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Tags: [Innovation](#), [Technology](#), [seven things](#), [howcast](#)

## Good to Know: Seven Useful Things Online This Week

By [Chris Dannen](#)

### Print Is Dying Because... It's Printed

"The Printed Blog" was an experiment in publishing [1]: a hybrid online publication with a printed counterpart that could be delivered to your house. The venture's founder, Josh Karp, believed that newspapers were simply doin' it wrong: with blog-like content, he believed, the printed paper could live on. He even went so far as to give each of his delivery people in San Francisco and Chicago, his two startup markets, their own print-on-demand machines to cut down on distribution time and make the whole thing uber-efficient.



Well, the problem with print turns out to be the print, not the articles. The Printed Blog is shutting down after just six months in the business, and while plenty of people criticized the idea when it came out, and continue to harangue Karp now, the experiment was important: by

isolating the content from the printed form-factor, we've learned that journalism itself isn't the problem, just the medium it's delivered in. Now when the cocktail party discussions start, you'll be the one with the answer: newspapers can indeed live on, online.

### **iPhone Now Only \$79**

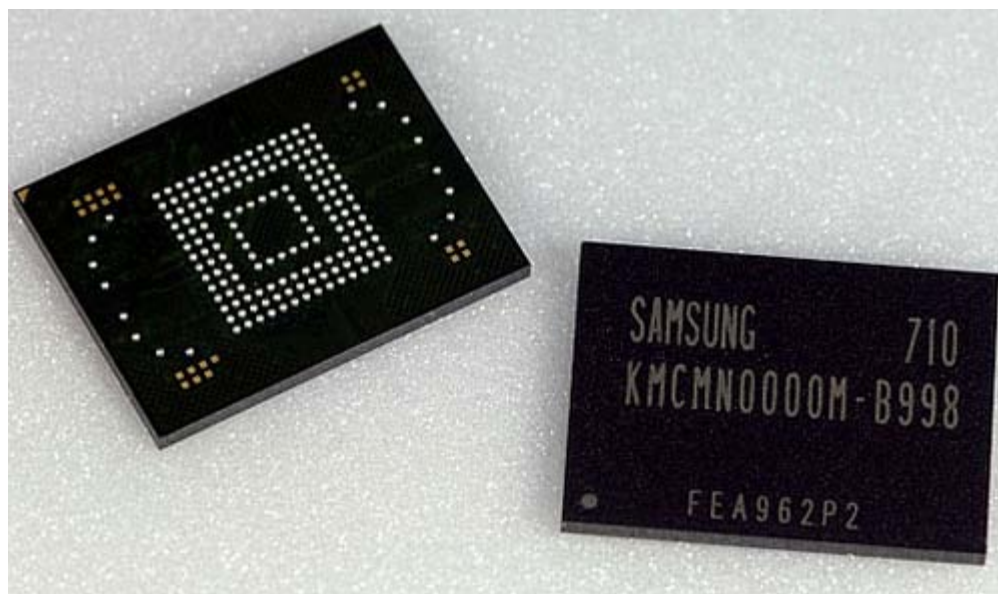
If you've been decrying the iPhone for its steep price, decry no more: you can now get a refurbished 8GB iPhone from the AT&T store for a mere \$79, plus tax and whatever other nonsensical charges they hit new customers with.



As [TUAW](#) [2] notes, you're still tethered to a two-year contract that will eventually bleed you of about \$2400, depending on the plan you choose, so the rock-bottom price doesn't change much in the long-run. But if you view smartphone bills as a fact of life, this deal is as good as it gets. Check AT&T's inventory [here](#) [3].

### **Hold That Netbook**

With all the buzz about Google's Chrome OS, TechCrunch's new CrunchPad tablet PC, and the generally break-neck speed of netbook improvements, you've been hanging back, waiting for netbook prices to drop. According to [ArsTechnica](#) [4], your patience might soon be punished by a recent rise in flash memory prices.



Like any commodity, NAND memory prices fluctuates in cycles--but those cycles have historically been tied to the holiday shopping season when sales of MP3 players, cameras and notebooks shoot up. But this a-seasonal price jump is a result of new factors like rising year-round demand and speculation. In other words: that netbook you want ain't getting any cheaper, at least for the foreseeable future.

### **That's Called ChalkBot**

If you're one of the surprisingly large number of Americans like me who follow the Tour de France every summer, you may have noticed massive, gorgeous printed messages on the route roads in the second stage this week. Nope, they're not paint--they're made of chalk, and they're sprayed on the road surface by ChalkBot, a massive trailer-mounted inkjet printer sponsored by Nike and the Livestrong foundation. You can even have it print your own message by texting the number in the video below. Check out how ChalkBot works by watching.

### **About that iPhone 3G...**

Remember that fantastic deal on iPhones we reported above? Well, you'll be buying the Genius phone in spite of some positively remedial service from AT&T. According to an interactive 3G speed test run by *Wired* magazine that included results from 12,000 participants nationwide, AT&T has by far the worst 3G service on the block, beaten by Verizon, T-Mobile, and Sprint, respectively.



As *Wired* duly notes, this isn't a scientific test, but simply a real-world "barometer" for service. AT&T's results might have been excessively low because of how many more AT&T users responded than other carriers', they explain, but hardware is also a factor; since many of those AT&T folks were probably on iPhones, which should have balanced things out. Read the results [here](#) [5].

### Twitter and the Power of Popular Links

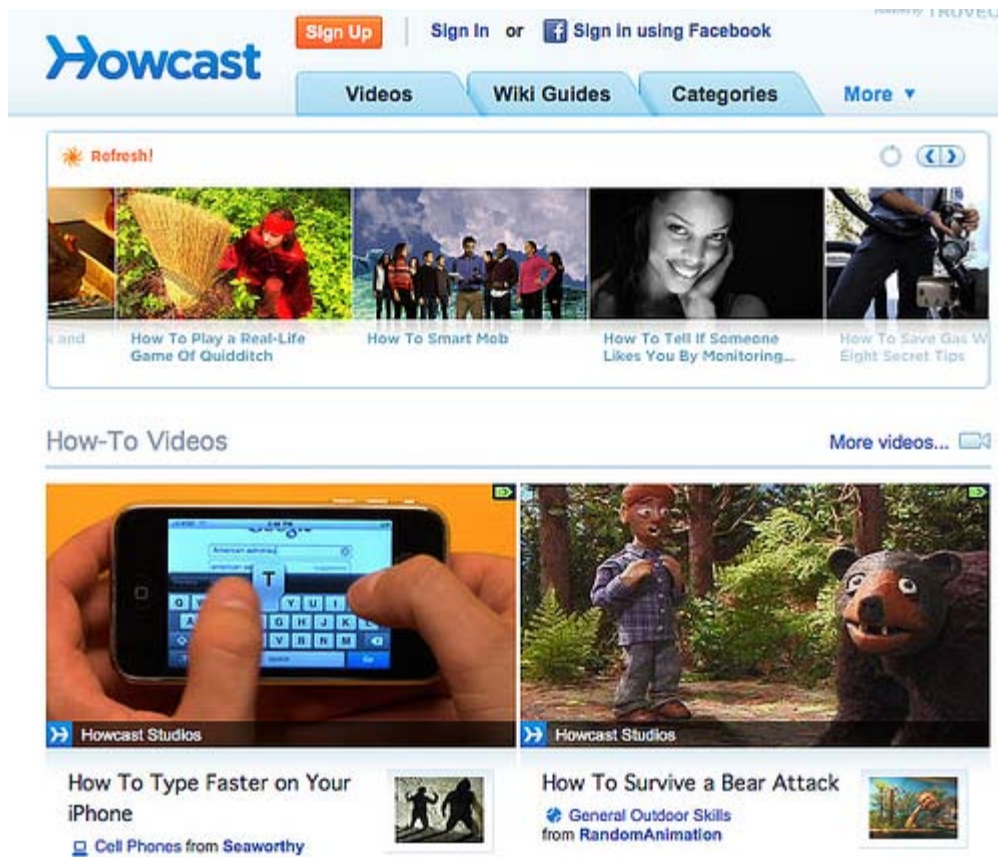
A new startup [announced Friday](#) [6] called [TuneIn](#) [7] uses the power of Twitter to catalog and index the links that people share every day. Because Twitter has the power to upstage social media sites like Digg in terms of the speed of link-sharing, someone needs to be organizing all that stuff; at least that's the impetus behind TuneIn.



It works basically like the normal Twitter interface, except it presents users with a sidebar that keeps track of all the links your friends tweet. The more re-tweets one gets, the higher on the list it goes. Sounds great for those of us that prefer to catch up on Twitter, not keep up; but what about all those people whose blogs push everything to Twitter and trail links to the original posts? If TuneIn can filter relevant links, it might just be a winner. Sign up for the beta at their site, and you could be the first Twitter user in your circle to make the onslaught work for you, not visa versa.

## Learn How, Now

There's lots more everyday wisdom we can't encapsulate in this column, but luckily, there's a place you can find it. A newly-launched site called Howcast hopes that its bank of 100,000 professionally-made instructional videos can teach you a thing or two without all the pain and sacrifice of leaving your chair (or reading). The new site will go up against a legion of competitors--the biggest of which is probably YouTube--but according to a *New York Times* [article](#) [8], it might have enough personality to attract the Web's ever-growing pool of DIY'ers.



The real question, however, is whether Howcast can draw any significant cashflow, especially when they have cut so many revenue-sharing deals with big players like Playboy and the Home Depot to create top-of-the-line videos. Check out the article or visit [Howcast](#) [9] for more info.

Browse the [Seven Things archive](#) [10] to read more stories like this.

TECH WEEKLY

### Links:

- [1] <http://arstechnica.com/web/news/2009/07/printed-blog-publication-fails-world-dies-of-shock.ars>
- [2] <http://www.tuaw.com/2009/07/10/dinner-and-a-movie-or-an-iphone/>
- [3] [http://www.wireless.att.com/cell-phone-service/get-started/index.jsp?q\\_returnUrl=/cell-phone-service/packages/packages-details.jsp%3Fq\\_package%3Dsku3130222%26q\\_sku%3Dsku3270242%26\\_requestid%3D315664](http://www.wireless.att.com/cell-phone-service/get-started/index.jsp?q_returnUrl=/cell-phone-service/packages/packages-details.jsp%3Fq_package%3Dsku3130222%26q_sku%3Dsku3270242%26_requestid%3D315664)
- [4] <http://arstechnica.com/hardware/news/2009/07/flash-memory-rebound-good-for-samsung-bad-for-netbooks.ars>

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- [5] <http://www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2009/07/3g-speed-test>
- [6] <http://www.techcrunch.com/2009/07/10/tunein-a-media-dashboard-for-your-twitter-stream/>
- [7] <http://tunein.com>
- [8] [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/12/business/12howcast.html?\\_r=1&th&emc=th](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/12/business/12howcast.html?_r=1&th&emc=th)
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