

Popular Mechanics bucks the trend

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Science and technology magazine *Popular Mechanics* has confounded the publishing industry doomsayers by actually increasing sales over the past three months, racking up an average figure of 45 000-plus for its April, May and June issues.



Acknowledging that the results were still subject to the quarterly ABC audit, editor and publisher Alan Duggan said he was thrilled with the magazine's performance, especially when viewed against the backdrop of a tough economic climate and fierce opposition from other male-oriented titles.

"This reinforces our belief that we are close to achieving an ideal package of content. Our science stories are edgy, informative and intellectually provocative without being pretentious, our technology articles are genuinely reflective of the cutting edge, and the balance is a formidably diverse mix of outdoor adventures, cool cars, desirable gadgets, practical DIY, and future shocks aplenty.

"In short, we're clearly giving our readers what they want. We've come to know these people rather well over the years, partly because many of them have been with us since our launch in August 2002, but mostly because we talk to them. In essence, they're clever, well-heeled, successful, open-minded, and curious by nature. In other words, a dream readership."

Having stirred a few strong emotions with its June cover story (devoted to the potential for intimate relations between humans and robots!), the magazine's July issue heads for the Moon - and a date with the Lunar X Prize, a competition for DIY space enthusiasts.

Also up for grabs is a 36-page tool guide, a nostalgic trip down America's Blues highway, a compelling story on gene therapy, a look at 'flying cruise liners', and a mildly disturbing article on organ donation. Oh, and a flash game that allows you to nuke your favourite power utility.

Popular Mechanics is part of the Ramsay, Son and Parker stable, which also publishes *CAR*, *Wiel*, *Getaway*, *Mooiloop*, *Leisure Wheels*, *Wine* and *Compleat Golfer*.

- Visit the PM Web site at www.popularmechanics.co.za or take a pot shot here: www.popularmechanics.co.za/shoot

