

PRODUCT WATCH

SUN-TECH's new **PRO-ONE MINI** (www.suntechgroup.com) control system integrates all AV devices, including AV and VGA input/output channel selection, projector power and screen control, master sound/volume control, and macro function keys, into a single panel. Now, without the help of an IT technician, educators can

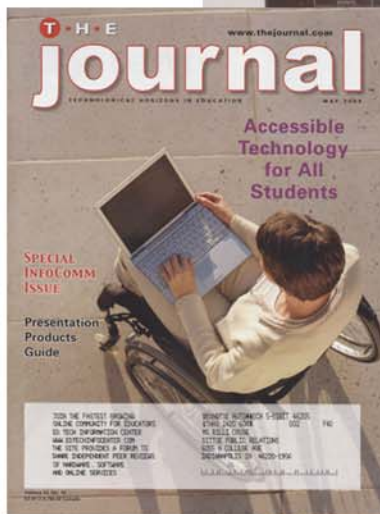


use the **PRO-ONE MINI** to incorporate almost any type of media on one user-friendly control panel, making it easy to deliver presentations anywhere on campus.

They also developed **LUCERA** rear-projection screens from Rearscreen Publishing (www.rearscreenlucera.com), which are polyester-based film stuck on an ultra-transparent optical

Lucite acrylic board, are available in 32", 40", 60" or 78" designs. Ideal for presentations or displays, the screens are NTSC/HDTV-ready and easy to install — simply set it up on two acrylic stands and you are ready to go. At only a 1/2" thick, the screens hardly shift the color of the projected image, even if the viewing angle changes, and the field uniformity allows for a wide-viewing angle and high-contrast images.

GTCO CalComp (www.gtcocalcomp.com) has introduced new versions of its InterWrite SchoolPad and MeetingPad with smaller footprints, a 40-hour battery life and a rechargeable pen. The **SchoolPad 400** and **MeetingPad 400** also incorporate Bluetooth Class I technology to give users control over their computers from up to 300'. The wireless pads can either be used in conjunction with the InterWrite SchoolBoard and MeetingBoard, or they can be used with a projected image on any surface to create an interactive whiteboard. In addition, up to seven pads can be connected to the same computer for greater audience and class participation.



Product Focus: ESL and Foreign Language Software

Designed like a game, the **EazySpeak** language software (available in English and Spanish) from Kutoka (www.kutoka.com) is a practical program for students 12 and up who want to learn a second language. Students find themselves in Doki City, where they interact with the humorous Doki characters who present scenarios that mimic the same communications hurdles they may find if they were really visiting a foreign country. Both versions have two levels that help build further comprehension of basic phrases, better conversational skills and a broader vocabulary.

The **Professor Toto Educational Kit** (www.professortoto.com) helps children learn Spanish and French based on the Thibaut Technique — an attention-grabbing learning technique that utilizes lively games, happy vocabulary songs and colorful visuals. Each kit contains DVDs, CDs and books, as well as parent reference guides that allow students to practice their conversational skills at home.

S**UBE: Language Learning Thru Art, Music and Games** (www.sube.com) was developed as part of a program to help Latino children maintain their Spanish language skills. Using the building block and scaffolding approach, SUBE users learn Spanish by building academic and cognitive skills

through games, music, art and informal conversation, with support and positive re-enforcement that enhances confidence. These blocks of support are eventually removed once students become more comfortable with the language.

Guaranteeing perfect recall when learning Spanish, French, Italian or German, the **Before You Know It Educator Edition** (www.transparent.com) relies on flash-card lists with more than a 1,000 words, 200 phrases and native speaker recorded sound. The software also allows educators to expand and customize their own lists of words specific to their teaching needs, review for tests, or further build their students' vocabulary.

E**nglish Discoveries** (www.englishdiscoveries.com) is a multilevel ESL program that features color graphics, full-motion video, animation, digitized sound and music, and an introductory tour in the student's native language. The software system teaches ESL through intensive practice in reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and language, as well as offering a record-keeping component to track student performance. The pronunciation models for speaking and listening also help teachers when trying to communicate what a particular word should sound like.

—A. Roman