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- Sony Z1
- Asus GeForce GTX 780
- Fujifilm X-A1
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CHILLING WITH DJ FRESH THIS CHRISTMAS

I love the feeling and wonder that Christmas evokes. It's a time to indulge in some happily sentimental recollections and musings.

It's that time of year! Despite it being a busy, yet successful, year there are still many goals that I wish to pursue in 2014. Being an entrepreneur at heart, I like to push my boundaries. It's the craziness and hectic schedule that keeps me on my toes and makes life interesting and the Festive Season is one of the rare occasions that I actually get to enjoy some quality downtime. In fact, it really is the only decent length of time I get to spend quality time with my family and, like with everything in my life, I give it 100% commitment.

When it comes to this particular holiday, I'm as excited as any little kid who KNOWS Santa's going to come calling! For me it's all wrapped up with the fantastic feelings and memories stretching back to childhood - of warmth and security, the tree and decorations, the excitement of anticipation, my loved ones and the awesome music and

delicious food which all lead up to the brand new year stretching ahead... a fresh start.

With a youngster in the house, there are a number of reasons why my family can be found in front of our Samsung Smart TV over this merry time of year. We get together and sync all of our compatible devices to play big screen, interactive android games against each other. We get hours of entertainment in full HD and the screen is so responsive you can really immerse yourself in each game, which ensures hours of family entertainment – and some seriously stiff competition!

Creating memories is priceless and being able to share them is magical. I make sure that I capture these moments with my Galaxy Zoom and upload directly to Facebook which brings our friends and family from all over the world closer during this special time. Amid all the excitement I still like to keep my finger on the pulse, so my Galaxy Note tablet and I will also spend some quality time catching up on the latest news and tweeting about the hottest trends.

What do I want from Father Christmas this year? For a while now I have been setting my sights on the Samsung Note 3 and Gear. Not only is it stylish, but as I am always busy,

"This time of year always reminds me how grateful I need to be for all of my blessings; the roof over my head, food on the table, the health of my loved ones and a job that I love!"

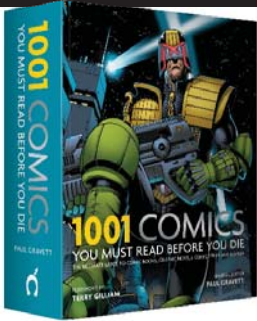
it just seems like a natural fit. I like the idea of not always having to have my phone in my hand but still being able to stay connected and have the benefits of a phone via the Gear.



DJ Fresh

DJ Fresh
Radio Personality

The illuminated path of the comic book



I got stuck into an amazing book recently – *1001 Comics You Must Read Before You Die* (Universe/Cas-sell). It's a vast resource that is easy to recommend to any comic book or sci-fi fan. While DC and Marvel are the two powerhouses of the industry, the book provides markers if you would like to venture

off the beaten path into some, well, stranger territory. Not only is manga covered, but also some alternative comics from giants such as Robert Crumb and, my two favourites, French genius Moebius and the mind-blowing Alan Moore. Even South Africa's perception-shifting Bittercomix is in there, providing a feather in the cap for artists Anton Kannemeyer and Conrad Botes.

It's interesting to note that comics are bourgeoning due to technology. Not only is the internet providing avenues for new artists to get their work noticed, but, thanks to an increase in processing power, superheroes are dominating the silver screen as never before. Taking it a step further, can it be that superheroes and technology are somehow intrinsically linked? Is it possible that they serve as a precursor for transhumanism and the further evolution of mankind? It's an idea worth exploring – any good artists up for the challenge?

May the Force be with you,
Mike (michael@techsmart.co.za)



Published by:



SMARTPUBLISHING
FREE MEDIA SPECIALISTS

Tel: 0861-777-225
2nd Floor, Block C,
Menlyn Woods Office Park,
291 Sprite Avenue, Faerie Glen, PTA
www.smartpublishing.co.za

PUBLISHING INFO

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NEWS

- 04 iPad Air
- 06 Samsung Galaxy Round
- 14 Smartphones
- 16 Cameras
- 18 Computing
- 32 Cars



FEATURES

- 08 Silk Road
We hitchhike up the internet's dark highways to see how the Silk Road came to an end.
- 10 Acer from the Netherlands
TechSmart recently travelled to the Netherlands to find out what Acer has got in store.
- 12 PS4 in SA
What is the latest news about the imminent arrival of the PS4? We spoke to the local distributor.
- 53 Games
Nov/Dec are certainly the top 2 months on the gaming calendar with a host of games being released. We find the best.

COLUMNS

- 52 Pippa Tshabalala
Pippa might just suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder after too much rAge.
- 56 Deep Fried Man
DFM believes it's time to wave goodbye to BlackBerry, since their SHIP has sailed.

CARS

- 33 Top 5 Crossovers
- 34-35 Fiat Abarth 695 Tributo Ferrari

SCIENCE

- 30 The Hype about Higgs
- 31 Smart Answers

REVIEWS

- 20 LG G2
- 21 Samsung Galaxy Note 3
- 22 Sony Z1
- 24 Logitech G500s
- 24 Asus Nvidia GeForce GTX 780
- 26 Fujifilm X-A1
- 26 Canon EOS 100D

LIFESTYLE

- 36-37 Style Vault
- 38 Geek Glasses
- 40-41 Top 5 Time Travel Flicks
- 42 Top 3 Comics that should be Movies

GAMING

- 54-55 FIFA 14 vs. PES 2014

Corrections: Issue 121, October 2013.

P40. The Oakley sunglasses featured here was incorrectly priced at R189. The Oakley Garage Rock range actually starts retailing at R1 390 at Sunglass Hut.

P42. The image of the "Schick Quattro Titanium" is actually the Schick Quattro Titanium Freestyle. It retails for approximately R94.95. The Schick Hydro razor that has been featured with the Nivea products is the Schick Hydro 5, retailing for about R64.95. These are available from all leading retailers and pharmacies.

We apologise for the errors, and welcome complaints regarding errors that warrant correction. Please mail michael@techsmart.co.za.



WATCH AMÉ'S COVER SHOOT VIDEO HERE:
www.youtube.com/techsmartmag

Q+A with TechSmart cover model Amé Viljoen

Q: How long have you been modelling?

A: About four years.

Q: Favourite comic book hero?

A: It's between Black Widow, Spider-Man, Superman and Batman.

Q: Favourite comic book movie?

A: It must be Thor.

Console or PC?

A: Console.

Q: Favourite game ever?

A: Red Alert, but I haven't played in ages.

Q: Favourite gadgets?

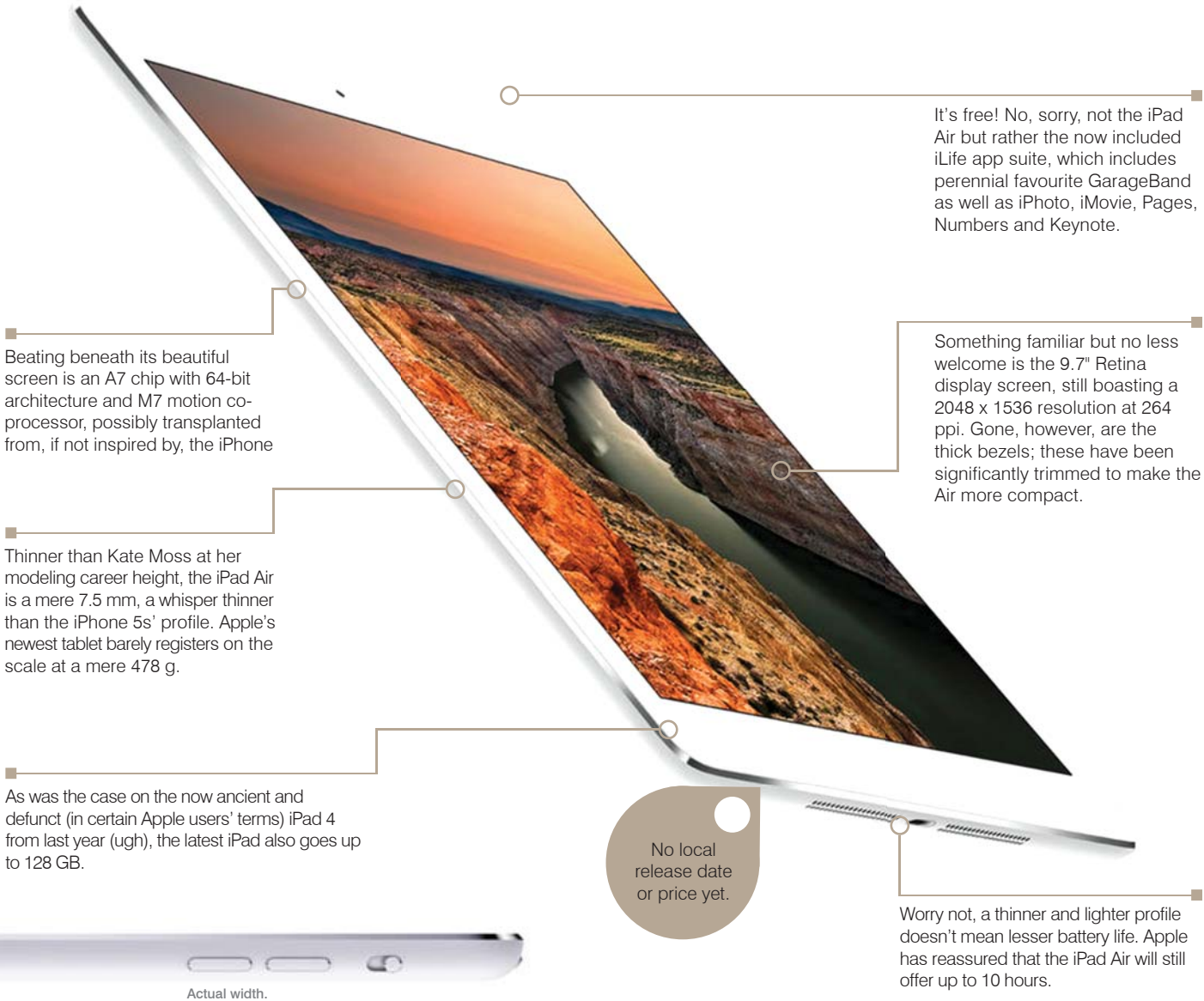
A: My BlackBerry plus my GPS since I'm a bit dyslexic with direction.



HOT STUFF

THE IPAD AIR

Apple has supermodel aspirations with its latest tablet.



It's free! No, sorry, not the iPad Air but rather the now included iLife app suite, which includes perennial favourite GarageBand as well as iPhoto, iMovie, Pages, Numbers and Keynote.

Beating beneath its beautiful screen is an A7 chip with 64-bit architecture and M7 motion co-processor, possibly transplanted from, if not inspired by, the iPhone

Something familiar but no less welcome is the 9.7" Retina display screen, still boasting a 2048 x 1536 resolution at 264 ppi. Gone, however, are the thick bezels; these have been significantly trimmed to make the Air more compact.

Thinner than Kate Moss at her modeling career height, the iPad Air is a mere 7.5 mm, a whisper thinner than the iPhone 5s' profile. Apple's newest tablet barely registers on the scale at a mere 478 g.

As was the case on the now ancient and defunct (in certain Apple users' terms) iPad 4 from last year (ugh), the latest iPad also goes up to 128 GB.

No local release date or price yet.

Worry not, a thinner and lighter profile doesn't mean lesser battery life. Apple has reassured that the iPad Air will still offer up to 10 hours.

Actual width.

AT LONG LAST

A TABLET FROM NOKIA

Nokia has finally managed to dip its toe into the tablet pool, showcasing its first ever tablet – the Windows RT 8.1 operating Lumia 2520. It is powered by a zippy quad-core 2.2 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 800 and boasts 2 GB RAM. Nokia focussed a lot of its attention on the optics since the tablet sports a 2 MP wide-angle selfie shooter, plus a 6.7 MP main camera with Zeiss optics (a first for tablets) and a low-light-be-damned f1.9 aperture. The Lumia 2520 launches in Q4 2013. No word yet on the local release window.



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At the heart of the image



HOT STUFF

SAMSUNG GALAXY ROUND

Is a curved display the latest must-have smartphone feature or will it fade out into obscurity like 3D screens on smartphones?

The 5.7" full HD Super Flexible AMOLED is curved inwards from the left and right edges, helping the Round fit the contours of your hand better.

Beneath the curvy exterior resides the quickest SoC on the mobile CPU block – Qualcomm's Snapdragon 800 quad-core processor running at 2.3 GHz per core.

The Round will see release in Korea first, with no local release date known yet



Shoot with a 13 megapixel main camera at the back and do 2 MP selfies at the front.

Quick is the name of the Round's connectivity game due to LTE (4G) connectivity, Wi-Fi 802.11ac and Bluetooth 4.0 being onboard.

The Galaxy Round offers 32 GB worth of internal storage, which you can boost by another 64 GB via the microSD memory card slot.

Multitasking should not result in any low-memory issues thanks to a whopping 3 GB worth of RAM.

ANOTHER CURVE BALL

Samsung Electronics is not the only firm with round display ambitions, as its Korean neighbour LG will reportedly release its own smartphone with a curved display dubbed the LG G Flex. Although specs are not available yet, the tech rumour mill is predicting a 6" 1080p display that is curved from top to bottom, rather than side to side like the Galaxy Round's screen.



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*External wired subwoofer, touchscreen and some features are available on selected models only.
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THE INTERNET HAS UNDENIABLY BROUGHT MASSIVE CHANGES AND MANY BENEFITS, BUT IT ALSO HAS ITS SORDID AND DARK SIDE AS PROVEN BY THE DRUG-SELLING SITE SILK ROAD. RYAN NOIK TRAVELS UP THE HIDDEN PATH TO SEE HOW IT CAME TO AN END.

***DEEP WEB**

The Deep Web is a section of the internet which contains information that isn't indexed by usual search engines and thus not accessible by a normal web search. It is not necessarily only host to illicit information, as private sites, or those which require a username and passwords (usually for a paid subscription service) is also considered part of the Deep Web.

One of the more significant online crime empires to be brought to its knees was the largest online and illicit drug website, Silk Road, which was also accompanied by the arrest of its alleged kingpin. Silk Road's story, and its recent demise, sounds as though it was straight out of a movie script or Tom Clancy novel.

Apart from selling illegal drugs, the illicit bazaar was host to a range of other black market goods and services, including stolen credit card data, guides to hacking ATMs to commit theft and even more disturbing, a contact list of assassin's for hire, according to Wired. As is the case with all too many illicit crime networks, Silk Road had a significant clientele. It apparently racked up 1.2 million transactions during its lifetime, and was raking in significant money – in the order of up to \$1.3 billion a year.

Like all good crime stories, the Silk Road bust wounded and weaved its way into a tangled web of arrests, undercover activity and culminated in counter-threats by those lamenting Silk Road's demise.

Hard drugs and inevitable demise

The site was two and a half years old when the FBI seized the domain and caught the alleged founder, Ross Albricht, also known as Dread Pirate Roberts. Albricht, a 29 year old physics student from Austin, Texas, was arrested in San Francisco and charged with narcotics trafficking, money laundering and being involved in facilitating murder. He has protested his innocence, and apparently has a personal fortune locked away of around \$80 million (R800 million). Indications are that Albricht viewed his role in Silk Road as part of an economic simulation to "give people a first-hand experience of what it would be like to live in a world without the systemic use of force." More particularly, Albricht apparently viewed governments and institutions as the perpetrators of this use of



THE END of the Silk Road

force, and advocated a more anarchist view of how markets should be run. How he got started in the drug trade is still unclear, how he finished though, is much less so.

Ulbricht's apprehension (in a library in San Francisco) is a little reminiscent of the arrest of Kim Dot Com, the founder of Megaupload, who was similarly considered a kingpin of an underground online business that traded in copyright materials. However, Silk Road's bust is considerably bigger and more serious than Megaupload's shutdown. The reason for this is that in its brief lifetime, Silk Road had become the 'go-to' underground (or Deep Web* destination) for buying and selling narcotics online, and has been called the Ebay of narcotics. Nor were these only the 'softer' prescription drugs, rather, hardcore offerings such as cocaine and heroin were apparently also readily available.

SILK ROAD WAS RAKING IN UP TO \$1.3 BILLION A YEAR, AND 1.2 MILLION TRANSACTIONS DURING ITS LIFETIME.

From there, the story only gets weirder, as Ulbricht came to the attention of the Department of Homeland Security after that agency found a shipment of fake identity documents, all with his photo. Inexplicably enough, he is reported to have drawn attention to Silk Road as being a site where "anyone" could have "theoretically" ordered such documents. Perhaps he believed that authorities would rule him out as having a connection to the site, not to mention being its founder; counting on them reasoning that Ulbricht wouldn't possibly have the gall to implicate his own crime empire. Clearly, he was mistaken.

Truth and consequences

Ulbricht wasn't the only one gifted with a pair of 'steel bracelets' by law enforcement; his arrest was followed by the apprehension of several others with ties to the online drug trade. These arrests though, showed that Silk Road's reach was global, spanning multiple countries that

included the US, UK and Sweden.

What's more, the bust has also cast a bit of a shadow on the internet's secure virtual currency, Bitcoin, which was the only accepted means of payment on the Silk Road site. While Bitcoin is perfectly legitimate, an online currency that is traded and used for many legitimate uses, its favouritism amongst drug dealers hardly did its reputation too many favours.

While the Bitcoin currency did briefly plunge in the wake of the Silk Road bust, it subsequently returned to its original value. Nonetheless, at this time of writing, Bitcoin is still largely considered blameless and expected to continue as online currency.

Another fallout from the Silk Road closure was the backlash against the authorities, with some elements affected apparently trying to 'name and shame' particular FBI agents, by finding and leaking their personal details, including their physical address, photos and details of their family, online. These, though, were largely considered intimidation tactics aimed at trying to instil fear in those charged with upholding the law.

To the point

One thing that Silk Road's shutdown does have in common with Megaupload's fall is that it similarly doesn't spell the end of illicit activities online, much like piracy and copyright infringement still largely continues. Indeed, no less shady sites are still in existence and likely to take its place, while rumours are circulating that Silk Road 2.0 may already be in the making.

If anything though, Silk Road has only pushed the existence of the Deep Web more fully onto centre stage, showing that even this, supposedly hidden and impenetrable underground of the web may not be quite so impervious to law enforcement as originally presumed. With the FBI now going after prolific users of Dread Pirate Roberts' empire, one thing is certain: for them, it may very well be the end of the road in more ways than one. [RN] **ts**

Acer ramps up notebook offerings



Acer unleashed a tour de force of new products in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. At the invitation of the company, TechSmart was on hand to witness the unveiling of Acer's new offerings, and garner some first impressions.

While Acer showcased an extensive range of devices across its portfolio, there were a few hardware highlights – namely notebooks – that really stood out.

Leading the pack were the new TravelMate P645 and P445 models. While both are billed as the company's business ultrabook, the former boasts a "rock solid" carbon fibre chassis, as compared with the P445's still highly durable aluminum/magnesium alloy chassis.

The P645 is also a bit more portable, with a slim profile (20.9 mm height), while weighing in at a very manageable 1.5 kg. Worth noting too is that the P6 series will come in 13", 14" and 15" models. No less important, we were told that the P645 will boast eight hours of battery life, as well as 3G, NFC and the new 802.11ac Wi-Fi standard. Additionally, as befitting business users, for whom security is key, the ultrabook sports Intel vPro technology.

The 14" P445 series meanwhile packs one of our favourite features, a backlit keyboard, and almost ten hours of battery life, but is slightly heavier at 2.2 kg. Similarly, the ever-present security concern is catered for via Trusted Platform Module (TPM) and a biometric (fingerprint) reader. Both of these are expected to peak their heads above water in the EMEA region before the end of the year, with the P645 sporting a starting price of €1 150 (R15 000), while the P445 is expected to start at €700 (R9 100).

Prince of portability

The TravelMate X313 is the ultrabook/tablet that most caught our eye. This 11.6" touch device, which at one moment resembled a Windows 8 tablet, and the next, an ultrabook, weighs in at a not-bad 770 g. If Acer's asserted battery life – up to a superb 18 hours in reading mode – is accurate, it really may just be the travelling user's next best friend. In our brief hands-on time with it, we came away impressed, particularly by the bright and sharp screen. Also winning us over was the zippy performance on offer, thanks to the 3rd gen Intel Core i5 processor (not Haswell, at least at this point).

According to Acer, its erstwhile tablet-ultrabook offering will be up to weathering the elements, and has been subjected to temperature, acoustic noise, vibration, shock, free drop and pressure tests "in order to offer users the most reliable all-in-one device." Price wise, expect to see it, similarly this year rather than next, accompanied by a starting pricetag of €1 000 (R13 000).

Furthermore, Acer unveiled three new workstations in the Veriton P series. These heavyweights, apparently built to the highest specifications, are also aimed at handling the heaviest of workloads, and are particularly intended for those in the fields of design, engineering and research.

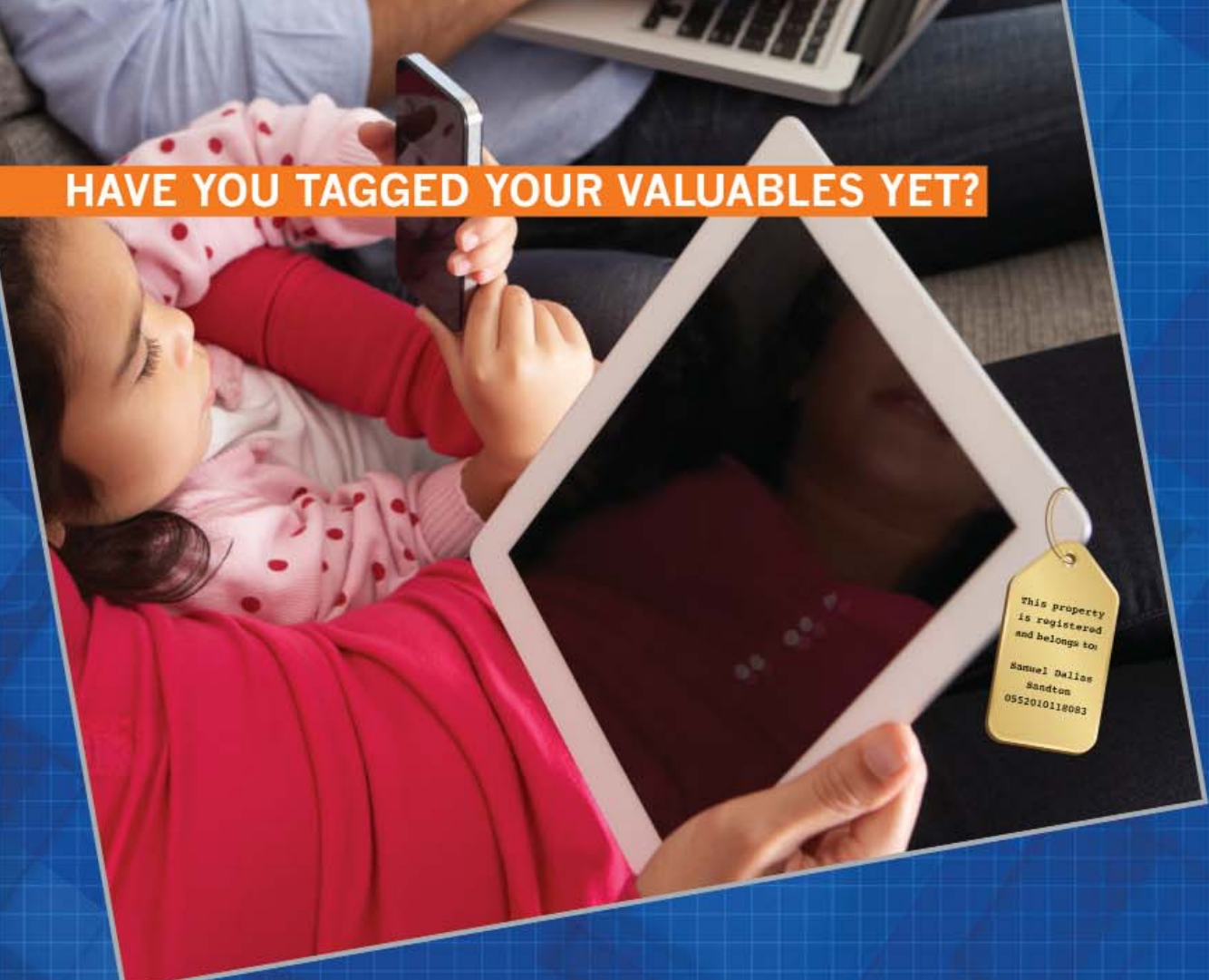
To the point

Of course, that wasn't all that Acer brought to Amsterdam, but it was certainly enough to whet our appetite for the months and year ahead. Hopefully, 2014 will once again be an exciting year for mobile computing, particularly as in 2013, the product category seemed to have lost a bit of its shine. [RN] **ts**

BREAKDOWN BOMBSHELL

Along with new products, Acer also dropped a positive bombshell. Jakob Olsen, the VP for the commercial division Acer EMEA stated that so confident was the company in its own products, that if a new Acer notebook broke down within its first year, not only would the company repair it, but it would also give the customer back half of the purchase price. This, he explained would not be retroactive – users couldn't dig out their old Acer notebook from five years ago and simply claim that it had broken down within its first twelve months.

However, it was really what Olsen said informally that was music to our ears, namely that South Africa would receive the same level of attention as the developing countries typically do, as regards product releases. In an industry where certain new devices never make their way to local shores, this was certainly welcome news.



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PS4 in SA

The Inside Scoop

With the PS4's launch coming inexorably closer, the time was right to get the inside scoop from the CEO of Ster Kinekor Entertainment, Mario Dos Santos, on all things PlayStation.



Dos Santos began by explaining that the PS4's slight delay – from its original 6th of December to the 13th – was only due to bringing the South African launch in line with the Middle East region. Additionally, he elaborated that the extra week allows for "issues" with customs, considering it will be the first time the device is brought into the country. However, the console's price point is still between R6 199 and R6 299, depending on retailers' markup, and this is likely to remain the same. Dos Santos expressed confidence that the new console is priced at the right level, pointing out that the PS4 is not just an improved PS3, but rather a completely different console. For example, the PS4 is built around providing a more social, sharing element to gaming.

Can't we just get along?

Additionally, the new console is largely expected to revive the fortunes of Sony's underappreciated portable console, the PS Vita, as the two complement each other. Furthermore, owners of both can look forward to more cross-play and cross-buy titles in the pipeline; while PS4 and PS Vita bundles are also being planned.

PRE-ORDERS WILL LIKELY ENSURE THAT MOST PS4'S ARE SNAPPED UP AS SOON AS THEY ARRIVE ON OUR SHORES.

What then, is the fate of the PS3? According to Dos Santos, both the PS4 and its predecessor will be able to happily coexist for the foreseeable future. Additionally, Dos Santos alluded to Sony potentially tapping into another market segment with its aging, but still very capable PS3, which he pointed out is still the company's most profitable console. While there is no official indication, he expressed hope that the arrival of the PS4 could prompt further price-cuts on both the PS3 and its strong library of games.

Brace yourself

It's no secret that, in South Africa at least, Sony has beaten Microsoft to the punch, with the Xbox One's local arrival still to be confirmed – a factor that has certainly helped Sony's launch.

That being said, the bad news is that not everyone will be able to get a PS4 when it first arrives. While the South African region apparently received a little more than the normal allocation of units, pre-orders will likely ensure that most PS4's are snapped up as soon as they arrive on our shores. However, the silver lining for those intent on starting the New Year with a new console is that a further shipment is planned for early January, and these may be accompanied by a free game or voucher of some sort.

Dos Santos also had an interesting opinion on Valve's recent announcement that it will be launching its SteamBox in the new year, in a bid to bring PC gaming more fully into the living room. He explained that different gaming machines will likely coexist, pointing out that there are already players who have more than one console, or split their focus between a console and a gaming PC.

To the point

As to what PS4 games he is personally most excited for, Dos Santos singled out Killzone: Shadow Fall and the next entry in the inFamous franchise, Second Son. Additionally, he enthused that users can look forward to a particularly vibrant raft of indie games on the PS4 in the months ahead. All said and done, it looks like the PlayStation faithful are in for an exciting time ahead. We cannot wait. [RN] **ts**

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LG G2

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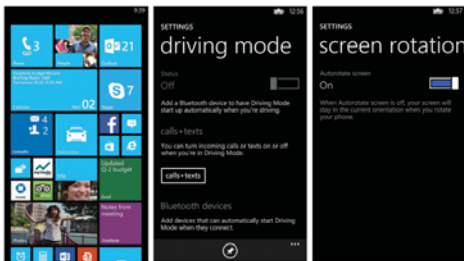
PHONE HOME: THE LATEST SMARTPHONE NEWS

HTC stretches display to the **max**

HTC lifted the lid on its One max phablet, which supersizes the 4.7" full HD touchscreen of the One to 5.9" (1080p). Powering the Android 4.3 Jelly Bean-running device is a quad-core 1.7 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 600, with this CPU being backed up by 2 GB of RAM. Also onboard is LTE connectivity, NFC, Bluetooth 4.0, Wi-Fi 802.11ac, HTC's BoomSound stereo front facing speakers, a 3300 mAh battery, and a fingerprint scanner on the back. The latter is used to lock and unlock the smartphone, as well as quick-launching selected applications. This is done by pre-assigning individual fingerprints to particular apps. Unfortunately, HTC is not bringing the One max to South Africa.



| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Display 5.9" full HD | Performance Qualcomm's Snapdragon 600 quad-core CPU (1.7 GHz) | RAM 2 GB |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------|



MICROSOFT reveals GDR3 update for **Windows Phone**

Microsoft is adopting the prevailing smartphone mantra of bigger is better, courtesy of its third software update for Windows Phone 8 entitled GDR3 (general distribution release 3). The biggest display currently found on a Windows Phone is the 4.7" touchscreen of the Lumia 625, but GDR3 supports display sizes of up to 6" and resolutions of 1920 x 1080. Additionally, Windows Phone devices can employ quad-core processing power. Beyond added hardware support, GDR3 also brings a myriad of software enhancements such as the ability to close individual apps on the multitasking screen.



BLACKBERRY: You can **count** on us

BlackBerry recently acknowledged the challenging times it finds itself in within an open letter to its customers, partners and fans. According to the letter, the company is "making the difficult changes necessary to strengthen BlackBerry." What is not so reassuring is a lack of strategy via which BlackBerry will be getting BlackBerry 10 device in the hands of more users. Although the company is currently considering a \$4.7 billion buyout offer from a consortium led by Fairfax Financial Holdings, it is also looking at other offers.



Read the full letter by going to bit.ly/BBhere2stay.

NOKIA illuminates **phablet** sector

Nokia unveiled its Lumia 1520 phablet at Nokia World in Abu Dhabi last month. It packs a 6" 1080p ClearBlack display, 20 MP PureView camera, quad-core 2.2 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 800 CPU and 2 GB RAM. Also new to the Lumia lineup is the Lumia 1320 that boasts a 6" 720 x 1280 LCD, Qualcomm's dual-core 1.7 GHz Snapdragon 400 processor and 1 GB RAM. **ts**



Games get green light on **SA App Store**

Apple has finally confirmed that the games section of the App Store is now officially available in South Africa. This means that users no longer need to create a fake UK or US account in order to gain access to this section of the App Store. There is a wide range of popular games available ranging from free ones like FIFA 14, Plants vs Zombies 2 and Asphalt 8: Airborne through to paid ones such as Infinity Blade 3, Modern Combat 4 and N.O.V.A. 3.

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GALAXY Note 3 + Gear

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SNAP! THE LATEST CAMERA NEWS

NIKON D610 jumps ahead

Release cycles on high-end cameras are usually long and it can take a number of years before one model follows-up an old one. That's why news of Nikon's new D610 full-frame DSLR came as such a surprise. The previous D600 was released by the yellow photo company only last year. So why was the new model released so quickly? The rumour mill speculates that Nikon was forced to play its hand due to the sensor dust issue that plagued the D600.

Improvements include better white balance, faster continuous shooting (from 5.5 to 6 fps) and a new Quiet Continuous Shutter mode that allows for lower noise photography at 3 fps, but unfortunately still no Wi-Fi or GPS. The D600 will still be available (R22 000 body only) with the D610 here in mid-November, costing R32 400 for the body-only.

| Resolution | Weight | ISO | Exposure |
|---------------------|----------|--------------|----------------------|
| 24.3 million pixels | 760g b/o | Up to 25 600 | 1/4000 shutter speed |



SONY A7 goes full-frame mirrorless



With full-frame sensors (24x36mm) already making an appearance in compact and rangefinder cameras, it was only a question of time before they arrive in mirrorless cameras. Sony has introduced the Alpha 7 and Alpha 7R compact system cameras which are set to take on the dominance of full-frame DSLRs from Canon and Nikon. The A7R crams in a massive 36 megapixels, while the 24 megapixel A7 includes an anti-aliasing filter and a different auto-focus system. Onboard you'll find Wi-Fi, NFC and a 1/2" electronic viewfinder with a so-so 786 432 resolution. These premium mirrorless units are set to ship in December, with the A7 going for \$1 700 and the A7R for \$2 299. No local release info is available yet.



LEICA M for (RED) goes to auction

How do you make an already expensive product even more expensive? Get two of the world's top designers to collaborate on a special edition. Jony Ive (the Sir responsible for Apple's amazing look) and one of our favourite designers, Marc Newson, got creative with Leica's M rangefinder camera. 85 days, 561 models and 1000 prototype parts later the Leica M for (RED) emerged. With a laser machined aluminium body and full frame CMOS sensor, it's set to go to auction on 23 November. The money raised is going towards The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.



New K-3 flagship for PENTAX

It's new flagship time for Pentax with their K-3, which it reckons is "Benchmarked as the most advanced enthusiast DSLR available". Featuring a 24-megapixel APS-C CMOS sensor, the camera has a trump card in an anti-aliasing filter that can be turned on or off – a world first. When off, the lack of anti-aliasing filter increases sharpness but also the chances of moire patterns. Now with the K-3 at least users have a choice to use it or not. The K-3 is speedy at a claimed 8.3 fps (for 60 images in JPEG), also coming with dual-memory card slots, a light sensitivity of -3EV, and a weather-proof magnesium alloy body. Expect it in SA around mid-November, going for R19 000 body only. **ts**

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ENTER COMPUTING NEWS

DELL

Now its general users' turn

While previous months saw Dell catering to business users, of late, it has been general users receiving new notebook affection. More particularly, the company recently unveiled new XPS notebooks. The XPS 15 can be equipped with an optional 15.6" Quad HD+ (3200 x 1800) display boasting 5.7 million pixels – five times the amount of standard HD. Also onboard are the 4th generation Intel Core i5 and i7 quad-core processor options as well as Nvidia discrete graphics. The company further announced a refresh of its XPS 13 ultrabook to include Intel 4th generation processors, Intel HD 4400 graphics and a 13.3" full HD (1920 x 1080) touch display. Pricing has yet to be confirmed although both are expected to become available from this month.

Display
15.6-inch Quad HD+ (3200 x 1800)

Processor
4th generation Intel Core i5 and i7 quad-core processor options



SONY

unveils VAIO Fit range

Also revealing a new range was Sony, as the company lifted the metaphorical lid on its VAIO Fit notebooks. The 15A, 14A and 13A aim to attract users with a multi-flip hinge, which allow them to convert the hybrid notebooks between conventional notebook, tablet and viewer modes by flipping the display over the hinge. Expect to see up to Core i7 processors, Sony's Triluminos display, backlit keyboards as well as Sony's own Inspiration Suite of apps. At the time of writing, prices of the products weren't available, although availability is on the cards for later this month.

Windows 8.1



WINDOWS 8.1

update shows its downside


Apparently all is not well with the Windows 8.1 update, which went live last month. After reports began emerging that the update in particular didn't work with Windows RT devices, even 'bricking' (rendering unusable) Surface RT tablets, Microsoft pulled the update to fix its problems. Furthermore, it seems as though while Windows 8.1 brings back the Start button, it doesn't restore the Start menu that users have become familiar with over the many iterations of the OS. Instead it just refers you to Windows 8's Metro interface. Our recommendation? Unless you use the Metro interface often, don't update straight away.



CONNECTIVITY

at the speed of light(bulb)

So how many scientists does it take to screw a lightbulb into the net? China revealed that it is making progress on enabling users to connect to the internet using light fidelity, or Li-Fi. The experimental technology entails wireless signals being sent via lightbulbs, with those equipped with microchips able to offer speeds up to 150 Mbps. At present, one of the problems is that connectivity gets cut off if the light source is impeded. However, all it needs is a scientist or two to have a 'lightbulb moment', and come up with a bright idea to make this work commercially. **ts**



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LG G2

LG is one of the top 5 mobile phone makers globally, but the company's local presence is small. Will this change with its new flagship – the G2?

Despite being around the same size as a Galaxy S4, the G2 boasts a bigger 5.2" full HD (423 ppi) IPS touchscreen, which we feel is the currently display benchmark for smartphones. This is thanks to its excellent picture quality and barely-there (2.65 mm) edge-to-edge bezel that allows for a more immersive movie viewing experience by bringing the video more to the foreground.

Another design arrow in the G2's quiver might be a hot button styling issue for some users. The volume rocker and power button can be found on the back of the smartphone and although this does take a bit of getting use to, you'll quickly get the hang of it, especially since that is naturally where your index finger rests when holding the device.

Snapdragon power and camera prowess

Powering the Android 4.2.2 Jelly Bean operating smartphone is Qualcomm's mightily impressive Snapdragon 800 quad-core clocked at 2.26 GHz per core. This CPU is backed up by 2 GB of RAM and some impressive battery life (1½ days with heavy usage) from the sizeable 3000 mAh battery. The Snapdragon 800 recently helped the Sony Xperia Z1 to the top of our smartphone benchmarking test scores and now has done the same for the G2, beating out all rivals including, the Z1 and the eight-core CPU of the Galaxy Note 3.

THE G2 IS EASILY ABLE TO COMPETE HEAD ON WITH ANY OF ITS RIVALS THANKS TO PACKING MIGHTILY IMPRESSIVE SPECS WITHIN AN EYE-CATCHING PACKAGE.

Equally impressive is the optics onboard the G2, with the highlight being the 13 MP main camera that features OIS (optical image stabilisation) that allows for clearer, blur-free stills and video recording.



Beyond less shaky video, users will also appreciate the enhanced audio recording and playback (24-bit 192 kHz Hi-Fi quality sound) on offer with the G2. This enables louder sound playback and audio recordings with noticeably less distortion. A myriad of other handy software enhancements are available including our favourite Knock-On, which enables users to turn the display on and off simply by tapping on the screen twice.

To the point

At the end of the day, the G2 is easily able to compete head on with any of its rivals thanks to packing impressive specs within an eye-catching package. In some aspects (battery life, CPU power) it even surpasses the firm favourite with local buyers – Samsung's Galaxy S4. It goes for an RRP of R8 000, making the device around R500 cheaper than a Galaxy S4 and R1 900 less than an Xperia Z1. [HD] **ts**

QUICK SPECS

Processor
2.26 GHz quad-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 800

Memory & Storage
2 GB RAM; 16 GB internal storage that is non-expandable

Display
5.2" full HD IPS touchscreen; 424 ppi

Operating System
Android 4.2.2 Jelly Bean

SAMSUNG

Galaxy Note 3

Samsung's Galaxy Note 3 is the company's third Note; it is also its best phablet, if not finest smartphone, to date.



The Galaxy Note 3 differs from its predecessors in a small, but immediately noticeable respect. It's both taller and narrower, fitting more easily into the hand, immediately evoking a sense of it being a larger Galaxy S4. Additionally, it is also quite a bit lighter (15 g) than the Galaxy Note 2 at 168 g, making it strangely enough feel somewhat less unwieldy than its predecessors, despite having a larger 5.7" screen.

Speaking of its display, the Galaxy Note 3's full HD (1920 x 1080) Super AMOLED screen is magnificent, a real invitation to the eyes, thanks to the fact that it boasts 381 ppi (pixels per inch).

Watch me fly

Also aiding the general usage of the device is the fact that it runs on Android 4.3, with general tasks working, as smooth as butter. This is largely due to the processor under the hood. In our review model, this was the Samsung Exynos (5420) Octa-core SoC processor with four A15 cores running at 1.9 GHz per core and four A7 cores clocked at 1.3 GHz each, along with the onboard 3 GB of memory. That

should deliver spectacular performance, and guess what? It does.

For a bit of a snapshot of just how fast and smooth the Galaxy Note 3 performed, one only needed to look at its benchmarks. It scored a staggering 34 739 in AnTuTu (nearly

THE NOTE 3 IS AMONGST OUR TOP CONTENDERS FOR SMARTPHONE OF THE YEAR.

triple the score achieved by the speedy Galaxy Note 2, and even surpassing the Galaxy S4's respectable score of 28 158). It also raced past the competition in Smartbench 2012, delivering a total Productivity plus Games Indexes score of 12 533, considerably better than the HTC One's 9783. It is still though trumped by Sony's Z1 combined score of 13 803.

The (S-)Pen is mightier

One area in which the Galaxy Note 3's progression over the previous models was clearly

apparent was in the use of the S-Pen. Gone was the annoying lag when using the stylus, and now, drawing and writing with the stylus felt that much more refined. Also, the S-Pen itself is quite a bit more comfortable to hold in one's hand; a small, but important detail if you are going to rely on this phablet as your go-to digital notebook.

Also winning us over was the onboard rear camera, which has seen itself similarly improved from the onboard camera found on the Galaxy Note 2. Instead of 8 megapixels, smartphone shooters now have 13 megapixels to play with, with the camera producing impressively saturated and sharp images.

To the point

If we had to nitpick though, the only fault we could find with the Galaxy Note 3 was in the placement of its power button on the phone's right hand side, which people with larger hands may find themselves inadvertently hitting. Also, its price is a wallet breaking R9 000. Otherwise, just like the Note 2, the Note 3 is amongst our top contenders for smartphone of the year. [RN] **ts**

QUICK SPECS

Processor
Samsung Exynos (5420) Octa-core SoC processor

Memory & Storage
3 GB; 32 GB expandable via microSD

Display
5.7" Super AMOLED 1920x1080 (381 ppi)

SONY Xperia Z1


 REVIEW


Following the release of the Xperia Z last year, Sony has continued to impress us with its smartphone lineup. Can it keep a good thing going with the Xperia Z1?

As with its predecessor, the Xperia Z1 feels very premium in hand thanks to the choice of materials (tempered glass plates and aluminium), plus a stunning 5" full HD Triluminos Display. It makes photos, web-pages and videos look incredibly crisp thanks to an excellent 441 pixels per inch. That being said the viewing angles on this display does not match those of the S4, whilst the Lumia 925's screen is far less reflective when used in direct sunlight.

Like some others in the Xperia lineup, the Z1 is both water- and dust proof (IP55 and IP58), so there is no need for death defying dives to prevent soda spills or trying to catch the Z1 before it falls in the toilet. The only aspects of its design that we do not like, and which we suspect might cost it a few sales, is that it is a bit thicker (8.5 mm vs 7.9 mm) and noticeably heavier (169 g vs 146 g) compared to the previous Xperia Z.

Two biggest draw cards

Beneath its suave exterior resides the fastest mobile processor currently available – Qualcomm's quad-core Snapdragon 800 running at 2.3 GHz. This CPU is backed up by 2 GB RAM so we expected it to be snappy and fluid whilst navigating Android 4.2.2 and multitasking and it is. More impressive though is that the Snapdragon 800 helped the smartphone achieve excellent benchmarking scores across the board (Quadrant Standard; 3DMark; AnTuTu; Smartbench 2012).

THE Z1 HAS THE CPU AND CAMERA TO BACK UP ITS FLAGSHIP CREDENTIALS.

The other headline feature of the Z1 is its 20.7 megapixel Exmor RS for mobile CMOS image

sensor, the biggest one found on any Android smartphone and second only to the 41 MP sensor on the back of Nokia's Lumia 1020. It is easy to capture great looking photos with this camera, since it defaults to a Superior Auto mode in which all the settings are automatically adjusted for you. In this mode, the camera captures 8 MP photos, but you are able to take 20 megapixel photos and manually adjust settings such as white balance and ISO by switching to Manual mode.

To the point

The Xperia Z1 is another great all-round smartphone from Sony that looks and feels premium in hand. More importantly, it has the CPU and camera to back up its flagship credentials. It goes for a recommended retail price of R9 900, which is expensive seeing that you can get a Samsung Note 3 or S4 for less. [HD] **ts**

QUICK SPECS

Processor
Qualcomm Snapdragon 800, 2.3 GHz

Memory & Storage
2 GB RAM; 16 GB storage with microSD

Display
5" full HD; 441 ppi

Operating System
Android v4.2.2 Jelly Bean

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LOGITECH G500s gaming mouse

When it comes to gaming accessories, we were particularly pleased that the G500s gaming mouse escaped its cage and darted across our desk.

While the G500s is a substantial mouse in size and heft, it's nonetheless ergonomic in the hand, which resulted in it being comfortable to play, and work, with for extended periods. In the past Logitech has made a bit of a fuss about the surface materials used in its gaming keyboards and mice, such as a hydrophobic coating on the palm area, which the company claims helps prevent players' hands from sticking.

THE G500S IS A VIABLE OPTION FOR ROLE PLAYING GAMERS AND FIRST PERSON SHOOTER AFICIONADOS ALIKE.

Suffice to say, in our time with the mouse, it did boast a rather premium feel, and we certainly could feel the difference between it and some of our other, more run-of-the-mill mice.

Long tales

We were also quite pleased to see that the mouse offered a decently long (2 m) braided cord, which provided a nice amount of freedom when connected to our rig. In the feature department, the mouse was up to some heavy gaming, supporting from 200 dpi for precision tasks up to 8200 dpi for speedier navigation, and able to process up to 12 megapixels/second. What this means in gaming

terms is that it proved particularly versatile, not just for in game tasks, but also for user's preferences in the kind of response they like from their input device.

As befitting a gaming mouse, the G500s boasted no fewer than ten customisable buttons for quick access to a myriad of commands or functions (such as varying your dpi on the fly), making it a viable option for role playing gamers and first person shooter aficionados alike. Also well worth mentioning is the dual-mode scroll wheel, which allowed us to more quickly scroll through long documents and web pages using the free-spinning scroll wheel.

To the point

There was little we didn't like about the G500s, nor was it an easy device to find fault with, unless you count odd packaging (we don't). At a rather reasonable price for a speciality mouse, gamers would be well advised to check it out. RRP: R900. [RN] **ts**



ASUS Nvidia GeForce GTX 780

Nvidia's GeForce GTX 780 utilises the same next-generation GK110 GPU architecture found on the range-topping GTX Titan. Does this equate to a titanic performance gain?

The goal of the Kepler GK110 architecture is to deliver better processing performance and provide a more efficient graphics card that consumes less power and generates less heat. A performance boost for the successor to the GTX 680 is pretty much guaranteed by the fact that the GTX 780 boasts 50% more memory and 50% more CUDA cores than its predecessor. It sports 2304 CUDA cores compared to the 1536 on offer on the GTX 680, and 3 GB of GDDR5 RAM.

Connectivity and power needs

In terms of connectivity, you get a DVI-I plus DVI-D connector; HDMI out that users with full HD monitors will appreciate; and a standard Displayport. Unfortunately the leap in performance comes with a need for more power, as the GTX 780 sucks up to 300 W via a 6-pin and an 8-pin power connector, up from the 195 W required by the GeForce GTX 680 from two 6-pin connectors.



THE GTX 780 BOASTS 50% MORE MEMORY AND 50% MORE CUDA CORES THAN ITS PREDECESSOR.

Luckily all this translates into buttery smooth gaming performance, whether you're playing less demanding titles such as Need for Speed: Most Wanted or graphically taxing ones the likes of Crysis 3. We tested the GPU on a PC powered by Intel's Core i7-4770K CPU clocked at 3.5 GHz and that boasts 8 GB RAM. During benchmarking the GeForce GTX 780 delivered a sublime score of 3277 within Heaven Benchmark 2.0 compared to its predecessor's tally of 2169. In addition, a score of 4259 was obtained via Futuremark's 3DMark 2011 DX11 benchmark test, easily beating the 3151 benchmark set by the GTX 680 last year.

To the point

The performance of the Asus GeForce GTX 780 sees it punching in a higher GPU weight class than its GTX 680 predecessor. However the added performance bite does come with a bitter aftertaste – its R10 500 asking price. It's a great deal more than the R6 220 that you fork out for last year's GTX 680. [HD] **ts**



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FUJIFILM X-A1

As big fans of Fujifilm's X-E1 mirrorless, how well does the cheaper X-A1 fare?

We loved the image quality on Fujifilm's X-1Pro mirrorless camera, while the retro-metal body of the X-E1 definitely tugged at our heart-strings. Both though were expensive (bodies only R14 000 & R9 000 respectively), and in a country still worshipping at the altar of DSLRs, they certainly didn't set the market alight.

Enter the new 16 MP X-A1 that now retails for a more affordable R7 000. For your bucks you do get a solid offering, albeit a more plastic version than the X-E1 (pretty much the same as the R9 000 X-M1 which we did not test).

THE X-E1 OFFERS A HOST OF FUNCTIONALITY, INCLUDING A CUSTOM SETTING AND WI-FI.

Missing from the X-A1 is an optical viewfinder, while the aperture adjustment is not directly on the lens anymore either. The X-A1 also doesn't use the same X-Trans CMOS sensor as the M1/E1, instead opting for the more conventional Bayer colour filter array as found on other cameras. Important to note is that it's an APS-C sized sensor, as found in bigger DSLRs, and that image quality certainly cannot be faulted.

Some added benefits

For easy adjustment of your speed/aperture and exposure compensation, Fujifilm provides two dials at the back of the camera within easy reach of your thumb. Also included is a programmable Fn button (we set it to AE Lock), and one Custom setting that makes it possible to save your personal preferences for taking portraits, for example. Although this provides versatility for those with some photography experience under the hood, Fujifilm certainly did not forget about the amateurs. This since an SR AUTO mode is include that can identify up to 54 scene types, adjusting the camera accordingly. Finally, we were surprised to find Wi-Fi onboard, a feature not usually featured on entry-level SLRs. With this you can automatically download pics to your PC, while you can also send images to smartphones/tablets if you install the Fujifilm camera application (unfortunately you can't remotely trigger your camera).



To the point

The Fujifilm X-A1 is still smaller and lighter than the smallest DSLR (Canon's 100D) while offering a host of functionality, including a custom setting and Wi-Fi. At R7 000 it makes for a compelling offering, coming with a 16-50mm kit lens that is slightly wider than usual. [MJ] **ts**



CANON 100D

**WIN!
P45**

If you are looking for the smallest, most portable Canon DSLR around, look no further – the EOS 100D admirably fits the bill.

For many a photographer, foremost on their mind is the size and weight of the camera they intend toting with them everywhere. Granted, you could opt for a point and shoot camera or a high-end compact like the G16 or even opt for a mirrorless option, but what about the photographer who has their heart set on a DSLR? Well, for them, the EOS 100D is ideal.

THE 100D HAS A DISTINCT ADVANTAGE WHERE BEING AS UNOBTRUSIVE AS POSSIBLE WAS ESSENTIAL.

For starters, at 116 x 88 x 68 mm, its body is not much bigger than the aforementioned G16 (although obviously lenses and a flash adds to its girth). Furthermore, it feels exceptionally light in the hand, and at 370 g, certainly won't weigh anyone down. We found this to have distinct advantages in general usage as well, where being as unobtrusive as possible was essential, particularly when photographing subjects are normally spooked by large cameras pointed their way.

DSLR to the core

Enhancing this, it boasts all the familiar features one expects to find in a DSLR, including a very decent 18 megapixel CMOS (APS-C) sensor, 9-point all cross type AF system, 4 fps continuous shooting and a very respectable ISO range of 100 to 12 800. Naturally, full compatibility with Canon's EF and EF-S lenses is a given, and important part, of the camera's versatility.

As befitting an entry-level camera, we found that accessing its features was particularly intuitive. While the 100D boasts an Extra Effect Shot mode, which captures two images simultaneously – one with a Creative Filter applied, as well as one standard image – this seemed to be less useful than we expected. However, the staple modes (aperture priority, shutter priority, and close-up in particular), delivered beautifully.

To the point

In the final analysis, we have to agree with the Technical Press Image Association, which awarded the EOS 100D the best entry level DSLR award earlier this year. As a DSLR, it's as easy to recommend as it is to use. It has a RRP of R8 500 with the 18-55 IS STM kit lens. [RN] **ts**

Crossing the (Nikon) Bridge: A popular choice

Nikon's range of bridge cameras is one of the most popular on the market. We look at a few of the intelligent choices available.

Bridge cameras have the best functionalities of both compact 'point-and-shoot' cameras and entry-level DSLRs. Nikon's range of bridge cameras, including the COOLPIX P520, L820 and L320, offer a combination of DSLR functions as well as being lightweight, user-friendly and ideally designed for photographic enthusiasts.

The most notable features of these cameras are the impressive super-zoom capabilities, high megapixel count, the relatively compact proportions, and in the case of Nikon's offerings, the quality NIKKOR glass.

Travelling the range

The Nikon COOLPIX P520 is billed as being 'the ultimate bridge camera' boasting 42x super zoom capabilities and 18 megapixels. With the ability to shoot wide angles or telephoto, this camera gives its user creativity to shoot different angles, and a choice of 19 scene modes. The P520 is equipped with built-in lens vibration to help steady hand-held shots,



COOLPIX P520

and also offers a vari-angle LCD screen for self-portraits. Additionally, users can easily switch over to full HD video and geotag their photographs with the built-in GPS function. The optional Wi-Fi capabilities further enable photographers to share images straight to a smart device.

choose the best scene mode to capture the optimal image possible, while ensuring that no shot is missed. The Nikon L320 is also equipped with anti-blur lens vibration technology to assist with hand held shots, and a 7.5cm LCD screen to view images in crisp clarity.

To the point

In essence, a bridge camera offers users the creative control to play around with settings, while switching over with ease between manual and auto functions. Thanks to the lightweight design, these models are perfectly suitable for a range of photographic activities. Enthusiasts, nature lovers and families can use these cameras to capture special occasions, outdoor activities and birdlife.

For photographers seeking a camera that is affordable and compact that offers optimal zoom functionality, Nikon's range of bridge cameras is an ideal choice. **ts**

Visit www.nikon.co.za for more information.

The Nikon COOLPIX L820 is a stylish and user-friendly camera with a 16 megapixel count and large 7.5cm LCD screen. Billed as a camera for every occasion, it offers both a 30x zoom and the flexibility to film all the action in full HD at the touch of a button. The camera is similarly equipped with 19 scene modes. It however, caters particularly to beginners, as it offers an Easy Auto mode to ensure all the settings are correct no matter what the location or lighting. Furthermore, the L820 can keep images sharp thanks to its side lever zoom and optical lens-shift vibration technology.



COOLPIX L820

The Nikon COOLPIX L320 is a lightweight and classic-looking 16 megapixel camera that is intended to cater to a myriad of photographic opportunities. To this end, it boasts a 26x zoom lens, user friendly buttons and Easy Auto mode. The latter configures the Nikon L320 to automatically



COOLPIX L320





Gadgets for Geeks

DELONGHI Nescafé Dolce Gusto Circolo



For a quick fix of steaming Joe there's not much that beats the convenience of new capsule coffee machines. Now Delonghi has built a great one.

While certain connoisseurs have their reservations, there's no denying that capsule coffee has captured the attention (and wallets) of those who can afford the luxury. Nescafé's Dolce Gusto system is the latest to hit the market, with the Delonghi Circolo machine making its way into our office. Credit where credit is due – it is well thought out and in many ways improves on other capsule machines. For example, the Circolo caters to tall as well as small cups, with the height adjustable so that the coffee does not splash.



The right dose

The Dolce Gusto system is based on a suggested 'dosage' on each flavoured capsule, with a scroll wheel present on the machine to adjust the machine to the recommendation. This enables the correct amount of water for the perfect cup, while also allowing to dilute your coffee if too strong.

In many ways the Dolce Gusto system is the perfect barista for bachelors since many of the 11 flavours available (not as many flavours as the Nespresso system) comes with a capsule of powdered milk – this means no more late night drives to the garage to buy milk. The Circolo machine is also quite an interesting *objet d'art* in its own right, with its circular design looking right at home next to a Harman/Kardon dock for example.

IN MANY WAYS IT IS THE PERFECT BARISTA FOR BACHELORS.

Now to these systems' Achilles' heel – the price of the capsules. The Nescafé Dolce Gusto system compares well against Nespresso prices, with a box of 16 capsules going for R80. Note though, for some of the flavours you need both a milk and coffee capsule, which means 16 capsules only provide eight cups.

To the point

What won us over was the Delonghi Circolo's attention to detail: the little magnet that locks the capsule in place; an LED that illuminates your cup, a button for cold water. All this adds up to a great coffee machine which sells for R2 500 at selected retail stores. [MJ] **ts**

CELLUON EPIC VIRTUAL KEYBOARD & MOUSE



This nifty compact device handily pairs via Bluetooth with iOS or Android devices and projects a red illuminated keyboard onto opaque surfaces, onto which one can then type as one would a physical keyboard. Although not all surfaces are ideal (irregular or glass surfaces are a no-no) it otherwise works well, although it seemed like the darker the room, the better. RRP: R1 887. www.syntech.co.za.

TRENDNET AC1750 DUAL BAND WIRELESS ROUTER



Trendnet's AC1750 Dual Band Wireless router enables you to manage two wireless networks – the 1300 Mbps Wireless AC band for the fastest wireless available and the 450 Mbps Wireless N band to connect common wireless devices. The TEW-812DRU can also handle multiple HD streams in a busy home, while HD videos and music can be shared across the network by plugging in a USB or NAS drive. Visit www.trendnet.co.za or www.phoenixdistribution.co.za for more.

TRENDNET 2-BAY NAS MEDIA SERVER ENCLOSURE



Trendnet's 2-Bay NAS Media Server Enclosure, model TN-200, is the entertainment and storage hub of a digital network. DLNA certified Smart TVs, media players, and game consoles can automatically find and play multiple HD videos and music simultaneously, while an iTunes library can be shared across the network. The device accepts two 3.5" SATA I/II hard drives (sold separately), enabling up to 8 Terabytes of storage. Visit www.phoenixdistribution.co.za for more.

TRENDNET POWERLINE 500 AV NANO ADAPTER KIT



The 500 Mbps Compact Powerline AV Adapter Kit, model TPL-406E2K, uses any electrical outlet to create a secure high speed network. Users connect the first adapter to their network and plug the second adapter into any electrical outlet for instant high speed network access. The Trendnet Powerline AV adapter automatically connects to other adapters, while up to 8 adapters can be used per network. Visit www.trendnet.com or www.phoenixdistribution.co.za for more.

STAY DRESSED UP



Forego the Bubble Bath and Soap on a Rope this festive season, and get your loved ones something special from our selection of wallets, handbags, sunglasses, jewellery, and more at DressedUp.co.za. Worth checking out is their range of Von Zipper sunglasses.

TechSmart customers get a special 10% discount too using the following coupon code: **TECHSMARTROX**.



eset How to enjoy safer technology

With the looming threat of more advance malware, ESET offers a range of solutions that protects users' electronic equipment.

These days it's become common place for just about anyone's identity and/or personal information to be stolen, duplicated or hacked. Exacerbating matters, cunning cybercriminals have started to deploy highly encrypted malware and viruses disguised as ordinary digital functions such as your web browser, apps, emails and PDF's.

According to security company ESET, its Smart Security and NOD32 Antivirus products protect users' PCs, tablets and/or mobile phones from 'hidden' malware by identifying them as a threat before they become one. Furthermore, in order to ensure that its users' online life is always protected, ESET Smart Security has created a series of new features that them to enjoy safer technology when exploring the great online.

Virus, thwarted

These features include Exploit Blocker, which adds another layer of protection against new and undiscovered malware to get one step closer to attackers. Exploit Blocker monitors the behaviour of processes, watching for suspicious activity typically associated with exploits. Once triggered, the threat is analysed

and if considered suspicious the threat will be immediately blocked.

ESET's products protect users' electronics from 'hidden' malware by identifying them as a threat before they become one.

The second feature, Advanced Memory Scanner, works alongside the Exploit Blocker to help protect against malware actively trying to evade detection. The scanner detects malware or viruses that would otherwise go undetected by the other technologies on your PC or mobile device. Vulnerability Shield then acts as an extension of the Personal Firewall in ESET Smart Security, operating on the network level and protecting against misuse of known vulnerabilities in the network.

Finally, Social Media Scanner extends security to Facebook and Twitter. On Facebook, it protects a user's timeline, messages and newsfeed as well as their friends' timelines as well. On Twitter, it protects one's profile and posts from

those they are following.

To the point

"As our use of the web, mobile and social platforms continues to grow, so cybercriminals have seen the golden opportunity to spread undetectable malware that puts personal information and online identities at risk. Smart Security and ESET NOD 32 Antivirus offers users with an easy and affordable way to benefit from the balance of both protection and usability without compromising on system performance," commented Carey van Vlaanderen, CEO at ESET Southern Africa.

Visit www.eset.co.za to find out more. **ts**



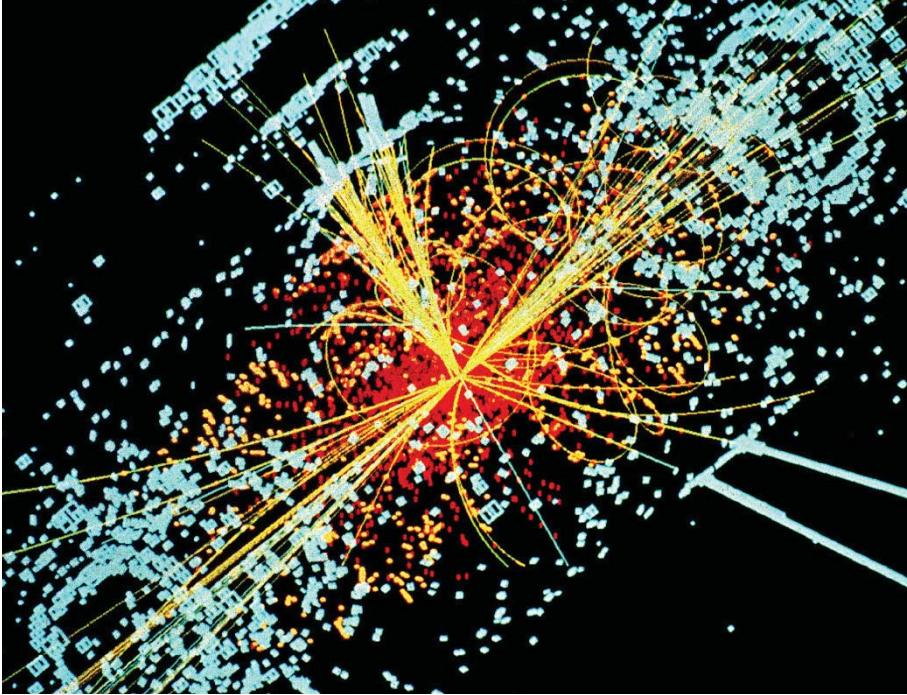

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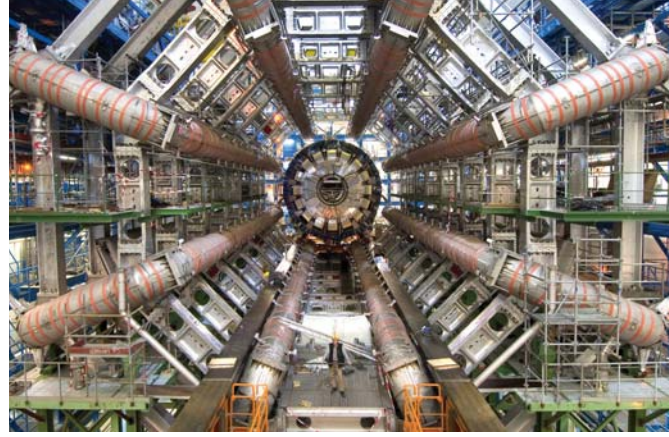
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|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|



A simulated collision between two protons.



CERN's Large Hadron Collider.

50 years ago two bright sparks, Peter Higgs (England) and Francois Englert (Belgium), did the math that suggests that the Higgs boson* should exist. Their theory was so far ahead of its time that it was only finally proven in July 2012, when researchers at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC, pictured) discovered the elusive particle. It is of little wonder then that they should be the recipients of the 2013 Nobel Prize for Physics.

The HIGGS Hype

***The Higgs boson is a carrier particle that transfers energy from an all-surrounding force field to anything that travels through the field. It's this energy transfer that gives matter mass. So, finding the particle confirms the mechanism through which matter acquires mass. And knowing how that mechanism works means we're one step closer to understanding the physics of the Universe.**

9593

The number of magnets used in the LHC to direct the particle beams.

10 000 servers
90 000 processor cores

Computing power found in the LHC Data Centre.

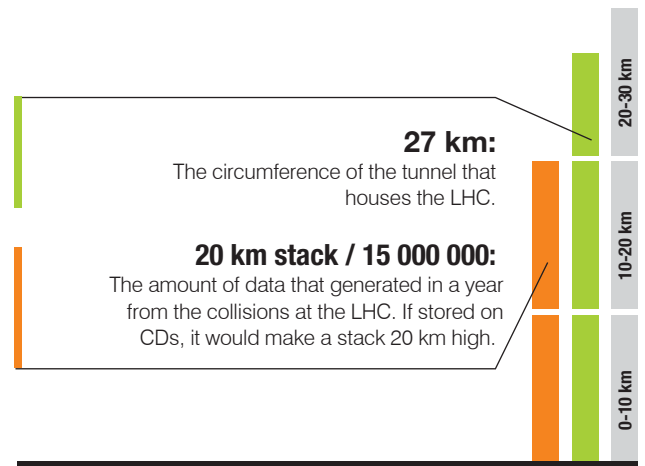
125 GeV: The mass of a Higgs boson, which is about 125 times more than that of a proton.

300 000: The number of computers used to analyse the data from the LHC.

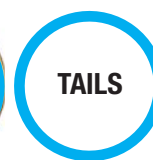
600 Million: The number of particle collisions that can be generated at the LHC every second.

-271.3 °C: The temperature to which the magnets of the LHC has to be cooled. Absolute zero is at -273.15 °C.

Sources: CERN, BBC, Scientific American, Symmetry Magazine, Nobel Foundation.



x 21



1 in 3.5 million The chance of finding the energy signal associated with the Higgs boson if the particle didn't exist.

21 in a row: It's about the same as tossing heads 21 times in a row when you flip a coin.

SCIENCE

PIC OF THE MONTH



Ant Holding a Micromechanical Gear by Manfred P Kage, Institute of Scientific Photography, Lauterstein, Germany. The photo comes from The Royal Photographic Society's international Images for Science exhibition 2013.

Visit www.rps.org/iise2013 for more.

SMART ANSWERS

Life is full of clever questions that need smart answers. We can help.



A comet striking Earth

What, the *Armageddon* cast didn't make it in time?

Uhm, no. A team of South African scientists recently reported on the first-ever evidence of a comet colliding with Earth, exploding in the atmosphere above Egypt about 29 million years ago.

What happened?

As the comet entered our atmosphere, it shattered into tiny pieces. The explosion generated so much heat that the sand beneath melted into yellow glass.

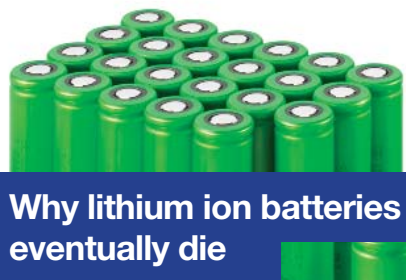
But how do we know it was a comet?

Chemical analyses of a strange black pebble found in this glass field showed that it consists of carbon and noble gases that likely came from beyond the Asteroid Belt, aka the comet neighbourhood.

And what now?

Comets contain materials from about the time when our solar system formed. Studying a remnant like this can help us understand what went down 4.5 billion years ago and teach us more about Earth.

Source: bit.ly/HeihoH
Image: Terry Bakker



Why lithium ion batteries eventually die

You mean they're not 'eveready'?

Nope. Lithium ion batteries can be recharged only for a limited number of charging–discharging cycles.

How so?

Looking at 3D videos, scientists found that the materials that the electrodes are made of expand during charging and contract during discharging.

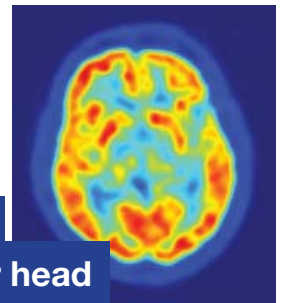
So why is this a problem?

When the electrode material expands, tiny cracks form in the microscopic structure. Although the material contracts again during discharge, it doesn't quite regain its original size. Repeated charging–discharging cycles cause the material to become weaker and weaker along the cracks until the electrode structure eventually disintegrates and the fragments lose contact with the cell.

Is there a solution?

There's hope, yes. It seems that the binding material holding the electrode together is the weak link. So finding a better binding material could help to let these batteries to never say die.

Source: bit.ly/1c5VB7s



How sleep clears your head

So have scientists finally figured out why we need sleep?

Well, they've found at least one good reason. A recent study showed that in the brains of mice, toxins that build up during waking hours are flushed out during sleep.

So without sleep the brain can clog up?

In a way, yes. The scientists found that a protein associated with Alzheimer's disease cleared faster from sleeping brains than awake brains.

How does it work?

During sleep, the space between brain cells increase by about 60%. This lets the fluid surrounding the cells flow rapidly through the brain to filter out toxins.

But why only while asleep?

The hormone noradrenaline controls the volume of specific brain cells called glia. Since the hormone is secreted only during the wake state, the glial cells likely shrink during sleep, which causes the space between the brain cells to increase. [LP] **ts**

Source: <http://1.usa.gov/19bOMwF>
Photo: Jens Langner.

RIDE: THE LATEST CAR NEWS



LAMBORGHINI BULL SEES RED ON THE NÜRBURGRING

Italian supercar maker Lamborghini is diligently tinkering away at the replacement for the sublime Gallardo. This vehicle, dubbed the Lamborghini Cabrera, is expected to be officially unveiled in 2014.

Besides an increase in power over the Gallardo's V10 to keep the Cabrera competitive against the likes of the Ferrari 458 Italia and McLaren MP4-12C, the car is also expected to be much lighter than its predecessor. This lightness will most likely stem from the same carbon-fiber monocoque construction utilised in the Lamborghini Aventador. Feast your eyes and ears on the video of the prototype vehicle being tested at the world famous Nürburgring by going to bit.ly/Cabreraspy. IMAGE: *TopSpeed.com*



More power on tap and auto gearbox for the BRZ

Petrolheads who have been praying for a bit more oomph from the engine of the Subaru BRZ, now have their prayers answered. Local buyers can opt for a 2.0 Sportshift 6-speed automatic derivative that costs R10 000 more than the 6-speed manual at R399 900. In addition Subaru now fits a performance exhaust system to all variants of the BRZ as standard to deliver an increased power output of 7 kW compared to previous iterations as well as its sister model – the Toyota 86. The normally-aspirated 2-litre four-cylinder Boxer petrol engine now produces 154 kW at 7000 RPM and 205 Nm between 6400 and 6600 RPM. Also onboard are paddle shifters on the steering wheel which makes the BRZ even more appealing.



Mazda debuts stop start system on CX-5

With sky-high petrol prices and looming e-toll charges within Gauteng, Mazda has decided to provide a bit of relief for CX-5 buyers' wallets, in the form of fuel-saving new engine technology. Mazda has introduced its smart idle stop system (SISS) on all models of the CX-5 crossover, which aims to improve fuel economy by up to 10% with in areas where the driver frequently stops at traffic lights and intersections. According to Mazda, SISS ensures that the engine will restart quickly in around half the time of other traditional electric motor idling stop systems. This tech assists the CX-5 2.0-litre petrol engine to lower its combined-cycle (town and highway driving) fuel usage figure to 6.8 litres per 100 km in manual guise and 6.9 litres per 100 km in the automatic version.



Kia Cerato hatch cruises onto local streets

Kia has hatched a plot to boost local sales of its Cerato, which sees the company attempting to lure prospective Golf, Focus and Megane buyers to its showrooms via the all-new Cerato 5-door hatchback. This hatch is powered by a 1.6-litre in-line four-cylinder Gamma engine that produces 95.3 kW at 6300 RPM and 157 Nm of torque at 4850 RPM. A higher specced 2.0 model will be locally available during the course of this month and will pack a 2-litre four-cylinder Nu engine that delivers 118 kW at 6500 RPM and 194.2 Nm of torque at 4800 RPM. Pricing starts at R229 995 for the Cerato hatch 1.6 EX and goes all the way to R299 995 for the Cerato hatch 2.0 SX AT. **ts**

Crossovers are rising in popularity due to their jack-of-all-trades appeal, above average ground clearance, and SUV-like design.

Here are our top 5.

TOP 5

COMPACT Crossovers



5. SUBARU XV 2.0i

Lineartronic CVT

110 kW; 196 Nm; R309 000

The XV is definitely not the belle of the crossover ball, as Subaru adopted a boxy, tough design that only manages to pull in the gazes thanks to an attention seeking bright orange colour scheme and two-tone 17" aluminium wheels. On offer with the XV is a great ground clearance level of 220 mm and Subaru's symmetrical all-wheel drive system, helping the XV to go where rival crossovers fear to tread. On the interior, things are well screwed together, with plenty of interior head- and legroom. We appreciated the inclusion of hill start assist that prevents you from rolling backwards on an incline.



4. BMW X1 sDrive18i

110 kW; 200 Nm; R352 500

With the X1, BMW opted for an estate with a raised ride height design, rather than the big imposing SUV look associated with the X5 and X6. Beneath the bonnet resides a 1995 cc four cylinder petrol engine delivering enough power to bring up 100 km/h on the speedo in under 10 seconds. Even though brand appeal and style are the X1's trump cards, fuel efficiency is also a big draw card with an average fuel usage figure of less than 8 litres per 100 km. Unfortunately the X1 is expensive and despite that, not the best equipped crossover in this comparison.



3. NISSAN Juke 1.6

DIG-T Tekna AWD CVT

140 kW; 240 Nm; R322 500

Nissan's Juke 1.6 DIG-T AWD CVT offers one of the best automatic transmissions in the smooth-as-silk CVT. Its all-wheel-drive system delivers plenty of grip on soaked streets and dirt back roads, but is not meant for bundu-bashing sessions. In terms of styling, the Juke boasts a love-it-or-hate-it design package that prioritises head turning appeal above interior space for rear passengers and luggage room. The Juke is not as fun to drive as the X1, but it can match the Beemer's claimed fuel usage figures in Eco mode, as we managed to obtain 8.5 litres per 100 km.



2. HONDA CR-V 2.0 Comfort

114 kW; 192 Nm; R316 000

Honda's CR-V is more of a versatile crossover than an all-terrain SUV. It offers plenty of style and practicality thanks to its 589 litres boot (expandable to 1146 litres with the rear bench pushed down). The CR-V offers dual-zone climate control, stability control, and a tyre deflation warning system as standard features. Performance via its 1997 cc i-VTEC 4 cylinder is brisk enough to compete within this segment thanks to a 10 second 0-100 km acceleration time and 190 km/h top speed, all whilst the combined cycle fuel usage figure is just 7.7 litres per 100 km.

1. FORD Ecosport 1.0L Fox GTDI Trend

92 kW; 170 Nm; R224 000

At the heart of the Ecosport's appeal lies a three cylinder turbo-charged petrol engine that produces enough shove to allow the Ford to reach 100 km/h in 12.7 seconds before powering on to an illegal top end of 181 km/h. Although these might not be the quickest figures in this comparison, the Ecosport does deliver class leading economy with a combined-cycle fuel usage figure of a mere 5.7 litres per 100 km. Equally as impressive is the amount of standard options you get, including dual front airbags, ABS, plus side and curtain airbags. More importantly, the Ford might not be the only car to offer Bluetooth audio streaming, but it is the only vehicle with a built-in infotainment system as standard, namely Ford's Sync. This system packs features such as hands-free telephony and helps this Blue Oval reach the summit of our crossover countdown. [HD] **ts**



Cross Pollination



Ferrari and their Italian owner Fiat put their heads together to come up with the limited edition Abarth 695 Tributo Ferrari. Is it a stepping stone to a Ferrari or just an expensive, enjoyable pocket-rocket?

The Abarth 695 has the distinct honour of being the most gawked at vehicle we have ever tested, as petrol pump attendants enquire about "the Ferrari", and passers-by point and snap photos wherever we drove.

Fiat enhanced the head-turning appeal of the standard 500 with, amongst others, a pair of Sabelt racing bucket seats; Racing Grey Ferrari-inspired 17" alloy wheels that are fitted with performance tires, lots of carbon fibre inlays, and a custom Scuderia Red or Modena Yellow (as seen on our test car) body paint. There are also a flurry of Abarth and Ferrari decals that add another 100 kW of power, even if it's just psychological.

This Fiat will get you noticed wherever you go, while the engine symphonics should put a smile on your face

Puts a smile on the enthusiasts face

Backing up the Abarth 695's sporty design is a 1368 cc turbocharged four cylinder powerplant that cranks out 132 kW and 250 Nm. This is especially impressive, considering that this Abarth only tips the scales at 1145 kg. This power equates to a 0-100 km/h acceleration time of less than 7 seconds and an illegal top speed of 225 km/h. Beyond its brisk pace, the driving experience is further enhanced by the sound emanating from the exhausts which definitely encourages one to keep the loud pedal floored. There's a delectable gurgle while the engine is idling. When travelling at speed though the sound transforms into a high-revving shriek that is accompanied by crackle noises when gearing up.



Fiat Abarth 695 Tributo Ferrari

What is less enjoyable though is the automatic transmission which is prone to jump the gear changing gun. When you are driving around town, the fact that the car changes gear rather quickly (around 3000 RPM) is not such a big issue, except when you want to overtake or whilst you are driving up a steep incline. Drivers can mitigate this somewhat by pressing the Sports button, which allows the engine to rev for longer above second gear (changes at around 6000 RPM) and also stiffens up the steering feel. Alternatively, you can change gear yourself by pressing the A/M button and using the paddleshifters behind the steering wheel for a more involved drive.

Living with a hot hatch

Fiat claim that the Tributo Ferrari will deliver a combined-cycle (town and highway driving) average of 6.5 litres per 100 km. We think that this is highly optimistic seeing that we averaged 11.3 litres per 100 km during the first half of our brief week-long test period. This is probably due to the fact that we kept the sport button on permanently and changed gears manually. Allowing the car to change gears automatically and pretending that there is no said Sports switch brought the fuel usage down to 10.2 litres per 100 km, which is still much more than the claimed figures.

Also worth a note is that the sporty suspension of this Fiat is quite firm, which we found to be fine most of the time, but can shake your fillings loose on the bumpy, pothole-filled roads. Equally sporty are the Brembo brakes which is particularly adept at knocking you back into those bucket seats.

To the point

Fiat's Abarth 695 Tributo Ferrari doesn't feel nearly as special as a Ferrari, but does make for a much more

affordable tribute to the Italian supercar maker. Its design will get you noticed wherever you go, while the engine symphonics should put a smile on your face. Also part of the package is some sporty handling and brisk performance. We just wished that Bluetooth audio streaming and better fuel economy was also offered by this little hot hatch.

It goes for a recommended retail price of R550 000, which is very expensive, seeing that you can pick up much quicker alternatives for less. These include the BMW M135i (235 kW; 450 Nm of torque) at less than R500 000, and the Mercedes Benz A45 AMG (265 kW; 450 Nm) for R600 000. [HD]. **ts**

→ CHECK THE TECH

The Tributo Ferrari comes equipped with Fiat's Blue&Me in-vehicle infotainment system, which is very similar to Ford's Sync. This is not surprising since both systems were co-designed by Microsoft and boast advanced voice-recognition functionality (supports UK English only).

You pair your smartphone with the Blue&Me system by turning on Bluetooth, scanning for devices and typing in the password provided on the car's central info display, located inside the instrument cluster. This will enable you to copy your smartphone's contacts to the system.

Once done, Drivers can use voice commands and steering-wheel mounted buttons to access functions such as making- or answering incoming calls, or having the SMS you just received read back to you. Unfortunately, Bluetooth audio streaming is not available, but you do get a auxiliary jack and USB port from which users can load all their favourite tracks in many different formats such as MP3, WAV, AAC, and WMA. The USB port can also charge your device if you have the appropriate cable, which is handy if you are using Google Maps on your smartphone to get about.

STYLE VAULT: THE SPORT MIX

by Mynhardt van Pletsen

Getting your overall fitness on is NB. We're not talking about channeling your inner Schwarzenegger here, we're just suggesting a little less Sheldon Cooper and a fraction more Chad le Clos. As with any sporty endeavour, there's some real challenges involved, so put away your sweatbands and let's do it.



Levi Commuter Series Trucker Jacket R540
Levi Outlet Store

Levi Commuter Series Slim Fit Jean R950
Levi Outlet Store



CHALLENGE NR 1: STAYING DRY

The keywords here are 'absorbant' and 'wickable'. When hunting for crossover athletic gear you want to make sure your garments, especially upper body ones, display both those characteristics. Fabrics like merino wool instead of cotton helps with anti-bacterial elements as well. Your colleagues will thank you. First Ascent and Columbia are both awesome brands that are locally available, and not too steeply priced.



First Ascent Terrabyte backpack R400
<http://firstascent.co.za>

Converse All Star leather lace-ups R900
Sportscene



CHALLENGE NR 2: BEING SEEN

This one is especially important when running and cycling. Combining your social or professional engagements with a quick work-out can often land you out and about after dark. That's when you need to make sure that motorists are aware of your existence on the road, before you amaze them with your effortless style. Luckily the Levi's commuter range won't allow you to compromise on either. With hi-vis stripes and roomy fits, these are your definite go to active lifestyle garb.

R990 First Ascent Renegade Jacket
Sportsman's Warehouse



CHALLENGE NR 3: MANAGING YOUR STUFF

There's nothing more frustrating than not being able to take your charger cable along to the presentation because there's no room on your bike. Investing in gear that's as at home with you in front of your screen as it is when you're hitting the tarmac, will help you conquer both worlds with minimum distraction. Quality products like the Tom-Tom sportswatch, Terrabyte backpack and Converse leather lace-ups not only look amazing, but qualify as legit fully functional gear as well. Lastly, a gorilla strength u-lock by Thule will make sure none of your stuff gets nicked.



R700 Skins compression under garments
Sportsman's Warehouse



R2 900 Tom Tom multisports GPS watch
Cycle Lab



R341 Thule cable lock
Lynnwood Cyclery

POA Specialized fixed gear track bike
Lynnwood Cyclery



CHALLENGE NR 4: WINNING

As in life, it's not about how well you do one single thing, but more about how well you can combine, adapt and mix things together. Finding the right combination of casual swag and technical gear will establish your status as both fashion evangelist and fitness enthusiast. Remember, in the end second place is just the first loser, and they can protest all they want but Charlie Sheen was right: it's about the win. **ts**



R450 Giro Commuter helmet
Cycle Lab

GLASSED GEEK

BY MYNHARDT VAN PLETSEN

TAKING OUR CUE FROM A SLEW OF BESPECKLED CELEBRITIES, HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW YOU CAN NOT ONLY EARN SOME MUCH NEEDED STYLE POINTS, BUT ALSO INCREASE YOUR PERCEIVED LEVEL OF INTELLIGENCE.



The Clark Kent



If the perfect combination of geekism and mystery is your thing, look no further than the man of steel's subtle tortoise shell beauties. A strong frame to keep his piercing gaze in check, yet subtle enough to keep them guessing.

David Green, Leaf Collection @ R1 400



The Buddy Holly

The vintage retro look of these over-sized frames yell fun and festivities. So if you want to show Peggy Sue your wild side, with a hint of artistic inclination, take these bad boys for a ride.

Ray Ban, Legends Collection @ R1 800



The John Lennon



Getting a little more pensive, these iconic shapes immediately communicate your contemplative take on the world, without getting too serious. Wear these to your next anti-establishment demonstration to show the world that we do indeed need something more than just love – we also need swagger.

Cube Series @ R850

The Steve Jobs



Bordering over into the exclusive domain of the intellectual elite, these frameless options are reserved for the seasoned and experienced spectacle wearer only. This minimalist trickery made famous by the legendary Mr. Jobs, is some subtle commentary on our over complicated perspective on how the world works. Wear only with a black polo neck, always approach with caution.

Free Form Collection @ R2 400



The Elton John



Not much more to say here, except that we all need some form of emotional prop now and then to help us forget about the seriousness of it all. We're not going to give ourselves away by telling you where we spotted these, but if you ever happen on a store that sells crazy in bulk, be sure to stock up for your next cocktail party. **ts**

* All spectacles and styles are in stock at Vision Corner Optometrists, Glen Village, Pretoria. www.visioncorner.co.za

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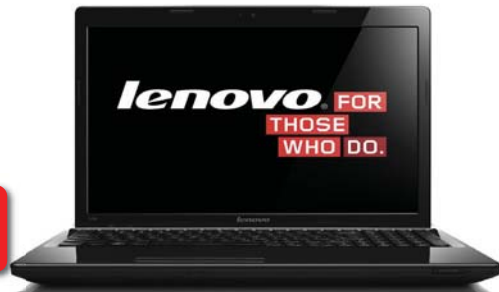
Lenovo G580 (Celeron)

bit.ly/g580cel

Intel Celeron Dual Core, Windows 8 64-Bit, 2 GB Memory, 500GB 5400RPM Hard Drive, DVD+/- RW Drive, 15.6" Display

R3 999

Budget beater!



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Top 6 TIME TRAVEL flicks

BACK TO THE FUTURE 1985

The flux capacitor, the awesome DeLorean, Marty McFly, and Doc Brown would not exist without *Back to the Future*. This irresistibly funny, charming and magical 1985 time travel classic has ingratiated itself in pop culture to the point where the three movies have their own special Lego sets available.

It's carried by two actors – Michael J. Fox's McFly oozes charm, while Christopher Lloyd as Doc Brown is the blueprint mad-scientist. Robert Zemeckis's imaginative storytelling makes *Back to the Future* a time capsule of awesome.

QUICK FACT

If it was not for a memo from none other than Steven Spielberg the movie might have been titled "*Spaceman From Pluto*".

DONNIE DARKO 2001

A haunting rendition of *Mad World* by Gary Jules closes what must be one of the most mind-bending time travel films ever conceived. In an antithesis of *It's A Wonderful Life*, a teenager is confronted with his own mortality, discovering he's experiencing a version of a future in which he should not exist.



Jake Gyllenhaal's breakthrough performance as Donnie Darko and a seething 80s soundtrack carry Richard Kelly's thought-provoking cult classic about teenage angst, time travel and destiny. A time warp in and of itself, *Donnie Darko's* dark visions of a giant bunny named Frank will continue to entertain and disturb.

QUICK FACT

The film flopped at the box office thanks to being released just after 9/11.

THE TERMINATOR 1984

Arnold Schwarzenegger is The Terminator. We could stop there, but James Cameron's sci-fi vision birthed more than just two monstrous Hollywood careers, it created an indestructible time travel franchise.



Prequels, sequels and TV series allowed film-makers to run rampant with past, present and future variations of the man vs. machine theme. If McG and Sam Worthington weren't able to kill it with *Terminator Salvation*, you could say this time travel phenomenon will only die when Schwarzenegger does, and that's if they haven't created a clone or digital version of the action icon by then.

QUICK FACT

Schwarzenegger's famous "I'll be back" was originally meant to be "I'll come back".



SOURCE CODE

2011

Source Code is what happens when you squeeze *Groundhog Day*, *Quantum Leap* and *Speed* in a time travel blender. This death-defying, out-of-body thriller zooms in on a terrorist situation as a decorated helicopter pilot (once again Jake Gyllenhaal), is tasked with finding a bomb on a train minutes before it explodes.

Inhabiting someone else's body in another time, reliving the same explosive sequence of events, trying to locate a ticking time bomb under pressure and questioning your every move make for edge-of-the-seat entertainment in this beautifully-crafted and intelligent time travel thriller from Duncan Jones (*Moon*).

QUICK FACT

Director Duncan Jones is David Bowie's son.



LOOPER

2012

Time travel and crime go hand-in-hand – just think of the possibilities: losing evidence, hiding corpses and making the ultimate getaway. *Looper* roots itself in 2074, an age where time travel has been outlawed by government agencies. Instead of facing meticulous police forensics, targets are sent 30 years back in time, when it was easier to dispose of bodies.

Writer-director, Rian Johnson, took inspiration from *The Terminator* and *Primer* in creating this fascinating sci-fi crime epic as a hitman (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) is confronted with his own worst enemy: his future self (Bruce Willis).

QUICK FACT

The diner seen in the movie was specially constructed with the crew having to field questions from locals about when it will open for business.



TRIANGLE

2009

The last place where you want to be when the gears of time travel kick in, is stranded on a boat in the middle of the ocean. Worse still, what to do when a mysterious killer starts flat-lining your friends one by one? *Triangle* is exactly what a good time-thriller should be – nail-bitingly suspenseful, secretive and ever so confusing if you haven't got your thinking cap on.

Don't get put off by the film's low-budget and relatively unknown cast – with *Triangle* you are in for a heck of a ride, if you can track it down.

QUICK FACT

There are lots of references to Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, including the number 237 popping up.

Don't WING it, SPLING it!

For awesome movie news and insightful reviews visit: spling.co.za | splingmovies.mobi | spling.mobi



3 comics that need their own movies

It seems like every second movie emanating from Hollywood is based on comics these days. But what is the good stuff that the box-office is missing? Connoisseur of comic books, Moray Rhoda, investigates.

INVINCIBLE

Robert Kirkman & Ryan Ottley
Image Comics



Mark Grayson appears to be an average teen, but he is the son of the most powerful superhero on earth, Omni Man. What the world also does not know is that Omni Man is Viltrumite, an alien from another planet and that Mark is the world's newest hero, Invincible.

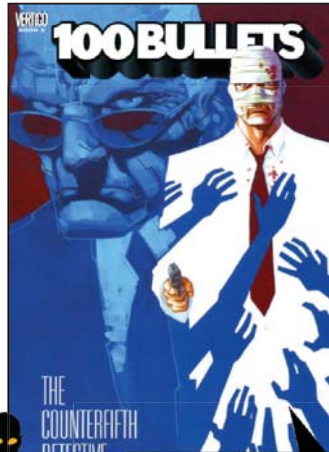
Known for its ultra-violence and pages of bloody fights, *Invincible* shows Kirkman's incredible ability to write believable characters and highly emotive scenes. After 100 issues the world of *Invincible* has become incredibly vast and stories can be set across many different planets or different dimensions, with a cast that includes aliens, cyborgs and hundreds of superheroes.

Possible director

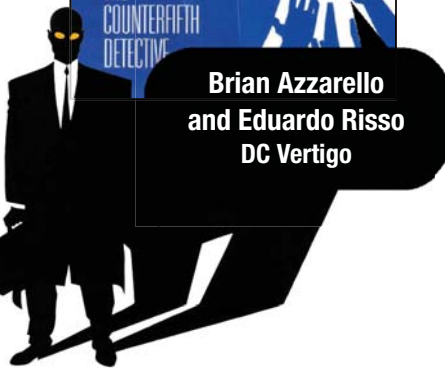
Definitely the king, Joss Whedon. He has shown his ability to handle massive worlds and ensemble casts to create blockbuster movies with just the right balance of action and comedy – *The Avengers* being the case in point.

Possible cast

Omni Man:
Bryan Cranston (*Breaking Bad*)
Mark Grayson: Sterling Beaumon (young Ben in *Lost*)



Brian Azzarello
and Eduardo Risso
DC Vertigo



A stranger (Agent Graves) shows you evidence that your terrible life was caused by a specific person and then gives you a gun, 100 untraceable bullets, and the chance to exact your vengeance with impunity.

This is the basic premise for each issue of *100 Bullets*, but the broader story is about the Minutemen, a group of seven enforcers for a clandestine group known as The Trust. The Trust, formed in the Middle Ages, are the secret power that controls the New World, and, after its betrayal, also Agent Graves's main target. Graves sets about reactivating some of the Minutemen who have had their memory wiped, such as Cody Burns who is living an unremarkable life when the series starts. The story includes many deeply flawed characters including the female protagonist – an ex-gangbanger Dizzy Cordova.

Possible director

World War Z director Marc Forster should do this justice

Possible cast

Agent Graves: Bruce Willis
Cody Burns: Timothy Oliphant (*Deadwood*)
Dizzy Cordova: Tatiana Maslany (*The Vow*)



Grant Morrison
and Frank Quitely
DC Vertigo

We3 are a squad of prototype killer weapons cybernetically grafted to three erstwhile pets: a rabbit (Pirate aka "3"), a cat (Tinker aka "2") and a dog (Bandit aka "1"). The animals have limited speech abilities due to skull implants and their intelligence has been boosted. Furthermore, they are encased in body armour that incorporates mines, machineguns, flechettes and razor claws.

This violent and disturbing tale follows their escape from a maximum security military base after they realise that they are about to be de-commissioned by their creators. We3 have to avoid and kill their military pursuers and also some other bio-engineered (newer) animal weapons sent after them to gain their freedom and a place they can call home. This is a comic that is difficult to forget.

Possible director

James Cameron has the best chance of making this world a believable, terrifying and heart-breaking place.

Possible cast

For voices we would like the following.
Dog: Christian Bale, Cat: Jennifer Lawrence, Rabbit: Kevin Spacey. **ts**



Pick up Moray's awesome Graphic Novel anthology comic *Velocity 4* at Readers Den, Outer Limits and www.darkcarnival.co.za/



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Phillip @Phystoz
@TechSmartMag I'm really loving the new look magazine, it offers so much variety. It's truly made for the modern day geek.



Reuben Goldberg @RubyGold
Schabir Shaik and Jackie Selebi should start a wellness centre. The Jackie and Schabir Wellness Centre - For When You're at Deaths Door



IholhozaD @LholhozaD
With the latest tech news for free @techsmartmag is the best mag in SA #fact



Martin Nieuwoudt @mavnieuwoudt
New @TechSmartMag is awesome! Begs the question why we pay a premium for all the other tech mags in SA. #DaylightRobbery



Mustakim Khalifa @KhalifaMustakim
Why google now when the new @TechSmartMag magazine has it all #bestever



Shai in the disco @ShaiArctic
I'm at that point where I don't procrastinate anymore. I just don't do whatever I'm supposed to do at all.



Grumpy Cat @_GrumpyCat
I'm sorry if I offended you when I called you stupid. I honestly thought you knew.



Mcebo Masuku @1one1
Can someone explain to me why and how @TechSmartMag is free? Not that I'm complaining of course. Great read it is...



Awkward Jim @AwkwardJim
Anyone ever remember that one time, before Facebook and Twitter, when we all went outside and did stuff?



Jerm @mynameisjerm
Thanks for giving me a detailed breakdown of what to do after the tone. I wouldn't have known, otherwise. Do I hang up when I'm done?



MajorFlakes @MajorFlakes
I'm always kind of surprised my google searches haven't gotten me thrown in jail yet.



Trevor Noah @Trevornoah
Breaking up with someone via whatsapp is great because you can use monkey faces to soften the blow.



Deep Fried Man @DeepFriedMan
Outa: Fiercely fighting e-tolls and not stopping until we BEAT THE SYSTEM (or run out of money, whichever comes first).



Musa Dliso CA (SA) @MusaDliso_
Just finished going through the October issue of @TechSmartMag n must say wow this one tech mag any man should read every month



marc maron @marcmaron
I'm a little narcissistic. When people hate on me I see it as me outsourcing my self loathing.

SEMANTECHS: Words worth Knowing

Apple tax

The extra money fans of Cupertino has to fork out for their love of a MacBook or iOS mobile device.

Dislimboed

When you have been waiting on hold for so long that you are on the verge of hanging up, but don't want to lose your place in the queue.

E-luded

Trying to find an IM thread on Skype or on your phone to no avail.

Embossed

Coming to the conclusion that for some reason, it's always you that have to add paper to the printer.

Facepalm

An update you posted to Facebook that attracted zero interest.

Fram

Spam sent to you by friends or family.

Gated

When you can't leave for home after work since your PC first need to install important updates.

Inhumanly looped

The phenomena of being bounced from one automatic answering service to another, which keep redirecting you to yet another number, once again answered via recorded message.

Zenmail

An email that does not contain any body text or no subject line or in which the sender refers to the attachment that he/she forgot to attach.

CITED: *what they said*

"I want the entire smartphone, the entire internet, on my wrist. I want a larger display than they're starting with. They're starting with displays that are the size of the iPod nano, which is the size of an ordinary watch of the past. I think we've got to get a little beyond this watch of the past."

Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak on smartwatches.



"For consumers concerned about fire risk, there should be absolutely zero doubt that it is safer to power a car with a battery than a large tank of highly flammable liquid."

The conclusion of Tesla CEO Elon Musk to a viral video of a Tesla Model S catching fire after it was apparently struck by a metallic object.

"To me this isn't mainstream, to me this is the last desperate part of a dying corpse."

Hater of Spotify and Radiohead frontman Thom Yorke on the music streaming service.

Canon

SA Expo 2013:

The inside story

With the Canon SA Expo 2013 taking place from 29 November – 1 December 2013, we thought it might be a good time to talk to Michelle Janse van Vuuren, Canon SA's marketing manager, about this highlight on the photographic calendar.

TechSmart (TS): Is it correct that South Africa is one of the few countries to host an annual local Canon Expo?

Michelle Janse van Vuuren (MV): That is correct, many of the other countries only host Expos every second or fourth year.

TS: What are the lessons learned from previous Expos?

MV: The biggest lesson we've learned is that you should never think that you know everything, plus every year you must change things to keep it interesting. There should always be something new as an attraction.

TS: So what are the new things at this year's Expo?

MV: We're going to introduce more speakers since people seem to like a variety. This means less repeats, although some of the main speakers will have an extra session. We're also going to have a workshop area where it's not just listening to a speaker, but also partaking in a training environment whether it involves a product, software, or accessory.

TS: Tell us more about the training sessions.

MV: We will be hosting smaller workshops aimed at teaching people more about their Canon cameras, both DSC and SLR, as well as several video sessions. We will also be hosting several software sessions. These workshops are aimed at giving people as much information in a hands-on type environment and will prove to be an invaluable addition to the current expo format.

TS: Each year the quality on offer from the photo competition is amazing. How is it looking this year?

MV: The competition is doing as well as last year. We start sorting the entries only after the closing date, and it takes hours and hours to do. The team of judges go through them in packs of 50 and then have to stop to take a break!

TS: Many people of course want to know about this year's specials. When will the list be released?

MV: Only a week before the Expo. There will be specials and then a few 'major specials' that should really grab attention.

TS: What about the people who can't make it to the Expo?

MV: The published specials on offer at the Expo event will also be available through the dealer channel around the country, so people would be able to purchase these specials at all major retail stores and photographic shops which sell Canon products.

TS: What is your advice for people coming to visit the Expo.

MV: Take the Gautrain since it's a quick and easy walk from the station to the Sandton Convention Centre. There should not really be a queue to enter the Expo this year, and we've added another terminal to help with congestion at the shop. **ts**

DON'T FORGET

The **Canon SA Expo 2013** is set to take place from **29 November – 1 December 2013** at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg. For more info visit www.csaexpo.co.za.



WIN with Canon and TechSmart!



To celebrate the upcoming Canon Expo, TechSmart in conjunction with Canon SA is giving away a Canon EOS 100D DSLR to one lucky person.

The EOS 100D is the smallest and lightest APS-C DSLR in its class making it compact enough to take everywhere so you can capture adventures in stunning quality. It comes complete with an 18-55mm zoom lens, and is valued at R9 000.

Come have a look at this and many more Canon products at the Canon Expo 2013, taking place in the Sandton Convention Centre from 29 November – 1 December 2013.

How to win

We want to know, when is the Canon Expo 2013 taking place?



Tweet your answer along with the following:

@Canon_SA @techsmartmag #TScanonexpo bit.ly/tscanon

or email your answer to: competition@techsmart.co.za

Entries close on 30 November 2013. Judges' decision is final, terms and conditions apply.



Mosaic Archive

For users of Adobe's Lightroom, Mosaic Archive is a must-have app, as it enables you to view your photo collections collated by that photo management software on iOS device. You merely download the app, and then the companion Mosaic Archive programme (71 MB) on your PC where Lightroom is installed. Then you can view your Lightroom residing photos via the app, according to their collections, ratings, and date captured. Mosaic Archive gives you a free plan, which enables you to view your 2000 most recent images from the cloud on any iOS device. Nifty and free.



Dashlane

One of the problems of living in the digital age is the fact that we are plagued with having to remember numerous username and password combinations. Dashlane seeks to address this, by offering up a password manager to keep track of these vital bits of info. It goes a step further though by then relying on that info to auto-login to these sites on your behalf. In a similar vein it can also autofill forms you encounter on the internet using your saved info, and secure notes, contacts and payment details as well. Free.



Shadowlayer: Dawn of the Lightforge

If you are looking for a free reminder of games like Dungeon Siege, Diablo or Titan Quest on your iPad, then Shadowlayer: Dawn of the Lightforge may be up your medieval, sword and sorcery filled alley. The game enables you to choose between classes and thus two different play styles, as either a warrior or mage. It starts off some time in the distant, fantastical future, painting a story of vengeance and loss, and then brings you back to the present to become the warrior/or mage you are given a brief taste of. Free, with in-app purchases.



On iOS 7, if you want to make the newest and shiny OS suit your visual preferences, go to Systems, choose General and then Accessibility. Here you can embolden all system text, increase text size in certain apps and, if iOS 7's motion effects are making you nauseous, reduce these effects rather than having to rush out to get Dramamine.

APPLE TOP TIP



ANDROID TOP TIP

Lock screen orientation

On occasion you do not want the screen of your smartphone to automatically rotate, such as when you IM chat in bed or are gaming for instance. Users can turn the Screen Orientation off within Settings. Just tap on Display (under the Device category) and uncheck "Auto-rotate screen" or "Orientation" on some devices, to prevent the phone from automatically switching between portrait and landscape views. To turn this feature back on, simply go back to Settings to check the above option again.



Home Button Launcher

Normally, holding the virtual home button on an Android smartphone results in Google Now being launched. If you do not use Google Now that often or at all, the Home Button Launcher app enables users to customise this functionality to launch their favourite applications such as the camera, Play Store, or Google Maps simply by long-pressing the virtual home key. Users can launch their favourite app or a list of their most utilised applications to launch. This app will only run on devices powered by Android 4.1 (Jelly Bean) and up.



Duolingo: Learn Languages

If you are learning a new language and need an entertaining (but still practical) app to assist you in mastering another tongue, look no further than Duolingo. This novel language-learning application turns the task of learning a new language into a game, with players having a set of lives (represented by hearts) that deplete with each incorrect answer. To progress, users complete bite-sized lessons and track their progress via achievements such as total points awarded for correct answers. The app helps people learn Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, or Italian, amongst other languages.



FIFA 14

EA Sports has made the mobile version of its latest FIFA installment a freemium title, meaning you can download and play it for free. Players only have to fork out for additional features the likes of packs of players in the Ultimate Team mode and extra gaming modes such as Manager mode.



The game itself though, boasts novice-friendly touch-based mechanics that includes a single tap to pass and swipe to shoot, good looking graphics, plus more than 600 officially licensed real world teams from within 33 leagues and 16 000 players. ts

APPS OF THE MONTH



BlackBerry APPS OF THE MONTH



Track My Life

Perfect for travellers, diarists, and, uhm, statisticians, Track My Life is an app that runs in the background and only requires minimal power. A great compliment to Nokia's HERE suite of navigation apps, when you launch Track My Life, it tells you about the places you've been and the kilometres you've travelled along the way. In addition, it also gives you the option of adding details and photos of the very same places you've visited to include in your mini-diary. Track My Life will follow you anywhere for R0 from the Windows Phone Store.



Fake Call - Get a Fake Call Instantly



If you find yourself stuck in an awkward situations and wish you had a way out then have a look at this free application by Ajani InfoTech Private Limited. Fake Call does what it says on



the box, providing you with the ability to fake incoming calls for those in-case-of-emergency situations. Other features include customisable caller names/numbers while you can also add audio clips to make the call seem more authentic. Fake Call might just provide you with the 'great escape' you are looking for.

Amazing Weather HD

There are plenty of perfectly good apps out there that can tell you about the latest weather patterns for each specific day, but with Amazing Weather HD you are guaranteed to do it in style. Weather HD gives your lockscreen a brilliant look and feel drawn from specific weather patterns for each day. In addition, it also gives you a beautiful background image that you can tap to get more detailed info. R16 will get you the app come rain or shine.



BlackBerry Application Resource Monitor

Not all BlackBerry devices have the power of the latest Z30, but you can tap a bit more performance from your unit by using this free application by BlackBerry Limited. This app allows you to monitor apps running in the background that might be taking up too many resources. It will recommend certain actions when it picks up 'naughty' apps. With this app you can also remove applications, files, old text messages and emails. The easy-to-use interface makes using this app a breeze.



KickOff Premier League



An app created for all those who follow one of the biggest soccer leagues globally, the English Premier League. KickOff Premier League keeps you up to date with all the latest soccer action as it happens, with push-updates when results are in. It comes complete with all the news, fixtures and results that you can pin to your start screen, while a stats corner allows you to compare different teams. You can score this for mahala.



Fast and Furious 6

Fans of *The Fast and The Furious* franchise can get their nitros ready and the adrenaline pumping thanks to Gameloft. This R8 game follows the same story of the last F&F movie, and sees you pulling off heists in destinations

such as London and Moscow. Features include different races and challenges, a variety of cars (including the Dodge Charger) and quite decent graphics. Don't expect too much from the story mode though, since depending on your dedication, it can be completed in one sitting. [IF] **ts**



WINDOWS TOP TIP

Nokia's range of Lumia smartphones are synonymous with great music capabilities. But did you know that if you put in your headphones you can adjust the sound quality? This can be done via the audio option under general settings. You have the option to choose a selection of pre-determined settings, or play around with the equaliser yourself. Alternatively, you can go full DJ and enable Dolby playback by swiping right and hitting playback.

Save battery power

Save battery power by having your device switch on/off automatically. All you have to do is go to Options> Device> Auto On/Off and select the desired schedule. However do note that this feature may differ for each device and OS.

BLACKBERRY TOP TIP



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THE AFTERMATH

By Pippa Tshabalala

Pippa Picture courtesy of Adriaan Louw from we-are-awesome.com

Around mid-year it becomes very difficult to get hold of almost anyone involved in the South African gaming industry. It might seem odd considering that July/August is normally a rather dry period for videogame releases, however pretty much everyone is consumed with planning for the biggest event on the local gaming calendar – rAge.

I HAVE NEVER BEEN SO RUN OFF MY FEET THAT I ACTUALLY COULDN'T THINK STRAIGHT BY THE THIRD DAY.

After months of preparation, it finally culminates in a three day geek fest (I say this with fondness as I count myself among them), where every gamer, cosplayer, techie and comic book nerd in the Johannesburg area, and even some from beyond the Gauteng borders, make their way to the Northgate Dome. This to mingle with like-minded people who share a passion for videogames, tech and geek pop culture.

This year was a particularly exhausting event with so much on show that for the first time in the entire history of my relationship with rAge, I didn't stay for the whole day on Sunday. That has never happened to me. I have never been so run off my feet that I actually couldn't think straight by the third day.

It's all with good reason of course. Along with a number of big titles on show such as Batman: Arkham Origins and Assassins Creed IV, the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One both made an appearance ahead of their international releases, and gamers were frantic to get their hands on these impressive pieces of hardware. Even with the controversy surrounding Xbox One in recent months, Microsoft South Africa did a great deal to win over consumers, and I wouldn't count them out of the game just yet.

You would think of course, that once rAge was over, things would go back to normal.

Distributors would start responding to your mails again, meetings would be easier to set up.

Wrong. 2013 is a big year for the gaming industry in all respects, and ahead of the 'switch' to next-gen, developers are frantic to not only get out their next-gen titles on launch, but also to sell their current-gen titles before they become obsolete.

I'm not actually complaining about the craziness however. This is an incredibly exciting time to be in videogame journalism. Not only are we seeing the launch of two incredible machines, but there are also a number of other consoles making their way into the market that offer alternatives to the mainstream commercial models.

Many of the titles on the holiday horizon are pushing narrative, visual and gameplay boundaries, which makes for an exciting lineup of games to play over December.

Personally I'm just looking for some time off where I can put my feet up, get around to playing all these games, and then start all over again in the New Year. **TS**

She came, she saw, she couldn't complete
THE THIRD DAY.
Lover of games,
Pippa Tshabalala,
is still trying to recover
from a brutal rAge.



GAMING BLOCKBUSTERS

November and December are jackpot months for gamers, ushering in several super hot blockbuster titles. Here are our picks.



Call of Duty: Ghosts

As has become an annual event, November means another entry in the Call of Duty franchise, with Ghosts crouching out of the shadows in the first week of this month. While Ghosts is being touted as taking the franchise in a new direction, certain staples are a given – a convoluted story, frantic firefights, more explosions than you could shake a Transformer at, and, of course, glorious multiplayer. Dog-loving gamers may just want to pick up the title to learn the fate of your canine companion, Riley, in the unlikely event that you needed yet another reason to add to Activision's coffers.

RELEASES 5 NOVEMBER

Killzone 4: Shadow Fall & Knack

While the above two titles may seem at opposite ends of the game spectrum, they do have one thing in common, both are exclusive launch titles for the PS4 and should appear, along with the new console, on its 13th December launch. First person shooter Killzone 4: Shadow Fall, set some time after the events of Killzone 3, is looking nothing short of spectacular. Knack meanwhile, appears to be a more whimsical action-adventure title. The titular hero is capable of sudden and rapid growth as well as of absorbing different materials, enabling it to garner new abilities. This comes into play as players find themselves having to protect humankind from an army of invading goblins.

RELEASES 13 DECEMBER



Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag

We have been gushing constantly over Assassin's Creed IV and with good reason – it looks spectacular. The game takes players to the steamy Caribbean amid the 'Golden Age' of piracy (the non-digital, Jack Sparrow version of the word) to step into the shoes of another of Desmond's ancestors, pirate and assassin Edward Kenway. Players can expect islands to explore; naval combat to indulge in; plenty of loot to plunder and treasure hidden in waterlogged caves to discover. Along with stealth assassinations, the game looks set to boast its fair share of silky smooth platforming. Furthermore, planned DLC from day one should keep players occupied in what is promising to be a killer sequel.

RELEASES 29 OCTOBER ON PS3, XBOX 360 AND 22 NOVEMBER ON PC AND WII U

Gran Turismo 6

Racing simulation fans can rejoice, as Gran Turismo slips into high gear and screeches onto the track in December. The game, considered as the benchmark for racing sims, will boast an exhaustive number of cars as well as a plethora of track locations, including the likes of the legendary Bathurst Circuit, the Goodwood Hill Climb track and now also Silverstone. What about the cars, you ask? Well, expect to slip into the virtual cockpits of BMW Z4 GT3 '11, Chevrolet Corvette Stingray and Audi R8 LMS ultra, amongst many others, we answer. Make room in your game calendar from the 6th of December. [RN] **ts**

RELEASES 6 DECEMBER



Honourable Mentions

No less deserving of a mention for a jam-packed couple of gaming goodness months, that other FPS doyen Battlefield 4 (1 November), and action platformer Ratchet and Clank: Into the Nexus (22 November) will also be competing for your year-end bonus.



FIFA 14

VS

EA Sports continues the annual evolution of one of gaming's biggest money spinners, with a few gameplay tweaks. Are these substantial enough to dribble past PES 2014?

Graphically speaking, the differences between FIFA 13 and FIFA 14 do make for a good spot-the-difference puzzle, with the biggest changes to be found in the menu system. EA has adopted a Metro UI-inspired interface, complete with live tile-esque submenus that look and function similar to the Windows 8 interface.

These take a bit of getting used to, but after a short while navigating this heavily revised interface became a breeze. Thanks to its visually appealing nature, we could not imagine going back to the old school menu system, despite being noticeably laggy at times, at least on the PS3 version.

Gameplay enhancements

So where did the FIFA 14 developers spend most of their time? Definitely improving gameplay, which now packs a few improvements over its predecessor. Most of these are enhancements made to existing features introduced within FIFA 13. Take as example Teammate Intelligence, which boost the defensive skills of the AI-controlled opposition, resulting in them closing down space and angles more quickly. This makes the job of stringing together a myriad of successful passes harder.

EA also revised the game's ball physics system with Real Ball Physics now determining the ball's trajectory to make it move more realistically.

Last but not least, there is a new defensive feature dubbed Protect the Ball that enables you to fend off and block opponents from the ball to maintain possession. Although it does work well, this feature also plays a big part in slowing down the passing and dribbling action in the midfield compared to FIFA 13, which will not sit well with arcade game fans.

FIFA 14 PLAYS LIKE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT GAME THANKS TO THE FLURRY OF GAMEPLAY ENHANCEMENTS.

To the point

FIFA 14 looks virtually the same as FIFA 13 (apart from the menu system), but plays like a totally different game thanks to the flurry of gameplay enhancements, which might not cater to everyone's tastes.

EA has now positioned FIFA as a full blown simulation title to rival the arcade experience on offer by Konami's PES 2014. This targets FIFA 14 more at players who want to bring virtual life to their soccer fantasies rather than casual gamers that just want to pick up and play a football game. RRP: R700 [HD] **ts**



PES 2014

Every year, PES and FIFA duke it out for best soccer game of the year. Does PES 2014 finally have enough features to cause an upset?



Unlike EA, Konami opted not to kick off with next-gen this year, concentrating all of its efforts on making PES look as good as it can on current platforms. As a result, PES 2014 actually looks better than FIFA 14. The menu system, however, feels incredibly dated especially when compared to the new system employed within FIFA 14, but the flip side is that all the menus remain snappy and fluid without any signs of lag.

WITH ITS 2014 EDITION PES NOT ONLY LOOKS BETTER THAN FIFA 14, BUT IN A LOT OF WAYS IS MORE ENJOYABLE TO PLAY TOO.

Unfortunately, the ever present thorn in PES's side remains licensing as there are very few teams or competitions with real world names, with some exceptions to these being the UEFA competitions (Champions League and Europa League).

New gameplay features

Under the bonnet changes include motion animation stability system (MASS), which simulates body contact between players to allow for more realistic physics.

Amongst other features MASS allows stocky defenders to block lofty

attackers by protecting the ball or barge opponents off the ball to gain possession. This feature works well and does allow for an extra dollop of realism, but does not match FIFA's simulation feature list that includes the likes of protect the ball and the player impact engine.

Where PES still exercises its superiority is in the buttery smooth passing system that remains crisp, quick and as slickly weighted as ever.

Also worth a mention is the Heart feature, which enables matches to become imposing for visiting teams, and actually affects the performance of players. This means that even if you master the free kick system you will find it difficult to locate the back of the net on a pitch with a hostile crowd. Heart is basically the best in-game representation of what homeground advantage is for a real world team.

To the game

With its 2014 edition PES not only looks better than FIFA 14, but in a lot of ways is more enjoyable to play too. In the end, what keeps you playing FIFA is the need to have your favourite real world team achieve virtual glory or your virtual likeness reach legendary status. What keeps you coming back to PES though is simply that it is an immensely enjoyable title to play, and that counts for a lot. RRP: R600 [HD] **ts**

BLACKBERRY'S SHIP HAS SAILED



Photo: GA Goodman

SA SHOULD BE PROUD
TO BE ONE OF THE
REMAINING NATIONS
that still cares about
THE FATE OF
BLACKBERRY,
writes Deep Fried Man.

I realise that this is meant to be a tech column, so I hope you forgive me because rather than writing about technology this time round I have decided to focus on BlackBerry instead.

It's no secret that BlackBerry is in a spot of bother. Once the world's dominant phone company, it is currently for sale, and also may have to lay off up to 40% of its workforce. In June, it was reported to have suffered a loss of \$84 billion. All of this can be attributed to the terrible and thoughtless practice perpetrated by rival telecommunications companies of producing much, much better phones. Ones with flabbergasting technological innovations such as the ability to display graphics and battery power that lasts for more than four hours.

But, while the gods of fortune have seen BlackBerry transform from the giants to the hobbits of the international smartphone world, they are still a massive hit in South Africa. This places us firmly in the illustrious category of nations that still insist on using BlackBerrys, an impressive list of spectacularly successful countries that includes the Philippines, Indonesia and Haiti.

While we somehow managed to hustle entry into the collective of emerging global economic powers known as BRICS, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and then us tacked on at the end, perhaps it is to SHIP (South Africa, Haiti, Indonesia & the Philippines) that we really belong. SHIP being an apt name indeed because a ship is what people used for transport before better technology became available, just as a BlackBerry is what we used to use for communication before other options

were affordable. As with other things, like racial equality, we're just a little slower to catch on than the rest of the world.

IT'S GOOD TO KNOW THE COMPANY CARES ABOUT US ENOUGH TO TRY AND CONVINCE US THAT THINGS AREN'T AS BAD AS THEY SEEM.

Other than BlackBerrys, one of the things South Africans love the most is the open letter. Steve Hofmeyr sends them to Julius Malema. Various people respond by sending their own open letters to Steve Hofmeyr. Kenny Kunene sends them to Jacob Zuma, just because he felt a little bit left out. And now, we will be delighted to learn that our favourite company has also taken a stab at our favourite pastime: BlackBerry has written an open letter to reassure its customers and partners that everything is ok (see p14).

It's a fine letter. Well written and with most of the desperation and despair that underlies it well hidden. Sure, most people around the world will respond, 'what's a BlackBerry?', but here down in the southernmost tip of Africa it's good to know the company cares about us enough to try and convince us that things aren't as bad as they seem. Because if, gods forbid, the company did stop producing the incredible devices they're so famous for, what on earth would we and the other fine nations of SHIP do?

We would be forced to progress. **ts**



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