

Was it something we said?

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Science and technology magazine *Popular Mechanics* has again defied the doom 'n gloom prophets with a January sale in excess of 47 000 - its best result since the magazine's launch in August 2002. Subscriptions now account for about 15 000 of total sales.



Among January's more compelling articles: a comprehensive look at America's missile defence programme, a showcase of amazing tech concepts for 2009, a candid look at recycling, and a new take on social networking.

Editor and publisher Alan Duggan said he was especially pleased with the result (still subject to ABC audit) because it came against a background of tough trading conditions and increased newsstand pressure. "This is good news for a number of reasons. Most importantly, it means we've got the editorial recipe more or less right - although 'recipe' is probably the wrong choice of word here because every issue presents a few surprises.

"It will also prompt advertisers to pay closer attention to *Popular Mechanics*, including those who might have been inclined to place their ads in more obviously niched titles. With luck, they'll come to accept the fact that readers with an interest in science and technology also wear deodorants and aftershave lotions, buy expensive watches, equip their kitchens with the latest appliances, drive desirable cars, and pursue a healthy lifestyle."

- Earlier this month, the magazine announced plans to stage the inaugural **Popular Mechanics Inventors Conference**, a two-day event that takes place in Johannesburg in late September. The organisers hope to attract anything up to 1 000 of South Africa's top innovators.

The programme will feature lectures by experts in a number of critical fields - patents and intellectual property rights, venture capital, computer-aided design, rapid prototyping, industrial design, injection moulding, marketing - as well as hosted exhibits encompassing these and other disciplines.

If you're an inventor, and would like to register for regular updates on the conference, visit www.popularmechanics.co.za.

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