

The 50 Best Inventions of 2010

Flying cars! Jet packs! Lasers that zap malaria-carrying mosquitoes! Here are the year's biggest (and coolest) breakthroughs in science, technology and the arts

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GREEN ENERGY Power-Aware Cord

By Deirdre Van Dyk | Thursday, Nov. 11, 2010

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We'd all like to be more energy-efficient. But watching the meter doesn't intuitively show how much juice is being used minute to minute. The Interactive Institute, a Swedish nonprofit that explores technology and design, had an idea: what if you could actually see the electricity flowing into your machines? The Power-Aware Cord embeds wires around a cable that pulse light in relation to how much electricity is being drawn off the grid. The more current, the brighter and faster the blue light spirals. In testing the device, researchers found that making the invisible visible tuned consumers in to their bad habits, nudging them to power down and offering some surprising appliance insights: when a radio broadcasts drumbeats and bass riffs, its electricity consumption jumps. Talk about being plugged in.



Interactive Institute

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