

Extra links that we couldn't fit in this month's newsletter...



What's Emerging

New tricks for genome sequencing

Sequencing is being used to track how the immune system changes over time, to measure gene expression and to analyse protein translation. [Read more...](#)

Banks making big profits from tiny loans

The phenomenon has grown so popular that some of its biggest proponents are now wringing their hands over the direction it has taken. Drawn by the prospect of hefty profits from even the smallest of loans, a raft of banks and financial institutions now dominate the field, with some charging interest rates of 100 percent or more. [Read more...](#)

Maternal deaths decline sharply across the globe

For the first time in decades, researchers are reporting a significant drop worldwide in the number of women dying each year from pregnancy and childbirth, to about 342,900 in 2008 from 526,300 in 1980. [Read more...](#)

Is the U.S. postal service obsolete?

According to a report released by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Postal Service is in deep trouble. Mail volume has decline from 2007 to 2009 and, in 2009 alone, mail volume dropped by "a record 26 billion pieces, while revenue dropped nearly \$7 billion." [Read more...](#)

Stockholm uses real-time GPS data to manage traffic congestion

Researchers at the Swedish school are collecting information from global positioning system, or GPS, devices installed in some 1,500 taxi cabs in the city. The data is crunched by IBM's streaming analytics software, called InfoSphere Streams, and then delivered in the form of real-time insights on traffic flow, travel times and optimal routes to commute. [Read more...](#)

New ways to read economy

SAN FRANCISCO—When the city's top economist needs a rough prediction of sales tax revenues, he watches the number of subway passengers emerging from the Powell Street Station on Saturdays. [Read more...](#)

Weighing the evidence on exercise

A growing body of science suggests that exercise does have an important role in weight loss. That role, however, is different from what many people expect and probably wish. The newest science suggests that exercise alone will not make you thin, but it may determine whether you stay thin, if you can achieve that state. [Read more...](#)

Newstilt

NewsLabs is taking journalists, and building their brand online. The goal is to turn each journalist on our platform into a TechCrunch for their niche. NewsTilt is the platform on which this happens. **Paul Higgins: This is a Y Combinator Funded Startup.** [Read more...](#)

Google Docs updates with a drawing editor, real-time collaboration, and speed

Google's office suite, Google Docs, updates with big changes focused on significantly improving document collaboration in Docs. That means new features, like Google Wave's real-time, character-by-character editing for multiple users, as-you-type spell check, a new commenting system, and more. [Read more...](#)

New super-heavy element discovered that points towards 'strange materials of the future'

Physicists have discovered a new super-heavy element that had been labeled a nuclear 'missing link' by scientists. Researchers believe the element points towards a concoction of more massive and stable elements that could be used to create strange and unpredictable new materials. [Read more...](#)

The story of water

Annie Leonard, the mastermind behind The Story of Stuff and The Story of Cap and Trade, has released the latest in her series of animations about environmental issues, just in time for World Water Day. [Read more...](#)

Robo-suit will help aging Japanese farmers pick crops with ease

Harvesting the bounty of the earth is harder than it looks, especially you're over 65 years old — as two-thirds of Japan's farmers are. Shigeki Toyama, a professor at Tokyo Agriculture and Technology (TAT) University, has developed a motorised exoskeleton designed to boost the wearer's strength by 62 percent. [Read more...](#)

Estimate: 800,000 U.S. households abandoned their TVs for the web

The numbers are still small, but last year an estimated 800,000 U.S. households cut the cable cord altogether, according to a new report by the Convergence Consulting Group. By the end of next year, that number is forecast to double to 1.6 million. [Read more...](#)

If real life were more like the Internet

Paul Higgins - this is quite funny and makes some really good points but also reinforces some basic assumptions about how economies cannot work in real life. The plumbing example is one that is obvious but in a world where the cost of content development, application development and the distribution of information and applications has plummeted the economic realities are totally different. Lots of business models are being unbundled and people are being forced to look at what real value to customers, clients and citizens is about, not hide behind "black box" expertise or giving me 7 things when all I want is one thing at 1/7th of the cost. [Read more...](#)

Augmented reality flashmob mimics human statues

The Dam Square in Amsterdam is known for "human statue" performers posing as various fictional and imaginative characters for onlookers. Interactive artist Sander Veenhof is coordinating with the team behind the Layar augmented reality application to organize an AR flashmob in the square, held on the 24th of April. The event site includes a number of printable large-form QR codes that participants will be able to bring to the square, each of which will manifest a human statue-esque character brought to life by mobile AR. **Paul Higgins: For those that this is double Dutch to what it means is that you can bring your smartphone as long as it has the right application, point it at printed QR codes which are sort of like bar codes and it would show the image the artist has created even though it is not physically there.** [Read more...](#)

Google: Android market now serving 38,000 apps, Nexus one is a profitable business

The Android Market now includes 38,000 apps, up 8,000 apps from a month ago. The application store for Android devices supposedly hit the 10,000 apps milestone in September 2009 and grew to some 16,000 apps in Android Market in December 2009. [Read more...](#)

Super volcano: How humanity survived its darkest hour

Paul Higgins: Given the impacts of the Icelandic Volcanic ash on air traffic around the globe it is timely to read and think about much larger events. There have been a number of major volcanic

eruptions over a long period of time much bigger than the one in Iceland. There is nothing surer that we will get another one, just nobody knows when, it may be tens of thousands of years away or in the next ten years. Imagine the worldwide disruption a major volcanic event would cause. [Read more...](#)

An artificial pancreas just a few years away

It's basically a collection of sensors, a pump, and a tiny computer no bigger than today's insulin pumps. The idea is that the sensors would continually test blood sugar, the computer would decide when insulin or glucagon is needed, and the pump would deliver the goods automatically. [Read more...](#)

Printer drivers: A thing of the past? Google, HP seem to think so

Google outlined how it will get around the biggest pickle facing its Chrome operating system: It will use its cloud to manage print jobs. The Chrome OS is designed to be lightweight and be used on multiple devices. And Google can't keep up with the drivers needed to get printers to work. The solution? Use Google's cloud as a big print server. [Read more...](#)

Speedy scanner re-writes book on publishing technology

Simply flipping through a book may not seem like the best way to scan it, but a Japanese research group at Tokyo University has created new software that allows hundreds of pages to be scanned within minutes. [Read more...](#)

Web coupons know lots about you, and they tell

For decades, shoppers have taken advantage of coupons. Now, the coupons are taking advantage of the shoppers. For example, if a man walks into a Filene's Basement to buy a suit for his wedding and shows a coupon he retrieved online, the company's marketing agency can figure out whether he used the search terms "Hugo Boss suit" or "discount wedding clothes" to research his purchase. [Read more...](#)

Icelandic volcanologists carefully watching Eyjafjallajökull's big sister

All eyes in the volcanology community are focused on Eyjafjallajökull's far larger sister, called Katla, which could cause disruption on a far larger scale. Katla is about eight miles to the west under the Myrdalsjökull ice cap. An eruption could cause widespread flooding and disrupt air traffic between Europe and North America. [Read more...](#)

Daily roads

DailyRoads Voyager is a free application for Android-powered mobile phones, allowing for continuous video recording from vehicles. Essentially, the application acts as a video black box, recording everything, but only keeping what the user is really interested in. [Read more...](#)

Symbian still leading in mobile ad click-through rates, Android dropping fast

According to Smaato, Symbian still reigns supreme in its global OS click-through rate index, outshining feature phones (non-smartphones with a proprietary operating system), Windows Phones and Apple iPhone and iPod touch devices, in that order. Android, at the number 2 spot in both January and February 2010, has dropped by around 50% and into fifth place. The only operating systems with lower CTR are those of Palm and RIM (Blackberry). **Paul Higgins: There is a bit of a confusing story here with Android gaining significant market share. Could it be that there is a differentiation between the population of users - that those who have taken up iPhones or Android phones are less likely to click on ads. Of course click through rate needs to also be matched up against the profile of the people clicking through for real value to be determined.** [Read more...](#)

Follow the Smart Phones

A service launched last week by Skyhook Wireless will make it possible for other businesses to predict, with new accuracy, which local bars will be hot at 8 p.m. on Monday night, or how many people will walk past a particular billboard poster at noon on Friday. [Read more...](#)

How your cell phone could protect you from a deadly chemical attack

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, through its Science and Technology Directorate, is developing a smartphone application that could one day protect users from a deadly chemical attack. With a cost of \$1 per sensor, the Cell-All would equip a cell phone with a sensor meant to detect hazardous substances. [Read more...](#)

4G Wireless: It's not just for phones anymore

Verizon says its next wireless network technology could link up cars, home appliances, and more. [Read more...](#)

Supercomputers map pathogens as they emerge and evolve

Instead of simply focussing on human infections, infectious disease researchers can now track the complex interactions, movement and evolution of the pathogens themselves using supercomputers. [Read more...](#)

Multiple generations under one roof, again

Adult children are moving back in with parents, and grandparents are taking up residence with their kids' families. Sound like old times? In fact, multi-generational households are making a comeback, according to a report. Some 49 million Americans now live in such an arrangement, up from 28 million in 1980. [Read more...](#)

Is 3-D TV Dangerous?

3-D television looks awesome, but can it be hazardous to your health? That's what many are wondering now that electronics giant Samsung issued guidelines on its Web site warning consumers of potential health risks associated with the emerging technology. Or is it just risk aversion on the part of Samsung. [Read more...](#)

The coming tide of global climate lawsuits

The Prunerov power station is the Czech Republic's biggest polluter: Its 900-foot-high smokestack pushes a plume of white smoke high above the flat, featureless fields of northern Bohemia. This January, the Federated States of Micronesia, some 8,000 miles away in the Pacific Ocean, lodged a legal challenge to the Prunerov plant on the grounds that its chronic pollution threatens the island nation's existence. [Read more...](#)

TED Video - The marshmallow challenge

Tom Wujec presents some surprisingly deep research into the "marshmallow problem" -- a simple team-building exercise that involves dry spaghetti, one yard of tape and a marshmallow. Who can build the tallest tower with these ingredients? And why does a surprising group always beat the average? [Read more...](#)

Netflix: 55 percent of subscribers now streaming movies

To put that streaming media figure into perspective, Netflix said that 48 percent of its subscribers watched more than 15 minutes of content in the fourth quarter. A year ago, 36 percent of subscribers watched streaming movies or TV episodes. [Read more...](#)

What Facebook's latest means for the Web

It can't be explained as succinctly as "a widget platform" or "a universal log-in," but Facebook's panoply of announcements on Wednesday at the company's F8 developers conference reveal some of the social network's most audacious moves yet. ***Paul Higgins: Those interested in the subject should look at our previous post <http://tumblr.com/x7n8yfart> which is a reblog of a post by Fred Wilson which in itself is a reblog - social networks in action!!*** [Read more...](#)

Get packing: Brussels decrees holidays are a human right

An overseas holiday used to be thought of as a reward for a year's hard work. Now Brussels has declared that tourism is a human right and pensioners, youths and those too poor to afford it should have their travel subsidised by the taxpayer. Under the scheme, British pensioners could be given cut-price trips to Spain, while Greek teenagers could be taken around disused mills in Manchester to experience the cultural diversity of Europe. [Read more...](#)