

101-holiday-gift-guide-2020-productivitycast

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SPEAKERS

Art Gelwicks, Augusto Pinaud, Raymond Sidney-Smith, Francis Wade

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-  00:00
Are you ready to manage your work
-  00:02
and personal world better
-  00:02
to live a fulfilling and productive life, then you've come to the right place,
-  00:07
productivity cast,
-  00:08
the weekly show about all things productivity, here, your host Ray Sidney-Smith, and



00:13

a gousto pinout.



00:14

With Francis Wade and art gal, Wix.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 00:17

Welcome back everybody to ProductivityCast, the weekly show about all things personal productivity, I'm Ray Sidney-Smith



A Augusto Pinaud 00:22

on a mongoose tropeano.



F Francis Wade 00:24

I'm Francis Wade.



A Art Gelwicks 00:25

And I'm Mark goex.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 00:26

Welcome, gentlemen, and welcome to our listeners to this episode, I'm really excited because we are coming near the end of the year. And that means holiday gifts, we get a chance to talk to you about really holiday gifts that you might want to ask your loved ones, your caring individuals in your home to purchase for you. Or these might be gifts that might be useful to another personal productivity enthusiast in your life. And so what we're going to do today is we're going to cover some gifts that we think particularly enthusiasts would enjoy knowing about and receiving as a gift. And so with that, let's do a round robin episode, where each of us talks about one gift at a time. And some of us probably know about the gifts, some of us probably have questions about the gifts you chose. And and we'll just kind of go from there. So with that, art, I'm going to pick on you first, what is your first holiday gift choice? Well,

A

Art Gelwicks 01:27

my first one is, it's kind of mundane, but it's really useful if you're in an environment where you're working with multiple computers. And those of us we're working from home now often find ourselves in that case, I personally have multiple devices that I need to interact with. So what I'm highlighting is what's called a four port, USB KVM, which is keyboard video mouse switch. And what it is, it's a little box that has four cables coming off of it each with an HDMI port, and a USB cable that plugs into your computers. And off of that box, there is also a regular HDMI cable that goes to your external monitor. And there's a USB port that you can or USB ports that you plug your external keyboard and your external mouse in. And what it all comes down to is a little box that sits on your desk with four buttons on it. And just by hitting one of those buttons, you switch to that computer. And the external monitor switches to that device, the keyboard switches that device and the mouse switches to that device. I've been through a lot of these over the years with varying degrees of success. Sometimes the monitors will work well. But the keyboards and the mice won't switch over all kinds of crazy things. This one I'm highlighting for in the show notes is the only one I found so far that has worked consistently from day one. It's smart enough to switch to a device when you turn that device on without actually having to hit the button. And the fact that has a nice long remote switch box. So you can take all the cables and everything and tuck it into your cable management system and have this little switch box sitting on your desk and just push a button and switch computers. It's really, really useful when you think about just trying to be productive on multiple devices.

F

Francis Wade 03:21

What's cable management system, I need one of those.

A

Art Gelwicks 03:25

For me, it's the real dark area underneath my desk that happens to be behind the cabinets. that's usually where the large dust bunnies live, and come out and visit me every so often. So other people are a bit more organized about it. Actually, it's kind of funny, you mentioned that because if you look on sites like Reddit, and you do a search for cable management, there are entire subreddits just about pictures of beautifully organized cables, like in server areas and behind desks. And it makes me very jealous. But I know my cables will never get that way. So

A

Augusto Pinaud 03:58

but you know that he's done. He's like, like when you see the planners, you see this color

and these people who have these artistic abilities, especially on the paper planners, and I look at them and I say, Wow, the mind never will look like that doesn't matter. If you tell me you're never going to do anything other than organize that planner. It's never going to

A

Art Gelwicks 04:19

Yeah, it's it's the Sistine Chapel. I mean, it's a beautiful thing, you admire it, but you're not laying on your back to paint it anytime soon.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 04:25

And so for those of you who are unaware, KVM stands for keyboard video mouse. And I'm curious from your experience art, what are some of the reasons why you would recommend a KVM switch to a productivity enthusiast or someone who is buying this for productivity enthusiast? And really in the in the sense of I'm trying to get to the question, which is more like around different situations where this might work. I mean, like obviously the work from home situation. I'm not sure how many people are going to have multiple computers. But when you do, what are the what are kind of the peripherals, so to speak, that really helped to make this better? Like, do you have a specific keyboard, a specific mouse a specific monitor that you feel like works really well in this environment with that KVM switch?

A

Art Gelwicks 05:17

Actually, it's, I'm glad you brought that up, because for me, it's more, it's much more than the key, the keyboard video and mouse component, the mouse is a big thing, because you only have to have one mouse on your desk, the keyboard, I have an external backlit keyboard that I've been using for years. And it's not so much that I like it, it's the fact that again, I only have to have one on my desk. So limited space necessitates switching things around. But because this works with the USB hub that I have, I'm able to have my webcam, jump from device to device, I'm able to have my headset, jump from device to device, even my boom mic, I can switch from device to device, just by pushing one button on the switch. And everything flips over. The only only hiccup I've had with it is sometimes it won't necessarily recognize the first when I hit the button to switch devices. And to fix it, all I have to do is switch to a different device and switch back and then everything wakes up. It's usually the computer that doesn't recognize the USB change more than it is anything else. But I could absolutely see if you had your personal computer, a work computer and a Chromebook, for example. And you wanted to use one nice monitor, keyboard and mouse, this is a perfect way to do that. Because you could stack those

devices up on a rack next to you. You don't even have to have them open. And it's like you have three separate desktop units, even though they're still truly laptops.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 06:46

Yeah, I really like KVM switches, and I have been a fan of them for years. So this is a great choice. For someone who really wants to level up their productivity like I do, I really am a big fan of having multiple devices so that I'm able to open up a set of like a project on one screen and then move over to another one and be working on that and the to not impeding on each other. And I don't know why. But my brain just works really well when it's compartmentalised on its own device, and its own kind of situation just sitting there waiting for me. So I really like that. And sometimes I also like having my task manager, my calendar, and my notes all on a separate device. So I can see those things out of the corner of my eye while I'm working on a main screen. But it's also helpful to kind of have it if you have it on a, you know, a primary device. And it's just kind of sitting there you can toggle back and forth between that device which has those things and your primary computer. So

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Art Gelwicks 07:44

it's interesting, you mentioned that because that's something I just started doing recently, like literally within the past two to three weeks. I've started having my Chromebook sitting next to me with what I've been using notion up on the screen. And that's its primary job is to act as the device that drives notion while I'm working on all these other systems. Because the one downside of the KVM is that you have to switch between machines if you want to jump around. But by dedicating something like the Chromebook over to your personal productivity manager, you use it like you would a regular notebook notebook being paper, but your other devices can stick to the main jobs that they need to do. So that's that's a different shift for me. And I'm actually finding it's working extremely well. I like that layout.

A

Augusto Pinaud 08:35

Now I've been a fan of multiple devices over multiple screens for many years. And in my case, because of what I used to move, it was multiple devices. And I like the tablet form. So I have devices that use I have a Logitech Bluetooth that can connect up to three Bluetooth devices. And that's all I use little of the mouse. So that solved my issue. But having a full device even if it's a Chromebook, you don't need anything powerful to do that and having the other one for more projects. At least for me, it works much better

than having everything on one device even in a large screen I have tried the large monitors in in the past and having multiple devices on a good screen. It's more powerful and effective for me than having you know multiple things. So I I get that the love of the of the TV KVM switch and and understand perfectly. Why that will work really, really well for many people.

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Art Gelwicks 09:43

There's one trick about if you have one large external screen and again, we're talking holiday shopping and if you want to go high end and think about it. If you get a 4k external screen, the resolution is high enough that you can basically get the equivalent of 210 ATP monitors on one display, because the resolution is high enough, and things may be slow, small, and you have to tweak it a little bit. But you can get basically two windows that are the equivalent of full size side by side on that high res screen. You're not talking in an inexpensive device, that's, that's a significant investment. But you can start to approach it that way I, I keep thinking about that. But honestly, with the flexibility I have with the KVM, and the fact that it was under \$40. To me, it's the smarter investment. Yeah,



Raymond Sidney-Smith 10:38

so I'm looking at it right now on online, and it's roughly 45 USD. So anybody who's looking, that's kind of the price. And we'll put links to all of these things in the show notes. And so with that, let's move on to a gousto booster, what's your first holiday gift choice,

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Augusto Pinaud 10:54

my first holiday gift choice is a site mount. It's not cheap. I mean, it's 20 something bucks. But basically, you put a little piece of metal on the back of your laptop, or the iPad or any device really. And it has a magnetic thing that then glue the phone. On the side of the thing. The reason I like that one over the ones who is staying there is I can remove it, there is nothing on the device if I don't want to use it. So if I put it in my bag or something, I don't have the risk of that breaking any of the devices, or I can use it or I can have multiple so I can put the phone on the side or I can put the phone on the top. It has been I've been seeing it he thinks to put a phone on the side for a really long time. And finally this year decide to make the investment on this one his own is the first one I like okay, I really like this one. And it's really a game changer to be able to put the phone on the side and really use it as, as another device. Even I got one also for my wife. And she's not a, you know, a technological person by any extent. But she loved the fact that now she can use it next to her work laptop and have the work phone next to it is a second screen. It's really, it's

something really, really simple. But it really changed. How much do you interact with the phone. So instead of the phone being a distraction that you pull out of the phone, out of the pocket, getting the pocket out of the pocket, get in the pocket or in the table, and you need to move to grab it, it's all abused at the same level of the screen that you're watching all day, it's been a really game changer for me.

A

Art Gelwicks 12:43

Is there any aspect of having your phone physically connected like that, that you don't care for? Because I find that? Well, let me ask it this way, my phone unlocks using a fingerprint scanner under the screen. I'm assuming that mounting it on the side of the monitor like that you're still able to get to any unlocks that you have whether it's fingerprint or or whatever. Have you had any issues with that

A

Augusto Pinaud 13:10

my phone does face it. And I don't have any experience with the fingerprinting. That said I have enough space on the back plate that is probably inch and a half by two inch or less. That is on the back of the phone. So I have I don't think you will have any issues with that



Raymond Sidney-Smith 13:31

at all. So this requires you putting an adhesive or a at least a plate inside of phone cover on the back of the device. Correct. And do you know what what size up to what size device can be held. It looks like from this the images it can hold a you know pretty decent sized phone. But it also says the tablet holder. So I'm wondering because it's showing here in an iPad but that that looks like you need to

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Augusto Pinaud 14:02

do could hold for the I hold the iPad Mini I got two because of the iPad Mini and I could hold with two of them my iPad Mini on the side fantastically well. The only issue with the iPad Mini is my iPad has data. So I tried to put the iPad Mini on the same side of the plugin. So if I want to plug in and put the iPad Mini and all that there is a space limitation but other than that, it's it will hold the iPad Mini without any issues. It looks like you can also have multiple devices kind of connected to the same say laptop if the laptop has the physical structure to hold up those devices. So



Raymond Sidney-Smith 14:45

I'm presuming that the say the new MacBook Air could not hold these devices up with it's a very thin clamshell if you have a solid you know MacBook Pro or you know a large device like that, you could probably hold up a few devices. And that would be really interesting. Cool.

A

Augusto Pinaud 15:07

Yeah, on the iPad on the iPad, if I took my wife, one, I can hold the iPad Mini, on a phone on the top on without any issues.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 15:18

And I could even see holding, like having multiple iPads connected to one another so that you would have kind of a multiple monitor situation, but they would be all iPads, which would be really cool.



15:32

Yes.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 15:33

All right, wonderful. Next up, Francis, what is your first holiday gift choice,

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Francis Wade 15:41

when we're when you're really young, and your parents Tokyo to open a bank account and get a library card, you know, do some of these basic things that were sort of a rite of passage? Well, I recently discovered, a friend of mine told me that my library card from which I have not used since 2005, in Florida, could be used to access their they bro word library systems online overdrive, ebook and audio book library, which blew me away. And I didn't believe it at first, because it sounded too good to be true. And, you know, and of course, I remember sitting in the library, you know, 1520 years ago when I, when I lived there, and going through books and magazines and internet was kind of like this cool idea, but you really couldn't get too much from it. Well, to my surprise, my lab record was still active. And the library maintains an awesome overdrive library maintains an awesome catalog of books. And so much so that it's the first preset check, before I go and buy a

book, I borrow it instead, and borrow it and borrow it to three different for four different times. And in these pandemic times, it's one of these ways that you can save, you can pull out a whole entourage, some of your cash and actually have a very decent selection. Just simply by, you know, being a good library library member, you know, following the rules, and they give you a limited time to borrow books, and they take them back. So you're not to take the back, we used to when you're much younger. But I have to think that this is this is a this is a sign of things to come, that this kind of access to quality content is going to be there's going to be new ways to get it for free. But that's my recommendation. It's not high tech, correct? Well, I guess it is very technical. Because I'm overseas, I'm here, I'm here, I'm borrowing from my own library card back in Florida. But so it does require some technology. But it's not huge technology, it's more of an awesome convenience.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 18:00

So it's my recommendation. And to put the holiday gift spin on this, since getting a library card is probably not holiday gift. Do know that you can actually like myself, actually by membership into libraries that you are not residing in their jurisdiction. So for example, you could say if you want access to the New York Public Library, you can actually go onto the nypl website and purchase membership, it's usually an annual fee, and then you can get access to their entire Digital Library, you can get access to their physical library catalog. But of course, if you are living in a distance that's not convenient for accessing their physical books, you can go ahead and still access their digital media library. And that can include things like their movie catalog, and their Digital Research catalog and systems. So they can be quite robust and give you access to those things. And then you're paying one, you know, nominal fee per year, as opposed to paying for Netflix plus, on Amazon, audible plus, plus plus. So the library as a gift can actually be a very nice combination of, of media and literature and other kinds of pieces all wrapped up into one nice bundle. So something to consider for friends and family, especially like Chicago's Public Library database. You know, New York's is is phenomenal. For those of you who don't know, many of the libraries, when you have access to a library card, you also get access to their LinkedIn learning or Lynda lynda.com. Now LinkedIn learning platform, which has, you know, tons and tons of courses online, and so you get access to quite a robust amount of data for a very low cost. So I would rather you know purchase a library card membership Over paying, you know, 1520 \$30 USD per month for LinkedIn learning. So, you know the dollars and cents make out way in the favor of the library over the, you know, direct

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Art Gelwicks 20:14

native platforms, we want to just reinforce the value of something like this. I mean, when

we think about the time period we're in right now, one of the most precious gifts you can give yourself or someone else is the ability to do continuous learning, and library memberships, or, you know, online education language, it doesn't matter. The fact that instead of spending time binging on Netflix, you're actually enriching and expanding your mind is, as I said, the best gift you can give yourself or anybody else in my book.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 20:48

So agree, I'm run a book club in my local library, in partnership with my local library. And when the pandemic started, we went virtual. And so we really haven't missed, you know, a beat in terms of being able to continue to meet and read and access the Digital Media Library when the library wasn't able to provide physical books. And now they're doing curbside delivery. And I'm sorry, curbside pickup. And with curbside pickup, we're able to now access the library's physical book catalog, in addition to their digital catalog, and so yeah, right on point with what you're talking about art, this really continues to keep enrichment alive, you can join virtual book clubs, and they're, you know, they're there with your local community. And, and that can be really quite nice and enriching, considering, you know, the whole being stuck at home thing. So that brings us to my first holiday gift choice. And that is, of course, a Google product. No, I chose the Google nest home hub max. And and I chose it because it's on my holiday wish list. But I really do think that someone who is looking to be more productive can get so much out of the Google nest hub max. And so the Google nest hub Max is in essence, a touchscreen display with a camera, a microphone, as well as set of speakers and a woofer built into it. And so it's a 10 inch display. It's touchscreen, I think, as I said, but it's a touchscreen display. And it gives you the ability to be able to make and receive video calls. And audio calls from the device, obviously connects to the entire Google nest and Google Assistant ecosystem, so that you're able to ask questions and all those kinds of things. But for me, especially this time, it's just so nice to be able to have a device where you can make a phone call, and have a video call with friends and family from this device, and it becomes its own stationary piece. You could have the say in the kitchen, and just, you know, call mom, call your brother or sister friend, you know, you know, spouse, partner, whomever, and access that person face to face, and have a quick conversation or just, you know, make dinner and have a conversation while you're making dinner, these things can be very highly productive in being able to just connect with people without that friction before where people felt, oh, well, you know, I've got to find my laptop and pull it out. And, you know, blah, blah, blah. Now, it's just built into the device. And you can you can queue it up to have different names associated with like big names, like call mom called dad, that kind of thing. And you can have a quick list of people. And, you know, it's just, it's just a really nice device. And, and it's and it's good for public areas. So you could have the say, in the

living room or in the kitchen. Or say, where I'm thinking about it is on my desk, where I currently have a nest hub, and home hub, and the Google nest home hub. And it's just great, except it lacks that camera. So when I do get a video call, and I want to be able to answer it, I frequently won't answer on that device, because it's not going to show it's not going to be able to show me to that person when they call. And so then I ended up answering on a phone or a tablet or something else like that. And it's just, you know, it would be nice to have that really just fixed there. So that, like with everything else, you know, showing me during the day, what I really like about it is it's showing me my photo library. So I have it showing pictures of friends and family and other kinds of vacation photos and that kind of thing. And it's just so nice to be able to have that, you know, just glance over and I've been I've been rotating vacation photos since you know, during the pandemic haven't quite been able to go on vacations. And so it's just so nice to be like Oh, I remember that Caribbean cruise or I remember that, you know, vacation to to, you know, Germany. or whatever, it's just nice to see those photos with you and your loved ones, and, and then be able to have this additional functionality of being able to use the camera.

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Francis Wade 25:08

This is more than a tablet on a stand.

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Art Gelwicks 25:10

Yeah, it's def it's a dedicated device. So the interface is much more focused around, you know, being a fixed device that, you know, interacts with your IoT devices interacts with Google services. So yeah, it's I've looked at using, like, the Amazon Fire tablets give you the ability to put them on a stand, and they have a tablet mode. And it's okay. But I still, I agree with you, Ray, I think the Google Home hub, net, nest Max, whatever branding tragedy they have now is that is an excellent option. I use it very similar to what you just described, I have it sitting on my desk, not only does it run through pictures, but it like I said, I control my IoT stuff, my calendar pops up there as the reminders I can, you know, voice control it. What I really like about it, though, is right now, if you're not sure that you want to get the max, you don't want to put out the money for that. The Google nest hub, which is the little brother to it, is under \$50. Across the board, what I'm seeing, so if you want to try and get started into something like this, and you're not sold into the Amazon ecosystem, this would be the way to get started, I have it set up so that again, I have pictures the same way you do. And one of the nice features of this is if you go into Google Photos, and you add photos into a photo album, you can tell that album to go automatically to this device or to somebody else's device. So just by adding those photos in your, basically your picture frame on your desk is now currently updated. So of the two, I have the Amazon little brother in one room, and I have the Google on my desk. And I find

that flat out. I think the Google one is a better implementation and just a flat out better way of doing things.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 27:07

Yeah, we also have the Lenovo smart display. One of them one of the versions, it really works nicely as being a big display so that you can see it from you know, from far across the room, it actually happens to be fairly far away from the bedside. And so you can see it right across the room. It's a nice display, you can, you know, set an alarm, you know, if you want to take a nap and say oh, setting the timer for X amount of time, it can do that. And it can show you the weather in the morning. So you can see the weather and it shows a nice display of the weather. It also provides the ability to watch video. So the nest hub max as well as the home hub. And the smart displays all of the various smart displays, even Amazon echoes, versions of them. And they're really useful for being able to just access these kinds of things, you can watch video, you can obviously connect your devices throughout the house. Just a really, really cool experience to be able to just have that dedicated space. You can of course ask it all the Google Assistant questions, add tasks and reminders and that kind of thing. But I really like its ability to just give me that connectivity to other people. Let's do our second round art Europe, what's your second holiday gift choice.

A

Art Gelwicks 28:20

It's a pretty standard one, but it's one that I found that I've really locked into as of late and it's a sling shoulder backpack, and the link will be included in the show notes. It's your it's your basic everyday carry bag, but it's a canvas bag flip front. And what I found is that again, working from home, I don't need the normal office backpack that I've always carried. I don't need a lot of that extra gear. But when I have to go somewhere I have to usually go right then I don't have a lot of prep time in advance. So I have found that this little bag now has become my de facto grab and go bag. It's sized just large enough to I could fit an iPad or in my case my Chromebook in there, I slip it right in and everything else stays organized into cables and things like that. And I can just grab it and take off. I have found that if you if you have someone who is that kind of person who sometimes needs to take off and run different places, this is a good gift for them. I mean, I I honestly have to say, I really like this little guy. The other thing about the bag that you'll see is the bag that I've highlighted uses what are called Molly straps, Mo Li E, which is a tactical military style strap which is actually sewn right onto various surfaces. And you can expand the bag by adding other Molly pouches to the bag. So in its normal case, it's very slim and streamlined. But if I think I'm going to be gone for the length of the day or maybe I need specific things, you can get extra models. pouches and basically modular allies your bag,

grab a Molly pouch hook to it, and maybe that Mali pouch has video cabling in it, or it's got pieces for your tripod or whatever. So I found the modular structure really works really well. And it's a very durable little bag. There's also a fairly inexpensive



Raymond Sidney-Smith 30:19

looks like it comes in a wide variety of colors. If there's two sizes, a 13.1 13.3 inch bag, and then a 14.1 inch bag, so you get two different options there. And it's got a whole bunch of different like clips and other kinds of things as you talked about. And so you can, there's a son glass holder strapped so you can clip your sunglasses onto them, a hidden anti theft pocket, they're calling that in a water bottle pocket as well. So very cool, very nice little bag for, you know, being on the go and putting your laptop in keeping it safe. All that good stuff questions for art. Before we move on?

A

Augusto Pinaud 30:57

No, I'm just looking at that I understand that it's interesting how they, the bags and and the need for the bag has changed was this not going you know, moving from the office to the living room, I may not need as much as I need but, but I have people also questioning how much they're taking. Now with all these things happening.

A

Art Gelwicks 31:18

That's one of the things that I have done is downsize a lot of the normal stuff that I would carry because again, I'm not working at a remote location for extended periods of time. I've gotten a small cable organizer pouch, you can usually get those for 10 to \$15. Put the cables I specifically know I might need when I'm out, take that pouch, zip it up and that goes in the bag and it never comes out. I don't use those cables for anything else except for when I'm not home. I have a phone charger that I've had I have tucked down in the bag. Like I said, I grabbed my my Chromebook and slip it in the back. The only thing I have to add to that bag technically when I go is my Chromebook and its charger. But the other thing that isn't really displayed and it goes along to those Molly straps is you can get accessories for the Molly straps that aren't bags. So they're like clips that have nylon stretchy cord on it, so that you can actually strap additional things to the bag, or they have C lock clips that are actually like if you want to hang your key chain on your bag, it hooks to the Mali strip or the Mali tag and then you just put key change on and it locks it closed. There's a lot of flexibility to that platform. And when we think about being productive, the one thing that we always talk about is make it your own make it work the way you work. And I found that this of all the bags I have this is the only platform that's

given me the flexibility to adjust accordingly.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 32:51

All right. Okay, so what is your second holiday gift choice

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Augusto Pinaud 32:55

my second thing is a 999 gift it's called a suitcase for Apple Pencil and interestingly enough the Apple Pencil on any stylus for that matter but the Apple Pencil is specifically a cheap device it's hundred bucks, it is fantastic but it's hundred bucks at the end of the day. And I know more people who have lost multiple of them than the people who have still have their first one they bought. And I found this when I bought my first Apple Pencil long time ago the first iPad Pro who had the Apple Pencil and it basically just stick it on the back of the iPad and it has an island thin and you can put the pen in there but then you don't lose the pen the pen is always was attached to the iPad and now with the magnetic the app you know if you have a more recent iPad it magnetically attached to your iPad was something not available on the on the first generation but it's still I think I like that little thing to put the stylus in there the stylus is always there there is no heated you know as still as the magnetic if you heat it, it may fall and then you may lose it. So it is really a super cheap solution for a big big problem. And it has I I have gift that things to clients and friends and family and all the people who I have gift those single case of a as a present really loved him and he's been a simple, really simple solution for a big problem.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 34:37

My question is around placement. So I'm nervous about putting the case on two different form factors for purposes of being able to use it. So for example, I have a similar case to the one that's shown on Amazon where the case on the iPad flips around and turns into a stand and I But I actually tend to flip it flat on its back so that I can place the lap the iPad on its back. And so I wouldn't want the case, because the case is going to not allow it to lie flat, how kind of moldable and flattening

A

Augusto Pinaud 35:15

it is so thin that I, I use the iPad flat when I especially if I am taking notes, and Juju will not do will not. I have not feel it as something that bothers me when I'm writing. What I did was I put it in the top quarter so that way it's in, and it gives, I don't know, maybe a three degree angle to that that is actually perfect. And it's really so thin that I have had no

issues with it.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 35:51

Very interesting. Yeah, you'd have to take the stylus out when you lay it flat, but you would give it Yeah, yeah, you would presumably be doing that anyway, because you're going to be using it on on, you know, lying flat for writing or something else like that. So very interesting. Okay, great. Next up, I have

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Francis Wade 36:09

Francis great. Continuing on the theme of the call in the sock, I'm suggesting a heart rate monitor. So heart rate monitors are awesome, because they allow you to get an idea of the exertion that you're expanding during exercise. And I had an extended period when I didn't use one when I was using Swift, I think I mentioned with last year or this year, it's a gamification for riding a bicycle on a stand. It's a game. It's a game, they engage with people around the world. But anyway, I used to spend about a year writing zift or a year and a half without the heart rate monitor, just measuring the wattage that it was measuring through the sensors on the on the wheel. But I kept seeing them mentioning and talking about the two Oh, he really should get the heart rate monitor, it would really help. Got one I've used them before and thought they were you know, they're a nice, I had a one with a watch and kind of the old style ones. But the new ones allow you to when combined with the proper software, allow you to get real time information in front of you. So nothing to watch, but on on the screen. And they also collect information over time. So that's interesting. I haven't actually done any big time analysis. But the instant feedback that I'm able to get and to collect gives you another way to tell how hard you're working out. And there are times when I'm, I know I'm working, I am working out in the past where I thought I was doing, you know, putting a whole lot of energy. And I probably wasn't because I just didn't have the data. So having that kind of information gives you an idea of how hard you're exercising, ultimately, how much? How many, how many calories are burned to get a more accurate read. So that's my recommendation. It's one of these. Again, it's one of these gifts that you could put in a sock and hit the someone that hey, let's say that it's exercise, you wouldn't be interested. But for those who are. I think it's a valuable addition. And the cost is about a half a third or a half what it used to be when I last had one that was working.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 38:28

Yes, I'm seeing it at around 30 USD right now. So very nominal in terms of cost. And

certainly for the fitness productivity enthusiast in your life. Or if you want to wink wink, nudge nudge Hey, honey, yeah, you need to lose a little weight kind of thing. That could be an interesting way to do it, maybe also to ruin someone's holiday.



Raymond Sidney-Smith 38:52

So next up is my second choice. My choices are actually two apps combined. And this fits into Francis's kind of fitness and health space. But more from the perspective that I think, if anything 2020 has taught us is that we really do need to take care of our mental and emotional health. And something that has helped me throughout the years has been my yoga practice, as well as my meditation practice. And from a productivity perspective, this is for me all about being able to use focus, that is the mental Faculty of attention. And being able to direct your attention for any period of time is a fundamental skill and productivity. And people forget that if they cannot direct their attention, then they are going to have a problem, right? They're not going to be able to make forward progress on any given project or task. And these two apps are just really quite lovely. The first one is down dog and down dog is built by a team. It's very well regarded in the, in the app ecosystem, and what I really like about them is that they cover a wide variety of different fitness modalities. So not only in addition to yoga, which includes yoga, and yoga nidra, for those who have maybe sleep issues, yoga nidra can help you, according to, you know, lore, it can help you with sleep issues. And so I don't use it. But if you have sleep issues, you can certainly use it. But it has a really what I think is a great yoga functionality in the sense that it puts together different yoga, saunas, in different combinations, so that you have variety. And it learns from what you like and what you don't like, and it puts them together over time. So it has the yoga application, then it has high intensity interval training or hit function, it has bar a, it has a seven minute yoga app as well. And then it also has prenatal yoga functions or content for those who are pregnant. And so it covers a wide range of items. Note that if you purchase on their website, if you use the link on the show notes, or in the show notes, if you buy them on the website, it actually I think it's like 30, or more percent off the annual rate, as opposed to buying it within the app. And also remember that when you buy it through one of the app stores, whether that be Google Play, or Apple's iOS platform, they are, they are taking a huge cut of the developers and the content producers, revenues. And so this is helps a small business, you know, in essence, make a little bit more money during this very difficult time. Plus, it gives you access to their entire ecosystem of apps. And they're very, very helpful for being able to establish and have kind of a wonderful yoga, you know, when another fitness app, you know, pieces during this time, the other app is calm, calm as a meditation application, but it also just is good for like breathing, you know, breathing is so important to your overall functioning. And people don't give a lot of thought to breathing because it's something that is involuntary. But when we actually think about our breathing more, we can not only

calm ourselves, pun intended, but we can also actually think better, we can think more clearly. And we can regain attention back to that meditation function. Calm has just been a really, really great application, it also includes a check in functionality, so you're able to actually track your overall effect. So maybe thinking about in terms of emotion or mood, you can go ahead and track your effects throughout the the application and it will log it, it will log how many times you've meditated in a particular day. So if you want to do the Don't break the chain methodology, you can go ahead and do that within the application. It's just really slick and it gives a lot away for the free version. And then of course, you can always upgrade it to the paid version, and gain access to all of the various the I forget what they call them stories or other what other premium content within the platform. And and if you go to comm.com forward slash gift, you can actually gift to another person. So unfortunately with down dog, you need to go in and and you know purchase it on behalf of the person or give them a gift card in order to purchase down dog on their website. You know like a Visa gift card not an actual gift card, because they don't have a gifting option. But with calm, they actually have a functionality built on their website. If you go to comm ca lm calm forward slash gift, you can go ahead and give that over to somebody else. So you don't have to have access to their account in order to gift it to them. So that is my second gift. And with that we have reached time. And so what we will do is we have some more items that we want to share with you all we will share those in the show notes so that you all have access to our bonus holiday gift items. And so go ahead and check that out in the show notes. And and then otherwise, I just want to wish everybody a happy winter holiday season. Whatever holiday you celebrate. You all enjoy the holiday seasons. I know this has been a tough year. But I hope that we all can find a little bit of joy and cheer in amongst this difficult time. This brings us to the end of our holiday gift guide 2020 episode and if you have any suggestions for folks, gifts that you think others might enjoy, or like or feedback regarding some of the gifts we chose, feel free to stop over on the website at ProductivityCast dotnet forward slash the three digit episode number you will be able to find any of our episodes and so you can go ahead and find this episode and leave a comment or question and we'll We'll be happy to read and respond to those when we see those. They're in the episode page, you'll also find our show notes. So you can find links to any of the holiday gift choices that we have chosen plus our bonus items. And you can easily jump to those items from there, and any other items that we referenced in the show, including a text transcript, so that you can read and download the text transcript, it's machine generated, so it's, you know, 80 90% accurate, I suppose, but it gives you a general idea about what we've discussed, and you can then jump to points in the audio to listen back. If you have a topic about personal productivity you'd like us to discuss on a future cast, go ahead and visit ProductivityCast dotnet forward slash contact. And if you want to subscribe for free to the podcast, you can go to ProductivityCast dotnet forward slash subscribe. Then you can find Apple podcast stitcher and all the other various podcast apps that host or syndicate to have us listed in the directory for ProductivityCast.

I want to express my thanks to Agusta pinout Francis Wade, and our guests for joining me here on ProductivityCast each and every week, you can learn more about them and their work by visiting productivitycast.net as well. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith. And on behalf of all of us at ProductivityCast his true productive life everybody.



46:13

And that's it for this productivity cast,



46:16

the weekly show about all things productivity with your hosts, Ray Sidney-Smith and



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