

Technology News

Posted: Mon., Aug. 29, 2011, 4:00am PT

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Industry tests Video Name Tags

Hollywood goes gaga for high tech promo tool

By MICHELLE WEISS

One company's video bling has turned into a new marketing tool for Hollywood.

Studios and TV networks -- including Universal Pictures, CBS and ESPN -- have brokered deals to use Recom Group's Video Name Tag at everything from film premieres to sporting events.

The technology takes the shape of a 2.8-inch OLED display that attaches to clothing with a small magnetic clip. A built-in 2GB hard drive can play up to 20 hours of footage as photo slides or videos using a six- to eight-hour lithium battery. New content is loaded with a USB connection. It cannot play audio.

While Recom, which introduced the units at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas in January, demonstrated the screens as wearable on jackets, wrist bands and belt buckles or as necklaces, networks have placed them directly on microphones as mic flags used by ESPN sportscasters while interviewing athletes during the NBA Finals, for example.

Company hopes the screens will become ubiquitous on NFL fields as well after the New England Patriots purchased the screens, which can cost as much as \$200.

Universal purchased Video Name Tags for the premiere of "Cowboys and Aliens" at Comic-Con in San Diego last month, strapping them on the wrists of attendees to resemble the alien power blaster that Daniel Craig wears in the movie.

The studio now plans to purchase more for the premiere of "The Lorax," said Rob Norden, president and CEO of the Recom Group.

McDonald's, Wolfgang Puck, Estee Lauder, Verizon Wireless and GameStop have used the screens as wearable promos in stores and restaurants, with sales at some stores going up as much as 20% during tests. But Recom is now hoping to turn the gadget into a fashion accessory. It handed out lower priced versions of the screens at the Grammy Awards in February.

"We knew people would like it; we never thought people would go so crazy on it," said Norden, who has also developed a video trading card, which Recom teamed with Panini America on, that plays up to 20 minutes of HD video. There are currently video trading cards for Kobe Bryant, Blake Griffin, John Wall and Kevin Durant.

(Marc Graser contributed to this report).

Contact the Variety newsroom at news@variety.com



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Video Name Tags resemble the alien power blaster used in "Cowboys and Aliens."

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