

## Top 10 must-read posts from May

Kasey Panetta, Managing Editor



Here's a rundown of the most read, most popular, most awesome articles on the web. Take a look at what you missed the first time around or check up on an old favorite to see the conversation in the comments. Keep checking out the Lead at [\[1\]www.ecnmag.com](http://www.ecnmag.com) [\[2\]](#) and follow us on Twitter [@ecnonline](#) [\[3\]](#) for our most up-to-date articles. [\[4\]](#)

### [1. Engineering Newswire 37: Boeing makes hypersonic history](#) [\[1\]](#)

*By The PDD Editors*

As usual, Product Design and Development's Engineering Newswire covered all the most interesting tech news and must-hear stories. The main story covered the Boeing X-51A Waveride, an unmanned hypersonic vehicle, that achieved the longest air-breathing, scramjet-powered hypersonic flight in history. Other highlights included a humanoid robot, named Robbie, that moves, the first of six instruments ready for installation on GOES-R, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's next-generation of geostationary operational environmental satellites and the first controlled flight of an insect-sized robot.

### [2. Do-it-yourself invisibility with 3-D printing](#) [\[5\]](#)

*By Eurekalert*

Researchers at Duke University—the same center that gave us the first working invisibility cloak—have succeeded in using 3D printers to create disks that are able to deflect microwave beams. The disc features carefully placed and sized holes—determined by some serious algorithms—that are able to deflect the beams. Researchers believe could easily be replicated in cloak form and could be used to deflect higher wavelengths, including visible light.



### [3. The most technologically-advanced toilet in the world](#) [6]

*By Kasey Panetta, Managing Editor*

Kohler, the family-owned bath and kitchen company and inventor of all around fancy bathroom fixtures, has really gone all out with their newest creation, [Numi](#) [7]. Their newest loo has all the typical—at least to Kohler—bells and whistles: heated seat, intuitive open and close lid, foot warmer, bidet functionality, deodorizer, and integrated air dryer. Talk about a throne.



### [4. Wind farms get pass on eagle deaths](#) [8]

[1]

*By Dina Cappiello, Associated Press*

When you picture wind farms, generally the image of a dead eagle doesn't come to mind. However, the farms, which kill an estimated 573,000 birds per year, could be prosecuted under federal law protecting eagles. Critics argue that this same law has been used to prosecute oil companies when eagles drown in waste pits or electric companies when a bird is electrocuted and that wind farms—as energy suppliers—should be held to the same standards. Their critiques land squarely on the shoulders of the Obama Administration which has been responsible for the unfair protection. [1]

### [5. The green death](#) [9]

*By M. Simon, Technical Contributor*

A controversial email from a reader sparked a debate about the risks and benefits of LEED-design buildings. The reader claims office sickness, varying temperatures, no hot water and poor lighting are a result of management's refusal to risk their building certification for the health of their employees. M. Simon points out the inefficiencies of being "green" at the risk of health problems or at the risk of actually being *more* wasteful.

### [6. This is what a 1950s robot looks like](#) [10]

*By Kasey Panetta, Managing Editor*

Introducing one of the original humanoids, Cygan, a 1,000 pound, 8-foot , 56- year

## Top 10 must-read posts from May

Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

---

old robot recently came up for sale at an auction. Created in Italy in 1957 by Dr. Ing Fiorito, the robot traveled far and wide around London, impressing crowds by shuffling—forwards or backwards—along at around 10 feet per minute, raising or lowering its arms, and responding to spoken commands, signals and light rays. Pretty simplistic compared to today's robots, but impressive for the time.

### [7. Charge your phone in 20 seconds \[11\]](#)

*Kasey Panetta, Managing Editor*

What's the key to charging your phone (and other small electronics) in the blink of an eye? Invent a better supercapacitor, according to 18-year-old Eesha Khare, who was just awarded Intel Foundation Young Scientist Award. Her invention promises to deal with limited life cycle issues and lower charging time and can last for 10,000 charge/recharge cycles.

### [8. A tale of two lamps \[12\]](#)

*By Karl Stephan, Consulting Engineer, Texas State University, San Marcos*

An age old battle: an 2013 LED lamp versus a 1967 Tensor lamp. Karl Stephan, extols the virtues of a lamp that has lasted several decades against a great lamp that only lasted about 100 hour and originally operated on batteries in 5 to 6 hour spurts before he found a way to plug it in. It brings to light—no pun intended—the issue of limited testing of products, particularly cheap products, before they are sent out into the supply chain. Since most people will just throw out a cheap lamp that breaks a few months later, there is no incentive to change the system. The LED lamp is harder to fix than it's worth, and Stephan was disappointed to learn how the lighting industry has changed.

### [9. Alan Alda wants scientists to cut out the jargon \[13\]](#)

*By Frank Eltman, Associated Press*

Alan Alda, aka Hawkeye Pierce the wiz-bang surgeon from M.A.S.H., is speaking out against complicated jargon that separates the average person from a doctor or scientist. Citing examples from his days barking out information about complicated surgical procedures, he says scientists need to do away with "gibberish" for the sake of society's understanding. Everyone, he says, from consumers to politicians, can benefit from a breakdown of the science jargon.

### [10. Fire human resources \[14\]](#)

*By M.Simon, Technical Contributor*

In his column, M. Simon argues that eliminating human resources from the hiring process would lead to better, more qualified employees. HR, he says, is responsible only for upholding somewhat bureaucratic company policies, occasionally at the risk of losing brilliant—if not troubling on paper—employees. HR often doesn't understand the technical nature of hiring for an engineering position, and should therefore not be involved in the process.

---

**Source URL (retrieved on 03/27/2015 - 9:26am):**

## Top 10 must-read posts from May

Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

---

<http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/06/top-10-must-read-posts-may>

### Links:

- [1] <http://www.ecnmag.com/videos/2013/05/engineering-newswire-37-boeing-makes-hypersonic-history>
- [2] <http://www.ecnmag.com/>
- [3] <http://twitter.com/ecnonline>
- [4] <http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/03/why-3d-printable-guns-are-terrible-idea%20>
- [5] <http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2013/05/do-it-yourself-invisibility-3-d-printing>
- [6] <http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/05/most-technologically-advanced-toilet-world>
- [7] <http://www.us.kohler.com/us/KOHLER-Numi-Comfort-Height-Toilet-Upgrades-Enhance-User-Experience/content/CNT18200062.htm>
- [8] <http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2013/05/wind-farms-get-pass-eagle-deaths>
- [9] <http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/04/green-death>
- [10] <http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/05/what-1950s-robot-looks>
- [11] <http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/05/charge-your-phone-20-seconds>
- [12] <http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/04/tale-two-lamps>
- [13] <http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2013/05/alan-alda-wants-scientists-cut-out-jargon-0>
- [14] <http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/05/fire-human-resources>