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ISSUE 138

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THE SAMSUNG GALAXY EDGE REVEALED!

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FIND INSIDE!

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- TOP NEW CAMERAS
- THE WORLD OF RUGBY
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TO SUPPORT MY VIEW

Like many of our more mature readers, my first contact with the internet came via a screeching modem trying to crawl to 56 kbit/s. Optimism about the potential benefits of the web back then was palpable, especially about what access to such large amount of information might mean for society.

Fast forward to present day, and it seems that for many, access to information in many cases simply means access to the information which support their view (whether wrong or right, it doesn't matter). You can see this in debates between atheists and the religious, supporters of Israel and those of Palestine, Democrats and Republicans in the States, anti-vaccers and the medical community, and those that believe in the theory of evolution and creationists to name but a few. Obviously I have my own opinion on these topics, and sometimes looking at people proselytising views that are opposite to mine, I'm reminded of the words of the great, late prophet George Carlin. He observed: "Think of how stupid the average person is, and realise half of them are stupider than that." It would seem that the other half is always in the opposite camp.

So, in the age of the internet, who shall be our saviours? I suspect it's those with a fine ear who can listen. Those who by simply listening, can hear the undercurrent of fear running through all our concerns.

Enjoy the issue,
Mike



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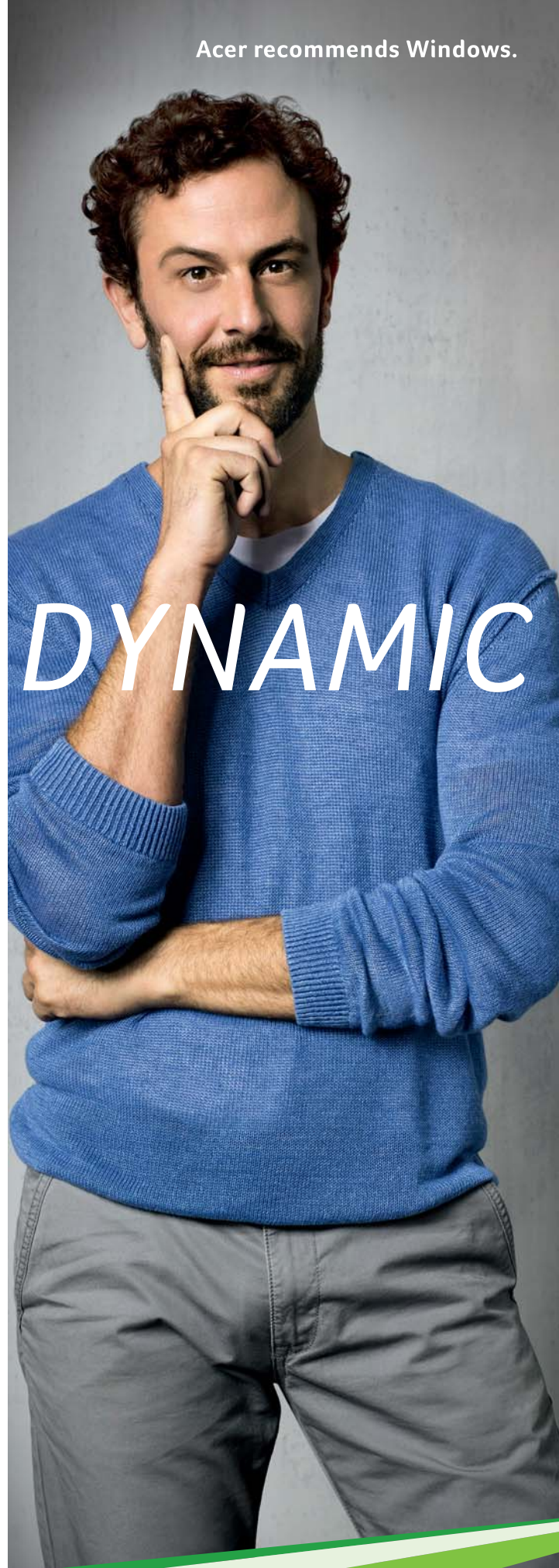
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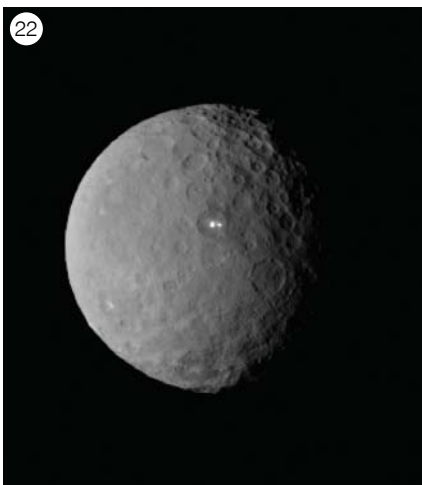
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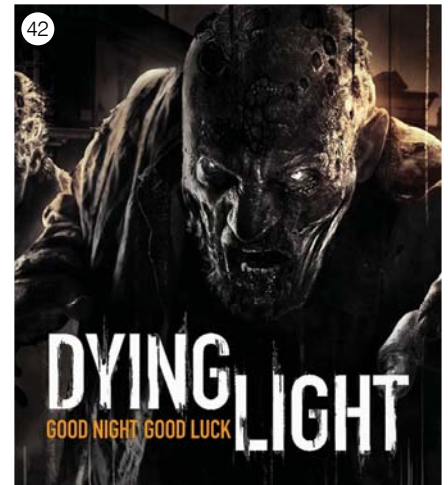
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GREAT GEAR!

SAMSUNG GALAXY S6 EDGE

As the eyes of the tech world descended on MWC15 in Barcelona, two new products stood out above the rest: the dual-edge sporting Samsung Galaxy S6 edge and Android Wear powered Huawei Watch.



What a difference some curves make. The new Galaxy S6 edge sports two of them, and with a new aluminium frame reminiscent of the Moto X, the S6 edge stole much of the spotlight from its sans curve S6 brother.

Samsung flagship devices have never been short on power, and the S6 edge houses an octacore (quad 2.1 GHz and quad 1.5 GHz) chipset under its 5.1" qHD display (577 ppi).

Added to this formidable processor setup, is a healthy 3 GB dollop of RAM. The S6 edge will arrive in 32 GB, 64 GB or 128 GB variants, with unfortunately no trace of a microSD slot to be found.

Samsung talked up the new phones' imaging capabilities quite a bit, and the edge features a 16 MP (Optical Image Stabilisation) camera on the rear and 5 MP wide-angle one up front.

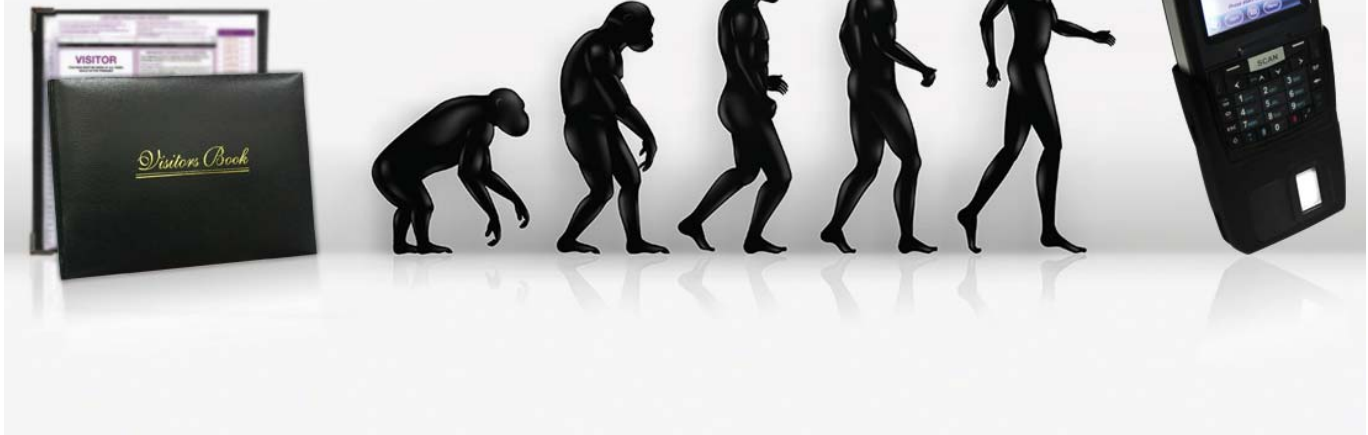
The S6 edge and standard S6 are set to make their local bow come 10 April this year. At the time of printing, pricing remains unconfirmed.

HUAWEI WATCH

Huawei joined the wearable game at MWC15 by unveiling the originally named Huawei Watch. Much praised for its looks, the Huawei Watch is sleek and refined, looking more like a traditional wristwatch than a smart one. With a 1.4" round AMOLED display, it also packs a 1.2 GHz processor, 512 MB of RAM and 4 GB worth of onboard storage. Although the release date is unconfirmed, it will be available in silver, black or gold, and sport a beautiful milanese band. **ts**



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GREAT GEAR!

MERCEDES-BENZ G500 4X4

Forget the Hummer, if you want to dominate both on and off-road, here are two new options to whet your bundu bashing appetite - The Mercedes-Benz G500 4x4 and Ariel Nomad.

More city faring than off-road in recent years, Merc's G-Wagon has lost some of its grit of late. The new G500 4x4 is a welcome arrival then, leaving no room for interpretation as to where it belongs

The rugged looking G-Class has not changed much in terms of design over the past few decades, and the G500 4x4 is no different. The most notable change however, is its ride height, courtesy of four rather imposing 22" rims and 325/55 off-road tyres, providing a 45 cm tall ground clearance.



Not just big, the G500 packs a rather impressive engine as well. In this case a 4-litre bi-turbocharged V8 that yields 310 kW of unbridled power. Other enhancements include carbon fibre body parts to make the G500 a tad lighter and far stronger than Merc's previous 4x4 concepts.

Set to debut at the Geneva Motor Show, Mercedes-Benz says production of the G500 4x4 will be dependent on consumer reaction. We say go for it!

ARIEL NOMAD

Much like its racetrack ready forebear, the Nomad is designed to offer uncompromised speed and handling, all while the scenery rushes past at 200km/h. Powering this pocket rocket is a 4-cylinder i-VTEC engine courtesy of Honda, which cranks out 175 kW. As a result the Nomad can hit 100 km/h from a standstill in only 3.4 seconds. All that speed comes at a hefty price though, with the Nomad set to retail for £27 500 (R320 000) in the UK. **ts**



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THE GOOD Middle

When it comes to price vs functionality, mid-range is generally where the action is. TechSmart checks out three of the latest.

Samsung Galaxy A5

In the Galaxy A5, Samsung shows that it's learning from its mistakes, and designed a beautiful mid-range smartphone with multimedia-focused users in mind.

A surprisingly stunning device in-person, the Galaxy A5 is easily one of the best looking smartphones that the South Korean manufacturer has crafted in quite some time. I'm an especially big fan of its aluminum frame, a design feature that's crept into Samsung devices ever since the debut of the Galaxy Note 4. As a result the A5 has a supremely premium feel despite its mid-range status, as Samsung's penchant for plastic has happily diminished.

Sharper image

Sitting in the middle of Samsung's new A series, the A5 features a 5" Super AMOLED display (720x1280), registering a sharp 294 pp pixel density. As such video and images look crisp, lending the A5 well to multimedia consumption. Added to this is a 13 MP primary camera on the rear, which features a speedy autofocus to make quick snapping a breeze. The image quality too, is fantastic for a mid-range device, capturing all the natural light in indoor conditions, and even more so when shooting outside.

Internally the A5 sports some enviable specs as well, most notably being its 2 GB of RAM, which ensures a solid performance while multitasking and switching between apps. Paired with the 2 GB is a quad-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 410 processor (standard for mid-range fare), clocked at 1.2 GHz. I was quite impressed with the A5's performance during benchmarking, as it outscored the Galaxy S5 mini, which has a similar chipset and RAM setup to the A5. Also included is 16 GB of onboard storage, with a pin-push microSD slot good for up to 64 GB, as well as a 2300 mAh battery to keep the A5 going for a full day.

Setting the bar

On the whole, the Galaxy A5 has proved to be one of the best mid-range Android smartphones out there at the moment, with its solid mix of performance and multimedia functions producing an enticing offering at R6 500. Samsung has therefore set the bar quite high, and the chasing pack will do well to outdo the A5. RRP: R6 500. [RLC] **ts**



QUICK SPECS



DISPLAY
5" Super AMOLED
(720x1280)



PROCESSOR
Quad-core
1.2 GHz
Qualcomm
Snapdragon 410



CAMERA
13 MP rear,
5 MP front-facing



OS
Android 4.4.4
(KitKat)



PRICE
R6 500

THE GALAXY A5 HAS PROVED TO ONE OF THE BEST MID-RANGE ANDROID SMARTPHONES OUT THERE AT THE MOMENT.

Microsoft Lumia 535

Having undergone a rebranding, Microsoft has continued its assault on the budget-conscious market with the Lumia 535, and it certainly delivers on its promise.

Placed on the lower end of the mid-range smartphone spectrum, the R1 700 Microsoft Lumia 535 should be no less deserving of your attention. Serving as Microsoft's first newly branded Lumia device, it appears that the budget-conscious user holds plenty of sway in Microsoft's strategy and thinking. Sporting Windows Phone 8.1 (with an update to Lumia Denim on the way), the 535 is primed to offer fantastic value for money.

Willing and able

Fitted with a 5" qHD screen (960x540), the Lumia 535 is clear evidence that smartphones (regardless of market) are set to sport larger displays. Offering a solid viewing experience thanks to Lumia's Clear Black technology, the 535 will keep users more than happy from a display perspective.

The same can be said for the Lumia 535's specs, which may surprise users, but certainly ensure this low-end mid-range device is willing and able. Microsoft has opted for a quad-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 200 processor, which clocks a respectable 1.2 GHz. The 1 GB of RAM too proved more than capable while flipping between Live Tiles and getting more familiar with Windows Phone 8.1. Added to this is 8 GB worth of onboard storage, which may seem a little undersized, but falls in with Microsoft's plan to offer an enriched online experience, as 15 GB of free cloud storage is available. If users are still unsatisfied, a microSD slot good for another 128 GB is on offer by removing the 535's plastic back cover. To date, two colour options (black and white) are available, with Microsoft stating that more colours are on the way for users to hot-swap and customise.

Complete Windows Phone

If one criticism was levelled against the Lumia 535, it would be its 5 MP primary camera, which produces grainy images in low light conditions. It's a small price to pay however when taking into account the 535's extremely enticing price point, which ensures that a full Microsoft/Windows Phone mobile experience can be obtained for very little outlay. RRP: R1 700. [RLC] **ts**



PLACED ON THE LOWER END OF THE MID-RANGE SMARTPHONE SPECTRUM, THE R1 700 LUMIA 535 SHOULD BE NO LESS DESERVING OF YOUR ATTENTION.

QUICK SPECS	DISPLAY	PROCESSOR	CAMERA	OS	PRICE
	5" qHD (960x540)	Quad-core 1.2 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 200	5 MP rear, 5 MP front-facing	Windows Phone 8.1	R1 700

Acer Liquid Jade

Acer is not the first name that pops up when you think about smartphones, rather notebooks and tablets. From last year however, some very attractive Acer smartphones have entered the market. Aimed at the midrange space, the Acer Liquid Jade is a sleek 5" one, coming in at R4 200.

The Jade offers an interesting proposition not often seen in mid-range phones, namely dual SIM cards. A slot on the left hand side offers a choice – either make use of two nano SIMs, or substitute one SIM for more storage in the form of a microSD card (up to 32 GB). It's a bit of a difficult conundrum if you do actually want to make use of two SIMs, since the 8 GB (not all of it available) onboard storage is not a lot. I used the extra slot to expand the storage, which came in handy with the Jade's 13 MP photos. These occupy between 3-4 MB each and quickly munch up space.

The Jade's 13 MP camera is another feature quite uncommon in this, and even higher price ranges. Photos in normal conditions are good while video (Full HD) is impressive, making use of autofocus during recording.

On the inside

From a looks perspective, the Liquid Jade is a smooth, stylish unit; in fact swiping the screen feels like you're swiping a well-polished stone (maybe something like, well, Jade perhaps?). These rounded corners make the Jade feel smaller than it actually is. Be frugal with screen time however, since its 2100 mAh battery doesn't like intensive workouts.

For its R4 200 price point Acer could have done a bit more on its innards. A quad-core 1.3 GHz Cortex-A7 does duty, while you only have 1 GB of RAM at your disposal. Not surprisingly it tests lower on benchmarking than the Samsung A5 and the S5 mini. While not overtly slow, I did pick up lag when for example viewing the recently opened apps menu.

A tad much?

Acer's Liquid Jade, with its dual SIM capabilities and 13 MP camera, plays into an interesting segment of the mid-range market. But its R4 200 asking price does come across a tad steep considering its innards, and while it leaves you content, it does not blow away. [MJ] **ts**



THE JADE OFFERS AN INTERESTING PROPOSITION NOT OFTEN SEEN IN MID-RANGE PHONES, NAMELY DUAL SIM CARDS.

QUICK SPECS	DISPLAY	PROCESSOR	CAMERA	OS	PRICE
	5" IPS LCD (720x1280)	Quad-core 1.3 GHz Cortex-A7	13 MP rear, 2 MP front-facing	Android 4.4.2 (KitKat)	R4 200



HOT WATCHES

Not all three might be smart, but they do a lot more than just tell the time.

TomTom Golfer GPS Watch

Much like a shiny new pair of golf clubs, TomTom's Golfer sports watch will not turn you into a scratch player, but will certainly make you the most tech savvy in your four ball.

The world of wearables is clearly divided. There are currently two distinct silos, with users being tempted by either fitness/sports-focused watches and smartphone aiding smartwatches. The TomTom Golfer falls into the former, as is aimed at the type of user that spends a vast majority of their time on the links.

Tried and tested

To that end, it hinges heavily off of TomTom's GPS knowledge and experience in order to provide an enriched golfing experience similar to that of much larger handheld course guides.

In terms of design, TomTom has kept things simple, with the Golfer looking an exact replica of its Runner sports watch series. As a result, it is fairly slim and quite comfortable once strapped to one's wrist. Featuring a sturdy aluminium frame that houses a 1.3" LCD display (144x168), the Golfer is clear and easy to read, an important consideration as it will be used outdoors most of the time. Just below the screen, you'll find a large, easy to use navigation button, akin to the one currently found on the Runner watch lineup.

Only for the pros

The Golfer's real secret weapon however is the built-in GPS functionality, which is geared towards optimising the wearer's golfing experience. With a substantial 34 000 international golf courses pre-loaded, the Golfer is capable of bringing up the closest golf course, based on its wearer's current location. Added to this, each golf course hole is highly detailed, with water hazards, distance to green and doglegs all on display.

As a result, in the hands of a seasoned golfer, TomTom's offering can act much like a secret weapon, as the rest of your non-tech savvy four ball looks on. This for me, is why its R4 000 price tag makes more sense. Much like a carbon fibre bike or hand crafted fishing rod, the TomTom Golfer is the kind of tool designed purely for those who take their hobby seriously. [RLC] **ts**



IN THE HANDS OF A SEASONED GOLFER, TOMTOM'S OFFERING CAN ACT MUCH LIKE A SECRET WEAPON.



QUICK SPECS

DISPLAY
1.3" square LCD
(144x168)

BATTERY LIFE
Up to 10 hours
(GPS mode)

PRICE
R4 000

LG G Watch R

LG's G Watch R is the best Android Wear smartwatch we've encountered to date, but something is still missing as wearables look for their champion.

When the world's tech manufacturers went all in on the smartwatch trend towards the end of 2014, LG's G Watch R looked the most interesting prospect. Oddly, its round design seemed to buck the design trend among most smartwatches, which favour a square shape. The G Watch R is an understated device with its all-black colour scheme. It feels well made, but I found it a tad chunky in real life, but still light at only 62 g. All in all the only design aspect I found displeasing was the faux leather strap, which didn't

EFFECTIVE AS A SMARTPHONE COMPANION, THE G WATCH R REQUIRES AN INDIVIDUAL THAT USES THEIR SMARTPHONE DAY IN AND DAY OUT.



feel as premium as a R3 300 device should.

Embracing the circle

There's no getting around it, the G Watch R's biggest selling point is its look. The circular screen means it blends in a bit more discreetly than its edge-sporting counterparts. The circle does have some drawbacks however, as the 1.3" round P-OLED screen (320x290) sometimes means multiple upward swipes are required to scroll through a long text message or e-mail.

As far as overall performance goes, it has proved a more than capable smartphone companion, lasting two days before a charge is needed. Added to this is a Qualcomm Snapdragon 400, registering at 1.2 GHz (standard for high end smartwatches) and 512 MB of RAM, as well as 4 GB of storage.

Meet the criteria

Once paired, Google Now comes to the fore, as customised content and smartphone notifications pop up on the G Watch R every hour. Phone calls, messages and e-mails are also brought up instantaneously, but actioning (replying via text or calling back) still necessitates the use of one's smartphone. Effective as a smartphone companion, the G Watch R requires an individual who uses their smartphone day in and day out, otherwise the R3 300 asking price becomes a bit impractical. If however, using one's smartphone forms a significant part of productivity, the G Watch R is a welcome aid. [RLC] **ts**

The LG G Watch R is available locally through Orange - <http://oran.ge/1v18a8P>

Q S U P P L I E S					
	DISPLAY 1.3" round P-OLED	PROCESSOR 1.2 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 400	BATTERY LIFE Up to 48 hours	PRICE R3 300	

Garmin Forerunner 920XT

As far as sportwatches go, the 920XT is a frontrunner.

It wasn't been that long ago when hardcore runners and triathletes where training with what looked like a small brick on their arms, masquerading as a GPS watch. Garmin's latest Forerunner, the top of the line 920XT, proves just how far they have come, since at 61 g (about 15% less than its predecessor) it's far from the bulky device of the past.

Now onboard

Garmin has done a lot to improve the functionality of the watch. Some examples are that swimmers can now log pool swim drills and kick sets (difficult on previous models), while cyclists might be interested in the VO2 max estimates which keep track of changes in their fitness level and how long it takes to recover after a workout. Runners haven't been left out either, since Garmin incorporates input on your running form (cadence, vertical oscillation and ground contact time) when using the HRM-Run heart rate monitor with built-in accelerometer.

The extras

Much like recent activity monitors and smartphones, the watch also tracks your steps, sleep and calories burnt during the day (logged online along with 'badges' offered as awards). Live tracking is also possible, so people can follow your progress online, but it requires that you have your smartphone with you. Speaking of which, there is also a smartwatch component to the unit, notifying you of calls and messages, while the mobile app transfers your training data.

It must be said that the Garmin's online website, Connect, is looking better than ever, with an interesting dashboard providing health and

fitness info and a second one for activities. The look, feel and functionality have greatly improved from a year ago, and it doesn't have to stand back for any other fitness site anymore.

The result

To be honest, the 920XT is a bit too much watch for a weekend warrior such as myself, packed with a significant amount of functionality that serious athletes will appreciate. If you are not into multisport, there are less costlier watches that will do the job, but if it's your thing, then all the added functionality makes the 920XT very easy to recommend. R7 500 with HRM-Run monitor. [MJ] **ts**



"IF MULTISPORT IS YOUR THING, THEN ALL THE ADDED FUNCTIONALITY MAKES THE 920XT VERY EASY TO RECOMMEND."

Q S U P P L I E S					
	DISPLAY 1.36" colour display	PROCESSOR Unknown	BATTERY LIFE Up to 40 hours	PRICE R7 500 with HRM	

BLACKBERRY CLASSIC

In the world of touch, is there still any room for type? BlackBerry's keyboard sporting Classic is one smartphone that certainly thinks so.

Not fully resurgent, nor down and out, BlackBerry has shown that it still has something to offer users (besides BIS) with its QWERTY keypad sporting Classic, which draws inspiration from the Canadian manufacturer's more popular devices. Many will remember when the Bolds and Curves of yesteryear built a reputation for BlackBerry as a solid business tool, but slowly they lost ground to the Galaxies and iPhones of the world.

BlackBerry is aiming to build upon its comeback that started with the Z10, and its more recent devices, like the Passport, have proved welcome surprises. Just like the Passport, the Classic focuses on business-oriented users, but at a slightly lower price point. Comparisons aside, the Classic undoubtedly looks professional. Its metal frame, textured plastic back cover and solidly built keyboard are guaranteed to get any business user's nod of approval.

Not to scale

Sporting a 3.5" touch display (720x720) which takes up roughly 40% of the Classic's front, there seems to be a slight scaling problem to my eye. App icons are a tad smaller than I'm used to, and the sizing issue also crops up when web browsing, as a pinch to zoom gesture is often required for sites not optimised for mobile. Screen size notwithstanding, the Classic feels nice and weighty in hand at 177 g. That might be too heavy for some, but the extra weight somehow feels right for a business device. The only issue I had while handling the Classic, was the feeling of an uneven weight distribution, which makes it feel less balanced than it truly should.

Business-oriented

Featuring a physical QWERTY keyboard, the quality of the typing experience is paramount. BlackBerry says it's the best typing experience it has mustered to date, but I tend to disagree - the capacitive keyboard on the Passport outperforms that of the Classic. That being said, key presses are sharp, and the forgotten sensation of physical typing makes a pleasant return.

As per the norm, BlackBerry Hub forms the backbone of this OS, with notifications, emails and text messages all appearing in one centralised format. All in all BlackBerry 10.3.1 performs quite solidly, with the quick actioning gestures being BB Hub's best feature. The added bonus of Amazon's App Store is also a nice touch, as a wide range of Android apps are more easily accessible.

Handling the processing is a dual-core Qualcomm MSM8960 Snapdragon chipset, which clocks at an unexpected 1.5 GHz. Thankfully though, there is 2 GB of RAM to help pick up the slack, the result of which is a nifty multitasking smartphone that shows no real

FOR A SMARTPHONE THAT AIDS BUSINESS APPLICATIONS, THE BLACKBERRY CLASSIC IS VERY GOOD INDEED



signs of lag. Also added is 16 GB worth of onboard storage, with a pin-push microSD slot, good for an additional 128 GB.

One of the major features that BlackBerry talked up about the Classic, was its 2515 mAh battery, designed to give a claimed 22 hours worth of life. It may be an issue with my review unit, but it failed to live up to the billing, as a recharge visit was often required before the day was up.

It's the business

It may not be entirely perfect, with the less than listed battery life and screen sizing issues, but for a smartphone that aids business applications, the Classic is very good indeed. My only issue is pricing, with a suggested R6 500 required to take one home; a price tag around the R5 000 mark perhaps would be more reasonable. [RLC] **ts**



TECH SPECS



DISPLAY

3.5" Capacitive touchscreen (294 ppi pixel density)



PROCESSOR

Dual-core 1.2 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon MSM8960



CAMERA

8 MP primary, 2 MP front-facing



OS

BlackBerry 10.3.1



PRICE

R6 500

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MECER A105 TABLET

With Windows 10 looming, is there any value to be had in a Windows 8.1 OS sporting tablet? If Mecer's A105 is anything to go by, then it's a definitive yes.

When it comes to lifestyle tablets, Windows 8 is yet to find a foothold, but conversely there are a number of productivity and business-focused options out there. Mecer's wallet-friendly A105 is one such offering, and is one of the best value for money tablet experiences currently available from a 10.1" device. The A105 can serve as the ultimate embodiment of Mecer's tech philosophy, delivering a solid performance without denting user's budgets with an eye on keeping things simple and efficient.

No frills, no fuss

This simplicity is most evident in the A105's design, which is best described as a black matte-textured slate, the A105 is rather hefty at 650 g, making holding it in one hand a touch difficult. One thing that its heavy feel does afford though, is a solid construction and premium feel, something that is sometimes hard to get from a R3 000 10.1" tablet. Powered by Windows 8.1, the A105 performs as expected despite the OS' decisive status. As such, business focused users is the A105's bread and butter, who will look for a portable device to take with them on the go.

AFTER A SOLID TWO WEEKS OF USE, THE A105 HAS PLENTY TO OFFER.

Being a mid-range device, Mecer has opted for some respectable internal components. Key among them being the A105's 1.33 GHz quad-core Intel Atom chipset, which is not the fastest by any means, but will not inhibit users when aiming to seamlessly multitask. Added to this is 1 GB of RAM and 32 GB of storage. Should that not cut it, a micro SD slot for up to 64 GB is readily available (not to mention OneDrive). Pulling duty on the battery front is a 8000 mAh Li-Polymer unit, which delivers a full two days' worth of use under moderate operation.

Plenty to offer

Some may argue that with Windows 10 on the horizon, there is very little value to be had from a Windows 8.1 touting tablet like the A105, but after a solid two weeks of use, the A105 has plenty to offer. Well constructed, solid mid-range performance and a wallet-friendly price point make the A105 a great prospect for multitasking business users. [RLC] **ts**

SONY'S XPERIA Z3 TABLET COMPACT

The Xperia Z3 is Sony's 8" tablet that offers the best of both worlds – a beautiful, expansive display in a device that can still be very comfortably held in one hand.

While good 8" tablets are certainly more common now than they were a couple of years ago, not all are created equal. Case in point the Sony Xperia Z3 Tablet Compact. It scores by offering a beautiful screen and a unique value proposition for those enmeshed in the PlayStation ecosystem.

Extrapolating, its screen offers luscious colours and clarity, due to Sony's own Triluminos technology and a pretty decent 1920 x 1200 resolution. Although it's glossy rather than matte, it manages to keep reflections largely at bay. As with many other Sony phones and tablets, it's also notably dust-proof and water resistant (up to 1.5 m).

Portable play

However, where the tablet really distinguishes itself is in its onboard capability of

connecting to and streaming games from one's PS4. For this to work, both the tablet and the console need to be connected to the same Wi-Fi network (sorry, jetsetters) and the console does need to be signed into PlayStation Network, making it a solution for playing your PS4 games elsewhere in your home. Unfortunately it took a few tries before the PS4 and the tablet would recognise each other. To its credit, when it did work, it worked well, with both the tablet and the DualShock 4 controller seeing each other and enabling a largely responsive experience.

In a nutshell

General performance wise though, there's no complaints, no doubt due to the Qualcomm Snapdragon 2.5 GHz Quad-core 801 processor and a solid 3 GB of memory. As has become the norm, the tablet comes in 16 GB or 32 GB variations, expandable by 128 GB via the microSD card slot.

As for ergonomics, Sony has nailed it - the tablet is wafer thin (6.4mm), the build quality is reassuringly solid and the tablet is thus a pleasure to hold. Barring some initial PS4 connectivity issues, the Xperia Z3 is a fine and unique 8" tablet. It has a RRP of R5 590. [RN] **ts**

WHERE THE TABLET REALLY DISTINGUISHES ITSELF IS IN ITS ONBOARD CAPABILITY OF CONNECTING TO AND STREAMING GAMES FROM ONE'S PS4.



AORUS X7 PRO

The X7 Pro notebook may have top notch specs and dual graphics cards, but it is still somehow sleek, thin and attractive

Aorus' latest is definitely an impressive piece of kit, starting with its build quality, which is top notch, as its chassis feels reassuringly solid and well put together. However, it's not overly flashy - the only giveaway that this is a gaming machine is the row of five G macro keys along the left hand side and the accents on the ever-important WASD keys.

Speaking of the chiclet keys, these are a pleasure to type on and use, with just the right amount of depth to be comfortable. As for its matte screen, I was both impressed and a little surprised - impressed because the clarity and colour reproduction is outstanding, surprised because the top resolution is *only* 1920x1080.

Hear me roar

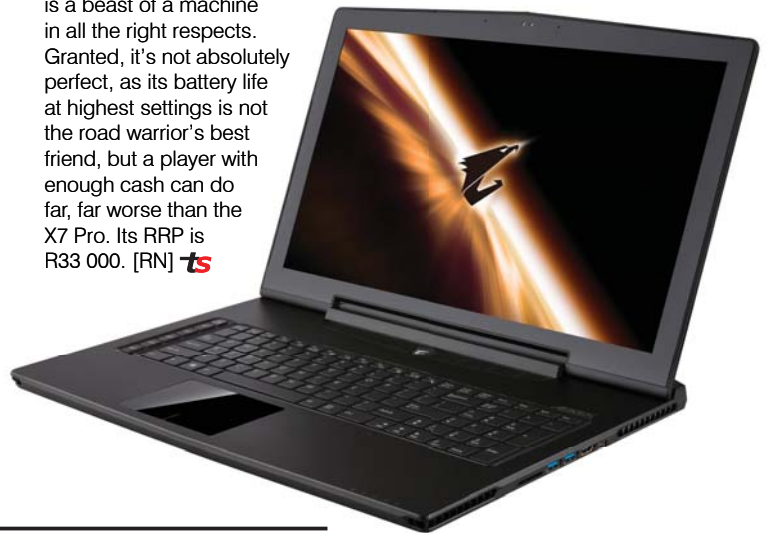
Beneath the sleek and elegant chassis beats a mighty heart, with a Core i7 (4870 HQ), clocked at 2.5 MHz and a healthy dollop of 16 GB of memory, doing duty. The X7 Pro also packs two Nvidia GTX 970 M graphics cards in SLI (backed up by Intel HD Graphics 4600 for when power saving is a priority). Thus, it came as little surprise that in general use, the notebook performed very well indeed, well aided by loud, clear audio.

AORUS' LATEST IS DEFINITELY AN IMPRESSIVE PIECE OF KIT, STARTING WITH ITS BUILD QUALITY, WHICH IS TOP NOTCH

However, all this power comes with a price - this notebook's demon has a name and it is fan noise. Along with two 128 GB solid state drives and a capacious 1 TB hard drive, users will find a generous number of ports, including five USB ports (two USB 2.0 and three USB 3.0), two HDMI ports, an SD card reader, and an Ethernet port.

Final thoughts

In the final analysis, the X7 is a beast of a machine in all the right respects. Granted, it's not absolutely perfect, as its battery life at highest settings is not the road warrior's best friend, but a player with enough cash can do far, far worse than the X7 Pro. Its RRP is R33 000. [RN] **ts**



PHILIPS SERIES 9000 SHAVER (S9111)

A good shaver is one of those essential man must-haves, that is if you haven't fully embraced the lumbersexual trend and gone for a beard that makes Gandalf look like a prepubescent boy.

It stands to reason that not everyone has R4 000 to spend on an electric shaver, but I can say that Philips' Shaver 9000 series is a well-crafted piece of shaving technology. In fact, from a number of electric razors I've used, it's certainly the best. It can shave both wet and dry, while Philips notes that the heads can flex in eight different directions to get those hard to reach places.

The shaving experience

Being used to the Braun 390cc foil shaver, there were a couple of patches of stubble on my neck that it just couldn't quite efficiently shave. The Philips cut those in its stride, although I had to get used to the round heads of the Series

9000 and how close I can shave to my moustache for example.

While day to day shaving for the office is like eating cupcakes, how does it handle those lazy weekend get-back-to-work Monday stubble? Quite efficiently. As expected shaving took a bit longer, but it didn't tug longer stubble. If you are one of those manly men, best would be to give your beard a once over with the beard styler that you can click onto the shaver. With an adjustable head, it is quite a comprehensive beard styler, although the fact that you have to clip it on and off makes a bit more of a slog to use.

As with many of the higher-end shavers, the Philips 9000 comes with cleaning system (SmartClean Plus) that washes the heads from hair and foam, while lubricating and charging it and goes one step further by also drying the heads.

Smooth, real smooth

There is very little to fault the Philips Shaver Series 9000. It is a well-crafted shaving tool that should find a welcome home in any man's bathroom. Whether you have the R4 000 to spend on the Series 9000 is another story. [MJ] **ts**

FULL DISCLOSURE: PRODUCT WAS RECEIVED AS A SEEDING UNIT.

FROM A NUMBER OF ELECTRIC RAZORS I'VE USED, THE PHILIPS SHAVER IS CERTAINLY THE BEST.



ASUS ROG G751JL

It's one thing to claim that one's notebook is a killer gaming rig, it's quite another to actually bring the goods. Asus ROG G751JL does both.

While there are more than a few gaming notebooks available, this only means manufacturers have to work more diligently to produce an offering that stands out from the crowd. What quickly becomes apparent is that Asus' G751JL has been built to do just that.

To start with, the notebook offers a unique design. More specifically, Asus has moved the screen closer to the user giving the illusion that the notebook is not quite as large as it actually is. This has a dual purpose, as it also gives the machine an isolated area to vent heat away from the user. Furthermore, the design gives the rest of the machine's chassis license to be fairly subtle by comparison, but the rest of the machine is covered in a soft, matte finish which does bolster the luxurious feel.

Showing off

More importantly than its aesthetics, the 17.3" notebook boasts no compromise specifications, with a top end Intel Core i7-4720HQ processor accounting for its performance. This is accompanied by up to a whopping 32 GB of DDR3 memory. Furthermore, the i7 is a quad-core processor with Turbo Boost up to 3.60 GHz and 6 MB L3 Cache. This combination should make short work of the most demanding games and tasks alike.

However, for gamers, even more important is the graphics solution onboard, and in this regard, users won't be disappointed. The latest Maxwell NVIDIA GeForce GTX965M GPU, which can claim 2 GB of GDDR5 dedicated memory has been included here, and accounts for a performance increase of 40% over the last generation GTX860M of its predecessor.

As alluring as terrific performance is, top-end components typically come with their downside - heat. Answering this concern on the ROG G751JL is a dual-fan cooling system which ensures the notebook will stay cool under pressure, such as when users play games on it for extended periods.

Moving up

As for its 17.3" IPS anti-glare display, its resolution is a very healthy full HD 1080p (1920x1080), with a generous 178-degree wide viewing angle. Storage, meanwhile, is well accommodated by the included 1 TB 7200 rpm HDD, while housing for a 2nd HDD for more storage space is also onboard. No less important than the screen is the keyboard. Along with backlighting and an ergonomic design to minimise fatigue, the ROG G751JL's keyboard quite fittingly sports macro keys. These are programmable to three commands, including launching apps, multi-key actions, or other functions.

With regards to connectivity on this unit, there are plenty of ports. The right hand side of the machine plays host to two USB 3.0 ports, a VGA connector, three audio jacks, Ethernet, HDMI and a Thunderbolt port. Two additional USB 3.0 ports can be found on the left side, as can the notebook's Blu-Ray drive and SD/MMC card reader.

QUITE CLEARLY, THE ROG G751JL IS A HEAVYWEIGHT AMONGST OTHER GAMING NOTEBOOK CONTENDERS.



Weighing in

Quite clearly, the ROG G751JL is a heavyweight amongst other gaming notebook contenders. It's not light, at 4.3 kg, but this is somewhat offset but its surprisingly wallet friendly price of R21 000 considering what it brings to the fore. It is available now at Evetech.co.za **ts**



TECH SPECS



Processor

Intel Core i7-4720HQ
up to 3.6 GHz



Memory

Up to 32 GB



Graphics card

NVIDIA GeForce
GTX965M



Screen resolution

17.3" IPS, 1920 x 1080

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MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS 2015: 5 GOOD THINGS



BARCELONA 2-5 MAR 2015

Now that the dust has settled in the Catalan capital following Mobile World Congress 2015, there was simply too much stuff for one person to see all. With that in mind, we've put together a list of five products that should not slip past your tech radar.

Huawei Watch

Smartwatches are a dime a dozen, and Android Wear OS sporting ones even more so. But for one singular reason, Huawei's first attempt at one garnered a surprising amount of attention at MWC15. That reason is that it's achingly beautiful. The Huawei Watch is a tad bigger than its counterparts however, with a 1.4" AMOLED screen. For now, Huawei has stayed mum on the release date and pricing for this smartwatch.



HTC Grip

Another wearable makes the grade, this time coming from Taiwanese manufacturer HTC. The Grip is the company's take on fitness-based wearables. Think of it as a mix between Nike's Fuelband and Garmin's vivofit. The Grip is designed to be an activity tracker plus workout companion, and makes use of some GPS-aided tech to ensure it remains accurate. The unit fits around the wrist and features a clipping mechanism to secure it. It also sports a fair bit of tech inside, such as a 32 bit MCU, 8 MB of SRAM and 16 MB worth of flash storage to record data. We will hopefully see it in the next few months.



Nokia N1

Breaking free from the confines of Windows Phone, Nokia's N1 (dubbed the Finnish iPad Mini) proved a surprise delight at MWC15. With Android doing all the heavy lifting from an OS perspective, the N1 serves as a sampler for the kinds of devices we could see coming from Nokia in years to come. Fitted with a 7.9" (2048x1536) display, the N1 features a beautiful aluminium unibody case that bares a striking similarity to Apple's smaller tablet. For now the N1 remains a creative project, with Nokia still to reveal details on a release date and pricing.



Alcatel OneTouch Idol 3

While Samsung's new Galaxy dominated proceedings, when it comes to value for money the Alcatel OneTouch Idol 3 models' debut was equally intriguing. Much like the Apple iPhone 6 and 6 Plus, the Idol 3 is available in two variants - a standard 4.7" version and larger 5.5" phablet. With a quad-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 410 and an octacore Snapdragon 615 in the latter, the phones can be used from both ends, so it doesn't matter how you pick it up. With a sub \$300 price, it's also good on the wallet.



Ford MoDe Smartbike

In the age of the Internet of Things, everything is connected. Yes, even the two wheeled type, as Ford presented the MoDe smartbike. The MoDe comes in two variants, the MoDe: Me and MoDe: Pro, both models are however in the prototype phase. The MoDe bikes feature a syncing application called MoDe:Link for iPhone 6 users. This allows riders to easily bring up navigation information, as well as pull up any essential diagnostics for the bike. [RLC] **ts**



(NOT SO) ENTRY-LEVEL CAMERA ROUNDUP

The four cameras below might fall in the top section of the entry-level market, but don't underestimate them one bit. They have enough photography bite to give some older midrange cameras a serious run for their money.



1 Canon EOS 750D and 760D

Canon surprised everyone by releasing two new models to replace the aging 700D. While the differences between the 750D and 760D might look cosmetic, photographers hankering for a bit more usability might want to go for the more expensive 760D. Both contain a sharp new 24 megapixels CMOS sensor and a 19-point all-cross-type autofocus system lifted from the EOS 70D, but the 760D has a few extras. These include a LCD top plate to quickly check key settings, a rotational thumbwheel to better change aspects such as aperture and speed, and a lock button for the mode dial. Whether or not these are worth the R2 000 extra is up to you, but what is certain is that the change in specs is enough to seriously consider the new models above the older 700D.

Sensor: 24.2 MP **Speed:** 5 fps **ISO:** 100-12800
Video: Full HD @ 30 fps
Screen: 1 040 000 dots, 3", fully articulated, touch
Price: 750D: R10 000 with 18-55mm lens, 760D: R12 000 with 18-55mm lens



2 Nikon D5500

For Nikon buyers, the choice between the D5500 and the older D5300 will be more difficult, seeing that the newer model does not offer that much more. The D5500 is definitely smaller and lighter than the D5300 (470 g vs 530 g), but onboard is the same 24.2-megapixel sensor (with no optical low pass filter for better detail), Expeed 4 image processing engine and 39 point autofocus system. What Nikon is promoting is the 3.2" articulate touchscreen that is now touch-enabled, a feature we like a lot. You also receive better battery life, but this might be because Nikon dropped GPS functionality on the D5500.

Sensor: 24.2 MP **Speed:** 5 fps **ISO:** 100-25 600
Video: Full HD @ 60 fps **Screen:** 3.2", 1 037 000, fully articulated, touch
Price: R18 000 with 18-55mm lens

3 Pentax K-S2

If you're the outdoor type then chances are you've been stuck in the rain, your DSLR tucked in beneath your shirt, surviving on a hope and prayer. With Pentax's K-S2 you're allowed to sing in the rain since it's billed as the world's smallest weather and dust resistant body. It's also the first from Pentax that is Wi-Fi enabled, joining the others on our list, also adding NFC for easy pairing. 20.12 megapixels aren't to be scoffed at, noting also that just like the Nikon, it omits an anti-aliasing filter. While the 3" LCD screen at the back is fully articulate for those difficult low-on the ground shots, the screen is not touch enabled, but the optical viewfinder provide 100% coverage, which others on our list can't claim.

Sensor: 20.12 MP **Speed:** 5.5 fps **ISO:** 100-51200
Video: 1080p at 30 fps **Screen:** 3", 921 000 dots, articulate
Price: R12 500 with weather-resistant 18-50mm



4 Samsung NX500

Samsung knows they are not an immediate choice when it comes to cameras, so they work a bit harder for your money. The new NX500 mirrorless is a good case in point. It includes a massive 28 MP sensor and a feature Samsung is punting hard: 4K ultra HD video recording for when regular HD is simply not enough. As per usual Samsung is on the ball with connectivity, including Wi-Fi, NFC and Bluetooth, while action shots should be no hassle since the NX500 delivers a blistering 9 fps. Its caveat is the lack of viewfinder, but if you are content to use the 3" Super AMOLED screen at the back, then the NX500 warrants a serious look (if not, try Samsung's NX1). **ts**

Sensor: 28 MP **Speed:** 9 fps **Screen:** 3", 1 040 000 dots, tilt, touch
ISO: 100-25 600 (without battery) **Video:** 4096x2160 (24 fps)
Price: R10 000 with 16-50mm





Mission possible: The Dawn Mission

AS THE DAWN PROBE CRUISES INTO ORBIT AROUND CERES EARLY THIS MONTH, WE STAND AMAZED AT THE FEATS OF ANOTHER LONG-TERM SPACE MISSION. HERE'S WHAT THE HYPE IS ABOUT.

THE MISSION

The Dawn mission aims to study two intact remnants from our early solar system, Vesta and Ceres. These are two protoplanets drifting around the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. Although both formed at about the same time, they are very different places. When Dawn left Vesta in 2012, it was clear that it is dry and rocky. Now it's on to Ceres, which images have already shown to be icy and wet. Scientists hope that Dawn's discoveries will help us understand how planets formed.

September 2007: Dawn launched.

July 2015: Mission ends.

4.4 billion km: The total distance Dawn travelled from Earth to Ceres. That's just more than 3 million trips between Joburg and Cape Town.

\$446 million: Total estimated cost of the mission, about 21 Nkandlas.

94 months: Duration of the Dawn mission.



THE TARGET

Ceres is a slightly flattened sphere, with a rocky core, a mantle of water ice and a dusty, clay-like surface. It makes up about a quarter of the mass of the asteroid belt, yet is the smallest of all the dwarf planets known. Already during its approach phase, Dawn has captured some intriguing images of Ceres. One in particular is a mysterious white spot, which astronomers hope they'll get a better look at when Dawn goes into orbit.

1801: Ceres is discovered. It was initially thought to be a planet.

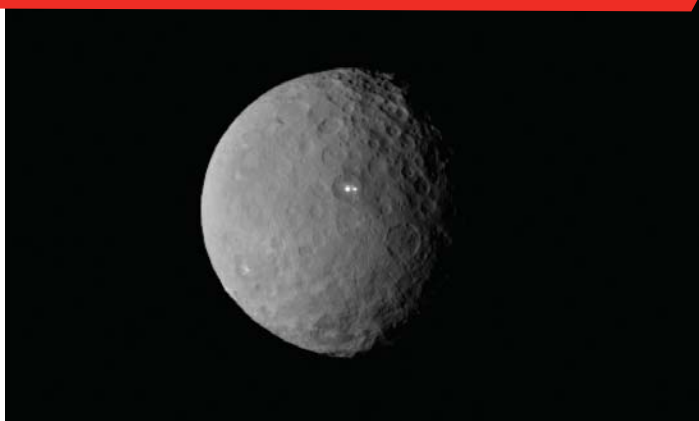
2006: Ceres is classified as a dwarf planet.

-38 °C: Maximum temperature at the surface of Ceres. That's about 95 °C below the hottest surface temperature ever recorded on Earth.

950 km: Mean diameter of Ceres, about 13× less than that of Earth.

9 hours, 4.5 minutes: The time it takes Ceres to make a full rotation on its own axis. You could drive from Joburg to Beaufort West in about the same time.

4.6 years: The time it takes Ceres to orbit around the sun.



THE TECH

The Dawn spacecraft consists of a central body, which houses the engines, scientific instruments and telecoms systems, and two solar panel wings to capture enough energy to power everything on board. It also uses an innovative xenon ion propulsion system to provide the thrust needed to sustain such a long dual-destination mission. Although this system has been tested on Deep Space 1 for 678 days, Dawn will be using ion propulsion thrust for close to 2100 days during its mission. [LP] **ts**

5740: Number of photovoltaic cells in each of the solar arrays.

3.25 mg: The amount of xenon used per second at maximum thrust.

425 kg: The amount of xenon propellant carried at launch.

4 days: The time it takes Dawn to accelerate to 96 km/h at full throttle.

400 km/h: Coasting speed in approach to Ceres.

3: The number of scientific instrument systems on board, including a framing camera and two spectrometers.

1.52 m: The diameter of the high-gain antenna on board.



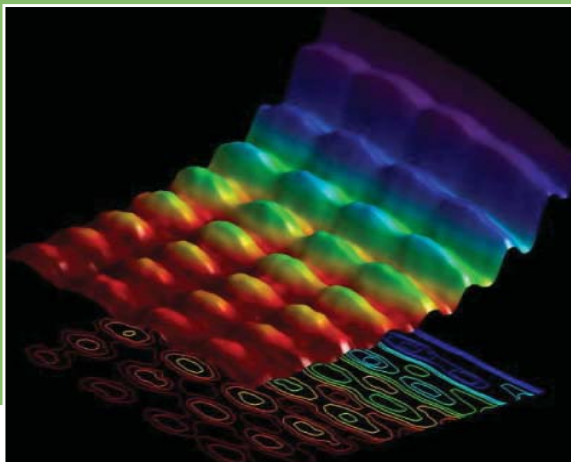
Sources

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SCIENCE

PIC OF THE MONTH



Although it has been proven that light behaves as both particle and wave, never before have scientists been able to take a photo of this. Until now. Using electrons and laser pulses shot at a nanowire, researchers at the *École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne* in Switzerland, managed to capture light in both states simultaneously. It is hoped that the experiment would provide further insight of how light functions in order to help develop quantum computing. Check this video for further information: bit.ly/2in1lightwave.

Image credit: Fabrizio Carbone/EPFL

SMART ANSWERS

LIFE IS FULL OF QUESTIONS THAT NEED SMART ANSWERS. WE CAN HELP.



UNBOILING AN EGG

Is it possible? Yup. Scientists recently announced that they managed to return rubbery, cooked egg whites to their original clear liquid state.

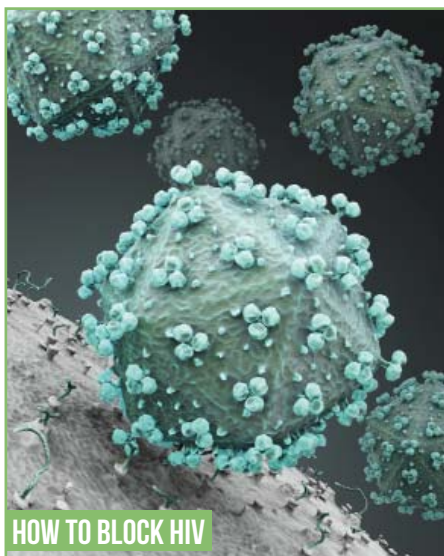
How? They took boiled egg whites and added urea. This changed the solid material back to a liquid.

Easy as that? No, that was only half of it. At the molecular level, the proteins were still tangled up the wrong way. So they then used a vortex device to apply shear stress to thin microfluidic films, which forced the proteins to untangle.

Why would you want to do this?

This was a proof of concept. In practice, though, therapies such as cancer treatments rely on proteins being folded the right way. If misfolded proteins could be untangled to their original state easily, production of these treatments could become faster and cheaper.

Source: bit.ly/1CZzPLS



HOW TO BLOCK HIV

Can HIV be stopped? Yes, recent reports seem promising.

How so? Scientists announced that they have developed a protein that might be a vaccine candidate.

How does it work? The protein mimics a receptor to which the virus typically attaches on target white blood cells. This blocks entry of the virus into the cell.

Is that all? No, for an effective vaccine you also need a delivery vehicle. The team showed that an engineered adenovirus, without any harmful effects, can be injected into muscle cells and churn out enough of the protective protein to last for several years.

Is it effective? Results look promising. In the study, all known strains of HIV and its simian counterpart were blocked and at much higher viral loads than usually seen in human transmission.

Source: bit.ly/1MxAWbQ



WHAT YOUR DOG SEES IN YOU

Can your dog read your face? Yup, a recent study shows that they can recognise both angry and happy human faces.

How do we know this? Scientists trained a group of 20 dogs to select either of the two facial expressions on pictures showed on a touch screen. Half the group were trained to recognise angry faces and the other half responded to happy faces.

And the results? The dogs correctly chose the expression they were trained on significantly more often than chance would predict, even on faces they have never seen before.

Do the dogs know what the expressions mean? It seems likely, yes. Dogs trained on angry faces took significantly longer to master the task than the other group, which suggests that they likely associate an angry face with a negative meaning. [LP] **ts**

Source: bit.ly/1FH4oYp

REVIEW: OPEL OPC



THERE'S MORE THAN TWO HOT HATCHES THAT MATTER THESE DAYS. ESPECIALLY WITH THE OPEL OPC ALONG FOR THE RIDE. TREVOR VAN DE VEN FROM ZA CAR (WWW.ZACAR.CO.ZA) FINDS HIMSELF OPCESED.

There is an obsession nowadays with hot hatches – many a humble family hatchback packs 150+ kW of power, is capable of 230+ km/h top speeds and accelerating to the ton in under eight seconds. All while being comfortable enough to carry a family and tackle the school-run. I'd wager that if you were to share the first thought upon mentioning hot hatch, something from either Volkswagen or Ford will pop into your head? And there's good reason for this. Ford and Volkswagen make two of the finest and most popular hot hatches for sale today, the Golf GTI and Focus ST.

You would be forgiven for forgetting, but there is an age old rival from the eighties hot hatch heydays that's returned with brute force: the Opel Astra OPC. But is it good enough to contend with the cool kids on the block?

Full frontal approach

Rolling up to the office door, LED daytime running lights aglow on massive 20-inch rims, huge black Brembo's poking through the

'snowflake' alloys, and silver-lipped intakes in the chunky bumper, the Astra OPC looks angry. Whereas the GTI is subdued, Germanic, and the Ford is more 'party' than business, the OPC has a bit of EFC fighter in it. And its numbers support this notion. 206 kW and 400 Nm with a claimed 0-100 km/h of six seconds onto a governed top speed of 250 km/h. This compared with 162 kW, 350 Nm, 6.5 seconds 0-100km/h and a top speed of 242 km/h; and 184 kW, 360 Nm, 0-100 km/h of 6.5 seconds and a 248 km/h top end for the GTI and ST respectively. The Astra has indeed the other two beat on numbers, but in real world scenarios it's very close and subject to endless hours of bar counter or braai-fire debate about conditions, traction and drivers.

The added extras

The thing about fast cars though, is that there's more to them than the numbers suggest. These ones are a lot more than tarted-up versions of the diesel hatches they loosely resemble, which is where the OPC really begins to shine. Those massive gumballs, huge brakes and other trick bits like its FlexRide Chassis – which allows you to adjust various



aspects of damping, steering feel and throttle sensitivity – and the limited slip differential are all standard on the OPC, as are the Xenon headlamps and various multimedia connectivity options including an OPC smartphone app. There's one model and options are limited to the colour you choose. The R486 500 you're going to part with means that it offers relatively good value (a base-line GTI will set you back R408 000 and the Ford ST3 R394 900).

But its trick bits and high-end equipment also means that the OPC is the car that I want to be in when the roads get twisty and my knuckles turn white. It's planted and predictable, cossetting in the deep leather bucket seats, and predictability is what you want if you want to enjoy your blast with [OPC] beast-mode activated.

A perfect fit?

The GTI and ST are perhaps a little more forgiving in day-to-day use. They have smaller wheels, bigger sidewalls, less tricky suspension and more 'standard' brakes. Their torque kicks in a little sooner and at least the GTI is available with a sharp DSG auto box, but the sum of the parts – high end parts no less – come together superbly in the Opel. The countless laps the development team spent on the Nurburgring means that from the time you slip into the racing buckets, slide the key into the ignition and watch the dials sweep on startup, you are behind the wheel of a focused hyper-hatch.

The OPC is more than a just a fast family runabout. If you want something a little subtler for work, a little less hard, a little less fast, a little less engaging on a twisty road, and something that's just better in a straight line then perhaps the OPC is not for you. The Opel OPC, though, eggs you along every inch of the way and it is fantastic. **ts**

BUT ITS TRICK BITS AND HIGH-END EQUIPMENT ALSO MEANS THAT THE OPC IS THE CAR THAT I WANT TO BE IN WHEN THE ROADS GET TWISTY AND MY KNUCKLES TURN WHITE.










OPC APP

Considering the focus of the Astra OPC, the development team produced an app (Apple only unfortunately) to show drivers real-time telemetry and driver performance indicators. The kit comes with an ECU adaptor which links to an iOS application, allowing the driver to view, record and analyse up to 60 channels of data including g-forces, vehicle speed, engine revs, electrical system statuses, boost pressure from the turbo and even some of the vehicle's settings like the automatic headlights. The app also includes a location map, track timer and a visual representation of the OPC's over- and understeer, a great tool to hone the perfect driving lines and cornering speeds on a race track.

The OPC Power App adapter is available through the Opel dealer network for R6 052 including VAT and includes the control unit and wiring harness.

Quick Specs: Opel Astra OPC

Engine	Power	Torque	Transmission	Claimed Consumption	Price
 2.0 litre turbocharged	 206 kW @ 5500 rpm	 400 Nm between 2500-4500 rpm	 6-speed manual, limited slip differential	 8.1 l/100 km (bank on 10-11 l/100 km)	 R486 500
					

TOP 5 CARS COMING TO SA ROADS SOON

WITH SO MANY NEW CARS SET TO LAND IN SA THIS YEAR, WE PROFILE FIVE THAT WE CANNOT WAIT TO GET BEHIND THE WHEEL OF.

Mercedes-Benz AMG GT

There are few things more exhilarating in the automotive world than being able to put a purebred sportscar through its paces, and come May this year, South African drivers will be able to put Merc's new AMG GT to the test. Not only a stunner in profile, the AMG GT incorporates some of the Stuttgart-based manufacturer's finest design and engineering efforts in the form of an ultra-lightweight body and newly created 4.0 litre engine.

In terms of looks, the AMG GT is a muscular and unadulterated version of the SLS, with a long sweeping bonnet and short rear, creating the appearance that all its power is aimed well forward.

Powering this supreme sports car is a direct fuel injection twin-turbocharged V8, which has been suitably paired with a seven-speed automatic transmission, as well as a manual mode should you be feeling brave. Mercedes has listed its 0-100 km/h time at 3.5 seconds, with a limited top speed of 310 km/h, fulfilling any aching desires that your racing driver alter ego may have.

Expected: Q2



Ford Mustang

Here's another sports car to fawn over, this time round with Yankee blood coursing through its veins. We are of course alluding to the new Ford Mustang, which we got to see up close and personal at Ford's Go Further event last year. This ode to American muscle is expected to make its official local debut in November this year, and will be available in right-hand drive for the first time in SA.

With three different models currently sitting in Ford's stable, the 5.0 litre V8 Mustang GT is the obvious standout, with a throaty engine sound terrifying enough to make hot hatch racers quiver. That massive V8 churns out 324 kW of power and is suitably paired with 542 Nm of torque. The result is a claimed 0-100 km/h time of only four seconds, which will certainly give Italian and German sports cars something to worry about.

Expected: Q4



Jaguar XE

In SA, the saloon car market is dominated by the Germans, as the BMW 3 series and Mercedes C-Class set the standard. Aiming to shake things up a bit is Jaguar's new saloon offering - the XE. As with most Jaguars of late, the XE is impeccably styled, looking both refined and aggressive at the same time. Set to hit roads come the end of the year, the Jaguar XE certainly seems like the car you need if you think that German saloon engineering has become slightly stale.

It definitely looks amazing, but how about what it's packing under the hood we hear you asking? Jaguar has certainly not scrimped in that department, with a range topping Supercharged 3.0 Litre model packing an impressive 250 kW of power from its V6 engine. Equally impressive are its quick fire specs, namely a top speed of 250 km/h and the ability to reach 100 km/h from a standstill in 5.1 seconds, according to Jaguar.

Expected: Q4



Land Rover Discovery Sport

Now for something a little different, but no less interesting. Head to Sandton, and chances are you'll pass all manner of SUV. The current reigning king of the curb (mount) is the Range Rover Evoque, the Northern Suburbs' soccer mom car of choice. Now the Discovery Sport has been added to the lineup, cementing Land Rover's SUV dominance. The Discovery Sport will be replacing the oft forgotten Freelander when it storms to SA shores in a few short months.

Slightly bigger than its Evoque forebear, the Discovery Sport is designed to be a jack of all trades, proving equally adept for those journeys through to the Drakensberg, as it is during the morning school run. Unlike the Evoque, speed is not the Sport's primary concern, as evidenced by the 140 kW output from the top of the range Luxury HSE model. Set for unveiling in Q2 this year, we expect the Discovery Sport to dominate city streets very soon.

Expected: Q2

Honda Civic Type-R

Don't worry hot hatch heads, we've got something for you to salivate over as well - the new Honda Civic Type-R. The reason we can't wait to see this hot hatch in action, is because it looks absolutely bonkers. With an expected debut in Q3 this year, those getting behind the wheel will have no fears whatsoever that their cars needs any custom body kits, as that massive spoiler and four-pronged exhaust setup leave no illusions as to the Type-R's street racing credentials.

For this radically styled hot hatch, Honda has also introduced a new 2.0 litre iVTEC turbocharged engine. It may only be two litres, but the Type-R's engine is said to produce a mammoth 240 kW, which makes it one of Honda's most powerful cars to date. Along with the power increase over previous models, Honda's also introduced a +R button, which stiffens suspension, tightens gear shifts and makes the Type-R feel more dynamic. We can't wait. [RLC] **ts**

Expected: Q3



From Geneva with Love

The annual Geneva Motor Show kicked off the European motoring showcase calendar, and each year it never fails to impress. Here are four cars that raised the Swiss temperature.

Volkswagen Sports Coupe

Kicking things off is a car that could very well start a design revolution at VW. Okay, revolution is a bit strong, but the Sports Coupe's shape, such as its angular bumpers and distinctively wide set grille are features that future VW cars could well sport. Under the bonnet you'll find a 3.0 litre V6 TSI petrol engine, paired with two lithium-ion battery powered electric motors. The result is a combined output of 279 kW. This means the VW Sports Coupe can hit 100 km/h in under 5 seconds, and should give luxury saloons something to worry about.



McLaren 675LT

The 675LT marks a return to longtail supercars, and carries the unique distinction of being McLaren's fastest, lightest and most powerful Super Series vehicle to date. Featuring a newly designed carbon fibre body, the 675LT tips the scales at only 1230 kg. Added to this lightweight design is an immensely powerful 3.8 litre twin-turbocharged V8 engine, which musters 496 kW. Reaching 100 km/h from a standstill in only 2.9 seconds, the 675LT will have supercar fans fighting to take one home. McLaren will only produce 500 models at \$400 000 a pop, so if you're a Russian oligarch put your name down now.



Aston Martin Vulcan

Not to be left behind is Aston Martin's hypercar concept, the Vulcan (yes, like Dr. Spock, RIP). Like any good hypercar, the Vulcan is steeped in drama, with a massive rear spoiler, large sloping bonnet and panoramic sunroof all upping the ante. Suitably, the Vulcan features one of Aston Martin's most powerful engines to date - a 7.0 litre twin-turbocharged V12 which delivers a potent 597 kW of raw aggression. Designed for billionaire playboys, the Vulcan has not been priced just yet, but we'd venture a guess that it's in the \$750 000 region.



Bentley EXP 10 Speed 6

Lastly another British concept, this time from Bentley in the form of the EXP 10 Speed 6. Designed as a sort of glimpse into Bentley's future, one word springs to mind when seeing the EXP 10 Speed 6 in action - bespoke. Every inch of it looks painstakingly put together, from the deep set curve of its side panels to the hypnotising headlights. The interior however is the real standout, and features all manner of hand stitched leather, wooden panels and chrome accessories. How much of the EXP 10 Speed 6 will find its way in future Bentley cars remains to be seen, but it sure is beautiful. [RLC] **ts**



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THE TECHSMART GUIDE TO RUGBY

In a World Cup year and with Vodacom's Super Rugby tournament in full swing, rugby is set to come into even sharper focus over the next few months.

In anticipation over the frenzied Rugby fever set to grip our nation soon, TechSmart has served up a rundown of all the key bits of info you need to know, as well as the kit you'll need to look the part.

KITTED OUT

Gone are the days when rugby players used to play the game in old black togs. Nowadays, rugby players' boots are as shiny and bright as their football counterparts. Whether or not that is a bad thing is up for debate, but these new boots can still be a welcome distraction if you're not a prolific try scorer of Bryan Habana's ilk.

First up is the tight five. Any good rugby team needs one to set the platform, and as such a tight five player needs a solid pair of boots to cope with the grind in the trenches. We're quite fond of Adidas' **adipower Kakari** boot, which will be sported by many players from the New Zealand and France national teams. As solid as these boots are, loose forwards will require something a little lighter while quickly getting from breakdown to breakdown. Puma's new **EvoPOWER 1.2** offering is best here, as they're both lightweight and durable, giving dynamic loose forwards like Duane Vermeulen a distinct edge.



adipower Kakari boot,
Adidas

R1 500



EvoPOWER 1.2 boot,
Puma

R2 000



EvoSPEED 1.3,
Puma

R2 000



Magista boot,
Nike

R2 000

Now for the guys who steal all the limelight, the backs. For those playing in the pivot or occupying the fullback berth, the **Puma EvoSPEED 1.3** is a clear standout. They also get the endorsement from Willie le Roux, who will no doubt be giving the opposition headaches. And lastly, the twinkled toed centres and wings, who will need an equally suitable boot, might think about the Nike's Flyknit woven **Magista**, which will make quick-stepping and fast cuts all the more easy.

HANDLE WITH CARE

Boots may get the most attention, but equally important is the protective gear you'll be sporting. No one wants to see you missing teeth at the office, it's not a good look during client meetings. With that in mind, the **Shock Doctor Gel Max Mouthguard** should be the first thing you reach for, which also carries the nod of approval from Discovery Vitality. To keep that torso protected from any unwelcome knocks, try on a pair of **Canterbury's Z-Vest** shoulder pads, which safeguard all the essentials. Last on the list is the head, and although scrum caps aren't sexy, a concussion is even less so. To cushion that noggin, strap on **Gilbert's P/Tec Xact Headguard**.



P/Tec Xact Headguard,
Sportmans Warehouse

R400



Z-Vest Shoulder Pads,
Canterbury

R400

Gel Max Mouthguard,
Sportmans Warehouse



R170

FAVOURABLE ODDS

Ranked second in the world at the moment, South Africans should feel buoyed by our chances this year, as the last time England hosted the tournament in 1999, we reached the semis, only to be beaten by a wonky Larkham drop goal. We also lifted the trophy in 2007 in France, which means our track record up North is not too shabby. Speaking of which, SA currently sits at 5/1 (www.oddschecker.com) to win the tournament.

ROAD TO THE FINAL

Getting to the World Cup Final is no mean feat, but thankfully Bryce Lawrence is no longer a referee. To give you an idea of how the Springboks will fare this time round, we've done a little prediction game as to who we'll face. In the pool stage (Pool B), we'll play Samoa, Japan, Scotland and the USA. To be fair to all those teams, we should win comfortably and top the Pool (knock on wood). We then face the second placed team from Pool A, which consists of Australia, England and Wales as favourites (one of which we face in the semis as well). After all that it's a final against the All Blacks (most logically) which will set up one helluva match on 31 October. [RLC] **ts**

SPEAKING RUGBY

Rugby has a language all its own, here are some terms to get familiar with

Garryowen: An old-school term for a high kick into the air with the objective of trying to retrieve it again.

Hinging: When a front row forward causes a scrum to collapse by not supporting their own weight.

Fetcher: Name given to loose forward who tries to win opposition ball at breakdown.

Tight Head: Name given to front row forward, also a term for winning a scrum if the opposition has the feed.

City Guide: TOKYO!!!

In a tech-obsessed city 13 million people strong, chaos and order seem to live intertwined. Not just famed for neon lights and crowded streets, Tokyo has a cultured soul all its own.

The ordered chaos of Tokyo life is evidenced by the estimated 3000 people negotiating the famed Shibuya Crossing every five minutes, and this serves as a perfect cross section of the city's inhabitants. From the young and trendy Tokyoites all showcasing their sartorial obsessions, to three-piece suited businessmen on their way to Izakaya bars, not forgetting the usual smattering of foreign tourists.

The capital of Japan is indeed a city unlike any other, since amid its monolithic buildings and frenzied streets, one is never more than a five minute train ride away from a beautifully manicured park or a religious monument steeped in history. A prime example is Harajuku, a street fashion district whose inhabitants mix together haute couture and manga-inspired garb with an enviable sort of ease. The district itself is divided in two by the Yamanote Line, the main train line running through Tokyo's major prefectures. The one half is crammed full of boutique shops, all of which clamour for the attention of passersby. Takeshita Street is a particular standout, stretching for a kilometre, chock-a-block with all manner of oddities, whether it be the latest Nike high tops, Anime inspired accessories or decadent crepes to feast on.

Once you've soaked up all the pop culture laden atmosphere that Takeshita has to offer, a short walk to the other side of Harajuku station will bring you to the entrance of Meiji Jingu. Filled with curious observers and respectful followers, the Meiji Jingu houses the largest and most popular Shinto (Japan's native religion) shrine in the country. Along with the occasional glimpse of its stoic monks, Meiji Jingu features numerous large Torii (traditional Japanese gates), as well as dense forests which provide cooling shade while strolling around the park's wide pebbled walkways.



Shibuya, Candida, Performa, CC BY 2.0



Harajuku Fashion 563, Mehmet Aktugan, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



Meiji Jingu, Harajuku, Robin-Leigh Chetty,



Nakamise Street, Asakusa, Robin-Leigh Chetty

Must Sees

1 Asakusa

Asakusa is a relatively small district that has something for everybody. The most notable feature is the Buddhist Kannon Temple and Nakamise shopping street. Also a short walk away is the Tokyo Skytree, perfect for an evening view of the city.

2 Yoyogi Park

Tokyo is a great city for people watching (no, not the creepy kind), and nowhere are people better on display than Yoyogi Park. A weekend morning is the best time to head to Yoyogi, as dance troops move to all kinds of music, from Pop to Metal.

3 Ebisu

While a Michelin Star sushi restaurant is great to boast about, Izakaya bars are where the authentic action is, with each bar specialising in a particular Teppanyaki style dish. Ebisu is a district famed for them, all of which are great value for money.



Mount Fuji, 9kurt, CC BY 2.0

Insider Knowledge

A few things to keep in mind when in Tokyo:

- 1 Never hand money over directly, instead use the money tray placed at any and all cash registers.
- 2 Know your bows. A simple downward turn of the head will suit you fine, but the deeper the bow, the greater the amount of respect.
- 3 Get familiar with trains. The Yamanote line will take you past most of the major districts with a full day pass going for ¥700 (R70).
- 4 Things can get expensive, so check out the 24-hour convenience stores and vending machines for morning and midday meals, and rather save your cash for the evening.
- 5 Learn the lingo. While most Tokyoites are extremely hospitable, they will truly appreciate the effort you make to learn a couple of key phrases and mannerisms. [RLC] **ts**



Tokyo Tower POV, Kevin Dooley, CC BY 2.0

For full image links: bit.ly/tokyoguide

I miss you... Tokyo, Top Luke Ma, CC BY 2.0 (Lead Image)



In celebration of the last few days of summer, we asked a number of local brewers for their favourite thirst-quencher from both their own and other breweries.

● **Citizen Beer**
www.citizenbeer.co.za
 Gary Pnematicatos

Own brewery: I'd say Diplomat is our beer of the summer. It's a great, crisp beer, which always hits the spot for me.

Other brewery: From another brewery I'd recommend the Union All Day IPA. It's such a light, easy-drinking beer, with great esters and a fantastic passion fruit flavour from the hops. It's a great beer.

● **SWAGGA Breweries**
www.swaggabrewery.co.za
 Justin Goetsch

Own brewery: From our range, I would say the SWAGGA Country Ale. It is a low alcohol, low bodied, easy drinking ale. Generous in flavour and leaving you wanting for more.

Other brewery: As far as other breweries go, I would without a doubt, recommend Smack Republic's Golden Ale. Also known as the "Bree Street Belle". Highly drinkable and flavourful medium bodied summer ale.

● **Three Skulls Brew Works**
www.threeskulls.co.za
 Jonathan Nel

Own brewery: Gravedigger American Blonde Ale. Unlike other blonde or golden ales available in SA, Gravedigger is generously hopped with two American varieties so it has distinct mango, peach and grapefruit aromas.

Other brewery: Jack Black Butcher Block. It's similar to Gravedigger, with a stronger hop profile and bitterness; its American hops make this Pale Ale as tasty as it is great to look at.

● **Boston Breweries**
www.bostonbreweries.co.za
 Russ Meyer

Own brewery: Johnny Gold Weiss. It's a lightstyle weissbier with the typical cloudy appearance for the style – straw coloured with a foamy white head. Bananas and bubble-gum hit you on the nose and both flavours – plus a hint of cloves – appear upon the second sip.

Other brewery: Citizen Diplomat – a great session beer with loads of character and a great finish on the pallet.

● **The Cockpit Brewhouse**
www.thecockpitbrewhouse.co.za
 André de Beer

Own brewery: My recommendation for beer of the summer from my own brewery is the Fökker Weiss. The style is a hefe-weizen, and the beer is light and refreshing with a zesty finish. Good to quench your thirst.

Other brewery: My recommendation from another brewery is Draymans Brewery Letzter Wunsch Helles. A very refreshing beer at low alcohol.

● **Loxton Lager**
www.loxtonlager.co.za
 Stuart Thompson

Own brewery: Loxton Lager with its fresh Fynbos fragrance that celebrates the landscape. Brewed for food - brilliant with a braai.

Other brewery: Brauhaus am Damm's Weiss. It's professionally brewed, crisp & refreshing, well worth tasting.

● **Jack Black**
www.jackblackbeer.com
 Frans van Staden

Own brewery: My beer for the summer from Jack Black Brewing Company will be our Lumberjack Amber Ale. It is my summer beer because it pairs so well with biltong, grilled springbok or a good old-fashioned braai.

Other brewery: My other favourite summer beer would be Cape Brewing Company's Pilsner. It's crisp, light in colour with a little bit of a hoppy bite, perfect for quenching your thirst on a hot summer day.

● **Ubuntu Kraal Brewery**
www.sowetogold.co.za
 Josef Schmid

Own brewery: Soweto Gold - Apple Ale is the perfect summer drink. Think crisp green Granny Smith apples, squeezed with love and care, to create an immensely refreshing, slightly tart and zingy summer beverage.

Other brewery: Any Weiss beer - refreshing and spritz...why not a Cranberry Weiss?

● **Brauhaus am Damm**
www.brauhaus.co.za
 Imke Pape

Own brewery: This will be Farmers' Draught - This ever popular, light, crisp, somewhat dry lager is a perfect thirst quencher and real drinking beer!

Other brewery: Drymans Brewery Berghof - Light bodied, slightly fruity, but still with lots of character. **ts**

TOP 5 (RECENT) SA FILMS



South Africa is quickly developing as a film-making nation. To see just how far we've come along, movie fundi Spling picks his Top 5 SA movies.

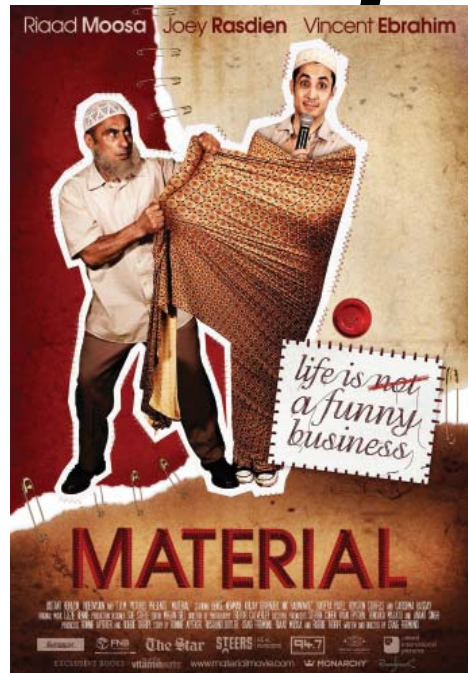
MATERIAL (2012)

Craig Freimond

Material is possibly the smartest, most heart-warming movie to originate from South Africa. Based on Riaad Moosa's life, *Material* deals with a young Muslim man whose love for stand-up comedy leads to conflict when his father expects him to take over the family business in Johannesburg.

Those expecting a straight comedy will not be disappointed, but pleasantly surprised by the film's emotional resonance, which is evoked by an honest script, two fantastic co-leads and a strong team effort. Craig Freimond's comedy drama is a crowd-pleaser that will make you laugh, cry and think - without hitting you over the head.

Proudly SA moment? Feeling the palpable father-son chemistry between Riaad Moosa and Vincent Ebrahim.



LIFE, ABOVE ALL (2012)

Oliver Schmitz

Life, Above All is an award-winning universal story about the intricate relationship between a mother and daughter in modern day South Africa. Writer-director Oliver Schmitz has composed an important, emotionally taut and melancholic drama with heartfelt performances, an insightful social commentary and beautiful cinematography.

The beauty and ugliness of humanity are reflected in the eyes of a terrific lead performance from young Khomotso Manyaka as Chanda, who shows great maturity in this underrated South Africa drama. *Life, Above All* is a touching, quietly optimistic and resilient drama, confirming a way forward no matter what life seems to throw at us.

Proudly SA moment? Being engrossed in an emotionally and intellectually-stimulating SA film.

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HARD TO GET (2014)

Zee Ntuli

Hard to Get echoes a similar passion and intensity to acclaimed Congolese crime thriller, *Viva Riva*. It's arguably South Africa's best action movie ever, powered by a similar sweaty, sexy and dangerous intensity on the back of world-class production values and surprisingly mature film-making for a number of feature film debuts.

We're blasted into a quick-paced action romance crime thriller in the style of *Bonnie & Clyde*, brandishing great bit characters with two incredibly charming co-leads. The unrequited chemistry between Skiets and TK is what fuels the burning romance and we can't help but be blown away by this high-octane actioner.

Proudly SA moment? When you realise just how much you've enjoyed the relentless onslaught of action and caper comedy that seems to ooze out of every scene.



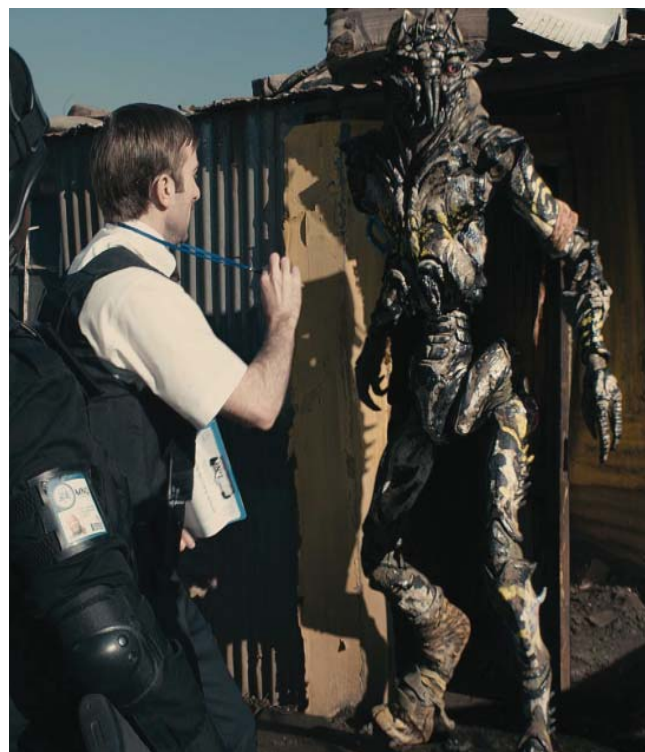
YESTERDAY (2004)

Darryl Roodt

Yesterday is a simple, pure, slow and quietly powerful South African drama from writer-director Darryl Roodt. It's the first feature-length Zulu film and was nominated for an Oscar for Best Foreign Film, lauded for its universality and purity, positively compared with *The Bicycle Thief*.

The film stars Leleti Khumalo as *Yesterday*, a young mother who discovers she has Aids and wants to live long enough to see her daughter go to school. Khumalo's heartfelt performance embodies the film's grace and nobility as she comes to terms with her plight. It's an emotionally complex and moving drama with an educational message that runs deep.

Proudly SA moment? Being absorbed by a powerful drama in a South African mother tongue that moves and inspires you.



DISTRICT 9 (2009)

Neill Blomkamp

Neill Blomkamp and Peter Jackson's thought-provoking and iconic sci-fi actioner put us on the map as a film-making destination with not one, but four Oscar nominations. The massive alien ship hovering over Johannesburg, the political subtexts involving "prawns", the mockumentary tone, cutting edge special effects and the captivating man-on-the-run story, all contributed to a film to be immensely proud of.

District 9 continues to reverberate as Blomkamp has gone on to direct *Elysium*, *Chappie* and is set to reinvigorate the *Alien* franchise, while Sharlto Copley has become a bona fide Hollywood star to rally the likes of our favourite Hollywood Monster, Charlize Theron.

Proudly SA moment? Listening to our unmistakable accents dominating a world-class film. **ts**



CLOSE BUT CIGAR: *Roepman, Die Wonderwerker, Verraaiers, Four Corners, Fanie Fourie's Lobola, Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom and Tsotsi.*

THE COMIC BOOK GUYS

WILLEM SAMUEL

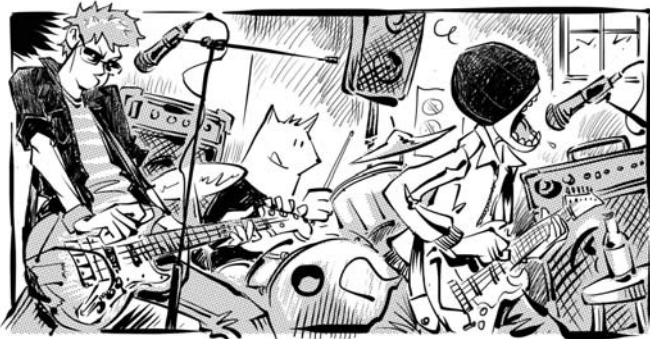
Willem Samuel's *Mengelmoes* comic book series has been impressive, both in content and look and feel. We tracked him down in the UK to talk more about the creative process, the local scene and fine art.



TechSmart: When did you decide you wanted to create comic books?

Willem Samuel: It was never a conscious decision, really. Comics were just one of the many things I did, like painting or music. Even by the time I went to Stellenbosch to study art I still considered becoming a painter. Fate had it that I met Anton Kannemeyer during my studies and he taught me some great fundamentals which got me seriously switched on to making comics. But even after I completed my degree I still wasn't completely sure of how it was going to work out as a career. It's

only when I started working at *Supa Strikas*, drawing comics from nine to five, when I was like, "Okay, I guess I am a comic artist after all."

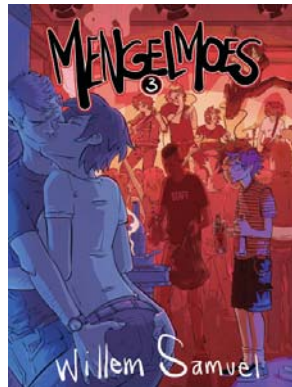


You hail from Cape Town, but are based in the UK. How is the comic book scene looking over there?

The UK also faces the same issues as South Africa such as the negative public perception of comics, e.g. that they are for children and not a literary or artistic medium with its own merit. It's also interesting that the book publishing industry is struggling too and that UK artists have a tough time finding their own voice against the influx of European, American and Japanese comics. But I think that the heavy competition here fuels people to find ways to be creative and to create comics against the odds.

Tell us more about the *Mengelmoes* series.

It's a six-issue series about a teenage Afrikaner growing up in the Post-Apartheid era. Each issue is about one single day, from a different year, over the course of 14 years, with each issue drawn in a different style: hence the title *Mengelmoes*. I'm on page 270 at the moment, so it's full



on graphic novel stuff and covers a wide range of issues from politics, religion, to love, drugs and fantasy.

It's currently being published periodically by Soaring Penguin Press in the UK and distributed to South Africa, and should be released as a single volume early next year.

Any advice for folks starting off in comic book creation?

Start small. Don't begin with an epic space-war-adventure story with chicks and robots if you have only drawn a couple of wonky Manga characters with pencil in the back of your schoolbook.

Do a single page, self-contained story, inked with letters and all and show that to your friends. Then try a five page story and post it online. And please note I'm saying "story", not five pages of action and gunfights. If you don't have a story you have nothing but a series of random drawings. Then go for 10 pages and so on, till you can finish a 30-page comic, with a self-contained story that you can print and sell at Free Comic Book Day. If you're okay with all the hours and making no money, you can go do your space adventure!

Lastly, talk to people in the industry. Send me or anyone whose art you like, a message on Facebook. Go to ChrisOatley.com and listen to all the podcasts, especially the ones about comics. There are great resources out there, so use them.

Where can people find more of your work?

You can go to your local bookshop and DEMAND they order you all the issues of *Mengelmoes*. They can order them from Readers Den Comic Shop (bit.ly/reddenmengel). If your local bookshop is Readers Den, then lucky you.

I have a blog thing too for more details: <http://willemsamuel.blogspot.co.uk> although my Instagram account (willemsamuel) is currently where I'm the most active. Feel free to send me a message or ask me anything! **ts**



All images courtesy of Willem Samuel

TOP Tweets!

Leonard Nimoy @TheRealNimoy · Feb 23

A life is like a garden. Perfect moments can be had, but not preserved, except in memory. LLAP

Chris Forrest @ChrisForrestSA · 25m

I think as punishment those SABC muggers should be made TV license inspectors.

Khaya Dianga @khayadlanga · 4h

Those who do not learn are doomed to repeat history class.

KAMOHELO @MrTsatsi · Mar 10

A friends phone got stolen yesterday too early to ask for her charger?

Matthew Lindblad @HideYourMilk · Mar 9

When you buy the \$10,000 Gold #AppleWatch, U2 moves in with you & cooks you breakfast every morning, but you can't get them to leave.

Mike Sharman @mikesharman · Feb 6

This surely wins Zim Twitter today RT @KBMpofu: Another powercut. I think we are slowly becoming like South Africa.

Matt Roller @rolldiggity · Feb 4

When a pizza guy comes to my door, I like to answer wearing the same uniform as him and holding a pizza, and then insist that he called me.

thomas violence @thomas_violence · Feb 16

the least attractive human qualities are: selfishness, insecurity, a lack of empathy, reluctance and the Murder Gene

Trevor Noah @Trevornoah · Feb 13

Often, people who can do, don't because they're afraid of what people that can't do will say about them doing.

Ben Trovato @BTrovato · Feb 9

Every time the power goes, I quickly drink all the beers in the fridge before they get warm. It's going to be an interesting five years.

Stephanie McMaster @Smethanie · Mar 2

Make fun of cats for chasing laser pointers all you want, but they probably think we look ridiculous staring at glowing boxes in our hands.

Saskia Ferreira @sasqiledork · Feb 28

Just read through my very first issue of @TechSmartMag and I want more NOW!

Shaun Fickling @thshauning · Mar 3

Hashim Amla is the Meryl Streep of cricket

Deep Fried Man @DeepFriedMan · Mar 9

Don't let anyone tell you your dream isn't important. Except the one where Angelina Jolie turned into a fish. That one was stupid.

Colin Moss @ColinMossSA · Mar 7

There's always one idiot who presses REPLY ALL.

OhNoSheTwitnt @OhNoSheTwitnt · Mar 6

Just saw the first robin of the year so you know what that means. Batman can't be far behind.

bitter spice @goldengateblond · Mar 6

I like my coffee like I like my men. Cream. No sugar. Hot. And squeezed through a French press. It's possible this metaphor doesn't work.

tech smart

poll

Which movie are you looking forward to the most?

Star Wars: Episode VII – The Force Awakens

25%

Furious 7

25%

Avengers: Age of Ultron

23%

James Bond Spectre

16%

Jurassic World

7%

Others

5%

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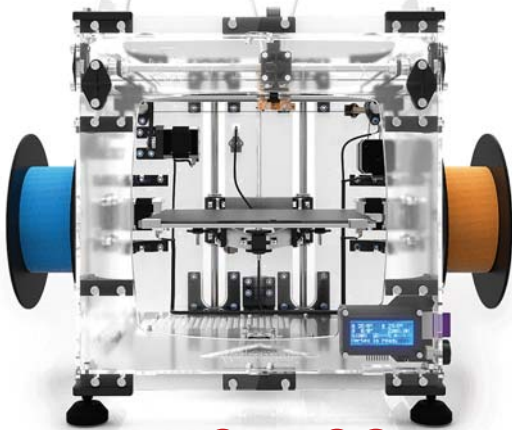
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DYING LIGHT

GOOD NIGHT GOOD LUCK

THERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU CAN COUNT ON: DEATH, TAXES AND ZOMBIES MAKING FOR GRIPPING VIDEO GAMES. DYING LIGHT HAS ALMOST ALL OF THESE; AND TO ITS CREDIT, IT DOES THE LATTER EXTREMELY WELL.

One could argue that zombies and infected humans in video games are hardly anything new. Resident Evil has offered it for ages, and the likes of Dead Rising have equally so garnered a following. More recently, Sunset Overdrive took a much more humorous and colourful look at a post-apocalyptic world, but Dying Light goes in the opposite direction. From the outset, it is far more reminiscent of *World War Z* in tone, with the seriousness of the world's situation and humanity's survival pushed to the fore.

The end is nigh

Dying Light's story is fairly straightforward. You play as an undercover agent tasked with retrieving a critical piece of information. This could lead to the cure to the viral outbreak that turns ordinary people into savage zombies. However, your mission, and keeping your real identity secret, is not all you have to contend with; having a safe harbour amid the zombie infested city of Haran also means keeping a group of survivors happy. This of course sets the stage for numerous – thankfully enjoyable – side quests to pursue, from rescuing members of the group to aiding them in their zombie-fighting efforts.

Dying Light's tagline 'good night, good luck' is a fitting one, because night will come, and luck is something you will most definitely need. Along with the recent turned Virals, which are faster and more average than your run of the mill zombies, you will also have to handle the shuffling but resilient Biters. The latter transform into the tougher, more fearsome Night Walkers when the sun retreats. Then, the game does its level best to prove that your four year old self was right after all, and there are plenty of reasons to be scared of the dark.

Free parkouring

A bleak world on the edge of its own destruction, monstrous creatures hankering for your blood (and bones, and brain) – sounds like fun, right? Actually it is, mainly because, much like *The Walking Dead*, Dying Light similarly grabs one's attention and refuses to let go before it has taken a good bite out of your leisure time.

DYING LIGHT IS DEFINITELY ONE GAME THAT ZOMBIE FANS IN PARTICULAR SHOULDN'T HESITATE TO SINK THEIR TEETH INTO.



The first essential skill you learn is parkour; indeed, traversal is critical in Dying Light, especially when that other oft used precept of survival, fighting, is not appropriate. A large part of the game's allure is searching nooks and crannies to find salvage, with which to craft medkits or upgrade your weapons.

Further driving the game's momentum forward is the dynamic of earning skill points. These enable you to enhance your agility, power (strength) and survival, plus craft more appealing weapons or tools, leading to some tough choices.

Each time I dipped into Dying Light though, I had a difficult time tearing myself away, which is exactly what I look for from an excellent game. Dying Light is definitely a game that zombie fans in particular shouldn't hesitate to sink their teeth into, and one game to wholeheartedly recommend. RRP: R700. [RN] **ts**

Best Bit: Successfully surviving a swarm of zombies when your health is low.





THE FRAGMENTATION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE CARRIES SUCH HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, IT SEEMS ONLY NATURAL THAT THE TOTAL WAR FRANCHISE WOULD SINK THEIR TEETH INTO THIS PARTICULAR PIECE OF HISTORY SOONER OR LATER.

The Total War games occupy a special niche in the strategy gaming landscape: titles which abscond the fantastical and the magical and instead strive to provide a realistic and importantly, historically accurate experience to armchair emperors. Consequently, Total War: Attila opens with a brief cinematic cut-scene to set the mood, and then immediately drops you into command of a local barbarian war band.

Gameplay

Fundamentally, Total War: Attila has two main gameplay modes; an overarching world map akin to Civilization titles, and a zoomed in down-and-dirty 'battle mode' where troop formations can be micro-managed. As any Total War veteran will know, mastering both of these modes is essential if you are to lead your nation to victory, and the depth inherent in both might be a tad intimidating at first.

First, let's take a look at the grand world view, this mode, as our made-up name implies is essentially a large map of the known world. Players can traverse the map using smooth camera controls to view captured provinces, recruit new troops, set taxation rates, combat famine, and much more. In addition to managing and developing your lands, this mode also allows the strategic deployment of your armies. Be warned though, things can get a bit overwhelming, especially at the start.

If this was all that Total War: Attila offered it would be a fun and engaging game for history buffs. The 'grand management' aspect of the game is however just one cog in the Total War machine. The meat of the game lies in personally commanding your armies on the battlefield.



THE SHEER DEPTH AND AMOUNT OF STUFF TO DO IN TOTAL WAR: ATTILA IS HARD TO CONVEY IN WORDS.

Forward, march!

Back in 2004, Rome: Total War wowed gamers with its ability to render massive troop formations in unprecedented detail. While not the first game in the series, it is still considered by many to be the franchise's jewel. Not only were there thousands of units on-screen, players could zoom in and literally look into the battle-hardened faces of their soldiers (low-resolution faces granted, but still).

Whether you are defending one of your settlements from enemy attack, or you are leading a grand seaborne campaign against your foes, commanding your troops in battle is an engaging and undeniably personal affair.

Arguably the most critical order the player can issue relates to battle formations and unit types. Do you prefer defense or offense, does the moment call for speed or disciplined advance? Accurately reading and predicting the flow of battle, and subsequently re-positioning your forces is crucial to victory, especially when playing on harder difficulty levels. The game looks great for its scale, and it really shows in the environments and epic vistas that become available when zooming around the map. Outside of the occasional graphical hiccup, the only issue we had was the game warning us about "low video memory", and then promptly forgetting about it, so... yay?

And the war ends

Attila is indeed a fine addition to the Total War saga. The sheer depth and amount of stuff to do in this game is hard to convey in words. The GUI might not be perfect, battles might become a bit repetitive sometimes, but Attila is so much more; it is governance, a massive campaign, intricate noble family trees, promotions and demotions, famine and failed harvests, disease-ridden docks and naval battles. It might take a few hours, but trust us, if any of this sounds fun to you then Total War: Attila will definitely pull you in. While not revolutionary, the title builds on the lessons of Rome II and continues being a fine strategy title for any gamer and/or history buff to pick up, regardless if this is your first attempt at placating Eurasia or not. [JK] **ts**





THE ORDER: 1886 IS NOT YOUR TYPICAL ACTION EXPERIENCE, AS THIS NEW PS4 EXCLUSIVE DOES THINGS IN ITS OWN WAY, WHICH IS SIMULTANEOUSLY ITS GREATEST STRENGTH AND ITS WEAKNESS.

There are two things the Order most definitely is: very cinematic and convincingly British. These are evident in an extremely well realised alternate Victorian-era London, with the exquisitely detailed city radiating that distinctively European sense of a land steeped in tradition.

Much like the real world Europe, The Order moves at its own pace. It's considerably more deliberate than its action genre counterparts, with everything from your navigation through the world, to the story's pacing, feeling more measured than most other titles. However, thanks to terrific production values, this only adds to the immersiveness of the game's story and intrigue.

Chaos in the order

The story centres around an uprising of rebels and half breeds – the game's name for men capable of turning into beasts. Add to this Jack the Ripper's rampage across London, and you certainly have your hands full in a city rife with unrest. You play as Sir Galahad, one of the Knights charged with protecting the realm, who becomes embroiled in investigating these dark tidings. Without spoiling anything, this escalates into a particular sticky situation that sets the stage for intrigue early on.

While the heart of the titular Order may contain more than a few allusions to the legend of King Arthur and his knights (including the fabled Round Table), it does not stick to the familiar tale. The discord within the organisation is often palpable, with rumours of a traitor in its midst only adding to the tension, along with some characters who you wouldn't trust to peel an apple.

Knight knight

Perhaps one of the niftiest parts of the game is picking up the small homages to well-known historic figures. Nicolas Tesla, for example, is your version of Q, outfitting you with new weapons; although these may look distinctively antiquated, they definitely get the job done when facing up against human, and not so human threats alike. Lady Igraine, meanwhile, is your fetching and very proper fellow Knight.

While there is most certainly an enjoyable, even gripping game here, The Order: 1886 hasn't had the warmest of receptions. The game, which is a new IP, certainly has its own way of doing things. While it uses a cover based system when in combat is reminiscent of Gears of War, this is less fluid than say, Uncharted, and its gameplay mechanics as a whole feel somewhat dated.

What I was less taken by is the cinematic 16:9 format that the game employs; in games, having two black bars on the top and bottom of the screen just feels like a waste of space. It is perhaps testament to the game's story that after a while I tended to overlook it, but still, it's not a favourable visual display choice.

Queue the cutscenes

Another controversial decision made in the game is the preponderance of cutscenes; at times, impatient players could be forgiven for wondering whether they were playing a game or playing a movie. Finally, although the world is alluringly and lovingly crafted by Ready at Dawn, it's a pity players don't have full freedom to explore as and where they wish.

That said, I'm inclined to give The Order: 1886 some latitude to find its feet, seeing as it is a new IP after all. Shortcomings aside, The Order: 1886 is nonetheless a compelling, enjoyable game in its own right; hopefully improved upon with a sequel. RRP: R700. [RN] **ts**

Best Bit: Heated firefights and facing off against a werewolf.



SHORTCOMINGS ASIDE, THE ORDER: 1886 IS NONETHELESS A COMPELLING, ENJOYABLE GAME IN ITS OWN RIGHT.



THE (GAMING) SOUNDTRACK OF YOUR WEEK

Forget about your latest classical, trance or death metal CD, game soundtracks are what you want to listen to during your working day. With most game soundtracks particularly designed to help players focus on the game without distracting them, below our suggestion for your work week.

MONDAY

Music to start the week to: Shadow of the Colossus
bit.ly/shadcolus

Scrub *Eye of the Tiger* from your playlist and instead get the work week off on the right foot by starting it with the uplifting *Shadow of the Colossus* soundtrack. Even as the week may loom like that game's titular giants, the soundtrack manages to be strong without being overly strident, inspiring without being distracting and uplifting enough to wave goodbye to the post weekend doldrums.



TUESDAY

Music to tackle a tough assignment to: Darksiders 2
bit.ly/darksiderssss

Often sweeping in its scope, the *Darksiders 2* score alternates between relaxing and striking chords of determination. Often beautifully and unobtrusively filling the silences, it's the kind of music that strikes just the right note between allowing listeners to clear their minds and concentrate, while occasional choral voices and the periodic more strident accompaniments keep one awake and alert enough to accomplish the task at hand.



WEDNESDAY

Music to relax and revitalise to: Rayman Legends
bit.ly/theraymanleg

The game itself was full of joyous whimsy, and the score echoes that perfectly. Often upbeat, playful, and frequently surprising, the score lightly dances from one tonal range to the next. Much like the *Rayman Legends* game it accompanied, this is one score that successfully keeps boredom and the mid-week malaise far at bay. It has not scrimped on running time, at 97 minutes there is a fair amount to dip into as the day progresses.



THURSDAY

Music to prepare the year-end report to: Dragon Age: Inquisition
bit.ly/dragonageinqq

One of the more recent additions to the soundtrack world, the score for *Dragon Age: Inquisition* (review) is every bit the peer of the game it was created for, which is certainly saying a lot. It is notably darker than the other scores on this list, more serious and more sombre at times, but also more given to inspiring a sense of triumph, resonating with purpose and resolve. Occasional and subtle choral voices, along with distinctive percussive strains also provide the sense of an epic undertaking, subtly urging one to press on.



FRIDAY

Music to usher in the weekend: Destiny
bit.ly/destinyost

The longest soundtrack on this list, clocking in at close to two and a half hours, *Destiny* is also the one that speaks loudest of unexplored promise, of great and grand things to come. Whether the game that shares its namesake delivered or not, its soundtrack still inspires hope that what is to come – namely, your weekend – could. Even if your plans entail no more than sending malevolent aliens back to the Void on the tip of an explosive bullet, *Destiny* is a worthy soundtrack to bid the working week goodbye and welcome in the weekend. [RN] **ts**



SCI-FI SHORT STORIES

This month we feature two more sci-fi stories that were entered in our competition. Enjoy!

Thanks for the Memories

BY CRAIG MEYER

Illustration: Otto Ueckermann

It's not often a major scientific discovery is made at a braai, although potjiekos purists hotly dispute this. It's even less likely when that discovery uncovers a plot by an alien race to take over the world and turn the human race into their personal playthings. This was, however, exactly what Dewald Swart, mediocre beef farmer (by his own admission) and doyen of the charcoal braai, stumbled across as he gingerly sipped his fourth brandy and Coke on his dark red stoep. Many might have ascribed this discovery to the amount of alcohol he had consumed, but Dewald, or Walti as he was known to his friends, was not one to succumb to the effects of brandy lightly.

The light grey spots in the thick piece of steak he was about to place on the glowing coals had definitely caught his attention. He was puzzled, unsure whether the meat was possibly infected. This was serious. He had slaughtered a cow the previous day, and, fearing the possibility of a contagious bovine disease, decided to send the meat for analysis the following day.

Themba Ndlovu, veterinary scientist and close friend of Dewald, inspected the steak. He sliced off a sample of the meat, placed it between the glass sliders, and slid it beneath his microscope. As he focused the lens and zoomed in, his eyes widened. He stepped away from the microscope briefly, and went back and double-checked that what he saw was not the result of a dirty lens. He peered into the microscope again, this time coming close to maximum enlargement.

Whatever he was viewing was alive. Dark, microscopic little squares, which flickered on and off. "Now," he thought out loud, "viruses are definitely not square". Themba looked at the squares again, and the little squares flashed back at him. He watched it for quite some time. And then he realized something even more remarkable. The little squares were flashing in sequence. A complex, highly organised sequence. But who had the technology to be able to develop something like this? The usual suspects... Americans? Chinese? Russians? At almost microscopic level?

Themba's colleague, Jeanine Dlamini (on whom he had the most enormous crush) walked in. Jeanine was responsible for software data modeling, although there was other modeling Themba wished that she would do. He asked her opinion of the sample, and her eyes widened in low-level shock. Her focus was absolute as she took in what she was looking at. Jeanine stepped away, her mouth open. She grabbed a pen and scribbled down numbers. Then more numbers, which made little pairs. Jeanine ran to her computer, and started feeding in the numbers for processing. Themba tried his best to pretend that he knew what was going on. Jeanine ran back and forth to the microscope, scribbling down numbers and then typing them in. "It's a code," she said just beneath her breath.



Illustration: Otto Ueckermann (www.ottograph.co.za)

When Dewald got the call from Themba, he was herding his cattle near the enclosure of a huge cellphone mast for which he was handsomely paid by a mobile operator. Before the mast, his slogan for the operator was "Everywhere you slow". But now he had blazing fast 4G LTE. On his farm, nogal. Themba was shouting, almost hysterically. Dewald tried to calm him down. "Boet, what are talking about?" "It's a virus Walti. A bio-engineered digital virus," he said breathlessly. "It's a code, similar to binary. It's been electronically transferred into the flesh sample you brought me by a high powered transmitter." "But what does the code do?" Walti asked incredulously. "Jeanine says it changes and erases DNA code. It erases memories," Themba exclaimed.

Dewald looked at the huge cellphone mast and heard the buzzing, electrical sounds. He pictured the code crackling through them at the speed of thought. He saw it flashing around the world in a heartbeat. He looked at his forearm and saw little grey spots. He felt slightly dizzy, and when his head cleared, he remembered what he was thinking about. The beef sandwich he brought for lunch definitely needed chutney. **ts**

About the author: Craig hails from the Western Cape, married, with three children and no dog. He is currently working in the telecommunication industry and is on the verge of self-publishing a collection of short stories called *Poison Pens* which he believes should sell three copies. Craig loves technology that works and sees the internet and fast broadband access as the great equaliser.

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SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Night has come to Cape Town

BY BEYERS DE VOS

Illustration: Chris Beukes

He has thirty seconds. Thirty seconds before the next patrol comes past. Then he can run for it. It's summer, but he only knows that because it isn't snowing. Snow, at least, comes only in the winter. In summer, it's just fucking cold.

It was just after sunset, and years before he was born, when the earth stopped spinning, and the cold is the only world he knows. He's heard about the Cities of Light, in the north, where the sunshine is eternal, but here, on the southern tip of Africa, the city – there is only one left – is condemned to eternal Night. And with the Night, comes the cold.

He hears a noise to his right, and crouches down lower against the barren earth, hidden in the shadows of a Darktree. The massive fence rises up in front of him. He flexes his fingers instinctively, getting ready to climb.

Twenty seconds.

No one knows why the planet stopped spinning on its own axis suddenly, bringing down human civilisation with it. He has seen photographs of Cape Town before it happened, of the sunsets, the greenery, the beauty. And the city is covered with graffiti offering various and obscene interpretations of The Last Sunset, the last time light shone on this place. And he's heard the people who say that it hasn't stopped spinning at all, that it is simply spinning much slower; that one day Light will return to this half of the earth. But that means nothing to him. All he's interested in is getting out. Getting on board one of the ice-ships and sailing north, away from this dead place. And in his bag, is his ticket out of town.

Table Mountain rises out of the earth behind him like some fearsome thing. In front of him lies the city, dark and foggy; here and there he can see the white glow of Rustlights, spectral and hazy. The wind is rough tonight, so cold that it could hurt you. It makes it difficult to hear or see properly. If a guard sees him, sneaks up on him, if something goes wrong ...

The moon is out too, adding a little of its own cold light. That is the new measure of a day: moonrise and moonset. It will set soon, which means the morning sirens will sound and the whole mine, the whole city, will wake up, all the Rustlights will be switched on, and any chance he has of getting out will be over. If they catch him, they'll take him to the King. And the King will kill him.

Ten seconds.

He looks down at the things inside his backpack. Small, misshapen rocks, nothing more than simple brown stones – worthless. But if he lets a little moonlight spill onto them, they change. Blue light ripples across their surfaces, like a shockwave. And the stones begin to



Illustration: Chris Beukes (<http://chrisbeukes.daportfolio.com/>)

glow: iridescent, mesmerising. He snaps the bag shut. These things are worth a fortune. They are the only things that matter in the new Cape Town. The only reason the city still stands, the only reason that Cape Town didn't go the same way as all the other Dead Cities that were caught on the wrong side of the daylight, is because of the mine underneath Table Mountain that produced these little rocks. Grind them up, and they produce Rust. Rust: able to generate electricity, gravity, magnetic fields. Able to spontaneously produce fire and ice. If a man ingested Rust, he would be capable of wonderful things. He could kill someone with the power in his hands. Just like magic. But how you get these lumps of rock to do any of that, he doesn't know. All he knows is that they are expensive and dangerous.

He isn't the first person who has tried to smuggle them out, but he might be the first person who does it successfully. And this is his last hurdle. Over this fence. And he can go straight to the docks, find a ship and barter passage with one of the pirate lords not bound to the King. And he can go north. And see the light.

Two seconds. **ts**

About the author: Beyers is busy with an MA in creative writing at UCT. He likes writing stories about lies and strangers and secrets, while his characters smoke a lot of cigarettes and like to wear scarves. Beyers is in the process of writing his first novel.

PIPPA TSHABALALA

On Costs

By Pippa Tshabalala

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

How much money do we honestly spend on gaming gadgets and gizmos? There's always a 'must have' accessory, or at the very least the essential piece of equipment that the hardware companies charge an extra arm and a leg for after you've already spent thousands of Rands on a console (read: an extra damn controller that should come standard). Then of course there's the motion sensing camera that doesn't come standard. The special (and mostly useless) peripheral controller that doesn't come standard. The peripheral interactive figurine that doesn't come standard. The list goes on.

Of course, we all shell out for these extra bits and pieces because, you know, we 'need' them to enhance our gaming experience. But do we actually need all these extra bits and pieces? Would the games not be just as fun to play if we didn't have all of these extra bits and pieces? You can argue that the console manufacturers force us into buying these things, and yes that's true, but it's more that they convince us that we need them in order to get the most out of our gaming. How often do those extra bits and pieces actually just end up gathering dust? I'm just as guilty of this as anyone – I have a couple of PS Move controllers that I've used maybe a handful of times and then forgotten about as I've migrated back to the much more comfortable and intuitive controller. The same goes for the Kinect on my Xbox 360 (I haven't got an Xbox One as yet) that I've used when I was going through a Just Dance phase and probably only once or twice since. The result is that by the time we're finished setting up a new console, we've spent more than many people's monthly salaries. Quite ridiculous if you think about it.

Think I'm exaggerating? Let's do a quick calculation.

A PlayStation 4 with only one wireless controller currently sells for between R5 600 and R6 800

YOU CAN ARGUE THAT THE CONSOLE MANUFACTURERS FORCE US INTO BUYING THESE THINGS, AND YES THAT'S TRUE, BUT IT'S MORE THAT THEY CONVINCED US THAT WE NEED THEM IN ORDER TO GET THE MOST OUT OF OUR GAMING.

PIPPA PUTS THE COST OF GAMING GEAR NICELY IN PERSPECTIVE

depending on where you're shopping. I'm going to go with the lower price for arguments sake here.

An extra R1 000 for another controller. Add a PS4 camera for another R1 000. Many of us play using headphones, so a PS4 wireless stereo headset sells for another R1 300. The running total so far is therefore R8 900. Add to that a couple of games that range between R700 and R900 (let's add one of each for argument sake), and you're now looking at a minimum total of R10 500. If you're lucky enough to find a bundle that includes games you actually want (we all know this doesn't always happen) then you might be able to knock off between R700-R1 000.

The average minimum wage in South Africa is less than R2 000 a month. The South African Government dictates that your domestic worker must earn a minimum of R1 450.33 a month.

Think about that for a second. That's only a bit more than the headset you just bought. **ts**



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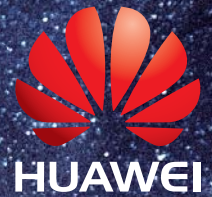


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