

# “WOW” Examples



## 1) The Smart Washing Machine

Right now, at least one firm is selling big-ticket, Web-enabled appliances: **Merloni Elettrodomestici of Fabriano**, Europe's third-largest appliance maker. Last year the Italian firm sold more than 1 million networked appliances--most of them washing machines. Merloni's Margherita 2000 washing machine sells for \$450 and looks no different from standard washing machines except that it is more gentle on delicate clothes and can be controlled through the Internet.

Ted Selker, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab who thinks about smart appliances for a living, believes he has the only Margherita 2000 unit in the U.S.--and he uses it for research. The washing machine measures whether water and detergent have soaked into clothing, which would result in removing all odor, and small particles of dirt or sweat. The machine can then perfectly time its washing cycles, wasting less water and not damaging delicate clothing.

"I don't care so much that they connect it to the web," Selker says--the "smart" thing about the machine, to him, is that it 'knows' not to damage clothing.

## 2) The Thinking Oven Mitt

An oven mitt that can tell whether food is still cold, is hot but not cooked or has cooked all the way through--and will tell the wearer either to put the casserole back in the oven, to serve the meal already or to pull out the fire extinguisher.

## 3) A Fridge That Tells You What To Cook

A refrigerator named Minerva that can tell what's sitting on the shelf with 80% accuracy. If you have a few tomatoes, an onion and some pasta, Minerva might suggest that you make spaghetti for dinner along with a recipe for the sauce.

Source: Herper, Matthew, "Smart Kitchens A Long Way Off." *Forbes*, May 21, 2001.  
<http://www.forbes.com/2001/12/21/1221networking.html>

## 4) A microwave that "reads" your food

Do you often overcook or undercook things in the microwave? You may benefit from a microwave that cooks the food for you – just the way you like it, right? Well, now that is possible. A special microwave allows you to scan the item you want to cook and the microwave knows how long it should be cooked and any other special instructions. There is actually a bar code reader built into the microwave. It has a built in memory for 20,000 items. Isn't that neat? It's running for about \$150 these days, so it's a bit pricey. But for those of us non-cooks out there, it could come in handy.

Source: clarkhoward.com - <http://clarkhoward.com/shownotes/2004/02/12.html>