

I've Been Bit!

25 years ago last month the Sony Walkman was first introduced to the public. I can remember listening to the first one about 1983 when they came out with the slim compact version which was not much larger than the cassette tape it was designed to play. I marveled at how small the thing was and how great it sounded. Flash forward 25 years and now MP3 players are all the craze.

I've finally been bitten by the technology bug. I'm not big on cutting edge technology. I don't have a Tivo DVR, a big-screen HD television, or even a cell phone with musical tones or camera. But the other day I ordered an MP3 player/USB data drive. I justified the \$60 price tag by convincing myself it was mainly for data storage and transfer, but dang it, its just so darn cool that you can play music through it.

What is an MP3 player? Well mine is this really sleek looking gizmo about the size of a chewing gum pack. It has 128MB of RAM which means it can hold up to 40 MP3 songs (2.5 hours of music). It uses a single AAA battery to play about 10-15 hours. You simply plug in a set of compact headphones and hit play. Out comes the most beautiful sound that you would almost swear you were listening to an expensive CD player. And, get this, it can even display the lyrics on its tiny backlit LCD screen.

Not impressed yet? Plug this little jewel into the USB port on your PC and you can copy data files or MP3 songs directly to it just by dragging them to the drive. This makes for a great way to back up your important data. Want more? It's also a digital voice recorder than can record up to 36 hours of voice. This same player can be purchased with 512MB of RAM and an FM receiver built-in in the same exact package. I marvel at how they can pack all that technology into such a small unit and at how beautiful it sounds. And then I sit and wonder at what's to come.