

## Weirdest Tech Stories of 2018

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*With technology being in every-day life, some oddities are going to occur. Here's a small list that you may not have read about in the main-stream media!*

### Nap-busting machines, “augmented eating” and more

As we begin a new year, it's a great time to give our brains a fun treat and look back at some of the strangest tech stories we heard about in 2018.

#### No sleeping on the job

Hoping to catch a few subtle Z's in your cube between meetings? If you're in Japan, you'll have to get another coffee instead, thanks to a new system that senses if you're sleeping— [and blasts you with cold air to wake you up](#). The as-yet-named system, a collaboration between Japanese air conditioning manufacturer Daikin and electronics giant NEC, will use facial recognition technology to detect if a worker's eyelids are making movements that usually happen before dozing off. Why cold air? An initial study found it was the best way to keep people alert (increasing room brightness and spraying aromas were also tested). Daikin hopes to release the system commercially in 2020, so grab your sweater.



#### Who needs a Rolex when you can have a mountain?

In February Jeff Bezos revealed the [first video](#) of his 10,000 Year Clock, which is being installed inside a mountain in west Texas. The Amazon CEO has invested \$42 million from his own pocket to finance the clock, which is 500 feet tall and powered by Earth's thermal cycle. It's a big project in every sense of the word: The clock has 5-ton counterweights, 8-foot stainless steel gears, and a 6-foot titanium pendulum. “It's a special Clock, designed to be a symbol, an icon for long-term thinking,” according to Bezos. Long-term is right: The century hand advances once every 100 years, and the cuckoo comes out on the millennium.

#### Armed and delicious

Can't reach for another bite of your holiday dinner? Strap a robot arm to your chest and let it launch food into your mouth for you! Food tech researchers in Australia and India want to shift their focus from manufacturing food to the social experience of eating. The result is [Arm-a-Dine](#), described as an “augmented eating experience.” But here's the catch: Arm-a-Dine will only feed you if you're happy. As you sit across from your dining partner, an attached smartphone scans your faces using facial recognition tech; the person smiling gets the next bite. (If both your faces are neutral, it hovers in the middle.) What could be more fun than laughing and suddenly having a scoop of mashed potatoes catapulted at your face?

#### Crypto no-no

In December 2017, the Long Island Iced Tea Corporation changed its name to “Long Blockchain”—and saw its stock skyrocket 500 percent. Unfortunately the New York-based beverage company didn't have a business plan to back it up; after making a vague pivot to “globally scalable blockchain technology solutions” its stock price plunged in early 2018, it was delisted by the NASDAQ in April, and the SEC

subpoenaed the company in July. In a January address SEC Chairman Jay Clayton stated that it would be a bad idea for any company to “change its name to something like “Blockchain-R-Us...without providing adequate disclosure to Main Street investors about those changes and the risks involved.” Lesson learned.

## He has a point

We talk to our phones as if they're human, so why not make them a little more human by giving them a...finger? Gulp. Yes, a French PhD student has developed a [robotic finger](#) that wags at you, strokes your hand, drags your phone across your desk, and generally freaks you out. Marc Teyssier, a researcher at Telecom Paristech engineering school, designed, built and patented his MobiLimb robotic finger to figure out why people found it so unnerving. “What if all devices had arms and limbs and were able to touch us like a human? I think we would behave totally differently with technology,” he told Reuters. Nope, the future of tech is not creepy, not creepy at all...