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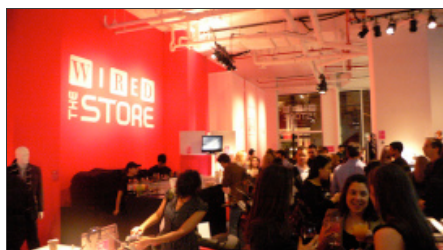
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Nov 20 2006

Party time: Wired opens gadget store

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(Credit: Caroline McCarthy/CNET Networks)

So here's the deal: Wired magazine has handpicked its choices for the hottest gadgetry of the 2006 holiday season, rented out a cool space in Manhattan's SoHo neighborhood (the same space where Sony held its PlayStation 3 press preview a few weeks ago), and filled it with those gadgets-- which ranged from a \$19.95 Zero Blaster toy gun to an Infiniti G35 sport sedan.

Plus, Wired's publicity crew threw a reception Thursday night so that members of the press could check out the selection and enjoy refreshments courtesy of Budweiser and Yellow Tail. Here are a few of the highlights!

I finally had the opportunity to fool around with Microsoft's Zune (in this photo I'm watching the video for Granddaddy's "Elevate Myself"). I think the graphical interface is cool-looking, but a tad too clunky for a portable music player; I prefer the simpler menus on my iPod. Aside from that, I don't think I played with the Zune enough to make any more judgments.



(Credit: Caroline McCarthy/CNET Networks)

Some of the hottest attractions were



PlayStation 3 and Nintendo Wii consoles set up for testing; since neither system had actually been released at the time of the Wired Store party, guests were eager to give them a spin. (I took the picture on the left before the party had actually started. Believe me, there were plenty of people waiting to try the games out.)

The gadgets that I really craved tended to be a little more utilitarian. One of them was the PowerSquid Calamari surge protector, which seems like a great possible solution to the tangled cables behind my desk. And how could anyone resist that name?

I also was digging the LaCie Rugged portable hard drive. The 160GB space is perfect for backing up my photos and music, and despite the "rugged" epithet, this orange hard drive is surprisingly cute. Not that cuteness should matter when you're talking about backing up the contents of your

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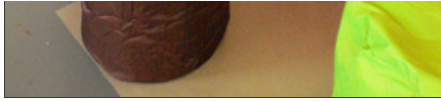
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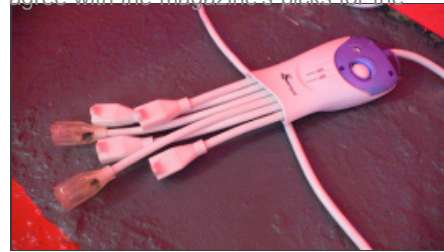
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computer...

If you want to check out the selection of the Wired Store, and see whether or not you agree with the magazine's picks for the



(Credit: Caroline McCarthy/CNET Networks)

sweetest gadgets around, you can visit the store's official [Web site](#).

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(Credit: Caroline McCarthy/CNET Networks)

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