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@CES: Intel's Otellini on Why Processors Still Matter

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The afternoon keynote speaker at the Venetian at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas is Intel ([INTC](#)) Paul Otellini.

The company a few minutes ago [issued a release](#) on the keynote, which says he is going to talk about a new processor code-named Canmore for set-top boxes and media players, among other things. And the special guest is going to be...brace yourself...Steve Harwell, lead singer of the band Smash Mouth. I'll be updating as we go along.

Otellini comes out to a video for a re-written version of Video Killed the Radio Star; the new version has Internet killing the CD star, the music store star, and a whole assortment of other stars. Apparently it is all about connecting to the Internet. He says we are just getting started connection consumer electronics to the Internet. Now you have to go to the Internet - the Internet reacts to our requests, rather than anticipating them. He says now the Internet will come to us. (Yipes! Push technology!) But he says this is something much more, a new level of capability and usefulness to the Internet.

He is doing a demo showing how you could have a mobile device take a picture of street sign in Beijing, and have it automatically translated into English. Using GPS to identify where you are. Another example would be translation of a restaurant side, and also get full information download from the Net about the food, maybe with reviews. Then you can focus on a menu item, and see a picture of it.

So, now they are doing another demo for a product called [BigStage](#) to build a digital version of Steve from SmashMouth.

Next demo: use the device for real-time speech to speech translation. Wow, how Star Trek of them. The universal communicator. The device is both English to Chinese, then Chinese to English (at least in the demo.)

Another demo: something called EveryScape with full panoramic displays of Beijing, with turn by turn directions. They think it would be useful for business, or for vacations. Another way to use the device: get some information on the fly from a virtual terra cotta doll giving you info on what you are seeing. (Or where the bathrooms are.) Very nice, but how close to reality is any of this stuff?

Otellini is listing the obstacles to any of this actually happening. Silicon. Wireless Infrastructure. Context. Natural User Interfaces.

Canmore, he says, is the first chip for consumer electronics device with full Internet connectivity - the first chips are out of the fab, and running in a development system that he is demonstrating. He also noted a mobile Internet processor called Menlo. He is demonstrating a full Vista machine using Menlo in a small form factor. He is demonstrating the use of Adobe's ([ADBE](#)) air software platform on a Menlo-powered device.

Otellini thinks we will eventually have a blanket of wireless connectivity - he says WiMax will have advantage for next 5 to 10 years. Coverage of cellular networks, with speed of broadband. Trials in 70 countries.

Then the next issue is search, he says, which does not consider location, device or context. Move from searching for information, where information comes to you proactively. That requires security and privacy to enable that kind of service. Also needs to have much improved user interfaces. He suggests thinks of the Nintendo Wii - popular due to controller, not the graphics. Allows the player to use natural motions.

Another big demo he is doing involves social networking. He brought out the founder of a company called [eJamming](#). The system is both social networking portal for musicians but also a downloadable application, that allows making music real time - to record in real-time with other musicians around the world with near-zero latency. He has a volunteer to demonstrate...it is the guy from SmashMouth. They are going to demo with members of SmashMouth online, and him here. They are playing the song *Walking on the Sun*. It sounded pretty good, actually. You can even do performances and have other people listen in on PCs, mobile devices, etc.

They also demonstrated a cool tool for creating virtual images of people called [BigStage](#). It is actually kind of cool.

They also worked with a company called Virtual Heroes, and created avatars of the band members linked to the actual band members, in a virtual garage. Another technology from a company called Organic Motion is capturing Steve's movement and translating him into virtual Steve. The whole combination allowed them to do a virtual jam session. Kind of cool.