



Mobile Electronics SEMA: Navigation Is Still Hot

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PR9.NET October 02, 2006 - LAS VEGAS - At the SEMA show this month, navigation proved one of the more popular categories with Lowrance, once again, winning the honor of "Best New Mobile Electronics Entertainment Product." Several suppliers joined Lowrance in showing new navigation models, including some newcomers to the category.

In addition to a Pioneer AVIC-Z1 and an Eclipse AVN 7000 (see TWICE Nov. 7, p. 34) new units were displayed by Concept and Crimestopper. A new company, Brandmotion, also made its official debut at SEMA and has adapted the Magellan RoadMate to "custom" fit a Ford F150.

Lowrance showed its first fully portable, battery-operated navigation system for the aftermarket called the iWay 350. The model has two built-in lithium ion batteries with a 15-hour capacity and a built-in charger. It also has an MP3 player and photo viewer. Users can load music and photos through an SD card slot. The unit also has a 3.5-inch screen and a built-in FM transmitter and embedded maps on a 4GB hard drive. The new iWay 350 is expected to ship this month at a suggested retail price of \$499.

Lowrance, a manufacturer of sportsmen sonar and GPS equipment, entered the aftermarket last year with the iWay 500. The company is now in 150 Best Buy stores, and expects to expand to more locations in the future. It is also in talks with Circuit City, according to automotive sales manager Jim Luetjen.

Concept showed two new in-dash navigation units at SEMA, entering the category for the first time. The maker of 12-volt video, speakers and amplifiers displayed two AM/FM/DVD/GPS units with 2GB of flash memory for embedded maps. Both are double-DIN models that offer voice prompted navigation and use NAVTEQ maps. The model DDM 65 has a 6.5-inch motorized touch screen. When the front piece folds down, it reveals an SD slot. The DDM 50 has a non-motorized 5-inch touch screen. Concept sells through approximately 700 retailers, he said.

Brandmotion, Ann Arbor, Mich., an exclusive license partner to Johnson Controls, made its official debut at SEMA with the mission of creating customized OEM products from high-tech brands. "Brandmotion helps consumer brands get more deeply integrated into the vehicle interior," said president Jeff Varick. One of Brandmotion's newer products is an OEM version of the Magellan RoadMate, adapted for the Ford 150 and, eventually, other vehicles. The unit has an OEM look and hides all wires. It will be sold through car dealers and distributors, said Varick.

Brandmotion is licensed to market modules for the Johnson Control RailPort.

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About SmartFinds Internet Marketing

SmartFinds Internet Marketing provides creative marketing strategies for business websites. Services include research, search engine optimization, short term advertising campaigns, long term organic marketing methods, enhanced marketing services and, campaign management and reporting. SmartFinds is located in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

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