I hear a lot of buzz each year about the Consumer Electronics Show, held in Las Vegas in January. Why is that?

It's because CES is all about what's new. CES is where most major technology innovations are announced to the world. CES can certainly help us understand the trends and predict the future. But make no mistake, what you most often see at CES is much like viewing concept cars at the auto show. Most of the exciting new technologies are not commercially available. Our estimate is that 90% of the technologies we reviewed are not commercially available in the U.S. Commercial availability typically begins in Asia before it hits the domestic markets. Many technologies are in "prototype," and companies use CES to find OEMs to brand and sell their products in markets around the world.

WHAT WERE YOUR PREDICTIONS IN 2011? DID THEY COME TRUE?

In January 2011, the iPad tablet had been on the market nine months and had sold 15 million units. The next tablet, Galaxy Tab, came to market just before CES. More than 80 new tablets were announced during CES 2011. My prediction was that "Viable alternatives to the iPad will reach the market in 2011." I think this was on target. But these devices did not take market share. By the end of 2011, the Apple iPad held onto nearly 90% of the tablet market.

My second prediction plays into the market share of the iPad. I predicted, ‘Price point for a 10.1-inch tablet remains near $500’ Until the surprise release of Amazon’s Kindle Fire at $99, this prediction was on target. I also predicted, ‘tablets will compete based on additional features and special functionality.’ Since tablets competed on price until the release of Kindle Fire in November, this was also on target.

WHAT DIFFERENCES DID YOU SEE BETWEEN CES 2011 AND CES 2012?

Last year, the star of CES was clearly the tablet. This year, the big news was all about television. The best product was the new LG OLED television (55EM9600, a 55-inch OLED TV). The long-awaited OLED technology made its debut as a beautiful 55-inch OLED television that is a mere 4-mm thick with a 1mm bezel. Other television technologies at CES included SimpleTV, a next generation DVR that has no video output. Instead, SimpleTV records over-the-air HDTV content, then streams it to supported devices such as Google TV, Roku and the iPad. TVs that connect to and access content from the Internet were also a big part of CES this year. Google and Samsung showed their offerings, and rumors abounded about Apple launching an iTV later in the year.

It is also important to note the emergence of the ultrabook at CES. While anyone who owns a MacBook Air wonders what all the fuss is about, those of us who work on the PC platform are finding the competing thin, light-weight laptops with full operating systems quite attractive. The new ultrabooks are sleek and sexy. The Consumer Electronics Association expects 30 to 40 models of ultrabooks to come to market by the end of 2012. Ultrabooks are forecast to replace netbooks and halt the slipping sales of PCs as consumers purchase tablets. While ultrabooks are light-weight and sexy, they are NOT tablets. You work with standard software and not with apps on an ultrabook. And until Windows 8 comes to market, the touch screen is not an option.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE TECHNOLOGY ANNOUNCEMENTS OF CES 2012 FOR PUBLISHERS?

In 2011, the tablet onslaught clearly had huge implications for publishers racing to deliver their content as widely as possible across the emerging tablet publishing channel. This year, while we saw refinements and hybridization in the tablet market space, the lack of overwhelming leaps in publication delivery technologies was good news. CES 2012 predicted that we will have a year to refine production tools and workflows to deliver content to a relatively stable delivery platform environment.

WHAT NEWS DO YOU HAVE TO REPORT ABOUT TABLETS?

Practically every major consumer tech company at CES 2012 showed a tablet. All tablets are not created equal, and the trend toward the tab-
The market for tablets continues to diversify based on differences of class, interface, usability and functionality. Internet Tablets are predominant. This category includes general-purpose tablets that support e-mail, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, as well as fun apps like Angry Birds and now e-reader technology. It is interesting to note that nearly all “e-reader” products at the show featured EPUB software running on a tablet. This makes sense, as CES is all about what’s new, and E-Ink technology is so old school.

**What was your pick for best tablet at CES 2012?**

I have a tablet and enjoy reading magazines and using apps such as the Weather Channel or IMDB. I am not much of a game player, but the tablet is great for folks who are. I have struggled with the tablet because I would really like to travel for business with just the tablet. But a tablet is not a PC. I can’t use my office software, project my slides or print or use Webex. So in the end, I have to take both a tablet and a laptop when I travel.

I was most impressed with the NEC LT-W Android Cloud Communicator. This office tablet has a dual book-style display made up of two 7-inch panels. The OS is Windows 7 and it runs all standard Office applications and leverages the cloud to make this a truly functional business device. LT-W is scheduled for launch in the U.S. in April 2012.

**What were the major technology advances for tablets?**

One trend is definitely toward a higher-res display for tablets. As it turned out, the latest Apple iPad has a significantly higher screen resolution with a pixel density similar to that on the iPhone 4’s Retina Display. Asus showed off its TF700T with a 1,920 x 1,200-pixel screen. Acer also teased us with a new tablet boasting full-HD 1080p resolution.

The other hot technology for tablets is the new Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich operating system. The new OS focuses on enhancing Android’s multitasking capabilities. Ice Cream Sandwich makes common actions more visible and enables you to navigate with simple, intuitive gestures. The animations, screen resolutions and entirely new typeface give these tablets a new and modern feel. New Android Ice Cream Sandwich tablets from Coby, Asus, Notion Ink and Sony were announced at CES 2012. You can learn more at the Android Ice Cream Sandwich website.

**What predictions do you have for publishers in 2012?**

Here are my predictions for 2012:

- Tablet display size seems to be standardizing at 7.7-inch and 10.1-inch. This is good news for publishers who are designing publications for a target device size.
- Tablet display resolution is increasing, and for those tablets battery life will decrease.
- The functionality of tablets is rapidly improving while the price is dropping. The Android Ice Cream Sandwich tablets set a new price point of about $250. This means a larger audience for content will be in place by the end of 2012.
- Office Tablets are emerging to provide more PC-like interfaces and functionality while maintaining the mobility of Internet Appliances.
- Ultrabook PCs will begin to compete head-on-head with tablets.