

## X PRIZE

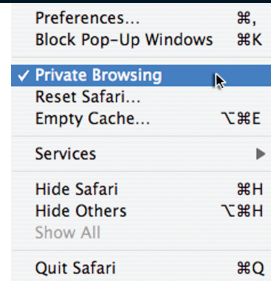
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Peter Diamandis's mission is to use cash prizes to inspire innovation in industries that are happy to sit back and make money on the utterly unacceptable status quo. The original \$10 million Ansari X Prize successfully inspired a non-NASA manned space flight (and will soon result in consumer space flights from Virgin Galactic), but it's the expansion of the idea into other areas that may have the greatest impact. Currently on tap is \$10 million for the first team to sequence 100 human genomes in 10 days and a to-be-determined sum for a super-fuel-efficient car that will put the Prius to shame.



## YOUPORN

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It was only a matter of time before the addictive convenience of YouTube extended to that other thing we love best about the internet. Now, less than a year after it was founded, YouPorn—where users can upload their own amateur sex videos—is a categorical slam dunk, with almost 15,000 free videos available right now (and most of them much longer—and better—than the 30-second free clips your friends find elsewhere). Boasting the highest traffic of any adult site on the internet, YouPorn is clear proof that not all things are best left to the pros.



## ZEPPELINS, LUXURY

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You'd be forgiven for assuming that the future of airships died in 1937 when the *Hindenburg* exploded in a deadly ball of flames above a New Jersey airfield. While the disaster was certainly a buzz kill for the fledgling blimp-travel industry, dirigibles have, strictly speaking, never been entirely out of fashion (Goodyear, for example, has been continuously flying its famous fleet since 1925). But things are about to get a whole lot more fashionable in the

world of giant gas-filled floating transports: Two companies are promising major entries in the "lifestyle zeppelin" class of air travel in the next few years. They are designed for medium-haul flights (like transatlantic crossings) while providing every possible amenity, from spas to casinos, not to mention state-rooms that will "rival the luxury cabins of the world's greatest ocean liners." Think of it as *Titanic* meets *Hindenburg*—what could go wrong?

## Big Ideas Graveyard

For every world-transforming idea, history is littered with notions that promised much but delivered little. We celebrate the winners, naturally, but we'd do well to remember the losers, too—if only as a cautionary lesson in our capacity for folly. Some ideas that never quite made it:



**The Segway** Few products could survive the hype of the Segway's debut. And yet still the faithful persist, whizzing past with their "I'm-traveling-at-four-miles-an-hour" grins. And all along we wonder: Isn't this what bikes are for?

**Pan Am Moon Ticket** Here's a ticket to the moon, said Pan Am. Come back to us in 50 years. Fifty years later, no flights to the moon and, more important, no more Pan Am.

**Y2K** A boondoggle of the first order. Governments and companies burned \$300 billion to correct a problem caused because computer geeks failed to remember that time, in fact, continues.

**Dymaxion House** For all of Buckminster Fuller's genius, he failed to account for taste. Definition of a tough sell: an aluminum house built in the manner of a grain silo, with a bathroom that shrink-wraps your shit.

**Oxygen Bars** It's hard to look cool when you're spending a dollar a minute sucking down a tube of otherwise free air. Also, the oxygen bartender is secretly laughing at you.

**Alex Rodriguez's Contract** \$175,370 per game. \$47,528 per at bat. There is such a thing as too much money, but apparently this wasn't it, since A-Rod opted out to search for an even larger windfall.

**Jet Pack** In a crushing disappointment to successive generations of *Popular Science*-ogling boys, this one never really, er, took off. What's so hard about thermodynamics and jet propulsion?

STRATO CRUISER by Tino Schaedler

