

GPS keeps skiers inbound

By Colin Nicholson, Independent

As we drove through the desert state of Nevada, it seemed both practical and reassuring that our car's global positioning system (GPS) could find its way to a ski resort in this arid landscape of cacti and rolling tumbleweed. Sure enough, turning a corner, I caught sight of the snowy peaks and green pines surrounding Lake Tahoe. But what is perhaps more impressive is that I could also use GPS to direct myself around the slopes of the resort I had arrived at: Heavenly.



Yes, just as satellite navigation technology has become a must-have accessory in cars, sat-navs are beginning to make themselves useful on the slopes. The market leader is Satsports (satsportsgps.com), which reproduces the artist's rendition of the mountains you see on paper piste maps on your iPhone, BlackBerry or other smart phone, with a little yellow circle to indicate where you are.

I was skeptical at first, but its position-finding was largely spot-on. Occasionally, it would place me on a piste when I was on a lift more or less above it, only to correct itself. I could zoom in and out and just had to drag my finger across the screen to scroll around the map. And I could replay where I had been.

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