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ISSUE 125 > FEBRUARY 2014 > ISSN 1726-3355  
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# CES 2014

What tech  
to expect

**PORSCHE  
911 TARGA**  
Dropping the top

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- › Fitness Gear
- › Manbags
- › Heist Movies
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# The End of the Virus

Is Facebook on its way out? If you compare the social network to that of an infectious disease, then by 2017 it could only have as little as 20% of its peak user base left. That is according to researchers at Princeton University, who used epidemiological models to explain user adoption and abandonment of social networks. Granted, they did base their conclusions of Facebook on that of the disaster that was Myspace, which was left abandoned because of mass migration to Facebook.

For now there is no new social network that threatens Facebook's popularity, but the fact that younger people are simply not as enamoured by the big F (3 million less 13-17 year old users than in Jan 2011) is interesting. This might be because posting becomes increasingly less cool once you've accepted that friend request from mom.

I have also heard a number of users complaining about simply not coping with Facebook's continuous updates of smiling selfies, happy loving couples, 'inspirational' pictures, kids off to their first day of school, babies born, new brilliant jobs, and friends showing off their holiday cabin at the edge of Mount Couldntcareless. Complaining about that though seems a bit like criticising a chair because it forces you to sit down. There are a couple of solutions to this problem – defriend, defriend, defriend, or simply uninstall that stupid Facebook app.

Enjoy the issue,

Mike Joubert  
mike@techsmart.co.za.



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## ABOUT THE COVER GIRL

### CATWOMAN

Also known as: The Cat, real name is Selina Kyle.

#### Quick Facts:

In her first origin story, Catwoman was a flight attendant whose life of crime begun after she purportedly suffered from amnesia following a plane crash (leaving her with eight more to risk).

While her supposed amnesia was later revealed to be a hoax, it turns out that prior to her life of crime, Catwoman had left behind an abusive first marriage – retrieving her jewellery from the safe of her former husband is credited with introducing her to cat burglary.

Catwoman has been both portrayed as Batman's adversary, a high stakes cat burglar and ambiguous super-villain, and Batman's most contrarian love interest.

In the *Earth 2* storyline, Catwoman and Batman eventually tied the knot and had a child together – Helena Wayne, who would grow up to become The Huntress.

#### Famous Catwoman quotes:

To Batman: "Seems like every woman you try to save ends up dead... or deeply resentful. Maybe you should retire."

"There's a storm coming, Mr. Wayne. You and your friends better batten down the hatches, because when it hits, you're all gonna wonder how you ever thought you could live so large and leave so little for the rest of us."

"You poor guys. Always confusing your pistols with your privates."

To Max Shrek: "You killed me... The Penguin killed me... Batman killed me... that's... three lives down. You got enough in there to finish me off?"

#### Model:

Nadia from Spotlight Agency



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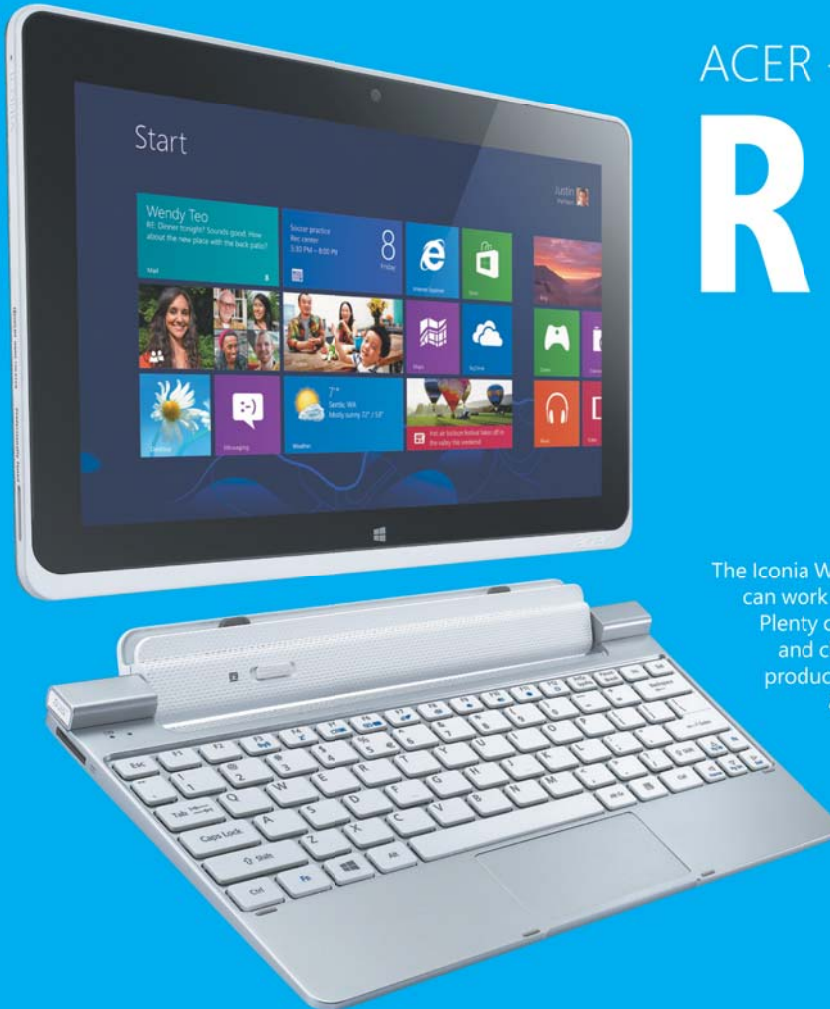
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Internet Explorer 10



## Windows 8

While stocks last.

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# HOT STUFF

## 2014 PORSCHE 911 TARGA 4

Two models are vowing for attention – the Targa 4 and Targa 4S. Both feature the classic Targa roof bar, but now slips the roof segment behind the rear seats with a push of a button in a quick 19 seconds.

Revealed at the recent 2014 Detroit Auto Show, Porsche's new 911 Targa 4 revives a classic, plus drops its top.

Breathing life into the Targa 4 is a horizontally opposed 3.4-litre 6-cylinder engine with 350 hp, enabling to push from zero to 100 km/h in 4.8 seconds, onto a top speed of 282 km/h.



Both models are exclusively All Wheel Drive, with the same wider rear track and body and Porsche Traction Management found in other 911 all-wheel-drive models. This means grip when you need it when hugging the curves.

Get your bank manager on the phone, since the Targa 4 will require R1 098 296 (\$101 600) of your savings (or more likely, credit), and the Targa 4S a humbling R1 256 122 (\$116 200).

The Targa 4S does even better, growing with a 3.8-litre horizontally opposed 6-cylinder engine. It produces an excellent 400 hp, and bolts from zero to 100 km/h in a mere 4.4 seconds. Top speed? 295 km/h on the manual transmission model.



### ALSO UNVEILED: TOYOTA FT-1 CONCEPT

Detroit 2014 saw another, more peculiar, release, this time coming from the usually conservative Toyota. They say life imitate art, and in the case of the show-stopping Toyota FT-1 concept car, it is indeed the case. The FT-1 first made an appearance in Sony's Gran Turismo 6 (GT6, see review on p47) and was rushed through production to be on time for its 2014 Detroit debut. As a matter of fact, GT6 was used in the pitch by Toyota's North American design studio, CALTY, to get approval for the concept to be built. According to the Japanese manufacturer, FT-1 stands for "Future Toyota," with the "1" referring to "the ultimate". **ts**





# D5300

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# HOT STUFF

## APPLE MAC PRO

As always, Apple can't resist innovating. This is what they came up with for their new desktop computer.

This is one *objet d'art* where style does not triumph over substance, as the Mac Pro's innards are just as impressive. Beneath its curvy body beats a quad-core Intel Xeon E5 at 3.7 GHz, or a six core Intel Xeon E5 at up to 3.9 GHz.

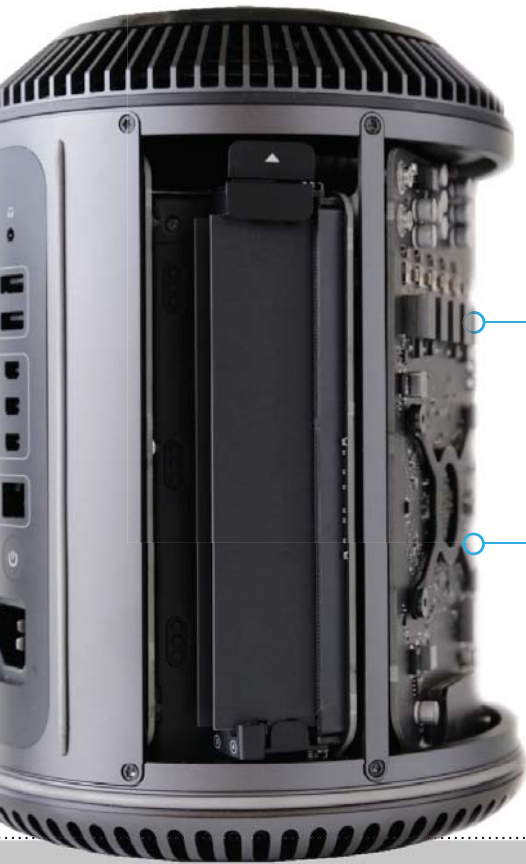


While exact local availability dates haven't been firmed up yet at this time of writing, you may want to get your cardiac defibrillator ready, for yourself and your bank manager – the quad-core version will cost R39 000 while the six-core one will command a be-still-my-beating-heart R51 000.

For graphics pros, the Mac Pro can also accommodate up to three 4k resolution displays or up to six displays via Thunderbolt.

While the quad-core version comes with 12 GB of memory, the six core version offers 16 GB. However, if you really want to make your friends and coworkers weep with envy, the latter can go up to 64 GB, in case you need to run Skynet or The Matrix from your bedroom.

Defying the convention that desktop computers must come in towers or even in all-in-one formats, the Mac Pro is instead a 25 CM high cylindrical shape with a diameter of almost 17 cm, meaning that this is one computer that can't be called a chip off the old block.



## HP Z1 G2

On the other end of the spectrum, you have the newly unveiled All in One (AIO) from HP, which seems to celebrate, even revel in, the straight line. The Z1 G2 provides conventional PC boasts a 27" display, and is similarly aimed at power users. Like the Mac Pro, it boasts fourth-generation Intel Xeon and Core processors, while its graphics are catered to with Nvidia Mobile Quadro GPUs. As it is fresh from the CES showroom floor, no local price has been confirmed, but Stateside, it is expected to start at \$2 000 (R22 000). **ts**





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# International CES®

While the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) could have been accused of being a bit predictable in previous years, 2014's was in many ways a breath of fresh air.

**GRANTED, CES 2014 HAD THE EXPECTED STAPLES – NEW TABLETS, NEW NOTEBOOKS, NEW TVS. HOWEVER, WITHIN EACH OF THESE CATEGORIES, AND AS WELL AS SOME NEW ADDITIONAL ONES, THERE WERE MORE EVIDENT INNOVATIVE AND INTERESTING CHANGES ACROSS THE BOARD.**

## Tablets



### Samsung Galaxy Note Pro

Rather than just rolling out yet another 10" tablet, Samsung instead revealed that it is not shy about going bigger on the tablet size spectrum, unveiling its 12.2" Galaxy Note Pro. Promisingly, the device will apparently boast a luscious 2560 x 1600 LCD display, a quad-core A15 processor at 1.9 GHz or quad-core A7 processor at 1.3 GHz for the Wi-Fi and 3G versions respectively, and 3 GB of memory. As this is the Note variant, expect the distinctive S-Pen and no doubt, applications to use the tablet as a drawing, painting and note-taking companion. It will further sport up to 32 GB of storage, expandable via microSD card up to an additional 64 GB.

### Hisense X1

When has a phone crossed over into the realm of being a tablet? Well, when your device comes in at just shy of the 7" mark, it's safe to say it's a tablet. Such was the case with Hisense's X1 smartphone (ahem, tablet). Along with a 6.8" 1080p display, the X1 can also lay claim to some mean specifications, such as a Snapdragon 800 processor, a 13 megapixel camera and large 3 900 mAh battery. Rocking Android 4.4 (KitKat), the monolithic smartphone or more correctly, smaller than 7" tablet, will apparently make its appearance Stateside later this year. *Image courtesy of www.AndroidPolice.com.*







## Lenovo ThinkPad 8

Flying the Windows 8.1 tablet flag was Lenovo, who brought an 8.3" tablet that sticks Microsoft's love-it-or-hate-it OS inside. To its credit, the tablet also boasts a 1920 x 1080 resolution and a 2.4 GHz quad-core Intel Atom processor, while storage runs up to the new maximum on the tablet clock – 128 GB. The tablet can apparently serve as a mini workstation in its own right, as you can connect it to a screen via mini-HDMI and plug commonly used peripherals into the device via the USB 3.0 port. Alas, there is no stylus support, which still leaves the field open for a new 8" stylus-accommodating Windows 8 tablet to fill the breach. If Windows 8.1 is your thing though, you may well be casting your eyes Lenovo's way this year.

## Asus Transformer Book Duet TD300

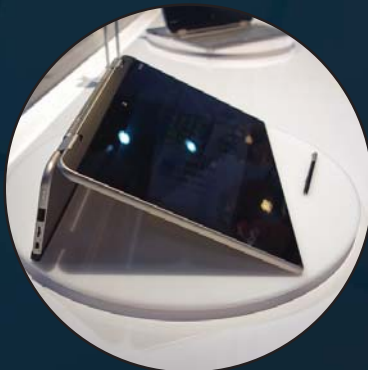
Another all too familiar category receiving a little different spin was notebooks. Asus brought its Transformer Book Duet, and with it the promise of multi-platform computing. More specifically, this 13" notebook's claim to fame is that it can run both Windows 8.1 and Android 4.2. Its internals are very decent too, including up to an Intel Core i7 processor and a 1080p display. Furthermore, by unclipping from the keyboard docking section of the notebook, the Book Duet will also be usable as a tablet. No word yet on local availability and pricing though.



## Notebooks

## Toshiba 5-in-1

Admittedly, Toshiba sometimes feels like a good old friend from whom we haven't heard in a while, the good news is, the company still bought its innovativeness to this year's showroom floor. For its part, it showed off a 5-in-1 concept, which sports a 13" screen and a variety of possible configurations that outflexes even Lenovo's Yoga. Along with expected notebook and tablet configurations, the company has also managed to cram a canvas mode (for drawing with the included stylus); presentation mode, which enables the display to stand upright; and finally, the ability to using the docking section as a kickstand for the tablet. The bad news is that it is only a concept at the moment, which means specs and prices have not been released. Nonetheless, if it is made it would certainly help the company one-up the hybrid competition. *Image courtesy of www.thewebuniversity.org.*



## TVs

## Samsung bendable 85" Ultra HD TV

This year's CES also brought us TVs on a bender – no, not *The Hangover* kind, but with curved screens. A 85" prototype model, debuted by Samsung, was able to switch from functioning as a traditional flat panel (hence the name) screen as well as having its edges bent slightly by a mechanism. Along with the fact that the TV boasts a 4k resolution, the company also has plans to install the technology in a variety of sizes, from the 'baby' sized 55" to 65", 75" and, then possibly the mastadon of the living room, a 105" version. Don't expect the company to bend on the prize though – our bet is that the latter will cost a pretty packet.





## LG Curved OLED TV

Also grading their TVs on the curve was LG, which melded together the luscious colours of OLED technology, the high resolution of 4K and, new to 2014, a curved screen. While details are sparse at present, the curve on the 77" set can apparently be remotely controlled. It too ventured beyond the 100" mark, showcasing an enormous 105" set with a curved screen as well. The rationale behind this curvature is that it would make it easier for viewers to pick up detail on their set from edge to edge, and purportedly make the entertainment they are watching on it more immersive as well.



## Valve Steam Boxes

One of our perennial favourites, gaming is a category that chases innovation as prolifically as certain Hollywood A-listers chase starlets. This year though, gaming technology had a greater presence at CES. To no-one's surprise, Valve made a splash with its Steam Boxes, with which it hopes to storm its way into the living room during 2014. Even though Steam OS has been built on Linux's architecture, the Steam Boxes themselves will be made by a variety of manufacturers, such as Alienware and Gigabyte, and thus specifications on offer, as well as price ranges, vary widely. Clearly the company is aiming at PC gamers accustomed to building their own rigs, and configuring them with a combination of Core i5 and i7 processors, as well as their graphics solutions of preference. Furthermore, some will apparently run Windows 8 as well.

## Oculus Rift – Crystal Cove

PC boxes with new operating systems and an innovative take on living room gaming wasn't the only thing to catch gamers eyes on the show floor. Virtual reality (VR) gaming, via the latest prototype of the Oculus Rift dubbed Crystal Cove, also made a splash. The VR headset boasts a 1080p OLED display, but even more notably, it is able to track the position of a user's head and body via integrated sensors and a camera to more accurately simulated movement. Why is this a big deal? Because it should enable players to have a more immersive experience, particularly since we are used to having our movements coordinated between our head and a body, and do not relate to the world – virtual or otherwise – as a disembodied head. The tech though, is not limited to gaming – the movie industry, auto industry and even NASA are interested. [RN]





# THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

International  
**CES**

So apart from the mainstream hits, what were some of the more 'non-traditional' reveals from this year's show?



## Scanadu Scout

An apple a day may keep the doctor away, but the Scanadu Scout offers diagnostic peace of mind with but a touch to the forehead. The tiny device syncs with an app on your smartphone and can check your vital signs in just 10 seconds, including heart rate, temperature, blood pressure, oxygen saturation, and much more.



## ChefJet

3D Printers continued to downsize and dazzle audiences this year, but the one that literally took the cake was the ChefJet from 3D Systems. A 3D printer that prints edible candy and confectionary, the ChefJet is easy to use and 'kitchen-ready', and can 3D print chocolate, vanilla, mint, sour apple, cherry and watermelon flavoured delights in various designs.



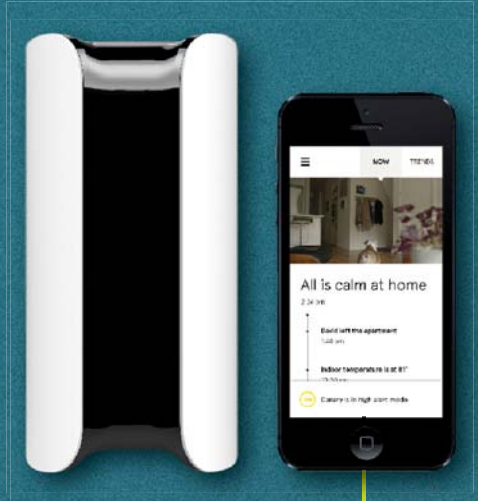
## ClearView Clio

One of the most acclaimed entrants this year was the ClearView Clio, the so-called 'invisible speaker'. Employing an ultra-thin clear acrylic glass transducer, the Bluetooth-enabled Clio literally disappears into its surroundings as soon as you place it down. The sleek device then utilises the company's Edge Motion technology to disperse crisp and clear sound in all directions.



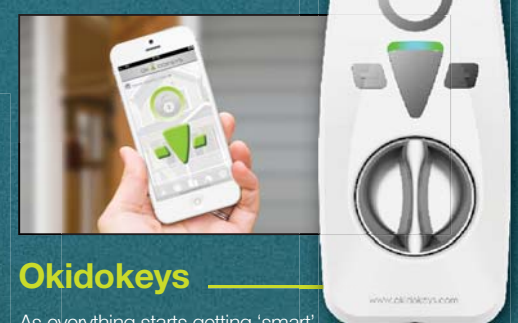
## EyeLock myris

The tiresome practice of typing usernames and passwords may soon be over thanks to the new EyeLock myris. The compact Bond-esque device offers quick, hassle-free security via iris scan. Connected via USB it will allow users to access their favourite sites and apps with a quick glance.



## Canary

Home security is always a headache, but now affordable peace of mind is on the way in the form of the Canary. Featuring an HD night vision camera, speaker, siren, motion detector and temperature sensors, the Canary can detect threats ranging from burglaries to fire to not turning off the aircon. This information is relayed directly to a smartphone app with a live video feed, data tracker, and the ability to remotely toggle the units' siren.



## Okidokeys

As everything starts getting 'smart' monikers, it's probably not that shocking that door locks would follow suit with the Okidokeys Smart-Lock. An easy-to-install system requiring no drilling or wiring, the Smart-Lock device fits over an existing lock allowing users to regulate home access via an app on their smartphone. NFC and RFID technology is also included, with special wristbands unlocking the door as a user approaches. [JK] *ts*



# CANON EOS 70D

**Canon's EOS 70D is not just a welcome follow-up to the 60D, it also surpasses its line and could serve as a viable alternative for the much loved 7D.**

In certain respects, the 70D is a curious animal. Most directly it is an upgrade to and replacement for the 60D and the pinnacle of the mid-range x0D (APS-C sensors) line. And yet it also punches above its weight and considered by some to be a solid alternative to the now aging EOS 7D.

Admittedly, it could be argued that the differences between the 70D and the 60D aren't that great – a 20 megapixel sensor as compared to an 18 megapixel one, the same swivel LCD screen, and 7 fps as compared to 5.3 fps. What's more, the cameras may feel identical, as they have the same weight (755 g) and dimensions.

However, the new features and the improvements on the 70D are ones that make a difference, including terrific low light performance, an ISO range up to 12 800 (further expandable to 25 600) and a 19 point focusing system (all cross type) that we found to be even a bit faster and more sensitive as compared with the 7D.

Testing this in a variety of lighting conditions, including overcast, low light, broad daylight and indoors, the focusing system snapped quickly and silently with no discernible hunting. Our best indicator of this was how quickly the 70D locked onto a dragonfly's ephemeral wings. When stacked up against the 60D's still acceptable nine focusing points, the 70D clearly offers the advantage for action shooters. Also new to the 70D is the touchscreen treatment; a nice touch for those who wish to eschew buttons.



## It's a pleasure

Moving away from comparisons though, the 70D still stands proudly on its own. We found that the APS-C camera, which is fairly compact for a DSLR, was a pleasure to use. Oft used buttons, such as those for changing ISO quickly or shifting between one of three autofocus configurations, were easily within reach. The articulating touchscreen on the 70D is also ideal for taking video, as it enables shooters to capture from awkward angles with no fuss. Furthermore, in Live view, videographers can tap to select their focusing point and video can be captured at up to 1080p at 30 fps.

## TESTING THIS IN A VARIETY OF LIGHTING CONDITIONS, WE FOUND THAT THE FOCUSING SYSTEM SNAPPED QUICKLY AND SILENTLY WITH NO DISCERNIBLE HUNTING.

A small enhancement that we nonetheless appreciated was the inclusion of a locking mechanism on the mode dial, which would go a long way to obviating the problem of accidentally knocking the dial out of aperture priority, for example, into an adjacent setting.

Also bolstering the 70D's profile is the inclusion of Wi-Fi connectivity. The one compromise that has been made is that the touch wheel on the camera's back is smaller than that found on less compact DSLRs. Furthermore, and also due to the camera's compact form, the EOS 70D has a single SD card slot, and does not accommodate CF cards.

## All of this for...

All in all, the 70D is a worthy addition to Canon's stable. It's terrific, easy to use, slick and a feature packed DSLR in its own right. It may well prompt photographers still considering the now aging 60D and 7D to look instead at how well the 70D may meet their needs. RRP: R14 600 with 18-55mm lens. [RN] **ts**

## QUICK SPECS

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# APPLE iPhone 5c

Apple shook things up in 2013 by releasing two smartphones instead of one. Is the 5c newcomer nothing more than 2012 tech dressed up in a restyled polycarbonate suit?

From the outside the iPhone 5c looks and feels new thanks to Cupertino swapping its usual aluminium shell for a polycarbonate one, as well as the iPhone 5c actually being thicker (8.97 mm vs 7.6 mm) and heavier (132 g vs 112 g) compared to the 5 and 5s.

## Different, yet familiar

Under the plastic bonnet things are a little more conventional, since the 5c packs most of the same internals as the iPhone 5. These include the dual-core A6 processor clocked at 1.3 GHz, 1 GB RAM, LTE connectivity, an 8 MP iSight camera and 1.2 megapixel FaceTime selfie shooter, 16 GB worth of non-expandable internal storage, plus a 4" (640 x 1136; 326 ppi pixel density) Retina display.

**UNFORTUNATELY THE 5C IS SIMPLY NOT AN UPGRADE WE CAN RECOMMEND TO IPHONE 5 AND 4S USERS.**

Text, webpages, photos, as well as video still look sharp and vibrant on this touchscreen, but we are increasingly finding the 4"



worth of screen real-estate to be a little cramped, especially after using a 5" Android-running smartphone or 6" phablet. Performance whilst opening, and running multiple apps, and navigating the smartphone's iOS 7 operating system also remains buttery smooth and quite snappy.

## Camera and battery performance

Apple's 8 MP iSight camera is backside illuminated and boasts a large f2.4 aperture, translating into good looking shots in low light conditions that feature reduced noise. In optimal conditions, photos also come out very nice indeed with stills being bright (especially in HDR mode) and sporting plenty of detail as well as realistic colours. We did miss the 120 fps slow-mo video recording functionality of the iPhone 5s and although good, the low light photo capturing capabilities of the iPhone 5c does not match those of Nokia's premium Lumia line-up.

Cupertino fitted the iPhone 5c with a slightly bigger non-removable 1510 mAh Li-Po battery, which strangely could not match the 14+ hours battery performance we got on the iPhone 5 that boasts a smaller 1440 mAh battery. At best, our test unit managed to last just over 12 hours, but most of the time usage time hovered around the 10½ hour mark.

## Cupertino cool or plastic pretender?

All things considered, the iPhone 5c is a very capable all-round smartphone despite coming across as an iPhone 5 repackaged in a more colourful polycarbonate suit. Unfortunately the 5c is simply not an upgrade we can recommend to iPhone 5 and 4s users since the specs are the same as those of the 5.

The biggest hurdle in getting one is its R8 500 pricetag (from iStore), which might be a lot less than the equivalent 5s' R10 000 RRP, but is as much as what you'll pay for devices with superior hardware like the Galaxy S4 (R8 500) or LG G2 (R8 000). [HD] **ts**

## QUICK SPECS

**Processor**  
Apple A6 SoC, dual-core 1.3 GHz

**RAM**  
1 GB

**Display**  
4", 326 ppi pixel density

**OS**  
iOS7



# SONY SmartWatch 2

**The Sony SmartWatch 2 is the Japanese firm's 3rd generation smartwatch. Does all that experience translate into the best smartwatch on the market?**

Although the watch is quite fetching, it does not quite feel as slick or premium in hand as the Samsung Galaxy Gear. Sony opted for a blockish Xperia-inspired design for its timepiece that blends glass, aluminium, and glossy black plastic into one stylish watch.

## Second screen symbioses

In order to begin using the SmartWatch 2, users have to download Sony's Smart Connect application from Google's Play Store on their smartphone. Once done, you simply pair the watch with your phone via NFC/Bluetooth, and you're ready to go.

Unlike the Galaxy Gear, the SmartWatch 2 works with a plethora of Android-powered smartphones rather than being limited to a few Xperia devices. Any mobile device running on Android 4.0 or better is compatible. Like most smartwatches currently available, the SmartWatch 2 acts as a second screen for your smartphone and displays notifications, received email, SMS and the like, which you can read on the watch.

**UNLIKE THE GALAXY GEAR, THE SMARTWATCH 2 WORKS WITH A PLETHORA OF ANDROID-POWERED SMARTPHONES.**

Notifications are shown on the SmartWatch 2's 1.6" (220 x 176; 176 ppi) LCD, which is no match for the Gear's 1.63" (320 x 320) Super AMOLED and its superior 277 pixel density. Sony's SmartWatch 2's



screen does offer better readability in direct sunlight though and happens to be water-resistant (IP57).

## Limitations when compared to the Gear

Where the Samsung Gear has a leg up on the SmartWatch 2 and most other smartwatches for that matter, is with its camera, built-in microphones and speaker. This means that users cannot make or answer calls from the SmartWatch 2 or capture photos or videos either. You are limited to initiating calls via the smartwatch, by using an on-screen dialler or contacts section within the Call handling app of the device. As with the Gear, the SmartWatch 2 does not pack built-in GPS, so it won't track your morning run sans the smartphone.

The number of available applications for the SmartWatch 2 is a lot less limited when compared to the Gear. You will find the official Gmail, Twitter, and Facebook applications, which are installed on the watch using the Smart Connect app on your smartphone.

## The smartwatch to get?

Sony's SmartWatch 2 might not look as snazzy as the Gear, but it works with a wealth of Android devices and costs half (R2 300) of the Gear's extravagant R4 600 asking price. Would we buy one? The answer is still no. [HD] **ts**

## QUICK SPECS

Weight  
122.5 g

Connectivity  
NFC and Bluetooth

Display  
1.6" (220 x 176, 176 ppi)

Operating System  
Android

# GIGABYTE



## P25

There are notebooks, and then there are gaming notebooks, which are more akin to luxury sports cars. Does Gigabyte's P25 rev our engines?

As befitting a high-performance notebook, the Gigabyte P25 is unabashedly conspicuous, boasting a bright yellow lid and head-turning chassis. The P25's aesthetic appeal continues when you open the lid, as chamfered edges, and an all black keyboard setting, lend it a smart-looking appeal as well.

### First, the good news

The 15.6" screen, which in our opinion amounts to a more manageable and portable gaming machine as compared with a 17" offering, sports a full HD resolution (1920 x 1080) display and looks glorious. More particularly, the screen boasts rich colours, excellent brightness, deep blacks and very impressive viewing angles. This, despite the fact that Gigabyte has opted for a matte screen rather than a glossy one. Happily, thanks to superb onboard sound via the built-in four dual channel stereo speakers, the P25 ensures that watching movies on it is no less enticing than playing games.



**FOR A DEDICATED PC GAMER ON THE MOVE WHO WANTS STELLAR PERFORMANCE, THIS MAY JUST BE THEIR DREAM MACHINE.**

Even more importantly, the notebook appeared to be up for pretty much any challenge. Gigabyte has packed the P25 with a Haswell Core i7 (4700 MQ), a generous 8 GB of DDR3 memory, while a 3 GB Geforce GTX 770M powers the graphics, along with switchable Intel HD graphics 4600.

Continuing the good showing, the P25's full size and backlit chiclet keyboard proved quite nice as well, with just enough depth to satisfy, while the all-important gaming WASD

keys received a bit more of an accent. Even though the slightly recessed trackpad was decent and responsive enough, we would have liked it to be slightly larger. That, however is a small gripe, since more than likely, gamers would accompany the P25 with their gaming mouse of choice.

On the storage front, the P25 also boasts what we consider ideal – a 125 GB SSD for ensuring fast, near instant boot times, along with a 750 GB SATA harddrive (7200 rpm, rather than the slower 5400 rpm) for accommodating media that you will likely want to store on the machine. If we had to nitpick, the only difficulty we experienced with the notebook was initially installing the removable battery, which takes a bit of maneuvering to lock in place. Furthermore, peripherals are catered to with two USB 3.0 ports and another eSATA USB charging port, an HDMI port and an SD card reader.

### Brace yourself

As with many things, quality and stellar performance invariably come with a separate-the-men-from-the-boys pricetag, and the Gigabyte P25 is no exception, coming in at a cool R24 000 for the version equipped with 8 GB of RAM. However, for a dedicated PC gamer on the move who wants stellar performance, this may just be their dream machine. [RN] **ts**

### Hot, but still cool

Also working in its favour is that the P25 never really got overly hot in our time with it. While we did notice a little warmth across the notebook when under load, this was far from uncomfortable, and quite evenly spread. Apparently, this fine distribution of air is owing to the fact that the notebook employs a dual heat sink and rear dual air vent system, which keeps the warm air away from either sides of the notebook and instead cools the CPU and the GPU separately.



## QUICK SPECS

**Processor**  
Intel Core i7-4700MQ

**GPU**  
Nvidia 3 GB Geforce GTX 770M

**RAM**  
8 GB DDR3

**Storage**  
750 GB SATA + 125 GB SSD



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# ACER

## Shows its tablet hand at CES

Acer didn't come to this year's CES empty handed, amongst other things, bringing a trio of tablets.

The first and higher end of these was the Acer Iconia A1-830. To start with, the company really stepped up its game on the product build side. Instead of plastic, the light (380 g) Android tablet rocks an aluminum metal finish, and it is powered by an Intel Atom (Clover Trail+) Z2560 1.6 GHz processor and 1 GB of onboard memory.

### Intel gets a nod

While the tablet boasts an IPS display, alas, the resolution is a less inspiring 1024 x 768 – ok, but certainly not groundbreaking. That being said, it looks like the tablet won't be a burden to carry around with one from a size and weight perspective, coming in with an 8.15 mm profile and at 380 g respectively. Happily, unlike the Nexus 7, it will accommodate microSD cards for expandable storage.

The tablet will apparently offer up to



REVIEW

seven hours of battery life when it arrives during the course of this year. Judging by its stated price Stateside of \$150 (R1 500), this one should hit the spot for those seeking a fast but affordable Android tablet.

The second tablet offering, and the even more affordable of the two, came in the form of the Iconia B1-720. The first differentiating factor is that this is a 7" device, the second is that it will sport a slightly slower Mediatek 1.3 GHz processor, although still a decent 1 GB of memory. Its price, at least as it will arrive in the US, could be its main draw, coming in at \$130 (R1 300).

### And Windows

The final tablet of this trio was the Iconia W4, this one an 8.1" Windows tablet, with a 1.8 GHz Intel Atom processor under the hood. It too sports an IPS display with a slightly better 1280 x 800 resolution. Furthermore, both its 32 GB and 64 GB versions will be expandable via a microSD card slot, and will weigh in at 415 g. **ts**

# GIGABYTE

## P27K

Gigabyte's P25 impressed, but the larger and even more powerful P27K is a gaming notebook that really takes the desktop replacement cake.

By all standards, Gigabyte's P27K gaming notebook is a monster – it is large, fairly heavy (3.2 kg), built to feel as solid as a Mack truck and boasts formidable specs. To start with, the notebook shares one similarity with the P25: it too offers a beautiful, rich display with a matte finish. The colours are no less rich, blacks no less deep and contrast no less sharp than that which impressed on its smaller brother, but on this 17.3" display, it is even more noticeable and enjoyable.

Furthermore, the full HD resolution (1920 x 1080) only helps matters – suffice to say looking at the screen, whether playing games, watching movies or just viewing pictures, is a treat on the eyes, even if it can't lay claim to boasting Retina display rivalling pixels per inch.

### Get ready, set, go!

Complementing the screen is the sheer performance capability of the machine itself, thanks to the presence of an Intel Core i7 (470MQ) processor at 2.4 GHz, a massive 16 GB of memory and a Geforce GTX 765 M graphics card. Together, these specs chews through general tasks like Usain Bolt through 100 metres. When you don't need all the Geforce's graphics grunt, you can always switch over to the integrated Intel HD Graphics



4600 to conserve battery life. Storage, meanwhile, once again offers to the best of both worlds – a 128 GB SSD drive for fast booting and a 750 hard drive for media (also expandable up to 2 TB).

### THE P27K IS A PC GAMER'S DESKTOP REPLACEMENT DREAM.

The full sized backlit chiclet keyboard was a pleasure to use, with just enough depth for our liking, although some users may be divided by the large palm rest area, which covers your wrists as well as palms when typing. At maximum, the audio was decent and clear, though with not as much bass as we expected.

### And what else?

Finally, there are a plethora of ports on offer, including two USB 3 ports, an eSATA/USB combo port, a USB 2.0 port and an HDMI port. If size and weight are no object, and you want a larger screen than that offered by the P25, then the P27K is a PC gamer's desktop replacement dream. RRP: R20 000. [RN] **ts**



# EVERKI Atlas notebook backpack

From past experiences with its Versa Premium, we know that Everki are manufacturers of top quality notebook backpacks. It did not take a lot to see that the Atlas is cut from the same cloth.

Firstly, the Atlas backpack fulfils the primary requirement of carrying your notebook safely with adequate protection. Featured inside is Everki's new adjustable three-point notebook pocket to snugly fit machines in sizes from 13" to 17.3".

**A LOT OF THOUGHT WENT INTO THIS SYSTEM, EVEN DOWN TO THE LITTLE SLIDERS THAT PREVENT STRAPS DANGLING EVERYWHERE.**

It secures your notebook snugly in place, although we did miss the little corner protectors at the bottom as provided by the Versa Premium. Just like that bag, you also don't need to take out your notebook at airport security checks, since all you do is unzip the compartment and send the bag through the X-ray machine. Worried about where to put your tablet? A felt-lined pocket makes for easy placement.

## He ain't heavy

At 1.72 kg the Atlas is not the lightest on the market, but its five-point balance strap adjustment system makes up for it. A lot of thought went into this system, even down to the little sliders that prevent straps dangling everywhere. As hoped for, a trolley

handle pass-through slot helps to make airports a breeze.

There is a sufficiently large top pocket for all your bits and bobs, it's just a shame that it's not hard-shell as with the Versa Premium. On that bag we criticised Everki for not providing an easy-to-use solution for power chord storage. In theory the Atlas doesn't either, but it does offer an always open magazine storage pocket, which worked just as well for tossing in your power chord after work.

## No memory

If there is a point of critique it is that the Atlas doesn't come with some memory enhancement pills. It should have, since there are so many different pockets and spaces available, that we had trouble of keeping track what we put where. As we've seen with these types of bags, quality comes at a premium, since the Everki Atlas retails for R1 822. [MJ] **ts**  
\*The Atlas was received as a seeding unit



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# HI-TEC Trail Blazers

While footwear may be too easily taken for granted, a well-crafted pair of shoes really show their value when you start demanding greater versatility, traction and not to mention comfort from the gear with which you grace your feet.

With this in mind, we were particularly keen to see how well Hi-Tec's Trail Blazers performed in light of the intense heat and all too frequent showers we have had of late. To start with, we were a bit taken aback by how light the Trail Blazers are (341 g), feeling more akin to an exceedingly well made slipper than a shoe in this regard, if not quite as light as a dedicated trail running shoe. Considering that our other hiking shoes approached the 600 g mark, the weight difference was considerable and noticeable.

## Sole survivor

Additionally, as well as being exceptionally comfortable thanks to its ortholite sock liner; we found that much like Hi-Tec's V-LITE SpHike mid WP boots, the Trail Blazers required minimal wear in. In fact it was mostly a case of slipping them on and going for a combination walk and run straight away, with the Trail Blazers almost immediately feeling like they and our feet were old friends. Furthermore, we experienced exactly zero chafing on the heel, nor did we once find our feet beset by blisters caused by the shoes either.



REVIEW

The good news is that the Trail Blazers never faltered, gripping dry and wet surfaces alike, uncompromisingly refusing to let go until we raised our foot.

## THESE MULTI-SPORT SHOES LEND THEMSELVES TO RUNNING, WALKING AND A MYRIAD OF ACTIVITIES INBETWEEN.

For fun, we walked and ran with our dogs on a leash with the Trail Blazers, just to see if an enthusiastic border collie could pull us off our feet on the aforementioned surfaces. To our delight, the answer was a just as enthusiastic no. It is this that really won us over, particularly as these multi-sport shoes lend themselves to running, walking and a myriad of activities inbetween.

## Mighty Multi

The Trail Blazers even looked the part of a multi-sport shoe – sporty, attractive and appealing. What's more, at just below R900 they are not overly expensive either. In the final analysis, we found ourselves highly impressed and can easily recommend them to outdoor enthusiasts. Available from Cape Union Mart. [RN] **ts**

# TOMTOM Runner

TomTom's new GPS running watch does what you want without being flashy.

For many runners who have picked up the sport recently, running with a smartphone and a tracking app couldn't be beat. That is until massive 5" devices such as the Samsung S4 started popping up, and these 'bricks' eat into your PB. If this has happened to you, then the TomTom Runner merits a closer look.



Runner were slightly on the low side, up until a firmware update brought the latest version. Now the Runner comes across much better, fixing on satellites quickly, providing a slight press delay before pausing your run (for those accidental knocks), and offering a stopwatch function.

## TOMTOM'S RUNNER WILL BE MOST LOVED BY THE ENTRY-LEVEL TO MID-RANGE RUNNER.

Apart from the watch body that pops out of the wristband (don't drop it!), the biggest frustration is the minimal information on display when it comes to your history on the watch itself. Initially only the date of your runs and the start of these are displayed. You have to click on each to actually see the kilometres clocked and time – a frustration, especially with the eat-as-much-as-you-can info displayed on smartphones. For your complete run info, including route, the Runner has to be connected to your PC and uploaded to the so-so TomTom Mysports website.

## Finish in sight

In our opinion, TomTom's Runner will be most loved by the entry-level to mid-range runner, looking for a watch that can track runs, and maybe a bit more (pacing, run-against-yourself, goals). R2 000 (R2 600 with heart rate monitor), or if you also cycle and swim, try the Multisport (wider strap, bike mount) for R2 900. [MJ] **ts**

It might not be as stylish as the TomTom Nike+ collaboration of a few years back, but the Runner is a fair bit easier to use. Both the controls and GPS unit itself are found in a little four-way pod below the screen which is effortless to control while running. The watch face is pretty much utilitarian and uninspired. While running it will display a number of options as the main info, including distance, pace, time, and heart rate.

## Firmware update a treat

Our initial impressions of the







# learnfast SHORT COURSES

## fill the softer skills gap

Short courses can play an integral role in ensuring that employees meet their full potential in a business setting.

Formal qualifications are of course a prerequisite in this day and age. What these qualifications may sometimes lack are the 'softer' skills required by professionals to either operate the various systems they are surrounded by in the workplace, or the interpersonal skills required to effectively work with people in most corporate environments.

The biggest challenge companies and individuals may face is availing themselves or their employees to address this required up-skilling. This is where companies specialising in short courses come in. Short course, impact training is the one way to get people in front of experts that are able to transfer the most important skills and best practices in the shortest possible time.

### Costs and consequences

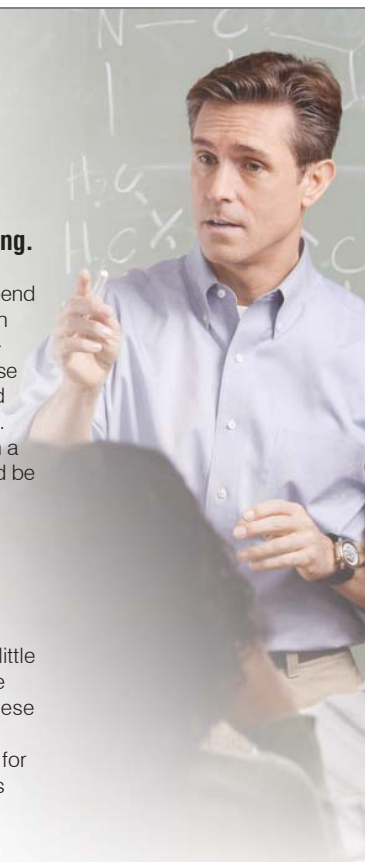
So what are the costs related to this training? There is the simple calculation and then there is the realistic calculation. Simply, the expense divided by the total number of employees only indicates the average physical spend per head, but does not consider the reduction in implicit costs related to more productive employees. Reduced errors and shorter time to task completion are just some of the ways in which operational bottom line gain may be achieved.

A big deterrent for companies and especially SME's to spend on training is the fear of losing these employees after such expenditure. Do not fall into the trap of denying your company the right to an effective and happy workforce because of this. Cost recovery agreements can be put in place and signed as separate agreements to the employee contract. These may stipulate that should an employee leave within a certain amount of time after course completion they would be liable for the cost of the training.

### The appeal of personal development

From the private individual's perspective, whether you are a school leaver taking a gap year or an established professional looking for further personal development, little appeals more to a prospective employer than someone who takes accountability for their own development. These short course certificates not only mean that companies interviewing you can take you on with little requirement for additional training, it also shows that you are as serious about yourself as they are about their business. **ts**

For more information on the short-courses on offer at Learnfast, visit [www.learnfast.co.za](http://www.learnfast.co.za) or contact 011-262-2054.




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### 1. Watch and learn

A group of researchers at Cornell University trained robots to identify human movements during simple household tasks. The robots, fitted with 3D cameras, compiled a library of actions and associated them with common household objects in different contexts. When faced with a new situation, they could draw on their learnt know-how to predict what was most likely to be the human's next move. In a demo, one 'bot helpfully opened the fridge, while another poured a beverage into a mug.

**120** 3D videos watched during the training.

**224 000 km**

Kilometres driven with only occasional human intervention.

### 2. Hands-free Kit(t)

Google has been testing self-drive cars on the roads of San Francisco since 2011. And its had remarkably good results: only one accident was recorded over the test period, which, by the way, was caused by a human driver bumping into the Google car. Results further showed that compared to human drivers, the computer car was better at maintaining a safe following distance and braked and accelerated more smoothly.

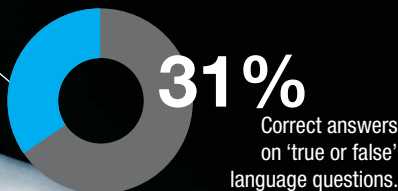
# Bits on Bots

50 years ago, science fiction writer Isaac Asimov predicted that by 2014 robots will be common but not really clever. True, but there are a few darn smart ones around.



### 4. A(I) student

Japanese engineers are working on a robot that's clever enough to pass the University of Tokyo's notoriously difficult entrance exam. They're training the 'bot to answer multiple choice questions on world history and physics and solve math problems and hope to progress to essay-type questions later. Early results show that the robot has a real knack for history questions, but its language processing needs work. The researchers hope that their student will be able to pass the university exam by 2021.



SOURCES: Snippet 1: [bit.ly/1iCbif0](http://bit.ly/1iCbif0) Snippet 2: [bit.ly/1erqjTT](http://bit.ly/1erqjTT)  
 Snippet 3: [bit.ly/1mMKFvp](http://bit.ly/1mMKFvp) Snippet 4: [bit.ly/LOW9t](http://bit.ly/LOW9t)  
 Snippet 5: [bit.ly/1ckvmZw](http://bit.ly/1ckvmZw)

### 3. Tech talk

In 2011, Australian scientists reported that they have taught robots to 'talk' about where they are. The robot language consists of phone-tone beeps, which were translated into two-letter syllables that humans could understand. When a robot was placed in a new spot, it would randomly pair two syllables to describe its position and other robots then learnt the words. Later the robots could describe their positions relative to known spots using the words of their newly learnt language.

**37.5 cm**

Positions associated with a specific word agreed within this distance, when used by different robots.

### 5. Quiz master

In 2011, IBM's clever computer Watson outsmarted two human quiz champions on the show *Jeopardy!* Although it made a few blunders over the course of the show, its ability to sift through massive amounts of information gave it the edge in the end. Researchers say that the feat shows that robots may prove useful in data mining applications. [LP] **ts**

**\$1 million**  
 Prize money won by Watson in the show, which IBM donated to charity.



## SCIENCE

## PIC OF THE MONTH

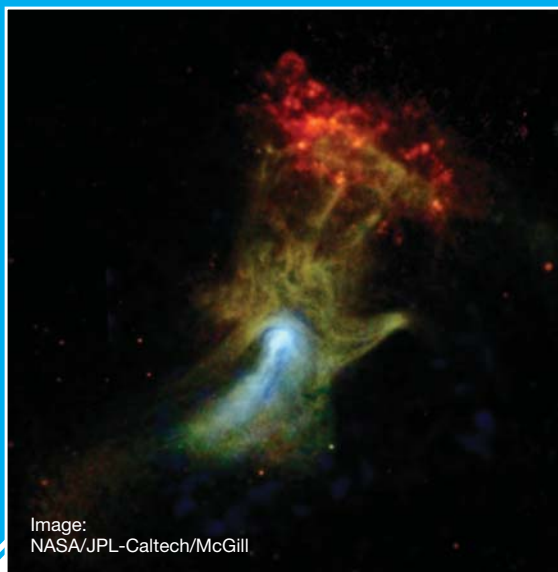


Image:  
NASA/JPL-Caltech/McGill

The picture on the left has been dubbed the 'Hand of God,' and is an object called a pulsar wind nebula. This X-ray image shows a cloud of material that has been dispersed by a star that went supernova. According to NASA, the stellar corpse (B1509) is a pulsar, spinning around at seven times per second. It sends out a particle wind that interacts with the magnetic fields of the surrounding material cloud, with this 'Hand of God' being the result. And no, this is not the same hand that touched the ball during Maradona's World Cup goal in 1986.

## SMART ANSWERS

Life is full of questions that need smart answers. Some recent scientific research can help.



### HOW WE WALK

**You just put one foot in front of the other, right?** That's the result, yes, but there's more to it.

**How so?** Each step consists of two phases. First, you lift the weight off your back leg. Then the knee buckles and the leg shoots forward. It's almost like a *kettie* being released.

**So there's a spring in every step?** Yup. The knee and its tendons, the calf muscle, and the ankle and its tendons, together act as a stretched spring. When the knee buckles, the stored elastic energy is released in a rapid burst. Because the muscle alone can't provide enough energy, the cooperation between the ankle and knee is the critical factor.

**What's the next step?** Understanding the mechanism behind human gait can help robots to walk in a more human-like way.

Source: [bit.ly/1d1KZ3u](http://bit.ly/1d1KZ3u)



### HOW POLAR BEARS KEEP WARM

**Uhm, they have thick, furry coats?** For sure, but the layer of fur is only about 5 cm thick.

**That's enough right?** At this thickness the fur can trap only a limited amount of air for insulation. If most of the heat from the animal's body was lost through conduction, the insulation would not be enough to maintain a comfy 37 °C body temperature.

**Perhaps heat loss is not only through conduction then?** Exactly. Researchers found that the animals lose most of their body heat through radiation.

**But how does fur reduce radiation?** A simple computer model showed that the individual hairs act like radiation shields that beam the energy back towards the animal's body. This traps the heat energy between the body and the hair and so creates an efficient layer of insulation.

Source: [bit.ly/1fgqeGh](http://bit.ly/1fgqeGh)




### HOW ROUGH SURFACES REDUCE DRAG

**Rough surfaces reduce drag? Huh?** Yup, it sounds counterintuitive. But scientists have shown that in turbulent conditions an uneven surface creates less friction than a smooth one.

**How did they figure this out?** The scientists designed a rough surface on which small ridges were all aligned with the direction of flow. Simulations showed that the unevenness changed the turbulence patterns close to the surface, which resulted in less resistance.

**How does it work?** On a smooth surface, turbulent swirls create friction. However, on the rough surface the unevenness traps air bubbles, which prevents the surface from getting wet. This allows the rough surface to glide through a fluid easier than a smooth surface.

**What does this mean in practice?** The principle could be used to develop coatings for the undersides of ships that create less drag and make for plainer sailing. [LP] 

Source: [bit.ly/1jfu9qb](http://bit.ly/1jfu9qb)



# SUBARU FORESTER

## 2.5XS Premium Lineartronic CVT

**The Forester is Subaru's bread-and-butter vehicle in South Africa, accounting for the majority of its sales. Can the latest iteration ascend the lofty heights set by its predecessor?**

Overall, our eyes deemed the restyled Forester to be a more appealing design package than Subaru's XV crossover. The Forester has traded its utilitarian look for a softroader suit whose sleeker lines make it appear more stylish, but without losing the sense that this SUV could go further off the beaten path compared to class rivals such as the Toyota RAV4.

On the inside, the Forester is decently screwed together and came across as particularly spacious. Our review model was also very well equipped, including plenty of creature comforts the likes of electrically adjustable driver's seat, leather trim, reversing camera (sans the park distance sensors though), as well as a double volume power sliding sunroof with sun shade cover. Also onboard was Bluetooth hands-free telephony and, thank the motoring gods, audio streaming. This allows the driver or front passenger to pair their smartphone and have their device's music tracks play through the car's six speaker audio system.

The only negative aspect of the cabin is that it does not match a lot of its competitors on the styling front, as Subaru utilises old school dials, knobs and switches, especially on the audio controls and multifunction steering wheel.

### At home on the road

Beneath the bonnet of this Forester resides a 2498 cc four cylinder Subaru Boxer engine\*, which is mated to a lineartronic CVT (continuously variable transmission). This powerplant produces 126 kW at 5800 RPM and 235 Nm at 4100 RPM, whilst sipping a claimed 8.1 litres petrol per 100 km. During testing we actually averaged a very decent (for this vehicle class) 8.6 litres on a combine cycle (a mix of town and highway driving), with fuel economy undoubtedly aided by the car's automatic stop-start technology. The latter works well but is not quite as smooth and refined as BMW's version of this system.

Whilst driving on a tarred surface, the Forester delivers a highly comfortable ride, with its suspension doing a nice job of soaking up the bumps on the road. Within city limits the CVT and Boxer motor work together nicely, whilst the highway driving experience is better compared to what was on offer in the XV thanks to a more powerful engine. You still





need to gear down when attempting to overtake or driving up a steep hill, but this task is made easier thanks to the presence of gear shifting paddles on the steering wheel.

### Doesn't mind playing in the dirt

Being a Subaru, the Forester comes equipped with the Japanese company's legendary Symmetrical all-wheel drive\*\* system. Also providing a boost to the vehicle's offroading aspirations is its excellent 220 mm ground clearance, as well as the X-Mode button located in front of the gear-lever. This button activates/deactivates the Forester's X-Mode, in which certain aspects such as the car's gear shifts, traction control system, and the Symmetrical all-wheel drive system, are optimised for low-traction driving. This mode makes venturing off the beaten path far easier for novices. Although we did not do any serious offroading in the Forester, we did manage to drive the SUV on hilly, mud-filled dirt roads with the X-mode turned on. It was amazing how much traction the vehicle had in the mud, even whilst ascending a steep incline.

### The SUV for you?

The Forester 2.5XS Premium is more capable than most of its SUV rivals when it comes to exploring hidden destinations, bereft of tarred roads, thanks to its excellent ground clearance level and all-wheel drive system. The car also does not have to stand back for competitors like the Honda CR-V when it comes to spaciousness, tech features, practicality or even styling (apart from the rather lacklustre interior cabin).

The Forester 2.5XS Premium goes for a recommended retail price of R429 000, which makes it a little bit more expensive than competitors like the Honda CR-V 2.4 Elegance AWD (R421 700) or Toyota's RAV4 2.5 Auto VX (R412 400). If you are planning to go offroad on occasion the extra premium should definitely be worth it. [HD] **ts**

## UNIQUE SUBARU FEATURES:

### \*BOXER ENGINE

Subaru's famous Boxer engine has been designed to lie horizontally within the engine bay as opposed to vertically like most powerplants. The Japanese car maker asserts that this results in less engine noise and vibration making its way into the interior cabin, plus a lower centre of gravity for the car, which leads to enhanced vehicle stability and a boosted level of cornering grip.

### \*\*SYMMETRICAL ALL-WHEEL DRIVE

According to Subaru, its symmetrical all-wheel drive system sends the power produced by the Boxer engine to all four wheels simultaneously. This results in the vehicle possessing twice the grip capacity compared to a front- or rear-wheel drive car. So, while the Forester is accelerating or cornering at high speed, the vehicle has more grip to keep you on course. For the driver this translates into more control over the car as well as additional confidence to push it toward its limits.

For the high flyer who needs to get from point A to point B in blistering time, without sparing comfort or the bells and whistles, we present our Top 5 super saloons.

# Top 5 performance saloons



## 5 Audi RS7 Sportback

412 kW; 700 Nm

Audi's four-door coupé – the RS7 Sportback – is a real head turner from the outside, whilst the interior turns into a real tech and comfort enclave for overworked executives. Thanks to the oodles of power produced by the 3993 cc twin-turbo V8 and smooth as silk eight-speed Tiptronic gearbox, the RS7 Sportback blasts to 100 km/h from standstill in just 3.9 seconds before reaching a limited, but no less illegal top-end of 250 km/h. Jumping behind the wheel of this Audi does not come cheap, gobbling up R1.4 million of your budget.



## 4 Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG S

430 kW; 800 Nm

The E63 AMG S is the most powerful E class ever, plus its 5461 cc twin-turbo V8 also delivers one of the best audio symphonics in this class. This roaring V8 sees this Stuttgart stallion galloping to 100 km/h in 4.1 seconds, before being reined in by the speed limiter at 250 km/h. The recently face-lifted E63 AMG also looks the part, every bit as suave as Cameron van der Burgh in an Armani suit. Aspiring buyers will need to hit the up button on the corporate elevator before acquiring the R1.438 million Mercedes.



## 3 Jaguar XFR-S

405 kW; 680 Nm

Jaguar's XFR-S is on the prowl for AMG, M, and RS branded prey, packing weapons such as sleek lines and a killer powerplant soundtrack via its supercharged 5-litre V8. This engine rockets the XFR-S to 100 km/h in a mere 4.6 seconds, onto a regulated terminal velocity of 300 km/h. The XFR-S is not only fast in a straight line though, seeing that systems like its electronic active differential and DSC stability control make it grip the road like, well, a cat. At only R1.258 million, this Jaguar is actually the bargain model in this illustrious group of vehicles.



## 2 Porsche Panamera Turbo S

425 kW; 800 Nm

In our opinion, Porsche's Panamera is not the most attractive car in this comparison nor in Porsche's own stable. However, it is one of the more practical vehicles the German company makes. This sports car is a four seater, whilst being no less athletic compared to its stablemates. Its 4.8-litre twin-turbo V8 shoots the four-door cruise missile to 100 km/h in a blink-and-you'll-miss-it 3.8 seconds, onto a top end north of 300 km/h. All that performance comes at a price though, with pricing for the Panamera Turbo S starting at a heart-attack inducing R2.38 million.



## 1 Aston Martin Rapide S

410 kW; 620 Nm

Beneath the bonnet of the sublimely styled Rapide S resides a honking normally aspirated 5935 cc V12, whose exhaust note is able to indignantly hush the rest of the cars in this comparison to silence. This powerplant can also rapidly blast the Rapide S to 100 km/h in 4.9 seconds before topping out at a keep-up-with-the-blue-light-brigade top speed of 306 km/h. Besides sitting lower on the road compared to its forerunner the Rapide, the Rapide S boasts enhanced road holding abilities plus an upgraded adaptive damping system offering three modes, namely normal, sport and track. The cost of owning a British automotive aristocrat is still to be announced. [HD] **ts**





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# TOP deals

## GIGABYTE Q2546 i5 Notebook

Intel Core™ i5 3230M 2.60 GHz Processor, Windows 8 Pro 64 Bit, 15.6" HD Display, 4 GB DDR3 RAM, 750 GB Hard Drive, nVidia GeForce GT640M 2 GB Graphics, 2 Year Warranty.

**R8 499**



## GIGABYTE Q2556 i7 Notebook

Intel Core™ i7 4700MQ 2.40 GHz, Windows 8 Pro 64 Bit, 15.6" HD Display, 4 GB DDR3 RAM, 750 GB Hard Drive, nVidia GeForce GT740M 2GB Graphics, 2 Year Warranty.

**R10 299**

## GIGABYTE P35K i7 Notebook

Intel Core™ i7-4700HQ, Windows 8 Pro 64 Bit, 15.6" HD Display, 16 GB DDR3 RAM, 1 TB Hard Drive, nVidia GTX 765M 2 GB DDR5, 2 Year Warranty.

**R17 355**



## GIGABYTE P27K i7 Notebook

Intel Core™ i7 4700MQ, Windows 8 Pro 64 Bit, 16 GB RAM, 128 GB mSATA SSD + 750 GB (5400 RPM) 2.5" SATA HDD, nVidia GeForce GTX765M GDDR5 2 GB, DVD+RW Drive, 2 Year carry-in warranty.

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# Back To Work

With 2014 well and truly underway, it's now also time to say "out with the old and in with the new" regarding your rather dated work attire. That's why we've put together this handy guide to your own back-to-work wardrobe makeover.

Style

by Mynhardt van Pletsen

## The Basics

Looking like you know anything about something is real easy. In fact, they taught us these basics when they dressed us for school on that very first day. Since then, making that all important anti-establishment statement became our main fashion fetish, and style suffered. For the sake of bringing believable business back, try doing a few of these things: Consider a tie. Tuck your shirt. Wear leather lace-up shoes. Get a matching belt. Wear socks. Wear a button shirt. Button-up that shirt. Shave every day.

That was reasonably painless? Now, onto even more important things.

## The Jacket

Whether you call it a blazer, sports jacket, sweat vest or whatever, a semi-formal jacket in a neutral colour is the fastest way to business up. It's infinitely scary how quickly your professional credibility factor increases once you fasten that top button. Find a relaxed single-breasted option to quickly transform your holiday hangover into becoming a savvy self-starter.



Stone single breasted jacket, Stone Harbour. R799

## The Shoes

If you haven't yet heard the saying 'the shoes maketh the man', boy, are we glad you found us when you did. If your name is not some derivative of Zuck, Steve or Woz, then your sneakers just won't cut it at the investors briefing. Dress up with a patent leather option, but keep it real by choosing a worn-in pair, giving the impression of both authenticity and experience.



Wingtip brogues, Woolworths. R599

## The Tie

Saving the most controversial for last – the dreaded tie is making a comeback. Here's how to look clued up without feeling completely suffocated. First off, you can wear a pattern on either your shirt or your tie – choose one, and keep the other one plain. Get a silk or cotton option that's not wider than the width of three fingers. Finally, make sure the tie reaches all the way down to your belt buckle. Anything shorter and someone's taking your lunch money, anything longer and you're never babysitting for anyone ever again. **ts**



Tie [collection of 3], Truworths Man. R150





Leather belt  
[various designs],  
Woolworths. **R199**



Cotton shirt [various colours],  
Edgars. **R299**



Oakley Currency,  
Sunglass Hut.  
**R1 200**



Levi's 501 Straight  
Cut, Levi Outlet  
Store. **R550**



ICE chronograph  
watch, ICE Woodlands.  
**R2 000**

# BRINGING Analogue BACK

by Mynhardt van Pletsen

In our über connected digital worlds, sometimes there is great value in offsetting our electronic endeavours with some offline objects. Since we're focusing on getting back to work, there's no better setting for your analog adventures than the office.



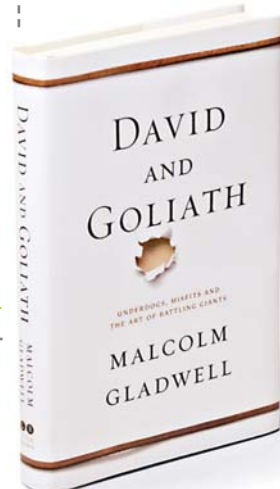
Being a bunch of pen-fundis here in the office, the Uni-ball PIN is one of the more remarkable writing implements we've come across. There's no streaking and it starts writing when you do.  
**R30, Sandton Stationery & Print.**

Not the greatest productivity tool, as you might get mesmerized waiting for this clock to flip over. We know, because we were.  
**R100, Typo.**



Love writing on paper and reading on screen? Now you can do both with the ridiculously clever Evernote/Moleskine collaboration. It's not exactly 100% analogue, but we couldn't help ourselves.  
**R330, Exclusive Books.**

Taking learning to the next level, the latest business bestsellers make great paperweights and desk stabilisers. Gladwell's brilliant *David and Goliath* not only looks good on display, but is actually worth reading as well.  
**R245, kalahari.net.**



Equally efficient during hot lunches or hostile takeovers, this beautiful pocket blade from Balladeo will cement your reputation as the CEO not to be messed with.  
**R500, Due South.**



Filling your workspace with the sweet scent of recently roasted beans not only stimulates creativity but also creates a social atmosphere. Did we mention caffeine is also a mild painkiller? **ts**  
**Bodum Brazil French Press. R410, www.yuppiechef.com.**



A MAN'S GUIDE TO

# MANBAGS

by Mynhardt van Pletsen

The manbag has ever been the subject of feverish debate – should we or shouldn't we? So while your mates are discussing whether Indiana Jones did indeed wear a purse or a satchel, here's some suggestions on where you can stash your stuff.



R1 000

## THE MULTITASKER

Thanks to Deuter, the connected office does fit in a bag. For the guy who simply has to have everything, and have it with him at all times. *Deuter Giga Office Pro, R1 000. Cape Union Mart.*



R225

## THE MESSENGER

If you're in the habit of slinging things over your shoulder, this should fit you just fine. An instant conversation starter, just add scuff marks and coffee stains. *Canvas messenger bag, R225. Woolworths.*



R3 500

## THE METRO MAN

For the up and coming, this bag communicates the perfect trifecta of suave, swag and subtle sophistication, but only if you've got tons of budget left after the silly season, *Jekyll & Hide laptop bag, R3 500. Frasers.*



R520

## THE MINIMALIST

If you have a constant love/hate relationship with the manbag, this little offering combines the cellphone pouch, wallet and manbag in the most elegant of ways. *Matblac iWallet, R520. www.matblac.com*

## THE MOONSTER

As long as there are moonbags, there will be middle-aged, overweight guys that wear them. Consider this a reprimand rather than a recommendation. *Available everywhere for cheap, unfortunately. ts*



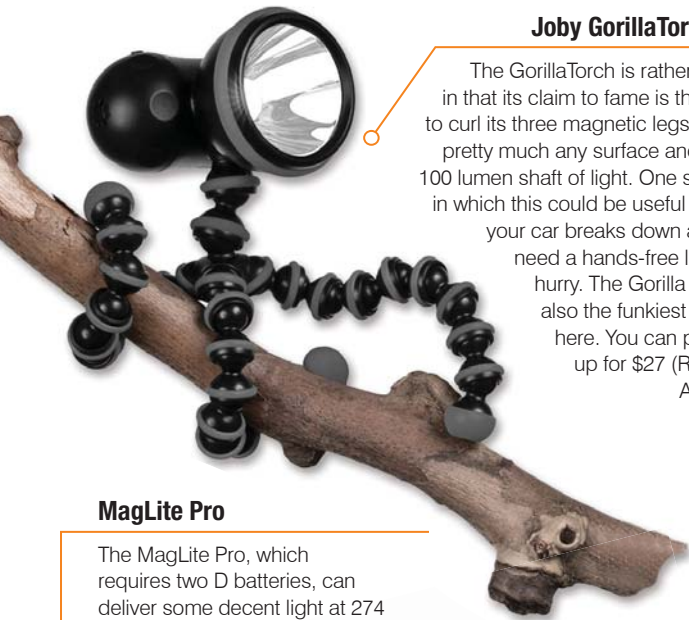


# The Light of your

So you're heading outdoors, and you've packed your firestarter, a decent blade, a GPS and, that other essential – a really good flashlight to pierce the gloom. Here are some of our picks.

## Joby GorillaTorch 100

The GorillaTorch is rather unique in that its claim to fame is the ability to curl its three magnetic legs around pretty much any surface and cast a 100 lumen shaft of light. One scenario in which this could be useful is when your car breaks down and you need a hands-free light in a hurry. The Gorilla Torch is also the funkiest offering here. You can pick one up for \$27 (R300) on Amazon.



## MagLite Pro

The MagLite Pro, which requires two D batteries, can deliver some decent light at 274 lumens. The flashlight hosts an equally new state-of-the-art LED light engine, which ensures the ideal balance between output and power efficiency. If you are packing this one for a game drive, then you may be reassured by its 366 m range. The MagLite Pro comes in at a not too bad price of R800.



## LED Lenser P14

An old favourite, the LED Lenser P14 boasts powerful light output in a fairly compact form, all encased in a solid body. A telescopic function enables you to narrow the light beam considerably. Furthermore, it has two levels of illumination, one at about half, and the other at full. At 210 lumens, it can cleave a path through the Magaliesberg in the dead of night. Expect to pay in the region of between R700 and R950. [RN] ts



## Nitecore TM26

This little 142 mm beauty offers up to an excellent 3500 lumens, although, you can step up to this with several power settings, (95, 440 or 1700 lumens). The 438 g flashlight boasts an integrated OLED display, which shows you at a glance how much juice is left. It's not just your environment that will be lighter if you use it, so will your wallet, as you can expect to pay in the region of R5 400 for it.

## Maelstrom XM18

At the top of the heap is the XM18, which packs up to a whopping 15 000 lumens, thanks to its 18 (!) LED lights. Its shortest runtime is just an hour, but that's all you need before this flashlight attracts the attention of every Vulcan scientific research spacecraft on a jaunt through the Milky Way. If that's your aim, you might want to count your pennies – the XM18 costs \$2 400 (R26 400).





# SPORT TECH

## ■ ADIDAS PUMPS UP THE RUNNING WATCH



Adidas is pushing the limit when it comes to running watches with its new miCoach Smart Run. Tired of only including GPS functionality, Adidas' latest also features Mio Wrist Based Continuous Heart Rate Technology to track heart rate directly from the watch (no strap needed); a built-in accelerometer to count stride rate; and an MP3 player (4 GB storage). The company's miCoach training coach is also built-in, granted you would need Bluetooth enabled earphones to listen to commands and the MP3 player. It looks extremely sporty, but also comes at an extreme price – R5 000 to lead the pack.

## ■ FLYKNIT MAKES NEXT LUNAR LANDING

Nike's Flyknit shoes have been getting incredibly good reviews, with the company now introducing the second iteration of its Flyknit Lunar range. The Flyknit Lunar2 continues where the Lunar1+ left off, combining the strength and lightness of the Flyknit uppers with the Lunarlon cushioning. Improvements Nike mentions include more stretch in the uppers for better fit, and improved cushioning to enhance stride. Budget is not part of the setup though – a pair retails for R1 900.



## ■ BAREFOOT CRAZE HITS FOOTBALL

German sportswear company Puma is setting its site on Brazil 2014 with its new evoPower soccer boot that will be seen on the feet of Fabregas, Henry and Balotelli. Puma believes more power comes from kicking barefoot than from what is delivered by boot. The new evoPower range mimics this barefoot kicking ability, and provides more backwards flexibility in order to put the ball past the goalkeeper. Also included is special strips of foam on the side of the boot for improved accuracy. R2 300.

## ■ MONO-WHEEL THE WAY OF THE FUTURE?

Who needs four wheels when one can do? The Onewheel is the world's first self-balancing electric skateboard, and can travel at speeds of up to 20 km/h. The inventor of the Onewheel believes it provides more of a snowboard experience than a skateboard one, since you lean forward to go and back to brake. It skid past its Kickstarter goal making close to four times as much as its initial \$100 000 aim. Preorders went for R14 300 (\$1 300), with future retail prices not announced yet. **ts**



# Top 5 HEIST FILMS

Hands up, this is a robbery! Movie fundi Sping investigates the top Heist movies ever made.



## Inception

Instead of robbing a bank or a museum, Christopher Nolan decided to break into the mind with *Inception*. This star-studded and mesmerising crime epic blends three climaxes into one as the team fights to maintain control of three suspended environments. Persuasive mind games play out with precision as the team unlocks the deepest reaches of their target's consciousness. *Inception's* revolutionary heist concept was beautifully executed with a monumental soundtrack, clinical cinematography, surreal visuals and strong performances from the likes of Leonardo DiCaprio, Marion Cotillard, Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Ellen Page.

**Best bit:** The closing shot of the spinning top totem.

## Best of the Rest

### The Usual Suspects

If you check the underside of this film, you'll find "Property of Kevin Spacey".

### Reservoir Dogs

Tarantino's breakthrough film has one of the greatest bank heist and restaurant scenes of all-time.

### Office Space

While it's not the first heist film that springs to mind, it's definitely the funniest...

### Ocean's Eleven

George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Matt Damon – the boys are back in town and you won't meet smoother criminals.

### Inside Man

Spike Lee's heist film is slick, smart and features a bank job so cunning... you'd expect the thief to write a book about it.





## Heat

*Heat* is probably most revered for the long-awaited match up of Hollywood screen legends Al Pacino and Robert De Niro. These movie stalwarts didn't disappoint, offering quintessential performances to crank up the heat in this aptly titled cops-and-robbers heist film. The titanic head-to-head showdown met all expectations, making this nearly three hour Los Angeles crime saga a gripping must-see. *Heat* is Michael Mann at his very best, delivering a well-balanced mix of great character drama and pulsating action. It's not surprising that *Heat* inspired the co-lead dynamic of *The Dark Knight*.

**Best bit:** The armoured vehicle shoot out, or the first meeting of De Niro and Pacino.



## Rififi

Often referred to as the grandfather and pinnacle of heist films, *Rififi* is a French crime drama that set the benchmark for the heist subgenre back in 1955. American director Jules Dassin agreed to direct the low budget movie in France, several years after Hollywood blacklisted him, and despite hating the novel. The French heist film didn't have any stars, yet brought a sincerity and humanity to its characters that broke the rules of the crime genre. *Rififi's* far-reaching influence can be seen in films such as Stanley Kubrick's *The Killing* to Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*.

**Best bit:** The intricate 30 minute long heist scene, which is shot in near silence.



## Dog Day Afternoon

Al Pacino stars in Sidney Lumet's *Dog Day Afternoon*, a crime drama based on that "weird bank heist that really happened" or the story of bank robbers John Woytowitz and Salvatore Naturale. Their failed 1972 bank job in Brooklyn inspired a *Life* article and *Dog Day Afternoon* three years later. The anti-establishment heist movie came at a time of heavy opposition to the Vietnam war and captures the spirit of the times. It was nominated for several Academy Awards including: Best Picture, Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor and Best Original Screenplay for which it won.

**Best bit:** "Attica!"



## The Killing

Crooks plan and stage a daring racetrack robbery. The premise may sound simple, but the execution is anything but in the hands of master filmmaker Stanley Kubrick. The hold-up is told from different participants just like *Reservoir Dogs*, moving from a documentary style narrative to an engrossing and suspenseful twist-and-turns thriller ride. Even in his early days as a writer-director, Kubrick was able to serve up a *film noir* crime thriller that still feels contemporary, even if it was "one last heist". No wonder he considered *The Killing* to be his first mature film.

**Best bit:** The clown mask worn by Sterling Hayden must have inspired the one worn by Heath Ledger as The Joker. **ts**

# NEW Cinema RELEASES



## Robocop (7 February)

Paul Verhoeven's original *Robocop* still holds up today, which is probably why the \$100 million remake has come under fire. While it may not be as cheeky as the latest *Spider-Man* reboot, the film's impending release will draw interest from die-hard fans looking

for reasons to hate it and newbies wanting to know what all the fuss is about. Armed with *Batman* faithfuls Gary Oldman and Michael Keaton; cult figures Samuel L. Jackson and Jackie Earle Haley; a hefty price tag and a CGI overload, we'd like to give the new *Robocop* the benefit of the doubt.

**Why watch?** Cracking down on crime, Judge Dredd style!



## American Hustle (28 February)

David O. Russell is an actor's director, who has managed to get Academy Award nominated performances out of his actors in his last three films: *The Fighter*, *Silver Linings Playbook* and now *American Hustle*. His latest drama follows

a brilliant con man and his seductive partner, who are forced to work for an FBI agent in the dangerous criminal underworld of Jersey. After best supporting wins, Christian Bale and Jennifer Lawrence teams up again with Russell, along with Amy Adams, Bradley Cooper and Jeremy Renner. *American Hustle* is set to be an entertaining and funny jaunt.

**Why watch?** Two words... Jennifer and Lawrence.



## Dallas Buyers Club (28 February)

Matthew McConaughey has been at the top of his game ever since *The Lincoln Lawyer*. He carries *Dallas Buyers Club* with a transformative portrayal of a spirited Texan cowboy, Ron Woodroof, who stopped coasting through life when he was

diagnosed as HIV positive in 1985. The actor lost 23 kg for the part and has garnered a number of nominations and awards for his compassionate and fearless performance. He's supported by *30 Seconds to Mars* frontman, Jared Leto, who delivers an outstanding performance as a transsexual AIDS patient with a drug problem.

**Why watch?** McConaughey's radical transformation and Leto in drag.



## Lone Survivor (28 February)

Mark Wahlberg stars in *Lone Survivor*, an action biopic and war film based on the memoir of Marcus Luttrell, about a Navy SEAL team who were sent to Afghanistan on a mission to capture or kill notorious al Qaeda leader, Ahmad Shahd. Writer-director, Peter Berg,

best known for *The Kingdom*, *Hancock* and *Battleship*, directs one of the coolest war movie casts in Taylor Kitsch, Emile Hirsch, Ben Foster and Eric Bana. While *Zero Dark Thirty* covered the operation behind the successful assassination of Osama Bin Laden, *Lone Survivor* deals with the failed Operation Red Wings.

**Why watch?** If the visuals don't impress you, you'll be blown away by the sound.

## NEW DVDs



## Prisoners (11 February)

Hugh Jackman is ferocious as a father in search of his missing daughter in this harrowing mystery thriller. We're thrown in the deep end as a father bends the law and a dedicated detective plays by the rules to pursue the same man in this beautifully crafted crime drama.

**Why watch?** If you want to truly anger Wolverine, steal his cub.



## Gravity (18 February)

In space no one can hear you scream. It's the tag line for *Alien*, but could just as easily have been for *Gravity* too. This survival adventure is truly breathtaking and you'll be relieved to have air in your lungs and your feet on the ground after watching Sandra Bullock spin out-of-control.

**Why watch?** It's the next best thing to flying Virgin Galactic. **ts**

# Don't WING it, SPLING it!

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South African comics still have a long way to go before making an international breakthrough, but SA's star is on the rise with some fantastic creators who are currently working with US-based comic companies. Comic book guru Moray Rhoda investigates.

# SA COMIC STARS: MAKING IT

# BIG



## JASON MASTERS

Jason is SA's best-kept secret. Way back in 2003 he finished second in the USA International Comic Book Idol competition, which gave him enough credibility to pitch the bigger studios. He cut his comic-drawing teeth on *The Human Target* comic as well as doing the movie tie-in comic for *RED*, the movie starring Bruce Willis.

Jason's highest-profile work to date was on *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight* for DC Comics. He has worked on numerous comics since and is currently illustrating *Batwing* for DC Comics.

You can see more of his art at <http://peubloshatner.deviantart.com>

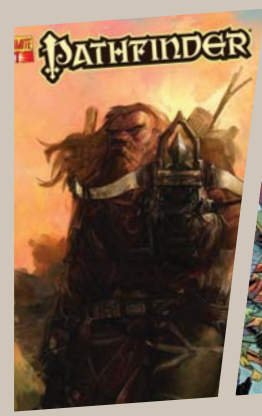


## SEAN IZAAKSE

Johannesburg-based artist Sean Izaakse recently finished a run on Dynamite Entertainment's (<http://www.dynamite.com/htmlfiles/>) *Pathfinder*. His first international work was a short story for *Goblins*, also published by Dynamite Entertainment. Sean excels at drawing superheroes, but his artwork for the fantasy-based series is (probably) the best of his career.

Using the profile generated by his work on *Pathfinder*, Sean teamed up with writer Vito Delsante to do a creator-owned comic called *Stray*. *Stray* is a dog-themed superhero and former sidekick who investigates his mentor's death. The book was fully funded on Kickstarter and will be out mid-2014.

You can see more of Sean's art at <http://sean-izaakse.deviantart.com>



## LAUREN BEUKES

Lauren is internationally famous as an author (*The Shining Girls*, *Zoo City*), but she is also a published comic-book writer. Her first work was for DC Vertigo's *Strange Adventures (One-Shot)* with a story called *All the Pretty Ponies*.

Lauren also wrote an arc called *The Hidden Kingdom* for Bill Willingham's award-winning comic *Fables: Fairest* (issues 8-13) which is published by DC's Vertigo. The comic, featuring the fairy tale star Rapunzel, is (mostly) set in Japan and draws heavily on Japanese myths and legends.

More recently Lauren teamed up with Cape Town-based artist Gerhard Human ([www.gerhardhuman.com](http://www.gerhardhuman.com)) to do a short story called *Birdie* for DC Vertigo's *The Witching Hour* comic.

Lauren's website is [www.laurenbeukes.com](http://www.laurenbeukes.com)





New to anime or looking to learn more? Anime fanatic Allen Simpson delves into the world of Gundam, certainly the best known mecha anime around.

## KNOW YOUR ANIME:



When people that know anime hear the word mecha, the first thing that comes to mind is giant robots operated by humans fighting in space. Typical cases in point being *Robotech* or, more likely, *Gundam*. The *Gundam* franchise is huge, with more than 15 different series such as *Mobile Suit Gundam*, *Mobile Suit Gundam SEED* and *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing*.

### From the house of Hajime Yatate

*Gundam* is the brainchild of Yoshiyuki Tomino, a renowned Japanese animator, who together with the team at Sunrise Studio put out work under the collective pseudonym Hajime Yatate. Originally planned to be an anime for boys, the series was first titled *Freedom Fighter Gunboy* or simply *Gunboy* because of the gun the robot was armed with. During early production there were a lot of ideas with the words 'gun' and 'freedom' floating around, until the Yatate team decided to combine both words and change 'dom' to 'dam', coming up with '*Gundam*'.

The *Gundam* anime has different and very distinct timelines, including action taking place in different alternate universes. The earliest series occur in the *Universal Century (UC)* where *Gundam* is the name of the Earth Federation's first experimental mobile suit. In the *Future Century* timeline, *Gundam* refers to a space colony's entry in the 'Gundam Fight' a type of competition to decide the new ruler of Earth. Then there is also the 'After War' timeline and many others.

### My Gunpla is better than yours

If giant robots are not your thing, how about small ones? Recently the latest *Gundam* series came to light, called *Gundam Build Fighters*. In the anime, set in the near future and not in any of the other alternate universes, people duel in an arena with small Gunpla robots (Gunpla are *Gundam* models for collectors).

In the anime *Sei Iori*, a school student and Gunpla builder, has a dream to become as good as or even greater than his father was. He goes to school and works at his family's small Gunpla shop afterwards, constructing an excellent Gunpla. But because he has no talent at Gunpla fighting, he keeps losing the first round of every battle he's fought. That is until he comes into contact with a boy named Reiji, and together they take on other players. **ts**

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR

Allen Simpson is a blogger and a published poet who has a deep passion for anime. He is also co-owner of AnimeFanatika, a reliable source of information on Anime providing fans with the latest news, reviews and goings on in the industry. Visit [www.facebook.com/animefanatika](http://www.facebook.com/animefanatika) and become a Fanatik today.

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### ALSO CHECK OUT

If you like *Gundam*, you might also like *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, *Robotech*, *Macross Plus*, *Macross Zero* as well as *Eureka Seven*.





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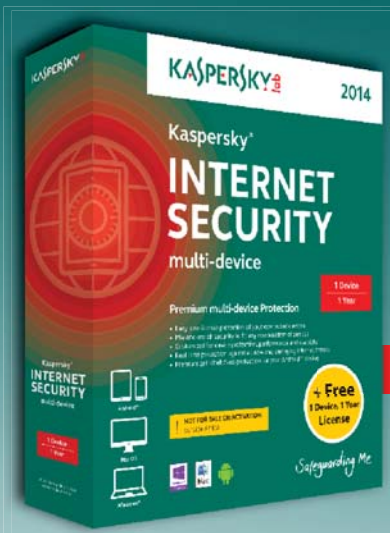


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German company Durable's range of PC cleaning products covers all the vital areas of PC hygiene. This includes taking care of sticky finger marks on new touchscreens, or keyboards that have built up such a collection of crumbs one could think you worked in the Bakers biscuit factory. Two things about Durable's range of cleaning solutions are worth noting. Firstly, they are alcohol free, which allows for less streaking wipes on LCD TVs, photocopies, monitors, and smartphone and tablet screens. The alcohol-free solution also doesn't interfere with the anti-glare coating that many notebooks come with. Their Superclean swipes and spray also come with Bact-o-clean, an anti-microbial additive, which, according to the company, is 99.9% effective against germs and viruses.

### Durable Screenclean 50 and Superclean 50

Durable's Superclean 50 consists of cleaning wipes for plastic surfaces, and is meant for keyboards, PC cases, and LCD bezels. Superclean's Bact-o-clean antibacterial additive is effective against viruses including the common cold, E-coli, Salmonella and influenza viruses. Once again, 50 packets are available, which should sort out the office's dirty PCs.

If you are intending to only clean displays, the Screenclean 50 solution is a great option for offices beset by dust or where touchscreen notebooks have been implemented. It helps in both



making screens spotless, as well as in reducing static for further built-up.

### Durable PC Clean Kit

If your PC needs an extreme clean after months of neglect, then you better get yourself the PC Clean Kit. What you will find inside will leave your PC or notebook spotless, as it includes 125 ml Superclean fluid; 125 ml Screenclean fluid; 20x lint-free cloths, 2x keyboard swabs, and 2x keyboard cleaners. The keyboard swabs and cleaners ensure you can get to the real muck stuck between keys, while it can also be reused if washed properly.

### Durable Laptop Cleaning Kit

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# TOP Tweets!



**Not Will Ferrell** @ItsWillyFerrell

Never argue with an idiot, they will drag you down to their level and beat you with experience.



**Mo-Afrika.** @uMbuso\_kaMalla

All is wel and okay until you run out of data bundles...



**Grumpy Cat** @\_\_GrumpyCat

The hardest part of a zombie apocalypse will be pretending I'm not excited.



**EFF** @EFF

A free and open Internet is essential. It can't be sacrificed at the altar of copyright enforcement. [eff.org/r.qy83](http://eff.org/r.qy83) #copyrightweek



**sara** @SomthinBoutSara

Monster trucks are just regular trucks that hide under your bed



**Kim Dotcom** @KimDotcom

What do we want?

An end to auto-correct errors!

When do we want it?

Cow!

Sow!

Bow!

Tow!

Duck this!



**Trevor Noah** @Trevornoah

Did you know that Breaking Bad was based on the true story of Bill Nye The Science Guy?



**Yule Darq** @YuleD

those blue eyes on the cover of @TechSmartMag .....



**rufus jones** @rufusjones1

Sherlock in big coat on roof looking out across London cityscape. Sees Daniel Craig doing exactly same thing on next building. Little wave.



**Deep Fried Man** @DeepFriedMan

Since I've discovered venting about brands on Twitter, less call centre agents get shouted at. #progress



**Little Kriegis** @DurtMcHurt

I hate when my blow dryer breaks and I have to dry my hair with helicopter kicks and spinning hadökens.



**America's Henchman** @TheDailySchmuck

I like my coffee like I like myself.

Black.



**M H** @PokerDomi

I'm sorry that you followed me and those were the tweets I had to offer today.



**Matt Roller** @rolldiggity

Zoos would be WAY cooler if they all had signs out front that said "Prisoners of WWII: Animals vs. Humans."



**Rob Van Vuuren** @RobVanVuuren

Yeesh. Just got an fb notification saying 67 people poked me. I feel like I need a shower.



**Ambanana** @Tattoo\_Acoustic

\*Downloads Twitter

\*Downloads Kik

\*Downloads Voxel

\*Downloads Instagram

\*Uninstalls Life

\*Upgrades Couch

\*Eats Chips

FEBRUARY 2014

## techsmart's Horoscope

As above, so below –  
how will your tech month go?



### ARIES

Bad news ahead Aries – Telkom will again take their time fixing your ADSL line and you will be forced to use your cellular data. You will not realise your cap has been reached until you are R3 000 in debt.

### TAURUS

With Venus featuring strong in your sign Taurus, it seems like February will hold difficulties with your atomic structure. This might provide hassles when using touchscreens of all kinds, while elevators might also prove difficult.

### GEMINI

With the Sun at the centre of our solar system this month, things are heating up in your love life Gemini. How about putting an end to your cyber-stalking ways and actually friending your Facebook crush? Like!

### CANCER

The planets are aligning for you in Feb Cancer, and if we were you we would not make plans past the 26th of this month. Why? Well, it looks like you might experience a personal Singularity. Enjoy!

### LEO

If you were thinking that a good month of movie watching lies ahead Leo, think again. Your Aries friend that torrents all the movies has connectivity issues and you will be forced to watch the second series of *Heroes* and Lars von Triers' *Antichrist*.

### VIRGO

Some guy in a leather coat will offer you a red or a blue pill this month Virgo. Remember what your mom taught you: Never take candy from strangers.

### LIBRA

With Saturn in orbit around the Sun this month, it would appear as if your life long quest to time-travel might bear some fruits Libra! Avoid the Renaissance, the Cretaceous period and any man with the name George.

### SCORPIO

This month is a mixed bag Scorpio. You will be forced to switch to consoles, meaning all the games in your Steam library will mean nothing. The good news? You bought most of them on special and didn't play them anyways.

### SAGITTARIUS

February is looking good for your career Sagittarius, and you will soon be employed as a game-tester. Too bad it's beta testing Disney's kids gaming division.

### CAPRICORN

February is looking like a brilliant month to further explore Will Smith movies Capricorn. Can we recommend *I am Legend* and *Bad Boys II*? Watch *The Pursuit of Happyness* and *After Earth* at your own peril.

### AQUARIUS

Be watchful in the month ahead Aquarius, especially after your time-travelling Libran friend comes back with tales of a guy named George. As a last resort, try to be at a Cancerian's house round about the 26th.

### PISCES

The voices in your head are acting up again this month Pisces, but don't worry too much since all will become clear once you spot the alien spacecraft round about the 20th. Safe travels! **ts**



# The Honeymoon

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

I've had a couple of months or so now to play on my shiny, new PlayStation 4. I was one of the lucky ones who got a PS4 on launch, and so haven't been required to wait until the next shipment arrives in the country. This means I was able to spend the holiday putting the (albeit limited) launch titles currently on offer through their paces.

**PERHAPS ONCE THE HONEYMOON PERIOD HAS COME TO AN END I MIGHT BEGIN TO SEE THE FLAWS APPARENT IN THE SYSTEM.**

I'll be honest, I'm very impressed with this machine. No, I haven't been paid to say that. It's fast, quiet, powerful and visually appealing to look at, and although this might seem like a contradiction it's equally unobtrusive within my lounge. It's way smaller and much lighter than you would think if you haven't seen it 'in the flesh'.

I'm irrationally happy that the controller has finally undergone a facelift – it was something that always irritated me in the sense that the old school PS3 controller never really matched its console visually. It was uncomfortable after long hours of gaming, and although it might seem like it's really just the addition of the touchpad at the top, the PS4 controller feels a good deal more comfortable than its predecessor. I have heard some complaints about the light on the back but this really doesn't bother me in any way.

## But missing...

Sadly many of the online features that presumably make this console such a hit internationally, aren't readily available in our territory. For example we still have no indication when PlayStation Now will be rolled out in South Africa, but the potential of these very promising features to be a major game changer in the home entertainment system environment, does make me at least a little excited for the future.

Like any love affair, it's not all sunshine and smiles however, and I'm surprisingly irritated that the visual customisation features of the

**ALTHOUGH NOT A FANGIRL YET, PIPPA IS FINDING MUCH TO LIKE ABOUT THE PLAYSTATION 4**

old PlayStation interface have been removed – I dislike the rather boring blue look and feel, although the menu and its navigation is, in my opinion, an improvement. The performance of the machine however, which so far has been exceptional, outweighs the cons here, but, as someone who has had to get used to the lack of customisation forced on Apple users, it grates in a more insidious manner.

This still doesn't make me a PlayStation fangirl, and I'm not going to make a judgement call on whether the PS4 or Xbox One is better at this stage. That's a pointless argument until we can see how both machines function within our territory. Perhaps once the honeymoon period has come to an end I might begin to see the flaws apparent in the system, but as of this moment I'm still rather enamoured of my new gaming love.

## The other lover

Of course we still don't know when the rival for my love might appear on the horizon, but with any luck I won't be waiting more than six months or so, which means my PS4 has a decent amount of time to convince me that I can't live without it. Best it start wooing me appropriately. **ts**





## Knack may have produced split opinions, but this launch title on the PS4 brings some fresh ideas and loads of promise.

Perhaps the only thing worse than a new IP that is hyped and turns out to be a dud (we're looking at you, *Aliens: Colonial Marines*) is one that promises to be fantastic, actually is pretty good, and then gets unjustly panned. Such is the case with *Knack*, a lively, innovative and engaging game, that brims with good ideas and exciting potential and is fun to play, at least most of the time.

### War and deception

You play as a robotic/golem creature, called Knack, that can absorb relics and increase and decrease his size, strength, and, in time, abilities as well. Initially pressed into service to help quell a goblin invasion, the story takes a more complex twist, centering around the mystery of the valuable relics which Knack can absorb and the nefarious plans of another individual.

To its credit, the game moves quickly from one locale to another, throwing you into goblin villages, caves, secret laboratories, and ruins. Also frequently changing is Knack himself, who at various points of the game absorbs more relics to become massive and formidably destructive, at others, he either loses his relics or has to use them to power up doors. In either case, his health responds accordingly – massive Knack can take significant damage before dying, whereas mini Knack has a correspondingly smaller health bar and is much more vulnerable.

### Legally stoned

However, adding another dimension to the gameplay is the accumulation of Sunstones, which power up Knack's special abilities. Filling up

Sunstone batteries then enable Knack to unleash some satisfyingly devastating attacks; take care of the larger and multiple opponents more easily, as well as wipe out foes from a distance. Adding to the impetus to explore the world is the fact that players can smash open some walls to reveal treasure chests, each of which holds a constituent part of a gadget.

Finding all the pieces and then equipping the completed gadget gives Knack further advantages, such as an additional Sunstone battery, or the ability to detect secret rooms. Similarly, players can find and collect crystal relics scattered throughout the world, which also bestow bonuses, such as increasing the damage Knack can deal.

### Hot and cold

Admittedly, *Knack* is not a perfect game as there are one or two tedious levels and occasional clipping issues. Despite this, the game looks very good and Knack's particle effects are terrific.



Is *Knack* the best game on the PS4 or the best new IP released? No. What it is though, is a fine game that deserves a chance to grow into its full potential and also deserves a place in your PS4 library.

R650. [RN] **ts**

Full review: [bit.ly/knackonline](http://bit.ly/knackonline)





# GT

## GRAN TURISMO® 6

THE REAL DRIVING SIMULATOR



**The latest iteration of the world's premier car simulation title has driven onto the PS3 rather than the new PlayStation 4. Are the updated 1080p graphics enough to land pole position on gamers' acquisition list?**



To kick things off let's start with the good: Gran Turismo 6 (GT6) looks amazing in full HD resolution thanks to perfectly modelled and exquisitely detailed vehicles that do not have to stand aside for the cars of Forza 5 on the Xbox One. Gameplay remains the benchmark for this type of game (racing simulation), and luckily in GT6 the handling of the vehicles as well as the changes resulting from players tinkering

with the setup of the cars remain as flawless as ever.

There are more than 1200 cars and 76 courses across 37 locations in the game meaning that you won't easily get bored with the limited number of vehicles in your virtual garage or having to drive the same course over and over again. Night time driving as well as weather changes also come into play within GT6, which adds to the realism as you have to contend with limited visibility or slipping and sliding around the track because of making the wrong tire choice.

### The Bad and Ugly

Now for the not so good. The frame-rates are not as buttery smooth as Forza 5's 60 fps, especially if there are a ten or so cars on screen simultaneously. We also have issues with the far too compliant AI, which makes it too easy to land a podium place despite the fact that

you have to start at the back of the grid for every single race and only have around 2-5 laps to fight your way to the front.



**GT6 IS THE BEST OVERALL RACING SIMULATION GAME OUT AT THE MOMENT.**

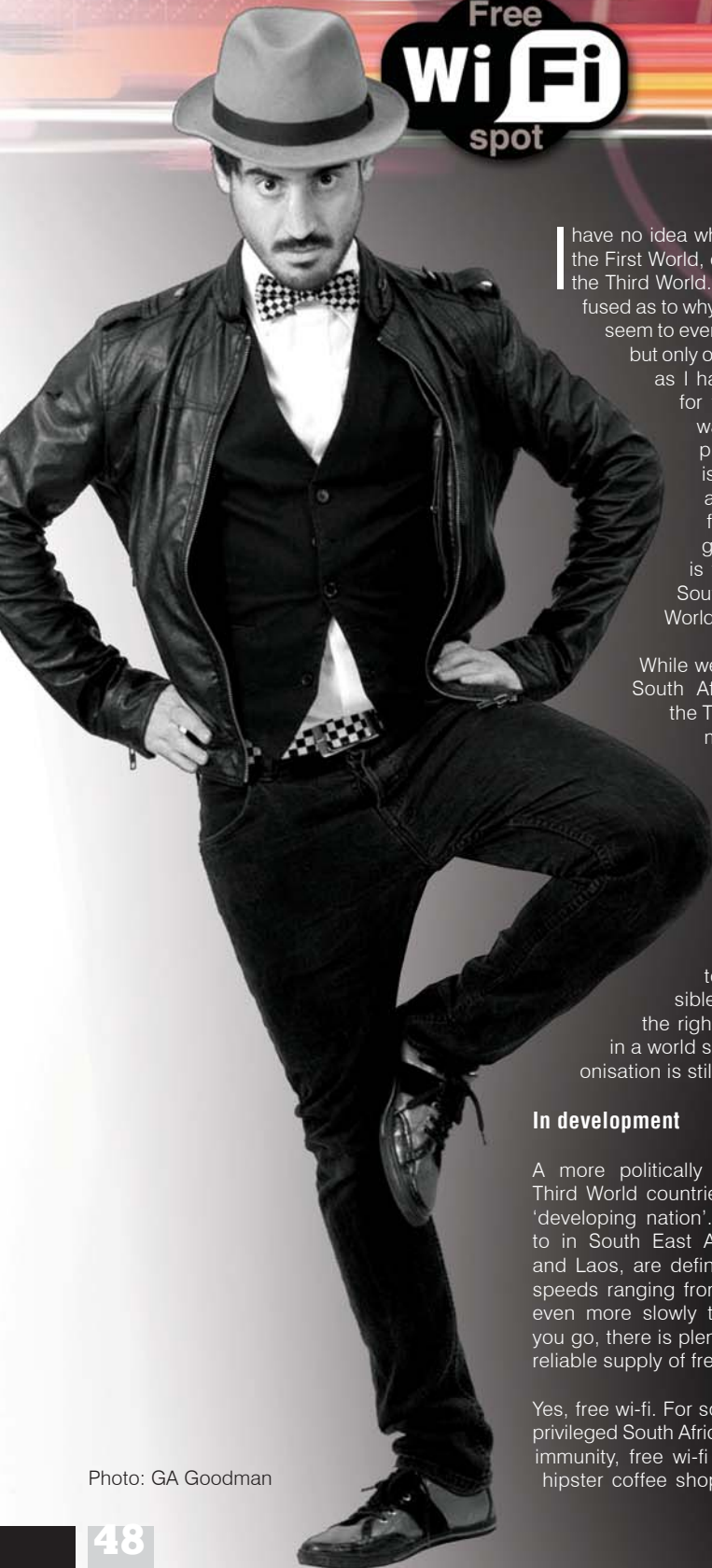
More blemishes on the otherwise perfect face of GT6 includes its really dull presentation that features an incredibly old-school menu system and very cheesy Japanese music. It pales in comparison to rival titles, especially the latest Forza game which calls upon the presentation talents of all three Top Gear presenters to keep things entertaining.

### Taking the chequered flag

Despite this, GT6 is the best Gran Turismo title ever and the best overall racing simulation game out at the moment, despite Forza 5's better graphics, sound and presentation. This is down to the best and most realistic gameplay, elements such as night time driving and dynamic weather (not in Forza 5), as well as boasting an unrivalled car and track selection.

If you are into cars and want to have at least one title in your game collection that will have a lifespan of more than three years – look no further than GT6. [HD] **ts**

# WI-FI ART THOU?



I have no idea why the First World is called the First World, or the Third World is called the Third World. And I am particularly confused as to why the Second World doesn't seem to even exist at all. I will Google it, but only once this column is finished, as I have already procrastinated for three days straight, going way beyond my prescribed procrastination limit, which is two days straight. I have already wasted much of my first paragraph avoiding getting to the point, which is that I am writing this from South East Asia – in the Third World.

While we are used to our home of South Africa being described as the Third World, the truth is that most of those who read this publication manage to live their lives in small First World enclaves, sometimes literally cordoned off by boom gates. Living in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria or even, I reluctantly have to admit Durban, it is possible to pretend, if you live in the right golf estate, that you live in a world so First it's almost as if colonisation is still in progress.

## In development

A more politically correct way to refer to Third World countries these days is the term 'developing nation'. The places I have been to in South East Asia, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos, are definitely developing, albeit at speeds ranging from slowly to very slowly to even more slowly than that. Yet everywhere you go, there is plenty of fresh fruit and a very reliable supply of free wi-fi.

Yes, free wi-fi. For some reason, despite more privileged South Africans having full Third World immunity, free wi-fi is a luxury found only in hipster coffee shops, and even then, only if

**DEEP FRIED MAN  
BELIEVES FREE  
WI-FI IS NOT  
A PRIVILEGE,  
IT'S A BASIC  
HUMAN RIGHT.**

you're prepared to keep drinking coffee until you get heart palpitations. Anywhere else, if one picks up wi-fi, a surge of initial excitement comes to an abrupt halt when one is met with the dreaded home page of Always On.

**EVERYWHERE YOU GO, THERE IS PLENTY OF FRESH FRUIT AND A VERY RELIABLE SUPPLY OF FREE WI-FI.**

It seems by making you pay for wi-fi, companies like Always On are just maintaining the South African tradition of charging people fees that exist nowhere else in the world, like the ones we pay for drawing money from an ATM and for getting the uncapped broadband that many other countries consider standard. If we told the village people of Laos that in South Africa we have to pay for wi-fi they would laugh so hard they'd fall out of their grass huts.

## Not asking for much

It's time for all South Africans to demand that we cast aside the chains of Third World bondage and develop to our full potential. It's not like my demands are excessive. All I want is an end to unemployment, affordable and functioning health care and education, running water, electricity and, of course, free wi-fi for all South Africans. Until we have all these things, the struggle continues. **ts**



# MATRIX

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