

# The 2011 **MSC** Gift Guide

**SELECTING GIFTS FOR TECHNICAL TYPES,** especially engineers, can be a challenge. Throw out all the standard measures of propriety. The real question has to be, “How cool is *THIS*?!” To make your shopping easier this year, we offer this passel of very cool items for your consideration.



### Bring a Landmark into Your Life

New York's steel suspension bridge spanning the East River linking Manhattan with Brooklyn—the Brooklyn Bridge—was *the* mammoth civil engineering project of the late 1800s and continues to inspire engineers as well as serve the people of New York and America. Display the celebrated structure in your office or home library with an artistic reminder of “the great bridge” from Restoration Hardware.

Brooklyn Bridge bookends provide a decorative yet sturdy anchorage for your favorite reference works. These weighty, cast iron bookends are 4½ in. by 3¾ in. by 5½ in. A set of two is just \$65. Available in stores and online at [www.restorationhardware.com](http://www.restorationhardware.com).

### Finally Solving the Cube, or Whatever

Have you always been frustrated by Rubik's Cube? Now there's a color-outside-the-lines variation on that theme that is a total blast—Buckycubes. The set of 125 small but powerful rare earth magnets has five on a side when you form them into a 1-in. cube. But who wants to stop there? You can build a little wide-flange section, a flock of mini-skyscrapers, or almost anything that comes to mind. They're easier to control than the original Buckyballs, which come in a set of 216 and form a six by six by six cube. (And because they're spherical, they roll a lot further when you drop them.) Want to see for yourself how cool Buckycubes are? Watch the short video at [www.getbuckyballs.com](http://www.getbuckyballs.com). And just in case one or two get away, the company does offer sets of spares.

### You Say Trousers, I Say Pants

A decade ago, when only geeks knew what that word meant, Scott Jordan came up with the wacky idea of technology enabled clothing. Fast forward to today and who would have guessed he tapped the mother lode? Now instead of touting passageways between pockets for wires, Scott Flex Cargo Pants feature 11—count 'em, 11—pockets to help keep all your miniature electronic devices (and other mundane stuff) discreetly organized, safe and accessible. The website description points out that these trousers are great for travel but polished enough for the office and have the look of traditional khakis “but with a secret inside.” That's the 11 pockets—take a look at the x-ray view to track them all down. Also available in a lightweight edition and as shorts. And while the trousers won't handle an iPad, several of the company's jackets and vests do.



For more information or to order, visit [www.scottevest.com](http://www.scottevest.com).





### Claim a Piece of "the Cloud"

It's really surprising how easy and economical it is to own a piece of "the cloud," as in, cloud computing. Invest a few bucks and a few minutes and you have basically unlimited access from any web-connected technology to whatever you wish to load. It's always on, and always connected; no need to leave your PC running or carry a portable drive or memory stick. Here's all you do: Buy a Pogoplug interface device (just \$99) at [www.pogoplug.com](http://www.pogoplug.com); plug in your own hard drive (which means the amount of storage is entirely up to you); login and share whatever you would like, from anywhere and with anyone.

Hard to believe it's that powerful for that low a price? Check out this 12-second video clip of the Pedal Pub, from a summer day in Minneapolis, <http://bit.ly/uX0ulx>. Basically, Pogoplug lets you use the web like it's supposed to work.

And newly available: the Pogoplug Mobile, which allows you to stream your entire photo, music and video libraries over WiFi or your cellular connection to your mobile device. Get into cloud computing and maintain control at the same time. Such a deal!



### EEK! Is That Real?!

Don't get out the bug spray just yet! What appears to be a giant arachnid creeping around is actually a very friendly travel companion for your portable devices. A handy gift for someone who tends to misplace their handheld gadgets (or to avenge that prankster in your family—there's always one), the Spiderpodium will grasp and dock your Smartphone, camera, MP3 player, handheld gaming system and most other moveable technology victims.

Made of Advanced Tech "SoftTouch" Rubber, the flexible eight-legged accessory lets you position your portable device at any angle, in any position, in any location. Just like the real creepy crawler, it can hang securely from anywhere—and the hole in the stand body allows most chargers to fit through. The Spiderpodium, in white or black, is just \$19.99 at [www.breffo.com](http://www.breffo.com).



### But Wait—There's More!

The fact is, we uncovered more neat gift ideas than we could fit into this month's issue. Explore these additional items online at [www.modernsteel.com/giftguide2011](http://www.modernsteel.com/giftguide2011).

### Can't Talk Without a Piece of Paper?

Sketch It! is a family game that was obviously designed with engineers in mind.



### From the Good Old Days...

Two gift ideas from the Blueprint Collection will surely make engineers smile and add a little levity to their desktops.



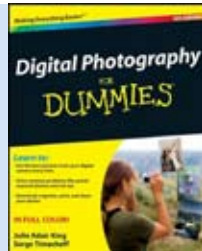
### Can We Talk, in Private?

The iTwin is an economical, amazing hardware solution to the challenge of setting up a VPN (yes, a virtual private network).



### Take Control of Your Digital Camera

Still not sure about how to take advantage of the bells and whistles on your digital camera? Check out *Digital Photography For Dummies*.



### Round Technology and USB

A very affordable family of turntables that plug into your computer and make it easy to enjoy listening to records, and to transfer vinyl content to digital media.



### Get a Grip on the Go

The iTab\_Grip provides a true handle on your iPad while walking around and carrying out business activities from virtually anywhere.



### Celebrate Your Unique Gang

Show your staff how much you appreciate them with a custom-designed, crossword-style roster on t-shirts or mugs.

