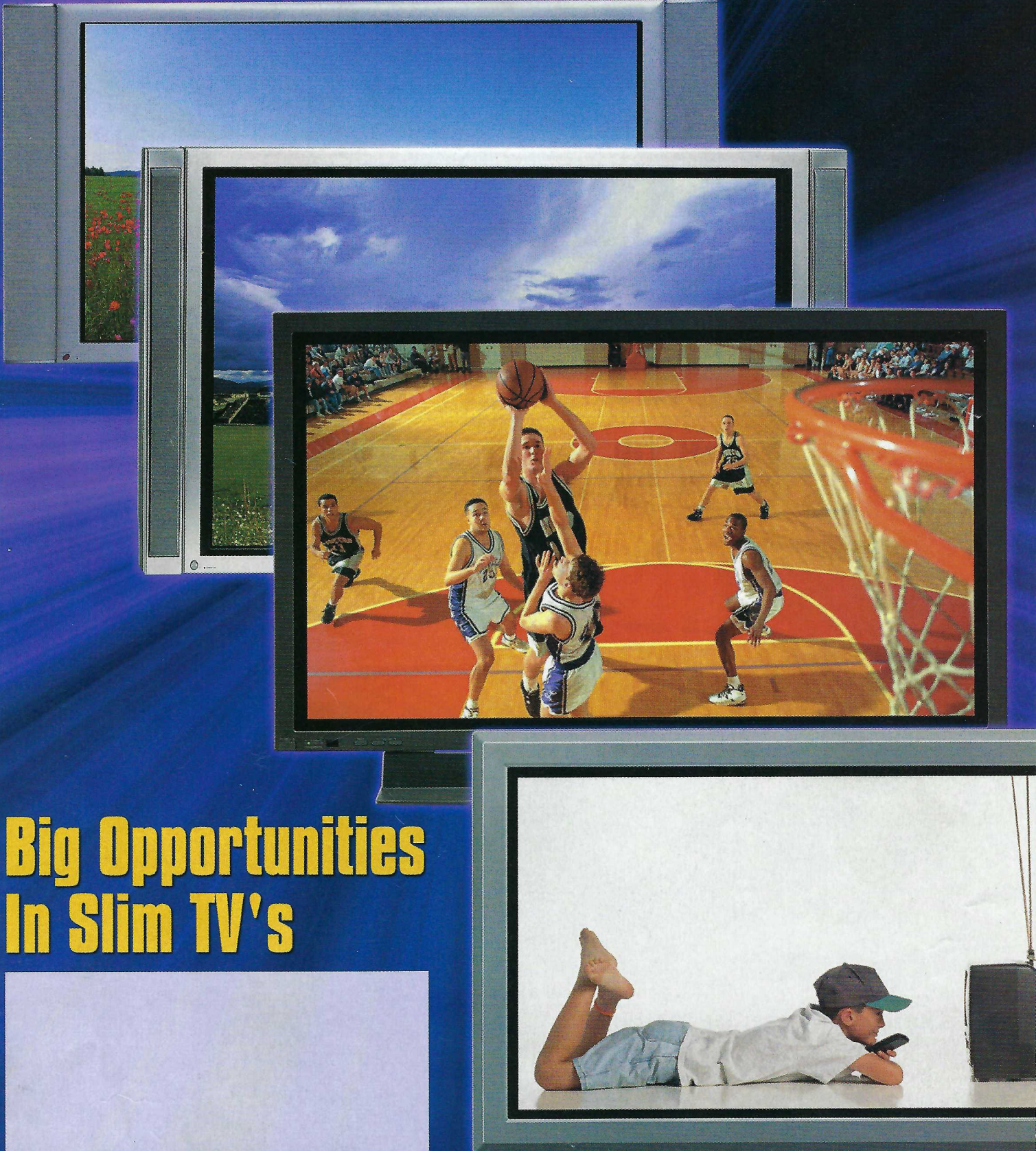


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# TELEMATICS UPDATE

**WILL TELEMATICS TECHNOLOGY BRING PROFIT & OPPORTUNITY TO THE CE RETAILER? BY MICAH SHEVELOFF**

**T**elematics technology is defined as the provision of two-way voice and data communication between the vehicle (and its owner) and information providers. Such a broad definition leaves the door open for a vast array of interpretations by product designers and manufacturers; however business analysts have predicted a bright economic future for the overall category.

Directed Electronics plans to unveil a telematics offering at the 2003 CES show, and deliver finished goods to dealers in the first quarter of that year. "We want to focus on sellable features that consumers will come in and ask for," reported Jim Jardin, marketing director of emerging technologies at DEI. The new product is expected to be a tracking device with "added features," and Delphi, based on an agreement reached on April 23 will supply the hardware. Delphi was the first company to market with factory installed telematics hardware in 1996, and remains a leader in the category today. Jardin pointed out that a survey conducted by IMR (Industrial Market Research) indicated that 63% of new vehicle owners would desire a vehicle-tracking theft recovery device as an add-on accessory for their automobile. DEI is working with Wingcast, a network service provider that is responsible for the communications link between con-

sumers and the information providers. Wingcast will also provide 24-hour emergency service and vehicle tracking.

DEI has been building their security products for approximately four years with an electronic serial port (ESP) that will allow retailers and expeditors to retrofit previously installed systems with the tracking product. In addition to new customers, that will allow dealers to access their existing customer database in order to generate sales. DEI has also utilized CDMA technology as the foundation for this device, taking advantage of both digital and analog wireless communications for extended range and reliability. Jardin reported that DEI has included fully enhanced web interface, vehicle location history, and tracking event capability as part of the feature set for the new product. Voice response connectivity is not expected to appear until the product's second generation.

Audiovox is in the final development stages of a telematics product called Pursuitrak, a vehicle tracking, notification, and control system. Consumers can be notified via telephone, wireless phone, or the Internet that there has been a breach of security with their car, and the system allows the motorist to track the

**Bluetooth™ Demo**

The diagram illustrates a Bluetooth network. At the center is a TI Bluetooth EVM (Evaluation Module). It is connected via Bluetooth to a mobile phone (labeled 'Cell Phone With Embedded Bluetooth') and a PDA (labeled 'Pocket PC PDA Displaying Vehicle Diagnostics'). The PDA is also connected to a headset. The EVM is connected via a Serial Link to a PC (labeled 'Host Processor Running Vehicle Diagnostics and Voice Recognition Application for Hands Free Cellular Phone Calls'). The PC is also connected to the headset. The diagram is titled 'TI-ENABLED BLUETOOTH AUTOMOTIVE DEMO CONSISTING OF A HANDS-FREE KIT & VEHICLE DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS'.

vehicle on their own computer. In order for Pursuitrak to be able to provide its host of services, the consumer must subscribe to the Pursuitrak service, allowing them access to the Cyber Center, a redundant network-hosted ASP including back-up power systems and multiple levels of security, all delivered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The technology allows for advanced monitoring of the vehicle and the capacity to locate the car and shut it down. Subscribers can also choose specific events and services that they would like monitored for them, such as early warning theft prevention, event-specific messaging, and even e-mail messaging. Pursuitrak can also notify the vehicle owner that their car is traveling at an excessive speed or has a low battery.

*Continued on page 26*

## **TELEMATICS**

*(Continued from page 22)*

### **TI DEVELOPMENTS**

Texas Instruments has announced the introduction of an IDB-1394 connectivity system for automotive use, as well as the successful development of a Bluetooth wireless system. The automotive 1394 promises to combine high speeds (100 megabits per second) with media flexibility, and could be used to simplify rear seat entertainment and other audio/video solutions within the automotive environment. The avionics and industrial markets are expected to benefit from these technologies as well. "TI's solution will help bridge the gap between the automobile and consumer electronics, allowing people to enjoy mobile multimedia entertainment and information," commented Brad Little, TI's manager of worldwide automotive advanced bus products.

The most excitement being generated by developments in telematics technology centers on OEM suppliers to the automotive industry, wireless communications companies, and the automotive manufacturers. Fleet vehicle management is very fertile territory for telematics devices, and there is already a high level of interest amongst haulers of hazardous materials, explosives, and fuel. Just-in-time delivery companies also see potential benefits from advanced vehicle tracking and communications devices.

Sensoria Corp. and the MechanicNet Group have announced that they are working together to provide an on-board vehicle diagnostic system that integrates with the car in order to provide the motorist with key information about any malfunction, and even suggest the nearest repair facility. The automated diagnostics industry is expected to balloon to a multibillion-dollar arena by the year 2007, according to industry analysts Frost & Sullivan.