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## What Was Cool at Cine Gear Expo

### Hands-On Report from DP Nirvana

By Steve Gibby  
June 27, 2006 Source: Studio Daily

Cine Gear Expo equals DP Nirvana, Gizmo Candy Store, Widget Heaven, Accessory Central, Thingamajig Dream, Gaffer Valhalla, or any other number of superlatives. Picture all the latest incarnations of film and video cameras, jibs, cranes, housings, lights, audio, and accessories in one concentrated location. Now place all that in a geographical area (LA) that reportedly produce over 80 percent of the world's total entertainment media of every kind, and you can imagine what a "buzzfest" the Cine Gear Expo was this past weekend. For anyone in the craft of film and video production this is a Field of Dreams, just make sure to leave your wallet, credit cards, and checkbook at home.

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Seriously, there's no way a diehard cine/video techie's pulse doesn't race when faced with such a plethora of solutions. I walked the grounds of the expo for two straight days snooping into booths for equipment that I felt exuded "coolness" – however that is defined. To me, a coolness quotient is more about products that definitely satisfy production needs, but also have the courage to break new technical ground, enable unusual footage acquisition, provide affordable field production, and cost-effectively allow crews to record dynamic images.

So how do you choose a "What's Cool" shortlist of products from an expo with hundreds of heavyweight exhibitors, each with interesting inventory? Admittedly, my list isn't comprehensive or exhaustive, but, in any case, it is my list. Here it is, not in order of "coolness", but rather just an alphabetical collection of qualifiers:

#### Anton/Bauer Elipz System

The Elipz system is a new line of accessories for handheld DVCPROHD (HVX200), HDV, and DV cameras. The line includes a battery, light, and grip. The cool thing about the battery (ELIPZ) is that it fits the footprint of the camera, bolts underneath, and provides all day runtime – perfect for long form production, documentaries, events, etc. The center of balance of the camera is also maintained. The light (ElightZ), which wasn't at Cine Gear, fits on top of the camera, draws only 10 watts, runs off the ELIPZ battery, is lightweight, and has an adjustable, 2-stage arm. The grip (EgripZ), is a dual-armed, adjustable piece that bolts on under the camera or ELIPZ battery, and gives you a bendable handle on both sides of the camera. I can see the EgripZ being the ticket for mobile, hand held, creative shots where a full-sized stabilization unit isn't available or practical.  
[www.antonbauer.com](http://www.antonbauer.com)

#### ARRIFLEX 416 S16 film camera

Just when digital gurus think that film is disappearing, especially S16, here come the 416. Turns out that many HDTV programs and indie features are shot on S16, and the demand is high for a small, lightweight, quiet camera for mobile S16 shooting. Indeed, the 416 is low profile, shoots 1-75 frames per second, has a high-resolution 35-style viewfinder, and mounts almost all PL mount lenses for 16, S16, and 35mm, including Master



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ARRIFLEX 416 S16 film camera, a smaller, lighter 16mm film camera.

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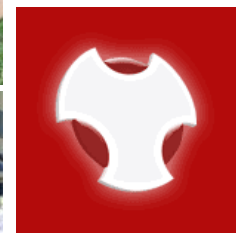
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Primes and Ultra Primes. The 416 control panel will be familiar to ARRI users, and a new lithium-ion battery reportedly lasts for up to five magazines. For traditional 35mm cinematographers who want a mobile S16 camera, the 416 is the ticket, because most of the features on ARRI 35mm cameras are included on the 416. I shouldered the 416 and walked around. It felt light, balanced, and comfortable. (I wanted to keep right on walking to my truck.) The 416 will ship by the end of 2006, so field testing will prove it's measure, but considering traditional ARRI quality, it should be a winner.  
www.arri.com

#### AX2 Parallax Scanning Adapter

Vision III Imaging (v3) has created a digital parallax scanning iris mechanism that fits between a camera body and an Angenieux HD ENG lens. It currently works with the Angenieux 26x7.8 AIF.HR.ESM lens and other Angenieux HD ENG lenses. V3 management told me that there are plans to also develop parallel scanning adapters for other major manufacturer's lenses. So what do the AX2 do? The adapter is installed between the camera body and the lens, in place of the 2x extender housing. A remote hand control is connected via a serial interface. It uses optical scanning techniques to inject 3D-like impressions of depth on standard film or video – a parallax view. The kicker is that you can use standard lenses, industry standard cameras, and it can be broadcast and viewed without any additional equipment. Very cool...

The unit software features preset features that can be triggered while shooting, parallax scan is automatic, and changes according to focal length while zooming. Parallax scan can also be customized, and there is a wireless control option. In demonstration at their booth I found the images to be intriguing – almost 3D like, but with a more real-to-life look.  
www.inv3.com

#### Cooke S4/i 15-40mm T2 CXX Zoom

The S4/i zoom breaks some new ground in film lenses with features like continuous remote readout of focus setting, T stop, and depth of field – generated from in-lens electronic circuitry. It works with any PL mount camera body. Whatever distance the lens is focused at is exactly displayed on a display boxes for the S4/i lens, which are created by Cinematography Electronics, ARRI, and Cmotion. Angle of view and entrance pupil are also displayed in the readout. Data from the lens can be accessed from your PDA or computer via ASCII or RS 232. Cooke offers free software on their web site. Another very cool feature is the optional Bluetooth transmitter for wireless use of the display boxes. Cooke claims the lens has no breathing, maintains high resolution throughout the zoom range, and adjusts automatically – thus no ramping or flare.  
www.cookeoptics.com

#### Innovision Bird's Eye Camera Support Column

Looking for an affordable, mobile system to get high position, pan and tilt shots at sports events and risky locations with your mid-sized camera? The Bird's Eye is a simple, but strong (steel – 50lbs), 16' tall, adjustable column that supports a smooth pan and tilt head. For extra stability, in winds, you can attach cables or ropes and anchor them laterally. The Birds Eye will support cameras weighing up to 10 pounds, so a Panasonic HVX-200, Sony Z1U, or Canon XL-H1, or smaller camera (Sony HC1, etc.) is no problem. The head will pan and tilt a full 360 degrees, with a pan speed range of .4°/sec (360° in 18 min) to 30° /sec (360° in 12 sec.) and a tilt speed of 30° / sec. If you don't need to, or want to buy it, you can always rent the Bird's Eye for that specialty production. Beyond sports and commercials applications, how cool would the Bird's Eye be for treetop nature footage?  
www.innovisionoptics.com

#### RED Digital Cinema Camera

The RED camera, with its announced 12 megapixel CMOS sensor, 35mm depth of field, 2540p resolution (and lower resolutions), multiple lens formats, cine-style and ENG-style capability, small form factor, and affordable/scalable concept, has been causing discussion ripples in the TV, video, and film industries since it was announced last December, and since RED's mockup display at NAB in April. The camera is a work in progress. The camera body and Cage One system mockups have been modified since NAB. At NAB, and for a while after, the mockups were a shiny silver finish. Turns out that the silver was merely for illustration purposes. A short while ago RED published updated mockups of the camera and cage system in a traditional flat black finish. The RED tent was busy at Cine Gear. The specs for the camera are basically the same as at NAB. RED reports that the design is on schedule in all departments. The camera body has been lengthened and remolded in places. The nose plate has been re-designed, and a smaller nuzzle has been installed. The camera has multiple hard points for mounting the cage and an array of accessories.



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Cooke S4/i 15-40mm T2 CXX Zoom breaks new ground in film lenses.



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RED camera body and Cage One system mockups have been modified since NAB.



The cage itself has been modified to include flat spots for mounting accessories on the side handles. A shoulder brace is being planned. RED is planning to display 4k images from the sensor at the IBC expo in Amsterdam (September). Tentative shipment of the first production models of RED could be as early as December, subject to delays if needed for development. If RED delivers what they've announced, it should make a significant impact on the convergent motion media industry.  
[www.red.com](http://www.red.com)

So that's my list! With so much "coolness" present everywhere at Cine Gear, it was a brainteaser limiting the list to these six products. I could have made a list of 60 products and barely scratched the surface! This is Steve Gibby signing off from DP nirvana...

*Steve Gibby is an Emmy-winning producer/director/DP, and a national Emmy Awards judge. His stock footage is available via [www.mammothhd.com](http://www.mammothhd.com). His company web sites are: [www.cut4.tv](http://www.cut4.tv) (Production) and [www.4umat.com](http://www.4umat.com) (Seminars, Work Shops, Boot Camps).*

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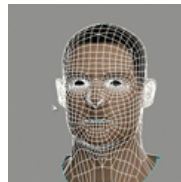
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