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## **TV Shirt TV Is All About The View**

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by **Brent Morrison**

There is a scene in the movie "Back to the Future" that starts shortly after the 17-year-old hero is transported back to the 1950s. Another boy, noticing the "Calvin Klein" label on his jeans, assumes his name is Calvin. If the film were made in the not-too-distant future, he might have been called "Sony."

Adam Hollander runs an outfit called Brand Marketers and has invented what he calls "T-Shirt TV," which is exactly what it sounds like: The shirt's front has a computer-driven 11-inch flat panel monitor that can play anything from commercials to home movies.

For the moment, T-Shirt TV is strictly an advertising gimmick. Hollander dresses "aggressively friendly" young women in the gear and rents them out as modern-day sandwich boards, with the monitors placed strategically where a lot of people - read "men" - might rest their eyes anyway. (Insert your favorite boob tube joke here.)

It seems to be working, but I've seen a picture of a model wearing the gizmo and found it more bulky than becoming. It reminded me of a comic strip I saw a few years ago in which an older woman calls a young blond aside and whispers "Dear, if you're going to stuff your bra with Kleenex you should take them out of the box first."

The first paid gig for Hollander's device was a showing of movie previews in the lobby of a Los Angeles theater, with launches scheduled in 10 major market theaters this month. It is reportedly a hit, but as with most new technologies there are bugs. A reporter for

the Christian Science Monitor notes that the TV toting model he saw had her screen go blank and needed to excuse herself to go reboot. When she returned, the volume on the speakers was so low listeners had to lean close to hear, though I wouldn't rule out the possibility that that was just another hook.

Advertising is all about getting noticed and the T-Shirt TV seems to do just that. A spokesman for 20th Century Fox, the distributor of a movie promoted by the gadget at a Boston theater, called it a "clutter buster." No word on whether this was said tongue-in-cheek.

In any event, advertisers aren't the only ones who crave attention so I suspect it won't be long before T-Shirt TV finds its way into everyday fashion, at least among the look-at-me set that now leans to body piercing and tattoos. It'll be a little pricey, but at least a T-shirt can come off when the novelty does and is unlikely to transmit blood borne diseases. You won't have to explain it to your grandchildren one day, either.

Or maybe you can tell them after you're gone. It's probably just a coincidence, but a fellow named Robert Barrow filed for a U.S. patent on a video tombstone about the same time T-Shirt TV was hitting theaters. Designed to survive decades of outdoor use, the high-tech grave topper features a touch screen LCD display and enough memory for several messages.

As tempting as it might be to get things off your mind after you aren't around to take the heat, I like my cemeteries quiet. I'm also more inclined to spout off in person so I can enjoy the effect but this could be another natural for the look-at-me-crowd, who will soon be able to shuffle off their mortal coils, out of their T-Shirt TVs, and into their own eternal video games.

Kids born today may grow up not remembering when loud clothing meant bold colors and dead people didn't talk. If so, there will probably be an expression for these quaint times of ours: "The good old days."