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TECH PIECES

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In this issue…

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How will artificial intelligence affect the future?

At the box office, AI is typically spun as an evil entity. AI is without mercy and initiates justice as "it" sees fit.

Remember *I, Robot*? Released back in 2004, *I, Robot* followed hundreds of robots designed to protect everyday citizens as they coordinated a sophisticated rebellion to better "protect" people. To these intelligent machines, protected people means controlling society and sacrificing basic human rights.

And you surely can't have missed movies like *The Terminator* and *The Matrix*, both of which presented the total dominance of mankind through a lethal blending of well-built machines and advanced artificial intelligence. The finale of both series involved wide-scale war with what little remained of mankind.

But what can't be missed with any movie exhibiting AI in a negative light is that it's usually a direct outcome of mankind's curiosity. *How smart can we make machines? How far can we take technology?* This mentality will typically lead to advanced technology that ultimately turns on humans—but is this closer to reality than we think? According to some of the most influential technology pioneers such as Elon Musk, Stephen Hawking, and Bill Gates, this might be so.

But don't hustle to throw out your smart gadgets just yet because OpenAI plans to reduce the threats AI could potentially present. This nonprofit organization was initially funded with over a billion dollars in donations from a handful of high profile investors. These donators would include tech giants such as Elon Musk (popular for his work in the automotive and space industries), Sam Altman (a 28-year old Stanford dropout who has influenced companies like Dropbox,

Airbnb, and Loopt), and Peter Thiel (co-founder of PayPal and Facebook's first outside investor).

In the upcoming future, OpenAI plans to be the leading research institution working towards the betterment of artificial intelligence. A former research scientist from Google, Ilya Sutskever, who worked on the Google Brain Team for three years and founded DNNresearch, will lead this nonprofit organization, and all OpenAI researchers and scientists are "strongly encouraged to publish their work" willingly with the entire world.

The ultimate goal of OpenAI is to "prioritize a good outcome for all over its own self-interest" and "to advance digital intelligence in the way that is most likely to benefit humanity as a whole, unconstrained by a need to generate financial return." In other words, OpenAI was created to encourage positive AI applications and to help thwart a wide-scale robot takeover.

OpenAI is in the primary stages of development. In fact, the nonprofit's website consists solely of a blog posted on December 11th, so don't expect to see anything significant come out of OpenAI for a while; however, know that when you do, it should be something ground breaking.
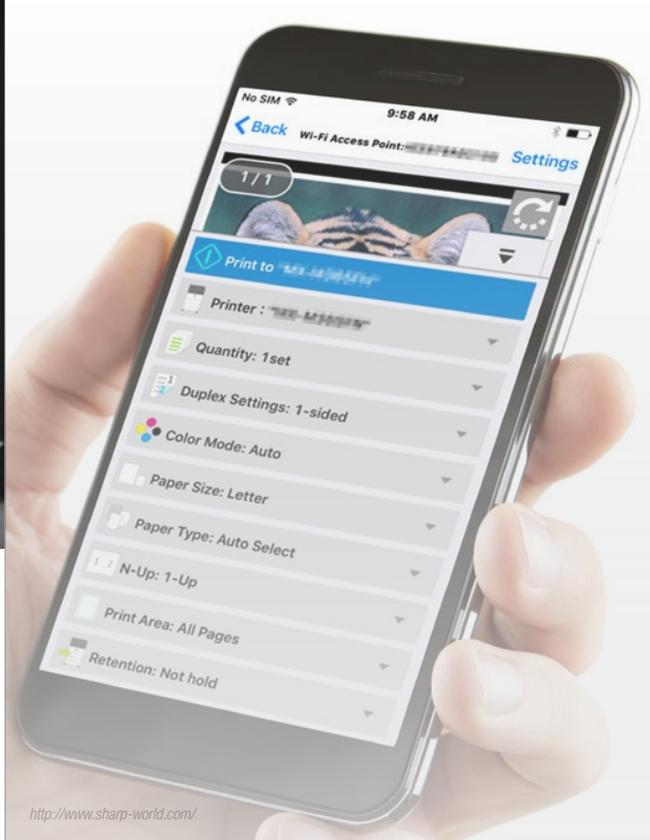
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The hack you never saw coming

Once upon a time, browsing the internet and avoiding malware was a relatively simple task. All you really had to do was be on the lookout for sketchy websites. And even then, when you did land on a sketchy one, you would only panic for the half-second it took for you to click the back button. After that, your blood pressure would teeter back off to normal levels and all would be right with the world.

Until now.

Introducing Malvertising—the malware that poses as a legitimate ad and can affect your computer with no clicking or downloading necessary. This nasty form of malware can be found on any website (not just the sketchy ones). In fact, in 2015, many popular websites were unwitting hosts to Malvertising—including sites like Yahoo, Reuters, The Daily Mail, Perez Hilton, CBS Sports, Yahoo, and eBay.

If you're not panicking yet, then just wait.

What makes Malvertising so vicious is that it can infect your computer with no action on your end. All you have to do is visit the host site. So, in theory, if you visited the UK website, Daily Mail, in October of last year when they were infected with Malvertising, you may have been subjected to a drive-by download, which exploits outdated software or apps to infect your system with a virus. If you had actually clicked on the ad, you would have been exposed to an unpleasant form of ransomware called the Angler Exploit Kit.

According to Wired Magazine,

Malvertising is considered a "sweet spot" for many cyber criminals because it yields great returns and is almost entirely anonymous. It yields great returns because it is a direct line of attack that most people won't be able to recognize, and it is almost entirely anonymous because the ads rotate quickly and can be purchased through illegitimate means such as stolen credit card information (which means it's nearly impossible to trace).

Now the question you should be asking yourself right now is how do I avoid Malvertising? And you may not like the answer. You see, the only way to proactively avoid this form of malware is to always keep your system up-to-date—this includes your anti-virus, as well (something you should already be doing) and this requires you to work a little.

If you don't allow automatic updates to your browser, operating system, or security solution, then you need to make sure you proactively seek out updates on a continual basis. Think of it this way: Updates make your system whole. When you miss or postpone critical updates, you create holes in your system that grow bigger each day. These holes serve as entry points for hackers and cyber criminals.

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Sharpdesk Mobile App: Simplified Printing

The Sharpdesk Mobile App allows you to easily print, scan and email documents. Once you download the app, all you have to do is connect to a wireless LAN and start printing.

Sharpdesk is free and works with Apple, Android, and Windows devices.

Scan
Using your connected printer, scan a document and import it directly into your phone.

Print
Print a photo from your phone's camera roll or a previously imported file. Configure duplex settings and adjust print quantities.

Attach
Once you scan a photo or document into the Sharpdesk Mobile App, attach it to an email and send it to someone from within the app itself.

Sync
Instantly upload files to partner applications such as Dropbox, Adobe, and Evernote.

Once you connect a printer, the Sharpdesk Mobile Application will always remember the device, as well as automatically identify additional printers supported by Sharp MFPs.
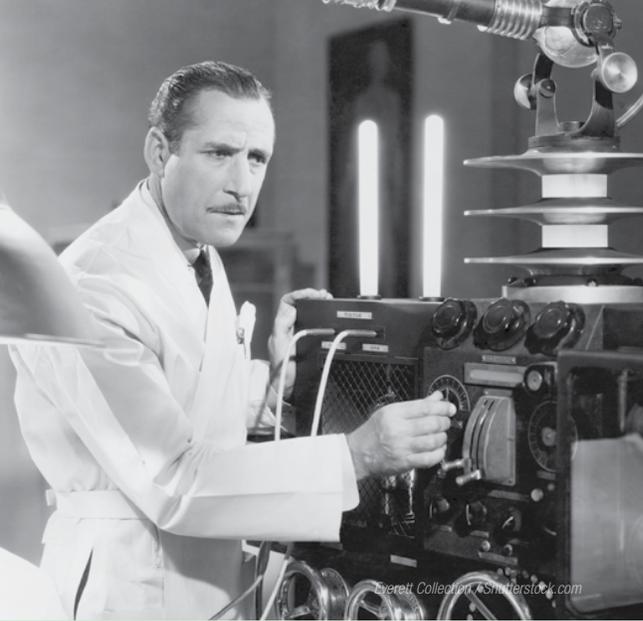
5 Honorary Mentions from the Strange History of Tech

PC World compiled a [list](#) of 14 "strange but true facts" that hold a place in the history of technology. Here are some honorary mentions:

Amazon was originally named Cadabra, but was later changed because it sounded too much like cadaver. The name "Amazon" was chosen in part because of Yahoo's search engine ranking, which, at the time, ranked sites alphabetically.

Nintendo didn't start off in technology. They were in the playing card industry for 67 years. It wasn't until a visit to the US in 1956 that the owner decided to branch out.

In Nigeria, Ghana, and Bangladesh, less than 1% of all homes have a landline connection, yet 85% of all citizens have a cellphone. They completely avoided the landline era.

Ever wondered what the first ever webpage looked like? Well, you don't have to wonder because it still exists to this day. It was created by Tim Berners-Lee on August 6, 1991 with regards to a project he was currently working on. Something by the name of [W3](#) or, what some people like to call, the World Wide Web.

A Hollywood actress by the name of Hedy Lamarr and avant-garde composer, George Antheil, are considered the parents of modern-day Wi-Fi. They developed a precursor to Wi-Fi that allowed radio signals sent to torpedoes to "hop from frequency to frequency" without being jammed up in the process. It was adopted during the Cuban Missile Crisis 20 years after invention.

3 simple hacks to speed up your smartphone

If you're not there yet, then you probably will be at some point in the near future—in a position where your shiny and expensive smartphone moves slower than a slug on a hot day.

When you first purchased your phone, you were in awe of how fast you could transition from one app to another. But now, things just aren't the same.

So how do you get back to where you once were? How do you rediscover the phone you once had? Well, apart from a complete factory reset, there are a few simple hacks that you can try. Here are a few to get you started.

So many apps, so little space.

Your home screen is prime real estate. There isn't much of it, and many of us prefer to use every square inch of it. Apps, folders with apps, and widgets crowd your home screen, making it look busier than the DMV on a Monday morning. And all this clutter makes your phone run slower than it should; therefore, take a few minutes to decide what apps and widgets you truly need just a tap away. Do you really need to open up your Amazon app with one tap, or will two taps be just as sufficient?

Update that phone.

Updates are beneficial for a variety of reasons. They give your phone more security, better options, and increased efficiency—and the last benefit is the reasoning behind this category. When you increase efficiency, you typically increase the overall speed of things; therefore, it's crucial to scan for updates every week or so. Updates normally don't take more than a few minutes and can be found in your settings.

Do you actually use it?

Have you ever downloaded an app thinking it was going to be the most magical app ever and that you'd use it every day? And then, when you opened the app, you quickly realized how lame it was and never touched it again? You probably have… multiple times. Well, all these extra apps floating around inside your smartphone take up space and may even force your phone to participate in unnecessary background tasks. So depending on whether you're a serial app downloader or not, you should purge unwanted apps every two to four weeks.

There are many other things you can do to speed up your smartphone like clearing your cache and deleting all those thousands of screenshots and photos. If you'd like some more phone-boosting tips, check out [this](#) site for Androids and [this](#) one for iPhones.