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THIS is a USB Hub!!

A USB hub consists of sockets to expand the number of USB ports a user has.



My current 4-plug USB hub is so lightweight, it continually falls down the side of the computer tower that sits on the floor, forcing me to retrieve it from a veritable maze of cords ... therefore, I was thrilled to find this hefty Gold Ingot in PC Magazine's September list of "10 Most Unusual USB Hubs."



Although USB hubs are typically very boring, these ten are NOT. I suggest checking out the entire list when considering Christmas Gifts for your loved ones -- that includes you, right??

This creative company, **Thanko, Inc.** has a booth every year at the International Consumer Electronics Show and specializes in creating useful and clever USB devices which no doubt inspired them to create the hub. The Gold Ingot hub sells for the somewhat unusual price of **\$49.83**. Like many wonderful products at CES, **there is not a U.S. distributor for them, therefore, shipping costs are rather high.** In the case of the Gold Ingot, shipping is handled by EMS (Express Mail Service), through Japan Post. **\$45.00 to ship** the Gold Ingot is a deal-breaker for me, altho' someone in Denmark apparently ordered the ingot, received it in two days, and is VERY satisfied! -editor

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Payment by Text-Messaging!



Is this **Google** Service in your Digital Future?

Don't be surprised if the **United States Patent and Trademark Office approves Gpay, Google's text-messaging payment system.** After all, **Goggle** somehow manages to recognize and implement practically **ALL** things cool!

According to the patent application drawings, users could use **Gpay** to make payments to various retailers, doctors or even their landscapers. Yep! users could pay for goodies from vending machines as well as larger payments to retailers -- via text message, or SMS (short message service) technology.

Back when Google's stock was a mere \$140.00 *I wish I'd bought some...* [me and a lot of other people] because they just seem, well, on TOP. Since a text-messaging payment capability is already **present in the Phillipines**, it is possible that a Google employee from the Phillipines is behind this brainstorm. Per a Google spokesperson, "We file patent applications on a variety of ideas that our employees come up with."



Speaking of USB Devices....

Now, here's a use for that Gold Ingot USB port --

The **Stanton T.90 USB** is a professional quality turntable that connects directly to your computer's USB port so you can transfer your records directly into your hard drive and save tracks as WAV or MP3 files. How cool is that?? USB-compatible turntables like the Stanton T.90 (**\$435 list, \$399 street**) offer a much tidier solution to music conversion by combining a turntable, computer audio card, phono-to-line preamp, and bundled recording software, all in one product. Much of the T.90's exterior is made from high-grade plastic, which can be compared with turntable staples such as the Technics SL-1200 and feels much lighter than many professional turntables.

The T.90 comes bundled with two programs, Audacity and **Cakewalk Pyro 5**. Cakewalk's Pyro is both intuitive and streamlined specifically to users looking to archive LPs, CDs, cassettes, and DVDs. Audacity is a free, open-source audio recording and editing program available for both Mac and Windows. It has a powerful set of features but it's not designed for novices. Users looking for the shortest route to recording their vinyl will want to install Cakewalk's Pyro 5 software. Using Pyro 5 to record vinyl is a snap. You can record an entire side of an LP in one pass, then later go through and clean up the recording, separate tracks, and export them to WAV, MP3, or WMA files.

Because the Stanton T.90 doubles as both a recording and a playback interface for your computer's audio, you can instantly play back the results of your digitally recorded vinyl through the T.90's RCA outputs--but there's more. The T.90 will even allow you to simultaneously mix your computer's audio and your turntable's audio into the same output--bridging both the analog and digital worlds. Video & CNET Review [HERE](#).

Celery

Receive emails without a computer

Many individuals *without computers* yearn for the ability to send and receive photos and emails electronically. **Celery** to the rescue! This service makes good use of two very standard commodities -- a Fax/printer and a phone line.

Here is how it works: You sign Grandma up with CELERY and choose an email address for her, i.e. grandma@mycelery.com. After you send her an email, **Celery** calls to tell her she has a message being sent and it is automatically printed out on the fax machine. To reply, she handwrites a letter putting the your name in block print at the top, places the letter into her CELERY, pushes two buttons and the letter is sent to your Internet email address as an image document.

The cost? \$99 for the **Celery** fax/printer+monthly fee of \$14. Visit mycelery.com or call 1-866-692-3537.

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