

Popular Mechanics gets 'in the zone'

The February issue of *Popular Mechanics*, on sale today, showcases a compelling line-up of gadgets, gaming, leisure activities, sci-tech and other features directed specifically at the curious teenagers who make up an increasingly important segment of the brand's audience. The custom-produced content forms part of *PM Zone*, the magazine's new bound-in teen supplement that made its debut last month.



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In a story titled "Gnarly riders", young readers will meet Capetonian Kent Ligeveltdt, who not only builds stylish longboards, but spends a lot of time training other people to extract the best from them. He *lives* the sport, covering at least 15km on his board every day.

Acknowledging a growing interest in citizen journalism, *PM Zone* offers a few useful pointers for getting started, warning that it won't be easy - and probably not very lucrative, either. (Against that, of course, there's a small chance of becoming famous.)

"Monsters in miniature" features some of the award-winning images from Nikon's annual photomicrography competition. Celebrating the beauty and complexity of Nature at the very small scale, the article features the eyes of a jumping spider in astounding detail, the tip of a butterfly's tongue, and more.

The move to add a youth-focused component to the brand was dual-purpose, explained publisher Neil Piper.

"Our intention is both to attract and engage with consumers who will grow up with the brand and continue reading it after they leave home, and to broaden the depth of content through apps, gaming and cool tech features directed at a younger audience."

PM editor Alan Duggan elaborated: "Whereas our brand has always catered for a very wide age group, it became increasingly apparent that we needed something focusing more closely on connected, tech-savvy teenagers whose interests occasionally diverge from the mainstream - to put it mildly!"

Popular Mechanics has also launched a [Facebook](#) page and a [website](#) to complement the *PM Zone* print platform.

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