

by Alan J. Pierce, EdD

### The Sleek 4G – A Cellphone Signal Booster

Are you extremely dependent on your cellphone? Do you often find yourself in your car driving in an area where cellular signals are too weak for normal cellular communication? Is your home or office in a weak cellular signal area? If you answered yes to some of these questions, this product might be something you will want to own. The Sleek 4G uses an outside wired antenna and a cellphone cradle to boost your cellular signal. See photo 1. My car testing of the unit did confirm that, as advertised, it can boost a weak cellular signal. I did not have an indoor location with a weak enough cellular signal to test the Sleek 4G indoors. If it works in a car I assume it will also work indoors in your home or office.



Photo 1  
Sleek 4G

To be honest it was very difficult to find a place in the NY metropolitan area that didn't have a decent cellular signal. The NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) attitude to cellular towers, by the residents of Westchester County, did provide a reasonably decent area to see what the unit could do and how much of a hassle it would be to set it up and use.

The Sleek 4G has no internal battery. For the unit to work, the power cable that comes with it needs to be plugged into an accessory outlet (cigarette lighter receptacle) of your vehicle. You will also need to place

an antenna with a magnetic base on to the roof of the car (see photo 1 again), run its wire into your vehicle, attach this wire to the Sleek 4G phone cradle, and place your phone into the cradle when your phone is in use. See photo 2. This is not as much a hassle as it sounds if you are doing a permanent installation.



Photo 2  
Your Cellphone in the Sleek cradle

Jonathan Bacon, Wilson's director of marketing provided the following explanation on how this system boost's your cellular signal. "The rooftop antenna collects any signal and adds enough gain to get it to the booster, which is built into the cradle. The booster amplifies the signal and pushes it to an inside antenna which is built into the padding of the cradle and communicates with the phone. This inside antenna is part of the unit's patented design. When your phone is in the cradle, it couples with that antenna to bring you the boosted signal... The Sleek is about a 20 dB of boost, and the phone needs to be in the cradle for it to be in the necessary proximity to the antenna." This Wilson YouTube video shows what the Sleek 4G

can do: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4XEvQGIFWE>

If you spend most of your time driving around in an area with extremely weak cellular signal, the Sleek 4G could provide the critically needed boost so you can meet your cellular communication needs. If your home or office is also in a weak cellular signal zone, Wilson makes an accessory kit, which is sold separately, for you to use to install the Sleek 4G in your home, hotel room, or office. See photo 3.

#### Not So Cool

Even though I had the Sleek's antenna as far away from my car radio's antenna, the reception of FM radio stations were adversely affected.



Photo 3  
Home or Office Installation Kit

Alan is co-author of *Introduction to Technology Glencoe McGraw-Hill 2010* and a *TechDirections Magazine* Columnist . Visit [www.technologytoday.us](http://www.technologytoday.us) for past columns, reviews, and resources.