

CHATTANOOGA

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\$3.95

A photograph of a man and a woman looking at a device. The man is on the left, wearing a black hat and a yellow sweater. The woman is on the right, wearing an orange shirt and a name tag that says "Diane". They are both looking down at a device that is not fully visible.

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TMIO INTELLIGENT OVENS ARE COOKIN' IN CHATTANOOGA

Life seems to get busier with each passing year, but even with all the convenient kitchen appliances available, busy families are still looking for meals that take little time to prepare. As a result, the traditional sit-down family dinner at home seems to be rare as many families turn to fast food solutions for their evening dinner. But the people behind Tonight's Menu Intelligent Ovens are hoping to revolutionize today's typical family dinner by offering consumers a new way to enjoy healthy, home-cooked meals.

Inventors usually get their ideas from a genuine need they see in everyday life. And TMIO President and CEO, David Mansberry, had grown tired of eating fast food meals and saw a need for his family to once again enjoy home-cooked meals for dinner together. These feelings charged a brainstorm of ideas, which eventually took the shape of a smart oven that could refrigerate and keep food fresh during the day and also be operated from anywhere inside or outside of the home.

Imagine waking up in the morning, going to the kitchen and putting a casserole for that night's dinner in your refrigerated oven. You set the oven to

begin cooking at 5:00 p.m., but until then, the oven will continue refrigerating the casserole to keep it fresh. Later that day, you're still at work and it looks like you're going to be getting home later



David Mansberry's revolutionary technology integrates the computer and the cell phone into everyday food preparation.

than you had originally thought you would. You get on your computer at work and log-in on TMIO's website to access your oven and change the time for when the oven begins cooking the

casserole. Arriving home, your meal is hot and ready for you to sit down and enjoy.

Or imagine leaving on a two-day business trip and you want to have a hot meal ready when you get back home a couple of evenings later. Before you leave on your trip you place a meal in the oven to be refrigerated while you are gone. Then the day you are leaving for home, you call your oven from your cell phone and give it directions to cook your meal so it will be ready that evening when you return home. Back at home, you walk in the front door, set your luggage down and breathe in the aroma of a fresh, hot-cooked meal waiting for you to enjoy.

This kind of oven operation is possible because of the Remote Command and Control system TMIO has developed using NASA Embedded Web Technology. TMIO's Connect Io (pronounced "Eye-oh") ovens can be accessed through a PC, cell phone or PDA. The ovens themselves can be connected via wired or wireless Internet, (however, if it is a wired connection, broadband is required). Because of the NASA Embedded Web Technology, Connect Io ovens are less expensive than computerized counterparts.

The Connect Io ovens can also be programmed using a touch-sensitive LCD screen on the face of the oven, which at the touch of a finger can program the oven functions or even save and retrieve favorite recipe times and temperatures. "We didn't know if the

LCD screen was going to work, with the high temperatures of the oven cavity right below it," says Tony Kendall, director of electrical engineering at TMIO. "But we created a unique cooling system that made it work."

"This may remind you of the Jetsons," says Marcus Moore, director of mechanical engineering at TMIO, referring to the space-themed Hannah-Barbara cartoon that aired during the 60s, 70s and 80s. And speaking of the Jetsons, TMIO even has a "Remote Repairman," the sound of which is strikingly reminiscent of "Rosie the Robot." But the Remote Repairman is not a robot—he is a person who will help troubleshoot the ovens via the Internet.

The TMIO Connect Io ovens are also unique because of the accommodations they provide for people with particular physical or religious needs. "We produce the only oven that is accessible to the blind," Mansberry says. "They can simply dial up their oven on their cell phone to set the time and temperature." TMIO's Connect Io has also received Star K certification and been blessed by Rabbi Moshe Heinemann. TMIO has programmed a "Sabbath Mode" into the Connect Io ovens so that they can cool and warm meals according to Orthodox Jewish regulations for the Sabbath and holidays.

Moore and Kendall both grew up in the

Chattanooga area and they are thrilled to be involved in developing this kind of technology right in their hometown. "I felt on the day we met David [Mansberry] like I had shaken the hand of the next Bill Gates," Moore says. *Time* magazine named the TMIO oven among one of the coolest inventions of 2003—it was right up there



TMIO's Connect Io oven has received recognition from the Consumer Electronics Association for three consecutive years and was named among *Time* magazine's coolest inventions of 2003.


with iTunes Music Store, camera phones and Toyota's Prius Hybrid-electric car. And TMIO has also received recognition from the Consumer Electronics Association for three consecutive years.

TMIO is headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, where Mansberry resides, and a software research and development division is located in Cary, North Carolina. But TMIO chose to base its manufacturing operations in Chattanooga, a leader in

appliance manufacturing. "We chose Chattanooga for this project because of its rich history in manufacturing kitchen appliances," Mansberry says. "And it gives us access to engineering, production and marketing talent." TMIO is leasing a 142,000 square-foot building at the former Cavalier plant off of Central Avenue.

The company currently has 16 employees working in Chattanooga, but it has plenty of room to grow and plans are in place to have 100 employees working in months to come.

TMIO has dealers and representatives throughout the United States and Canada. In the Chattanooga area, the Connect Io ovens can be purchased through Absolute Appliance. Although Moore and Kendall are working on initial cost reductions for an anticipated 20 percent decrease within the first

year, the Connect Io oven currently sells for \$8,500. Even so, Moore says it is worth it if you calculate the savings from all the restaurant meals you won't be buying anymore. And Mansberry points out the benefits of being able to spend quality time with family again. "TMIO is allowing families to reconnect," he says. "Dinner is ready when you are." 

For more information visit: www.tmio.com.