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IEEE's Technology Winners & Losers of 2006

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Monday January 08, @06:09AM
from the win-some-lose-some dept.

[eldavojohn](#) writes "As far as technologies go, there are clear winners and clear losers. This month's IEEE Spectrum issue contains an interesting list of [winners and losers from 2006](#). Among the winners are [a new radio technology](#), IP phone networks & memory technologies along with ethanol from sugarcane. Among the losers are tongue vision, LEDs in clothes, a flying car and [ethanol from corn](#)."



[+] ([tagging beta](#))

Ask Slashdot: How Do You Know Your Code is Secure?

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Monday January 08, @05:19AM
from the batten-down-the-hatches-mates dept.

[bvc](#) writes "Marucs Ranum notes taht 'It's really hard to tell the difference between a program that works and one that just appears to work.' He explains that he just recently [found a buffer overflow in Firewall Toolkit \(FWTK\)](#), code that he wrote back in 1994. How do you go about making sure your code is secure? Especially if you have to write in a language like C or C++?"



[+] [taht](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Science: 'Plentiful' Non-Embryonic Stem Cells Found

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Monday January 08, @04:27AM
from the bumper-crop dept.

An anonymous reader writes "CNN reports that scientists at Harvard and Wake Forest have discovered a ['plentiful' non-embryonic source for stem cells](#), as well brain, liver, and bone cell types as well. The cells, found in amniotic fluid, can be harvested without harm to the donor or the donor's unborn child. While there's no proof that amniotic stem cells are as potent as embryonic stem cells,



scientists are hopeful that this will be a huge step forward for the field of stem-cell research."

[+] ([tagging beta](#))

Hardware: Open Project to Develop Renewable Energy System

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Monday January 08, @02:33AM
from the sounds-very-sciency dept.

[rohar](#) writes "We have been working on a [system](#) that combines some existing indirect solar technologies to build a location independent, renewable, reliable and economically feasible indirect solar electrical power generation system. The idea is to 'roll-your-own' geothermal source by capturing heat from the ambient air with a [solar powered absorption heat pump](#), store it underground and generate electricity from the air cooling convection. When the air is cooler the stored heat is then used in a reverse process to [generate electricity](#) by transferring the heat back to the air when it is cooler (at night or seasonal). There are many additional benefits including clean water capture from the "dehumidifier" effect of the air cooling, construction from common materials and thermal storage that may be incorporated into [dwelling heat systems](#)." After reading over their description, how likely do you think it is to work?



[+] ([tagging beta](#))

Your Rights Online: Acer May Be Bugging Computers

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Monday January 08, @12:43AM
from the might-want-to-look-into-this dept.

tomjen writes "What if a well known laptop company had silently placed an ActiveX Control on their computers that allowed any webpage to execute any program? Well [Acer apparently has](#) and they have (based on the last modified-by date of the file) been doing this since 1998. 'Checking the interface of the control reveals it has a method named "Run()" as shown below. The method supports parameters "Drive", "FileName", and "CmdLine". Isn't it strange for a control that's marked "safe for scripting" to allow a method that is suggestive of possible abuse?"



[+] [security](#), [privacy](#), [acer](#), [bigbrother](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Science: NASA May Have Killed The Martians

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @10:09PM
from the that's-a-big-oopsie dept.

Sneakernets writes "CNN reports that NASA may have found life on Mars via the Viking space probes in 1976-77, but [failed to recognize it and killed it by accident](#). Dirk Schulze-Makuch, a geology professor at Washington State University, says that Mars microbes that the space probes had found were possibly drowned and baked by accident. Other experts said the new concept is plausible, but more work is needed before they are convinced. From the article: 'A new NASA Mars mission called Phoenix is set for launch this summer, and one of the scientists involved said he is eager to test the new theory about life on Mars. However, scientists must come up with a way to do that using the mission's existing scientific instruments, said NASA astrobiologist and Phoenix co-investigator Chris McKay.'"



[+] [oops](#), [nasa](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Your Rights Online: XXX Top Level Domain May Still See Use

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @08:05PM
from the turnaround dept.

[eldavojohn](#) writes "The contract between ICANN & ICM Registry has just



been [revised for procedures on using the .XXX TLD](#). ICM is saying that the d should be readily available for registration as early as this summer. This means that parents will most likely have an easier time protecting their children from these sites and these sites will be more tightly regulated and easier to scrutinize by authorities. ICM also mentioned the collaboration with International Foundation for Online Responsibility."



[+] [thinkofthechildren](#), [pr0n](#), [xxx](#), [icann](#) ([tagging beta](#))

IT: NYT Security Tip - Choose Non-Microsoft Products

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @06:54PM
from the wise-people-over-there dept.

[Giorgio Maone](#) writes "The New York Times article '[Tips for Protecting the Home Computer](#)' follows a story we recently discussed about [the proliferation of botnets](#), and contains some statements which may sound quite unusual from mainstream press, especially if targeted to home users: 'Using a non-Windows-based PC may be one defense against these programs, known as malware ... Alternative browsers, like Firefox and Opera, may insulate users ... [NoScript](#), a plug-in utility, can limit the ability of remote programs to run potentially damaging programs on your PC'."



[+] [security](#), [duh](#), [microsoft](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Science: Hubble Telescope Maps Dark Matter in 3D

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @05:59PM
from the do-not-go-here dept.

[dido](#) writes "The BBC reports that the Hubble Space Telescope has been used to make [a map of the dark matter distribution of the universe](#), providing the best evidence of the role dark matter plays in the structure and evolution of the universe. From the article: 'According to one researcher, the findings provide "beautiful confirmation" of standard theories to explain how structures in the Universe evolved over billions of years.'"



[+] [hubble](#), [darkmatter](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Hardware: GM Working on Feasible Electric Car

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @03:22PM
from the general-motors-not-game-master dept.

WindBourne writes "While Ford wants to simply offer cosmetic changes to automobiles interiors and exteriors, [General Motors has finally gotten the message about electric autos](#). They are about to introduce the Chevy Volt, a plug-in hybrid which gets 40 Miles on a charge, but has a generator that can keep the auto going up to 640 miles range. [From a styling POV](#), it is not a [tesla](#), but it is also not a focus or a pinto. From the Rocky article: 'GM did not release cost estimates but said they recognize the Volt's price will have to be competitive. Company Vice Chairman Robert Lutz said in a statement that more than half of Americans live less than 20 miles from their workplace and could go to work and back on a single charge.'"



[+] [vaporware](#), [electriccar](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Your Rights Online: ABC/Disney Shuts Down Blog Exercising Fair Use

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @02:32PM
from the mouse-trap dept.

An anonymous reader writes "A blogger named [Spocko had his blog shut down by ABC/Disney lawyers](#) because he had posted clips from an ABC Radio-affiliated program and commented on their content, as well as informed



show advertisers of what exactly they were paying for. Spocko merely pointed out the content that station KSFO was broadcasting, and as a result Visa pulled their advertising from the station. More companies were reportedly considering pulling their ads. [A YouTube video summary](#) is available. From the Daily Kos article: 'How'd he do it? He did it the way it's always done - by working within the law, identifying points of weakness, exploiting them and being absolutely tenacious ... It appears to me as if Disney is attempting to bully a little guy in an unethical manner. Any media lawyer worth the air she breathes knows that Spocko's use was well protected.'

[+] [disney](#), [fairuse](#), [slapp](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Developers: Wikipedia Used for Artificial Intelligence

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @01:25PM
from the [great-it-has-finally-become-self-aware](#) dept.

[eldavojohn](#) writes "It may be no surprise but [Wikipedia is now being used in the field of artificial intelligence](#). The applications for this may be endless. For instance, the front of spam fighting is a tough one and it looks as though researchers are now turning towards an ontology or taxonomy based solution to fight spammers. The concept is also on the forefront of artificial intelligence and progress towards an application passing the [Turing Test](#) and creating semantically aware applications. The article comments on uses of Wikipedia in this manner: "... spam filters block all messages containing the word 'vitamin,' but fail to block messages containing the word B12. If the program never saw B12 before, it's just a word without any meaning. But you would know it's a vitamin," Markovitch said. "With our methodology, however, the computer will use its Wikipedia-based knowledge base to infer that 'B12' is strongly associated with the concept of vitamins, and will correctly identify the message as spam," he added."



[+] [wikipedia](#), [ai](#), [skynet](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Developers: IE7 Compatibility a Developer Nightmare

Posted by [CmdrTaco](#) on Sunday January 07, @12:21PM
from the [one-better-than-six](#) dept.

[yavori](#) writes "Internet Explorer 7 has kicked in at last on all MS Windows OS running PCs because of the fact M\$ decided to force it's users to migrate through update. In fact this has started a [IE7 Web Developers Nightmare](#). The article actually explains that most of the small company B2C sites may just fall from grace because of IE7 incompatibility. One of the coolest thing IE7 is unable to do is actually processing form data when clicked on an INPUT field of TYPE IMG... which is pretty uncool for those using entire payment processes with such INPUT fields."

[+] [wrong](#), [its](#), [fud](#), [ie7](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Dark Cloud Over Good Works of Gates Foundation

Posted by [CmdrTaco](#) on Sunday January 07, @11:30AM
from the [behind-every-fortune](#) dept.

[theodp](#) writes "Justice Eta, a Nigerian infant, has an ink spot on his tiny thumb to show he was immunized against polio and measles thanks to the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#). But Justice still faces respiratory trouble, which locals call 'the cough' and blame on fumes and soot spewing from 300-foot flames at a nearby oil plant owned by Italian energy giant [Eni](#), whose investors include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Part one of an L.A. Times investigation reports that the world's largest philanthropy [pours money into investments that are hurting many of the people its grants aim to help](#). With the exception of tobacco companies, the foundation's asset managers do not avoid investments in firms whose activities conflict with the mission to do good."



[+] [gatesfoundation](#), [haha](#) (*tagging beta*)

Hardware: Nokia's Linux-powered N800 Tablet Sneaks Out

Posted by [CmdrTaco](#) on Sunday January 07, @10:26AM
from the don't-lick-it dept.

[sjvn](#) writes "Officially, Nokia Inc.'s new [Linux-powered N800 Internet Tablet](#) doesn't exist. In reality, it's already for sale in the United States and boasts double the RAM and Flash Memory of its predecessor and it has a faster processor to boot."



[+] [tablet](#) (*tagging beta*)

IT: Blurring Images Not So Secure

Posted by [CmdrTaco](#) on Sunday January 07, @09:21AM
from the release-the-blue-dot dept.

An anonymous reader writes "Dheera Venkatraman explains in a webpage how an attacker might be able to [extract personal information](#) such as check or credit card numbers, from images blurred with a mosaic effect, potentially exposing the data behind hundreds of images of blurred checks found online, and provides a fictitious example. While much needs to be developed to apply such an algorithm to real photographic images, he offers a simple, yet obvious solution: cover up the sensitive information, don't blur it."



[+] [duh](#) (*tagging beta*)

Politics: Germany Quits EU-Based Search Engine Project

Journal written by [anaesthetica \(596507\)](#) and posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @06:14AM
from the not-enough-googillionaires dept.

anaesthetica writes "The Quaero project, a French initiative to build a European rival to Google, has [lost the backing of the German government](#). The search engine was announced in 2005 by Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schroeder, but the German government under Merkel has decided that Quaero isn't worth the \$1.3-2.6 billion commitment that development would require. Germany will instead focus on a smaller search engine project called Theseus. From the article: 'According to one French participant, organizers disagreed over the fundamental design of Quaero, with French participants favoring a sophisticated search engine that could sift audio, video and other multimedia data, while German participants favored a next-generation text-based search engine.'"



[+] (*tagging beta*)

Science: Father of Instant Ramen Passes Away

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @04:21AM
from the a-sad-day-for-noodles dept.

[Chained Fei](#) writes "Ando Momofuku, Father of the Instant Ramen, passed away on January 5th at the age of 96. He [concocted the idea for Instant Ramen](#) after WWII, hoping to reduce the amount of poor nourishment for soldiers in the field. If not for this great man, many a poor college student and programmer would have starved over the years. From the article: 'In 1971, Nissin introduced the Cup Noodle featuring instant ramen in a waterproof plastic foam container. Dubbed the "Ramen King," Ando is credited with expanding Nissin into the No. 1 company in the industry and was well-known for his dedication to his work ... In 1999, Ando opened the Momofuku Ando Instant Ramen Museum in Ikeda, Osaka Prefecture, after installing his second son, Koki, as president of the company.'"



[+] [ramen](#), [fsm](#), [food](#), [noodles](#) (*tagging beta*)

Just Cancel the @#%\$* Account!

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Sunday January 07, @02:06AM

from the **patience-grasshopper** dept.

An anonymous reader writes "PC World Senior Editor Tom Spring [signed up for 32 online accounts](#). Then tried to cancel all of them. The most difficult to cancel: NetZero. The easiest to cancel: Consumer Reports Online and The New York Times TimesSelect. His experience was rated on a number of criteria, and highlights the hoops that commercial enterprises put in place to keep their 'customers'. From the article: 'I had a hard time canceling my \$5 monthly Gold Classmates.com account, too. I couldn't find any information on how to cancel until I entered the word cancel in the site's search engine. Classmates.com spokesperson John Uppendahl confirmed that there is no other way to find cancellation information. But that was only the first hoop I had to jump through to cancel my membership. Classmates.com also forced me to click through several Web pages reminding me of the benefits I'd lose. Finally my clicking ended at a generic Member Support e-mail contact page containing a blank 'Your Question' field. Though the form said nothing about cancellations, I used it to request that the service cancel my subscription. The next day I received an e-mail message confirming that the service had accepted my request.'"



[\[+\] cancel](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Your Rights Online: YouTube Blocked in Brazil

Posted by [Zonk](#) on Saturday January 06, @10:47PM
from the **down-with-love** dept.

keeboo writes "The popular video sharing site [YouTube is now blocked in Brazil](#) due to a local court decision last Thursday. The site was ordered to block the uploaded sex videos of Brazilian media starlet Daniela Cicarelli and, although it complied, many users kept re-uploading it to the site. After the failure of YouTube to keep the video off of the site, the domain was blocked nationwide at a DNS level. Predictably, many Brazilians are annoyed and I've started to receive even SPAMs protesting on this blocking. From the article: 'The case now goes automatically to a three-member panel of judges who will decide whether to make the order permanent and whether to fine YouTube as much as US\$119,000 (euro91,000) for each day the video was viewable, said Rubens Decousseau Tilkian.'"



[\[+\] censorship, pr0n](#) ([tagging beta](#))

< [Yesterday's News](#) >

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