

THE NEW CALL FREE!

An old-fashioned broadside about not-old-fashioned things!

The New Call #1 - Q1 2009

α - What The Hell Am I Thinking?

Some of you may be wondering just what a broadside is. Good for you. *This* is a broadside. They used to be everywhere a couple of centuries ago; the mass media made by anyone with access to a printer. Just one side of paper, sometimes folded, with interesting things on it.

Well, who doesn't have access to a printer now? There's a ton of information available via blogs too, but they're not so easy to read on the train or bus.

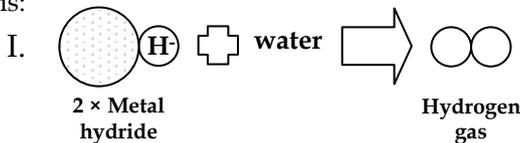
So, here we are. Some nuggets of data, either my own original musings or cool stuff triple-filtered by the internet, that you can pick up, browse over coffee or while the boss isn't looking, and maybe find out about something you didn't know about.

Lastly, yes, I do music. This is not about promoting that though. That would be terribly narcissistic wouldn't it?

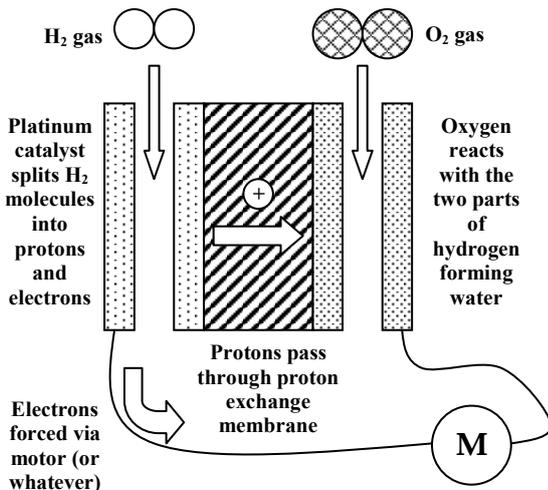
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β - How Fuel Cells Work

There's been a lot in the media about fuel cells and how they're the future of energy generation, but do you know how they work? No? Well look at this:



II. Hydrogen atoms are just a single proton and one electron.



III. When hydrogen and oxygen combine chemically the only product is pure water, which can be used again in stage I. The only thing that's used up is the metal hydride.



γ - Dawn Of A New Music Industry

It's an exciting time for new musicians.

Empowered by the internet and home recording on computer, they now have the means to record and distribute music themselves. A half-decent mic, a dodgy copy of a DAW (digital audio workstation, such as Cubase, Ableton Live, or even GarageBand), some know-how, and they can inexpensively get the sort of recording quality at home that two decades ago would've taken a costly studio session.

The social networking merry-go-round is tailor-made for building a fan base, and sites like Bandcamp and Tunecore let artists sell their tracks. Best of all, your music stays up there online, on an infinitely long shelf where any new fans can instantly see it and give you money for your back-catalogue (what Chris Anderson described as The Long Tail - look it up).

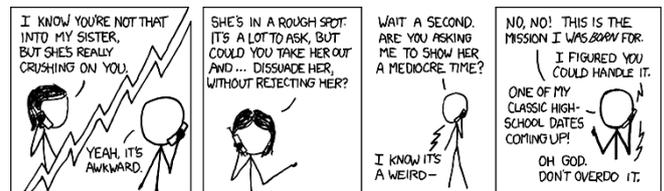
These are eating into the areas that the music industry traditionally has absolute control over, so which way now for them?

The thing new artists can't do so well is talk to radio stations, arrange collaborations, and most importantly they struggle to manage a large number of fans. Record labels will always have big-sellers like Britney, but they also need to act as facilitators to the nascent micro-recording scene that's crying out for this service they're well positioned to offer. Instead of one Razorlight they need a profit-share with a couple dozen little guys. The labels need to accept anyone can be a label now, and instead capitalise on those things the small guys can't do for themselves, not least because if they don't then someone else *will* do it.

That way we all get better music and the industry guys get to keep their jobs.

δ - XKCD

Overqualified



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