2019 Tech Toys

Unique technology toy finds
at the International Toy Fair in NYC.
February 15 - 19, 2019

by Scott Traylor
February 20, 2019

Introduction

With the close of New York's International Toy Fair, toy fair season has ended. The season officially kicked off in early January with the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, followed by toy fairs in Hong Kong, London, Nuremberg, and then finally over the last five days, the show in New York City. Toy companies spend many months, even years, preparing to unveil their playful masterpieces in NYC. The toy industry is one that lives and dies by the new ideas it has to generate every few months to stay ahead of the game. It moves fast in order to stay ahead of trends, and if a company is very lucky, it defines those trends.

The category of technology toys has matured well over the last decade. In the early days companies chasing shiny new tech often released toys that had forced play patterns, which resulted in poor play experience coupled with sizable financial losses. Tech toys are a high risk, high reward game.

Over the course of a year I see thousands of technology toy products for kids; apps, websites, robots, you name it. If a toy has a button and a battery, a screen or a motor, chances are I've reviewed it. This presentation puts together in one place many of the brightest tech toy announcements made at Toy Fair last week, as determined by me. Note, while I have worked in the toy space, I have not worked on any or the products included in this presentation.

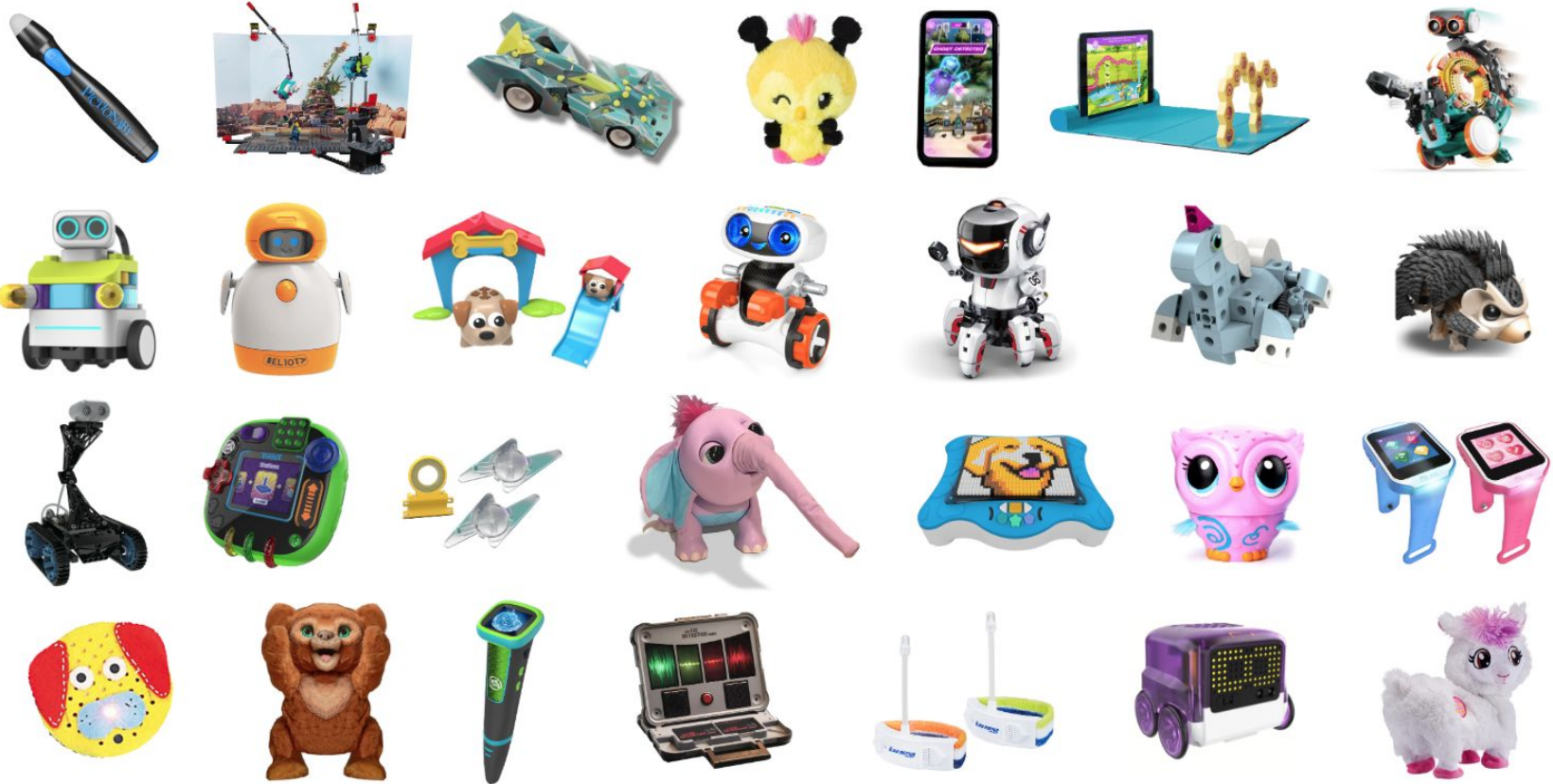I look forward to hearing your thoughts. Enjoy!

- Scott Traylor

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Selected Tech Toys

Tech Toy Tracks

App-based Toys

AR/MR App-based Toys

Robots/Coding

All Other Tech

Details

Pictionary Air by Mattel

Info

MSRP:	US $19.99
Ages:	8+
Available:	Fall 2019
Platform:	iOS and Android

Scott's Take

A modern twist to the popular Pictionary game. Using a special light-up pen that pairs with the Pictionary Air mobile app, the drawer illustrates their clue in the air. The app captures the air drawing in real time, and displays the drawn masterpiece on screen. Live drawings can be recorded and saved for playback. While not required, playing this game with many people benefits from projecting the Pictionary Air app onto a large screen. To do so requires Apple TV or Chromecast and a large screen television.

Links

[Article 1](#)
[Video 1](#)

5

Movie Maker App by Lego

MSRP:	US $49.99
Ages:	8+
Available:	Now
Platform:	iOS and Android

Scott's Take

The new LEGO Movie Maker encourages kids and families to direct their very own brick-built films or recreate scenes from the company's latest box office hit thanks to a companion app that features film capture, editing, special effects and playback options.

Links

Article 1
Article 2

Hotwheels TechMods by Mattel

Info

MSRP: US $50.00
Ages: 8+
Available: Fall 2019
Platform: iOS and Android

PR

This smart RC kit offers a true physical to digital experience, in addition to building and customizing the vehicle from the chassis up, kids can then use a smart device (not included) to control it. There are 2 different ways to drive:
1. RC Mode lets kids drive in Freeplay and complete increasingly challenging physical tasks to move to the next level.
2. In Controller Mode, the car itself lets kids control and win different mini games and earn points. Kids can redeem points and take on new challenges in the free TechMods app.

Links

Article 1

Hatchtopia Life by Spin Master

Info

MSRP:	US $6.99
Ages:	5+
Available:	Summer 2019

PR

Hatchtopia Life is a new line of Hatchimal plushies. 15 in the series to collect, each in its own patented crackable egg. Each egg contains a Hatchtopia Life code to unlock surprises in the Hatchtopia Life app. In the app you can play games, collect coins, decorate, complete quests, and connect to friends.

Links

Video 1 (0:37 - 0:49)

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Hidden Side by LEGO

Info

MSRP:	US $19.99 to $129.99
Ages:	8+
Available:	Fall 2019
Platform:	iOS and Android

Scott's Take

LEGO Hidden Side is an augmented reality (AR) enhanced play experience, when once a LEGO kit is built, kids explore a haunted alternative reality hidden within their construction. Each kit has AR mysteries and challenges to solve, and the play expands over the many kits.

Links

Article 1
Video 1 (8:43)
Video 2 (14:33)

Plugo by Shifu

Info

MSRP: US $45.00
Ages: 5 - 11
Available: Spring 2019
Platform: iOS and Android

Scott's Take

An interesting twist on using a tablet's onboard camera for learning games. Plugo comes with a base game board to hold your tablet on one end, and a variety of kit components to arrange on the other which triggers real-time responses from your tablet's screen. Challenges are displayed on your tablets, and the user needs to place specific game pieces correctly to advance the activity.
There are five different kits to purchase, each focuses on a different set of learning skills.

Links

Video 1 (2:22)
Video 2 (2:04)

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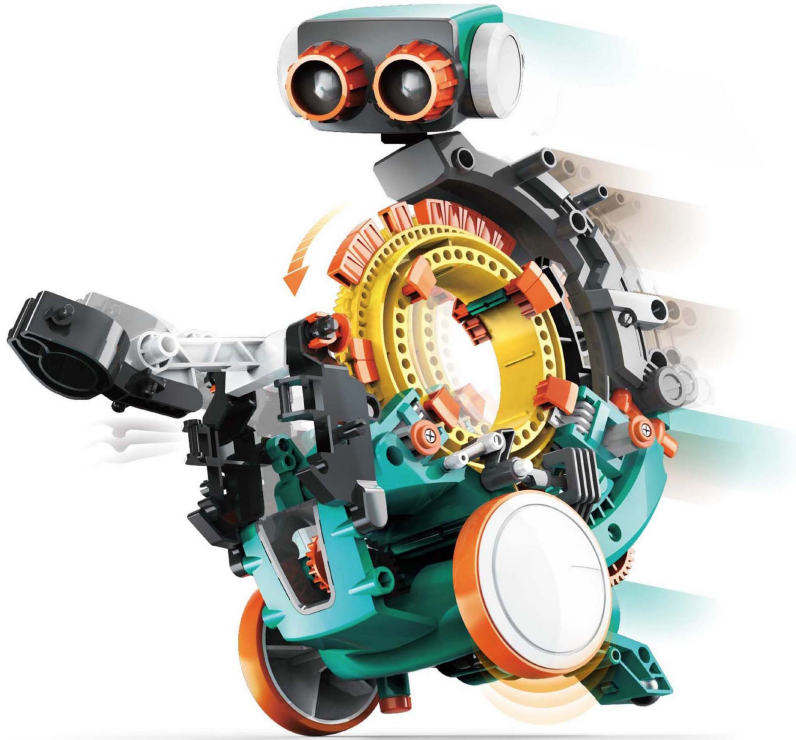# Tech Toy Tracks

App-based Toys

AR/MR App-based Toys

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Mech-5 by Elenco

Info

MSRP: US $39.99
Ages: 5 - 12
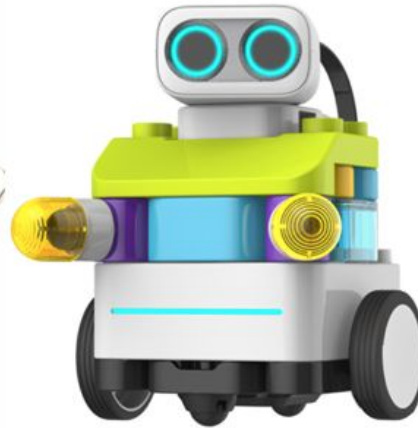Available: Summer 2019

Scott's Take

The kids' robotics space is a crowded one, and there are few screenless coding options. Even fewer solutions at this price point. The Mech-5 coding approach is unique. There's a moveable "coding wheel" at the center of this robot where users program the robot by snapping coding pegs into the wheel. Coding peg combinations instruct the robot to move forward, backward, turn, spin or pause.

Links

Article 1

PaiBotz by Pai Technology

Info

MSRP: US $99.99
Ages: 4+
Available: Spring 2019

PR

PaiBotz combines construction, coding, and creativity. Children can build, program, and play with PaiBotz robots, using 150 physical building blocks and more than 30 interactive augmented reality puzzles available through the free accompanying app. Children can build and code up to six pre-designed PaiBotz, or create their own designs.Children can explore coding concepts like sequencing, looping, and conditional coding with an intuitive and visual programming language. PaiBotz can light up, move, dance, play drums, and make sounds via the motors, sensors, and the app's Bluetooth connectivity.

Links

Video 1 (0:52)
Video 2 (0:20)

14

EL10T, the Coding Robot ("Elliot") by Elenco

MSRP: US $89.99
Ages: 3+
Available: Summer 2019

PR

Learn simple coding concepts at an early age. Use blocks to "code" moving EL10T forward or backward, turn left or right, or play music. Manipulative, tactile blocks develop hand-eye coordination and help kids visualize pictorial coding commands. Develops STEM learning, logical thinking, problem solving and sequencing skills. Includes EL10T Robot with USB Coding Panel, 20 coding blocks, coding station, cardboard obstacles, two-sided game cards, two-sided playmat with coding grid, decorative stickers, and instruction manual.

Coding Critters by Learning Resources

Info

MSRP:	US $39.99
Ages:	4+
Available:	Summer 2019

PR

Coding Critters are interactive pets that introduce preschoolers to critical thinking, problem-solving, and other STEM skills with the help of fun playsets, storybook coding adventures, and two interactive modes. Includes a 20-page storybook with multiple coding challenges. There are three different Coding Critters sets. Ranger & Zip (pictured), Scamper & Sneaker, and Rumble & Bumble. Each sold separately. Requires 3 AAA batteries, not included.

Links

Article 1
Article 2
Video 1 (1:01 - 1:16)

Code 'n Learn Kinderbot by Fisher-Price

Robots/Coding

MSRP: US $59.99
Ages: 3 - 6
Available: Fall 2019

PR

Code 'n Learn Kinderbot is an interactive and "programmable" robot that teaches coding and engineering alongside colors, letters, counting, shapes and more. Enhance problem-solving skills by figuring out how to "program" Kinderbot's movements. Simple machine accessories let kids build & change Kinderbot's friendly design. Three ways to play include free coding, learning challenges, and a "secret code" booklet to unlock more learning.

Links

Article 1
Video 1 (1:57)

17

Tobbie II by Elenco

Info

MSRP:	US $89.99
Ages:	10+
Available:	Summer 2019
Platform:	iOS, Android, web

PR

Kids can build a robot, then code and program with MakeCode or Phython Editor. With 6 legs and a fully-rotational body, Tobbie includes motor, infrared sensors, buzzers, and BBC Micro:bit. Bluetooth-controlled and user-friendly.

Links

Article 1

Robot Safari by Thames & Kosmos

Robots/Coding

MSRP: US $29.95
Ages: 5 - 7
Available: May 2019

PR

Build a series of motorized robotic animals with this introductory mechanical engineering kit. An illustrated 32-page storybook centers around a family of makers and engineers, the Omegas, which are featured in other Kids First early engineering kits. As they follow the story, kids can build models of these robots and experiment with them to see how each one uses the battery-powered motor and mechanical parts to move in a different way. Teaches simple engineering concepts to young children. Helps develop fine motor skills, mechanical engineering skills, visual-spatial skills, and reasoning and concept development skills

Tumbling Hedgehog by Thames & Kosmos

Robots/Coding

PR

Assemble a real robot that looks like a cute hedgehog. The robot has a built-in sound sensor and is programmed to react to different sounds. After you build it, you can play with it by making clapping sounds and watching it tumble, roll, spin around, bristle its spines, and scurry around. You can get the hedgehog to bristle its spines and act in a playful way with different clap patterns. The hedgehog's eyes light up with LEDs. You will gain experience through building to the inner mechanical workings that enable the robot to move. Learn about gears, motors, sound sensors, LEDs, and more.

Links

Video 1 (0:39)

20

Robotics: Smart Machines by Thames & Kosmos

MSRP:	US $134.95
Ages:	8 - 14
Available:	Oct 2019
Platform:	iOS and Android

PR

This product release focuses on motorized machines that make use of continuous tracks, to move themselves and other objects around. Models are controlled by programs and an ultrasound sensor, so in addition to constructing the machines, you'll also learn how to use the included visual programming app on your tablet or smartphone to code the programs yourself. The bot can also detects your hand, moves toward it, and follows it around. You can assemble other robots including a dozer bot with a bulldozer attachment and a fire rescue robot. You can also build your own robots.

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Rocket Twist by LeapFrog

Info

MSRP:	US $59.99
Ages:	4+
Available:	Fall 2019

Scott's Take

LeapFrog's Rockit Twist is the latest learning game platform with a clever input alternative. The various buttons on this handheld device feel a bit like a fidget box, which is a great input extension and appropriate enhancement from the traditional D-pad found on most gaming systems. 12 preloaded games are available with six additional game packs sold separately.

Links

Video 1 (2:41)

Light Racer Kit by Tech Will Save Us

Info

MSRP: US $24.99
Ages: 8+
Available: Now

Scott's Take

Simple and clever, electronic components that once assembled can attach to your bike's wheel. Wireless coil components and capacitors trigger LED lights to shine when bike wheels are spinning.

Links

Article 1
Video 1 (0:42)

Juno My Baby Elephant by Spin Master

Info

MSRP: US $99.99
Ages: 4+
Available: Fall 2019

Scott's Take

Spin Master's experience creating animatronic dolls is a specialty in the toy industry, and applied to a baby elephant results in a super cute experience. Touch sensors on Juno bring out charming expression, sounds and animated trunk.

Links

Video 1 (2:10)
Video 2 (2:24)

smART Pixelator by Flycatcher

Info

MSRP:	US $59.99
Ages:	7+
Available:	Fall 2019
Platform:	iOS and Android

Scott's Take

Flycatcher's smART Pixelator device allows kids to make some creative, pixel-like artwork, in both 2D and 3D. The base of the product is a screen that displays a grid of colored lights. The user places colored beads on the screen to match the underlying color, filling the screen with their creative work of art. The product includes 50 different images to build, but the beauty of this product is that kids can upload their own photos to the device via the smART Pixelator app and a Bluetooth connection.

Links

Video 1 (0:30)

Owleez by Spin Master

Info

MSRP: US $49.99
Ages: 6+
Available: Fall 2019

PR

Owleez is an interactive pet you can rescue, take care of and teach to fly. Owleez expressive eyes will tell you if they are happy, sad, hungry and more. Make them happy by loving and caring for them. If you make them happy, they will really fly! Just like a real pet, you can feed, pet, tickle and rock them. They make lots of different sounds and respond to your touch. Includes one Owleez pet, one nest for nap time and charging, and one bunch of berries for feeding.

Links

Video 1 (2:25)

Kurio Watch Glow by KD Interactive

Info

MSRP: US $59.99
Ages: 4+
Available: Fall 2019

PR

The Kurio Watch Glow is Bluetooth-connected and comes preloaded with 20+ apps and games, and seven light effects. There's a front-facing camera to snap selfies and videos, complete with filters and frames. Connect two Kurio Watches via Bluetooth for watch-to-watch messaging. Includes an activity tracker, music player, alarm/stopwatch, calculator, calendar and more.

Links

Article 1

Sew + Glow Kit by Tech Will Save Us

Info

MSRP:	US $24.99
Ages:	8+
Available:	Now

PR

Design and build glowing badges that light up with the touch of a button. Bring your own designs to life through the amazing power of electro thread.

Links

Video 1 (0:49)

FurReal Cubby the Curious Bear by Hasbro

Info

MSRP: US $99.99
Ages: 4+
Available: Summer 2019

PR

Cubby is a curious young cub, and is eager to be picked up and held (it hugs you back!), plays peek-a-boo, and can even dance. Give it a bottle or treat and it'll make eating sounds. It's a chatty bear, too – it babbles back when spoken to. In nighttime mode, this cutie closes its eyes, makes sleepy sounds, and plays one of four 5-minute sequences of soft music. Its face is expressive with moving eyes, nose, and mouth. Requires 4 x 1.5 v C batteries.

Links

Article 1
Video 1 (5:46)

LeapStart Go by LeapFrog

Info

MSRP:
LeapStart Go: US $49.99
Deluxe Activity Sets: US $10.99
LeapStart books: US $7.99
Ages: 4 - 8
Available: Fall 2019

PR

The LeapStart Go interactive learning system is an easy-to-carry stylus that brings compatible books and activity sets to life. It uses a small, built in video screen to provide a deeper learning experience. In addition to helping kids learn beyond basic skills such as letters and numbers, it also works with the full LeapStart library of 25+ books (sold separately) that cover a variety of preschool through first grade subjects, plus new activity sets.

The Lie Detector Game by Hasbro

Info

MSRP: US $39.99
Ages: 16+
Available: Aug 1, 2019

PR

The voice analysis technology built into this adult party game is designed to detect subtleties in a person's voice to help you discover who's telling the truth, and who's not. While taking turns the player in the hot seat is asked uncomfortable Yes or No questions. Tell the truth and you'll earn points, but a lie gives the point to your opponent. The player with the most points wins. Game includes lie detector unit, 64 cards (252 questions), and instructions. Three "AA" batteries required.

Links

Article 1
Video 1 (4:03 - 4:39)

Slow Motion Race Game by Hasbro

Info

MSRP:	US $19.99
Ages:	8+
Available:	Aug 1, 2019

PR

The Slow-Motion Race Game is a laugh-out-loud race to the finish line. To play the game, 2 kids put on the speed-monitoring headbands. Then they press the button, listen for the music, and race to the trophy in slow motion. Don't go too fast because the headband will buzz. If it does, a player has to freeze until the buzzing stops. Kids can boost the hilarity by pumping their arms as if they're running during the race. The first player to grab the trophy, wins. Game includes 2 speed-monitoring headbands and game rules. Four "AAA" batteries required.

Links

Video 1

Novie by Spin Master

Info

MSRP: US $24.99
Ages: 6+
Available: Fall 2019

PR

Novie is the interactive robot you can train to do more than 12 tricks.
Using gesture control, Novie can follow your hand, and you can train Novie by moving your hands in specific ways. Novie can learn to do wheelies, spin, walk and more. Its eyes can change colors to show you its emotions. With three different color varieties to choose from - blue, red and purple.

Boppi the Booty Shakin' Llama by Zuru

Info

MSRP: US $19.99
Ages: 3+
Available: Summer 2019

Scott's Take

Boppi the Booty Shakin' Llama is, and I kid you not, a twerking llama. Bobbi tosses it's head and shakes its booty to three unique songs. That's it. Check out the video link below. In the toy industry this is what's called a "watch me" toy. Meaning after playing two or three times it ends up at the bottom of the toy box.

Links

Article 1
Article 2
Article 3
Video 1 (0:46)

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Robots/Coding

All Other Tech

Details

Overview of Selected Products

PAGE	TECH TOY TRACK	COMPANY	TOY	MSRP	AGE	AVAILABILITY
5	App-based Toys	Mattel	Pictionary Air	US $19.99	8+	Fall 2019
6	App-based Toys	LEGO	Movie Maker	US $49.99	8+	Now
7	App-based Toys	Mattel	Hotwheels TechMods	US $50.00	8+	Fall 2019
8	App-based Toys	Spin Master	Hatchtopia Life	US $6.99	5+	Summer 2019
10	AR/MR App-based Toys	LEGO	Hidden Side	US $19.99 - 129.99	8+	Fall 2019
11	AR/MR App-based Toys	Shifu	Plugo	US $45.00	5 - 11	Spring 2019
13	Robots/Coding	Elenco	Mech-5	US $39.99	5 - 12	Summer 2019
14	Robots/Coding	Pai Technology	PaiBots	US $99.99	4+	Spring 2019
15	Robots/Coding	Elenco	EL10T, the Coding Robot	US $	3+	Summer 2019
16	Robots/Coding	Learning Resources	Coding Critters	US $39.99	4+	Summer 2019
17	Robots/Coding	Fisher-Price	Code 'n Learn Kinderbot	US $59.99	3 - 6	Fall 2019
18	Robots/Coding	Elenco	Tobbie II	US $89.99	N/A	Summer 2019
19	Robots/Coding	Thames & Kosmos	Robot Safari	US $29.95	5 - 7	May 2019
20	Robots/Coding	Thames & Kosmos	Tumbling Hedgehog	US $39.95	7+	July 2019
21	Robots/Coding	Thames & Kosmos	Robotics: Smart Machines	US $134.95	8 - 14	Oct 2019

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Overview of Selected Products

PAGE	TECH TOY TRACK	COMPANY	TOY	MSRP	AGE	AVAILABILITY
23	All Other Tech	LeapFrog	Rockit Twister	US $59.99	4+	Fall 2019
24	All Other Tech	Tech Will Save Us	Light Racer Kit	US $24.99	8+	Now
25	All Other Tech	Spin Master	Juno My Baby Elephant	US $99.99	4+	Fall 2019
26	All Other Tech	Flycatcher	smART Pixelator	US $59.99	7+	Fall 2019
27	All Other Tech	Spin Master	Owleez	US $49.99	6+	Fall 2019
28	All Other Tech	KD Interactive	Kurio Watch Glow	US $59.99	4+	Fall 2019
29	All Other Tech	Tech Will Save Us	Sew + Glow Kit	US $24.99	8+	Now
30	All Other Tech	Hasbro	FurReal Cubby	US $99.99	4+	Summer 2019
31	All Other Tech	LeapFrog	LeapStart Go	US $49.99, $10.99, $7.99	4 - 8	Fall 2019
32	All Other Tech	Hasbro	The Lie Detector Game	US $39.99	16+	Aug 1, 2019
33	All Other Tech	Hasbro	Slow Motion Race Game	US $19.99	8+	Aug 1, 2019
34	All Other Tech	Spin Master	Novie	US $24.00	6+	Fall 2019
35	All Other Tech	Zumu	Boppi the Booty Shakin' Llama	US $19.99	3+	Summer 2019

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360KID

Other Toy Fair Articles by Scott Traylor

Feb 20, 2019 — Toys with a baked-in tech twist top New York Toy Fair

Feb 20, 2018 — The AR & AI tech taking New York Toy Fair by storm

Feb 22, 2017 — NY Toy Fair: A techie's perspective

Feb 20, 2015 — Toy Fair 2015: Brand mashups, smart toys and indie innovation

Feb 27, 2014 — Tech comes into its own at Toy Fair 2014

Feb 21, 2013 — Tech Toy Magic at Toy Fair

About Scott Traylor

Scott Traylor has a long history of developing digital product successes that delight and engage children everywhere. For more than two decades he has lead the development of hundreds of successful consumer and classroom products through his children's software business called 360KID, as well as with other children's media companies. Scott is a board member, trustee, and advisor to a number of child-focused learning companies. A former computer science educator at Harvard for over a decade, Scott continues to be involved in research, writing, and speaking on all things related to kids. He lives in Silicon Valley, searching for the next big opportunity in the children's industry.

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