

Digital Life

Home Tech Car Tech Cameras MP3s Mobiles Computers Apps Games How-To iPhone Blogs Technology

Digihub

You are here: Home » Digital Life » How-To » Article

Digital Life

Mobiles | RSS | Newsletters | High contrast

A gadget for the car that's music to my ears

STEPHEN HUTCHEON
December 15, 2009 - 5:57PM

Comments 6

Join the conversation

4 people are reading this now.

Comment on SMH.

6 comments.

Comment on Twitter.

Read tweets.

Related Coverage

Photos Tech
Gadget Gift Guide

Top Digital Life articles

1. Game on: Aussies have their say on R18+ video games
 2. Rotten Apple iMacs spoil Christmas
 3. A gadget for the car that's music to my ears
 4. Google confirms secret 'Google phone'
 5. Privacy overhaul catches Facebook boss
- + More Digital Life articles

How To Topics

- Guides (301)
 - All Guides (301)
 - Video (101)
 - Mobile (99)
 - Camera (83)
 - TV (64)
 - Computers (60)
 - More Guides »
- ▶ Trouble Shooter (64)
- ▶ Computer Brands (10)
- ▶ Macman (9)
- ▶ Cameras (8)

Latest Comment

“ I'm curious to know how the law handles the point about if there is someone else in the ... ”

abs
See comments (6)



The Parrot MKi 9200 ... the connector cable, microphone and screen and, right, control unit.

Parrot MKi 9200
Hands-free mobile car kit
RRP: \$479
Rating: 4/5
www.strike.com.au

Over the years I've been experimenting with various iPod and iPhone accessories designed to allow portable music to be played through the car stereo without the need to subject the car to invasive surgery.

All previous attempts involved hooking up to FM transmitter-based devices, which purport to allow you to stream your music wirelessly into your car's hi-fi system.

But I've come to the conclusion that most of these devices are woefully unsuitable for uninterrupted, interference-free listening. And no amount of fiddling, tweaking and shifting frequencies is going to change that.

There just isn't enough free space on the FM radio spectrum to ensure a satisfactory listener experience.

A French Richard Branson

All of which is a long-winded introduction to a Frenchman named Henri Seydoux, a man whose CV makes him out to be a cross between James Dyson (funky device designer) and Richard Branson (serial entrepreneur).

A former journalist, Seydoux is the founder of Parrot, a maker of Bluetooth and wireless tech gear. He is also the founder and a director of the luxury shoe company Christian

LATEST VIDEO

Digital Life Video

More video

Netbooks must have THE LOOK

Blogs

Latest blogs

digihub

Are you prepared for disaster?
December 14th

Will that be Visa, AMEX or Twitter, sir?
December 11th



December 10th

The power or the passion?

More blogs

Comments

Latest comments

digihub

- Google Phone - How much will it cost?
With Google seemingly going to sell their Google Phone directly to consumers over the net, how much ...
- Chrome vs Firefox, which is better?
- wireless internet programme

More forums

Latest

Featured products

digihub



Eee PC T91MT

The Eee PC™ T91MT's multi-touch functionality makes interacting with the computer ...



G51J 3D Gaming notebook

A pair of Nvidia 3D Vision™ active-shutter glasses coupled with a wide-range ...

News

More products


Latest news


digihub


ASUS Wins Eight 2010 iF Product Design

ASUS launches first ever multi-touch tablet ...

Story Tools

 [Share on Facebook](#)

 [Email this story](#)

 [Print this story](#)

SMH Jobs

Louboutin.

Parrot which specialises in hands-free systems for cars and motorcycles, recently branched out into designer accessories such as the Philippe Starck-designed Zikmu iPhone speakers, which won a "Best of Show" award at last year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

Meanwhile, back to the car and the quest for a device that will allow me to pump up the volume and blast out the Best of Nana Mouskouri in a way it was intended to be played.

Look, no hands

Enter the Parrot MKi 9200 - a hands-free mobile car kit with a very uncatchy name and an excellent pedigree.

While it's designed to work with a number of mobile phones, like all phone accessory makers, the current focus is on the iPhone. (At least give them credit for not calling it the i-Parrot.)

Did I mention it's also a hands-free mobile car kit? Solution overkill, if you're just looking for a better in-car iPod music experience but worth the extra cost if you (a) take and make a lot of calls in the car and (b) happen to be driving south of the Murray River this holiday season.

New road rules that came into effect in Victoria last month are among the strictest in the land regarding a driver's use of mobile phones. Basically, unless it's in a cradle and you're using a hands-free device, you face a hefty fine and a loss of demerit points.

And those changes to the road rules were agreed to by all state and territory transport ministers meaning that sooner or later, the same laws will apply nationally.

Better than FM

The MKi 9200 syncs with your iPhone via Bluetooth when you start up the engine. The small screen - which you stick on to your dashboard - lights up and tells you you're connected.

The manufacturer recommends the device be installed by a professional, a job that can take up to an hour and a half depending on the complexity of your car's innards. The installation is described as "screw and hole free" and does involve hard wiring.

You can dial using the voice commands (not always 100 per cent accurate); by scrolling through your iPhone contact lists; or by dialling using the jog button on the device's volume control (not recommended).

(With the voice commands, if the name is not recognised, you'll be prompted for confirmation. But if it is, then the device will immediately launch into the call - without a double check. So when I asked for "Kate", the phone started calling "White". On the second attempt, it started calling "Katie". On the third attempt, it dialled "Kate".)

Everyone in the car, of course, gets to listen in to your calls

Awards

December 15th

December 7th








November 20th

**ASUS launches
NVIDIA 3D vision
notebook**

Popular Phones & Plans

Phones Deals Brands



1) Apple iPhone 3GS 16GB	36 plans	3%	
2) Apple iPhone 3GS 32GB	36 plans	2%	
3) Apple iPhone 8GB	42 plans	1%	
4) Nokia N97	41 plans	1%	
5) Nokia E71	49 plans	1%	

Compare: [Mobiles](#) | [Broadband](#)

Get the best deal at smh.com.au
The Sydney Morning Herald

because it's all routed through the stereo system. But it's hands-free and it's loud and clear.

You can also play your music this way, although you will have to set it up before you get under way and, once the playlist is in action, there's no way to change playlists or skip tracks without having to fiddle with the iPhone.

And if you receive a call when you're listening to music, you get put back again once you hang up.

Although this is only a partially tethered solution (the Parrot box is connected to the stereo), the quality of the Bluetooth stream is head and shoulders above FM.

The other way is to use the fully tethered method and dock your iPhone to the connector wire. Although it's almost impossible to tell the difference in sound quality, this method of hooking up your phone has two distinct advantages:

1. You charge your phone at the same time.
2. You can use the Parrot controller - a two-button, one-knob device - to skip through tracks.

All of which goes to prove that in an age of ubiquitous wirelessness, you still can't go past a tethered solution when it comes to in-car music.

[To advertise your business on Google...click here](#)

Comments

6 comments so far

\$26 on E-Bay got me the same thing for my Sony Ericsson, the sound is not quite CD quality but plenty good enough for me.

Posted By: warnie1aus | Melbourne - December 15, 2009, 5:42PM

I have one of these and they are pretty cool. Voice recognition works about 19 times out of 20.

Posted By: Bluetooth Geek | Brisbane - December 15, 2009, 5:42PM

This is an interesting article, except that it fails to explain how the device is connected to the car stereo.

Also, this product is exceedingly expensive and there are similar, much cheaper options.

SH: I have added in a little about the installation process. It somehow slipped out.

Posted By: klaw - December 15, 2009, 4:54PM

The device is hard wired into the back of the stereo klaw. Solid product. Hope this helps.

Posted By: Bluetooth Geek | Brisbane - December 15, 2009, 5:53PM

I'm curious to know how the law handles the point about if there is someone else in the car re phone having to be mounted somewhere etc

Posted By: abs - December 15, 2009, 10:00PM

Anyone got suggestions for a cradle for the iphone that works well when calls are recieved. Bought a fairly cheap one that's great for music, but when the calls come through, the sound goes to a very low level.

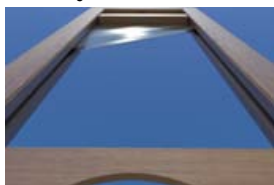
Posted By: Iphone guy | Sydney - December 15, 2009, 7:39PM

More Related Coverage



Photos **Tech Gadget Gift Guide**
Everything a gadget geek could want to see under the Christmas tree - and around the house!

Money



Don't stick your neck out when rates go up

smh.com.au

- Compare All Saving Accounts
- Compare All Home Loans
- Compare All Credit Cards

Essential Baby



Jane Kennedy, mum of 5

Essential Baby

- Ovulation calculator
- Due date calculator
- Discuss pregnancy

Video



Attack of the animations

smh.com.au

- Life & Style videos
- Entertainment videos
- Business videos

Managed Funds



Cheaper mortgages are out there

InvestSMART

- Managed funds, shares...
- Find a managed fund
- Morningstar rated funds

TheVine



Win lingerie and swimwear

THEVINE

- The year in TV and radio
- Review: Meredith Festival
- Photos: Meredith Festival

Compare and Save

Broadband | Energy | Mobile | Home Loans | Savings Accounts

Too much xmas cheer?



Repent your Christmas sins with 5.51% on your savings!

Compare all Savings Accounts

I want for xmas!



Gold diggers need platinum cards

Compare all Credit Cards

Last Chance for Christmas



Veuve Clicquot NV just \$58.99 per bottle sold by the dozen

Compare our prices today

Mobile Phones & Plans



Huge offers - big gifts with a purchase of a new mobile.

Compare Mobile Phones & Plans

Broadband Plans



Three carriers all offering 6 months discounts on Mobile Broadband

Compare all Broadband Plans

Readers' most viewed

brisbanetimes.com.au

Top 5 Digital Life articles

1. Game on: Aussies have their say on R18+ video games
2. A gadget for the car that's music to my ears
3. Rotten Apple iMacs spoil Christmas
4. Google confirms secret 'Google phone'
5. Privacy overhaul catches Facebook boss

WAtoday

Top 5 Digital Life articles

1. Rotten Apple iMacs spoil Christmas
2. Game on: Aussies have their say on R18+ video games
3. A gadget for the car that's music to my ears
4. Privacy overhaul catches Facebook boss
5. Nokia N97 review: iPhone killer or pussycat?

theage.com.au

Top 5 Digital Life articles

1. Rotten Apple iMacs spoil Christmas
2. Game on: Aussies have their say on R18+ video games
3. A gadget for the car that's music to my ears
4. Privacy overhaul catches Facebook boss
5. Google confirms secret 'Google phone'

smh.com.au

Top 5 Digital Life articles

1. Game on: Aussies have their say on R18+ video games
2. Rotten Apple iMacs spoil Christmas
3. A gadget for the car that's music to my ears
4. Google confirms secret 'Google phone'
5. Privacy overhaul catches Facebook boss

Videos

1. Ultimate Fighting comes to Sydney
2. Top of the class: HSC awards
3. Soccer's decade of two halves
4. Swearing rant from Irish MP
5. Boeing 787 maiden test flight

[SMH Home](#) | [National](#) | [World](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Business](#) | [Technology](#) | [Sport](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Life & Style](#) | [Travel](#) | [Weather](#)

[Sydney Morning Herald](#)
[Sitemap](#)
[About Us](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Privacy](#)
[Conditions](#)
[Member Agreement](#)
[Advertise with Us](#)

[Products & Services](#)
[Newsletters](#)
[RSS News Feeds](#)
[Mobile](#)
[Text](#)
[Subscribe](#)

[Classifieds](#)
[Accommodation](#)
[Cars](#)
[Dating](#)
[Jobs](#)
[Real Estate](#)

[Other Sites](#)
[The Age](#)
[Sydney Morning Herald](#)
[WA Today](#)
[Brisbane Times](#)
[Business Day](#)
[Money Manager](#)
[Essential Baby](#)
[Fairfax Digital Network](#)



Copyright © 2009. Fairfax Digital