smooth and flat until your hand gets near it. Then it lights up to display a full set of controls for HVAC, stereo and everything else you see on a center console today—except that today's controls don't disappear when your hand moves away.

When you touch a control, you hear a satisfying blip, click or clunk each time you change a setting. That is the Visteon-3M integrated center panel with proximity sensing and haptic controls, and it's coming to a car near you by the 2011 model year. Visit [www.visteon.com](http://www.visteon.com).

### 4 ICO Global Communications

The guys at ICO don't mess around with minor software apps—they launch real live rockets into space and sell applications they bounce off them. One such application is live television beamed to your car. Others have done this before, but ICO's signals can be displayed on larger, nine-inch screens because of stronger signals from its satellites. The nation

wide service, boosted by terrestrial repeaters, will be available next year for \$15 to \$25 a month and should be available in cars from OEMs in two and a half years. The system is in alpha testing now, broadcasting 10 satellite channels in Las Vegas and in Raleigh, N.C. It also will offer two-way interactive communication so you can not only call for help when you need it, you can also vote for *American Idol*. Competitors include the AT&T CruiseCast (page 31) and two other companies, Open Mobile Video Coalition and Qualcomm MediaFLO. Regardless of who comes out ahead, chances are you're going to have satellite television in your car at an almost reasonable price within a couple of years. —MV

"Starbucks" or whatever you've programmed in. It then directs you to the nearest such outlet. Very handy when you're out driving around. The 4350 also has real-time traffic and hands-free calling with Bluetooth. MSRP is \$650, but you can find it

on the Web for much less. Visit [www.magellangps.com](http://www.magellangps.com) for more.

### TomTom GO 740 LIVE

TomTom gets into interactive real-time traffic with this new device, which anonymously sends traffic data whenever it's on, so all of the TomTom users in, say, Los Angeles are helping to give one another a more accurate traffic picture. This was the idea behind the now-defunct Dash Express nav device that we saw last year, and it's a good solution for better traffic reports. It

combines real-time feedback with historical traffic data, what's usually happening on that stretch of road at that time of day, for a very good picture of traffic in your city. It also offers local fuel prices, weather and Google searches. A feature called QuickFix remembers the locations of the satellites you'll be using in the next week for faster startup. And the GO 740 responds to 130 voice commands. The MSRP is \$499, but



you can search the Web for better prices. Visit [www.tomtom.com](http://www.tomtom.com).

### Garmin Nuvi 885T

This one has everything: speech recognition, lane assist with junction

