



AM/FM/CD OR DVD HEAD UNIT W/BUILT-IN MONITOR
 Clarion VRX755VD AM/FM/DVD with touch screen direct iPod interface; \$1,600; Clarion, (800) GO-CLARION, www.clarion.com.

2005 Consumer Electronics Show Report

THE MOBILE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY ROLLS OUT INNOVATIVE NEW PRODUCTS THAT WILL BE MUST-HAVES WHEN UPGRADING YOUR MUSTANG'S ICE SYSTEM

text by Richard Truesdell / photography by Richard Truesdell and the manufacturers

If there was a surprise at this year's Consumer Electronics Show, at least as far as Mustang aficionados were concerned, it was the almost total lack of new '05 Mustangs in attendance. With the exception of the '05 Saleen that was on display in the Escort booth, the only '05 Mustang of note, that we saw, was the car in the Scosche Booth.

We talked with several ICE manufacturers and many stated they wanted to do a Mustang but there were no cars available. We suspect that next year, after our favorite pony has been out in the marketplace, and that the convertible version will have been released, that all of that will change.

On the product front, everywhere we looked some company was touting their iPod-friendly capability or iPod interface accessories—a trend predicted on these pages more than six months ago. Alpine started delivering their iPod adapter late in 2004, and it promises to be a huge

success. Of even greater interest to us was eStone's in-dash AM/FM/CD receiver that features a removable hard disc drive player that can rip tracks from its internal CD transport in addition to your PC—very cool. Look for an in-depth evaluation of this unit, a world's first exclusive, in next month's Boom Room.

On the radio front, the pitched battle remained between the two national satellite radio providers, Sirius and XM, who each promoted their respective services and tried to differentiate themselves. Sirius looks to be closing

the gap with rival XM, who was touting the addition of NPR veteran Bob Edwards to their lineup. I'd say that XM is targeting a slightly more mature audience than rival Sirius.

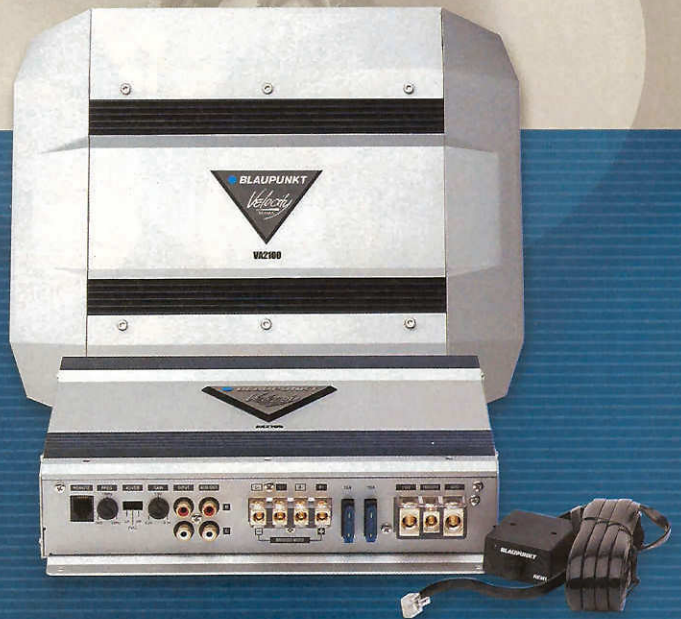
Interface devices continued to make news as the vehicle manufacturers try to squeeze the aftermarket from new vehicle dashboards. As we told you last month, some suppliers are fighting back, most notably JL Audio with their CleanSweep signal processor—a device that will equalize and level-match the output of almost any factory-installed head unit or premium amplifier, converting it to an input that is friendly to most aftermarket amplifiers.

On the speaker and subwoofer fronts, there was little noteworthy except for the trend of user/field replaceable parts for high performance subwoofers. Several manufacturers, Boston Acoustics among them, showed such components, which



ABOVE: 5/6/7-CHANNEL AMPLIFIER

Alpine MRA-D550 (60x5) 5-channel Mobile Theater Amplifier with built-in Dolby Digital, DTS and Dolby ProLogic II processing; \$950; Alpine, (800) ALPINE1, www.alpine1.com.



TOP RIGHT: 1/2/3/4-CHANNEL AMPLIFIER

Blaupunkt Velocity VA2100 (100 x 2) 2/1-channel amplifier with removable side rails and end caps; \$300; Blaupunkt, (800) 950-BLAU, www.blaupunkt.com.

RIGHT: SIGNAL PROCESSOR

Alphasonik PEX3B 3-way active crossover with remote bass level control; \$380; Alphasonik, (714) 988-0370, www.alphasonik.com.



BELOW: AM/FM/CD OR DVD HEAD UNIT W/O BUILT-IN MONITOR

Eclipse CD8455 AM/FM/CD with Memory Stick slot for Area Shot downloadable navigation; \$600; Eclipse, (800) 55-ECLIPSE, www.eclipse-web.com



is especially valuable if you're a member of the subwoofer of the month club (a result of trying to play your system so loud that it can be heard a block away).

On the navigation scene, we found an emerging trend to stand-alone units, with several models now available for less than \$1,000 from suppliers like Lowrance, another product that we've previewed. Eclipse showed several innovative head units that featured a Memory Stick slot that enables owners to download specific itineraries from their Web site, then allow the user to

plug in the flash memory card to provide voice-prompted turn-by-turn navigation. Slick stuff, and a forerunner to similar capabilities to be offered in mobile phones in the next 18 to 24 months.

Video continues to be an important category, and this year was no exception. Almost every manufacturer seems to offer factory-style head rests with LCD monitors installed, mostly for big SUVs. An associated trend is to build both the screen and the DVD player into the headrests. Several companies showed such products, and while none

are application-specific to Mustangs, don't be surprised if some appear even though the back seat of a Mustang is not the optimum viewing location for your favorite DVD.

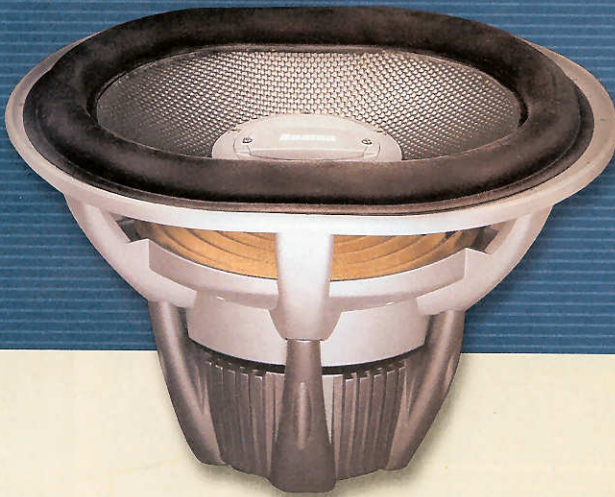
While there were many innovative products on display at CES, it's difficult to single out the 15 most important introductions, especially given the size of the show. We've done our best here, but in the months to come look for Boom Room to give you first looks at many of 2005's most important ICE products.



TOP: DROP-IN REPLACEMENT SPEAKER
 MTX TDX6802 5x7/6x8 DomeAxial 2-way speaker system; \$100; MTX Audio, (800) CALL-MTX, www.mtx.com.



UPPER MID LEFT: COMPONENT SPEAKER SEPARATES
 Kicker RS56.2 5.5-inch component separates speakers with Ford 6x8 adaptor plate; 500/set; Kicker, (405) 624-8510, www.kicker.com.



LOWER MID LEFT: RAW SUBWOOFER
 Boston Acoustics Revolution 12-inch Subwoofer with field-replaceable voice coil; \$1,000; Boston Acoustics, (978) 538-5000, www.bostonacoustics.com.

BOTTOM LEFT: ENCLOSED SUBWOOFER
 Scosche FDMUS05 2005 Mustang 12-inch subwoofer enclosure; \$250; Scosche, (800) 363-4400, www.scosche.com.

BELOW: NAVIGATION STANDALONE
 Socket Bluetooth Cordless GPS Nav Kit for Pocket PC PDAs; \$340; Socket, (510) 744-2700, www.socketcom.com.

