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Thursday, May 24, 2012

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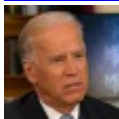


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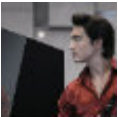
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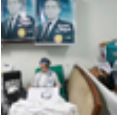
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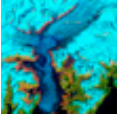
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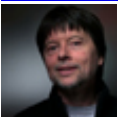
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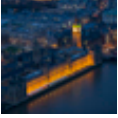
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[Nicholas Jackson](#) - Nicholas Jackson is an associate editor at *The Atlantic*, where he oversees the [Health](#) channel. A former media aggregator for Slate, he has also worked for *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *Texas Monthly* and other publications.

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Last Typewriter Factory in the World Shuts Its Doors

By Nicholas Jackson

Recommend 16k

6

Apr 25 2011, 3:47 PM ET [89](#)

I've owned at least two typewriters over the years. They were passed down to me from other family members; I think one I discovered in my grandmother's basement and begged her to let me take it home with me. She obliged and I used the thing, banging out random nonsense, until I ran out of tape. There's something about the

large, clunky, medieval device that appeals to the aspiring writers among us; they make you feel more connected to your work. When a story is done and has been pulled off the roller, you can still feel it in your fingers.

Because I have a mother that loves to collect antiques -- and drag her children with her to the nearest barn sale -- I've seen hundreds of typewriters. (The Smith-Corona Galaxie DeLuxe, made famous among members of my generation by Cameron Crowe's *Almost Famous*, will always be a favorite.) It never occurred to me that I might not be able to find one whenever the desire hit. Sure, there are thousands collecting dust on thrift store shelves from here to Texarkana, but that will eventually change. Now that Godrej and Boyce, the last company left in the world still manufacturing the devices, has closed its doors, when typewriters make their way to landfills, there won't be any new ones to replace them.

Story continues after the gallery.

Typewriters



Wikimedia Commons

[Full Screen](#)





Mechanical desktop typewriters, such as this Underwood Five, were long-time standards of government agencies, newsrooms, and offices.

With only about 200 machines left -- and most of those in Arabic languages -- Godrej and Boyce shut down its plant in Mumbai, India, today. "Although typewriters became obsolete years ago in the west, they were still common in India -- until recently," according to the [Daily Mail](#), which ran a special story this morning about the typewriters demise. "Demand for the machines has sunk in the last ten years as consumers switch to computers." Secretaries, rejoice.

"We are not getting many orders now," Milind Dukle, Godrej and Boyce's general manager, told the paper. "From the early 2000s onwards, computers started dominating. All the manufacturers of office typewriters stopped production, except us. 'Till 2009, we used to produce 10,000 to 12,000 machines a year. But this might be the last chance for typewriter lovers. Now, our primary market is among the defence agencies, courts and government offices."

Godrej and Boyce has been around for about 60 years now, having opened in a time when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru celebrated the typewriter as a "symbol of India's emerging independence and industrialisation." For decades, the company was producing -- and selling -- tens of thousands of units annually. In the early 1990s, the *Daily Mail* points out, it was still able to sell 50,000 machines. In less than 20 years, though, that number dropped to fewer than 800. There's still a market, albeit a (very) small one. And we're not enough to sustain an industry.

Images: Wikimedia Commons.

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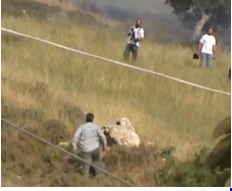
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and 3 others liked this.

[Post as ...](#)**Showing 89 comments**Sort by Oldest first [Subscribe by email](#) [Subscribe by RSS](#)Real-time updating is **paused**. [\(Resume\)](#)**stefanstackhouse** 1 year ago

I went through college with an SCM Classic portable typewriter, a Pickett slide rule, and a Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary. Electric typewriters and portable calculators (4 function) were just coming out, but were still too expensive for we poor college students. I considered myself lucky to have any typewriter of my own at all - lots of students didn't.

When I graduated from college and began working in state government, I also graduated to an IBM Selectric. I liked the Selectric a lot better than the old manuals, which were really a pain for non-perfect klutzes like me to use. Eventually I got to use a Wang Word Processor, and then IBM PCs came into my life. It has been a couple of decades now since I've used a typewriter. I can't say that I miss them at all.

15 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**SmackwaterJack** 1 year ago

I miss them, i had an underwood that i received for my 15th birthday in 1965, i banged the heck out of it writing poetry and short stories, i only stopped using it around 1984 or 85 when i got my first computer (a commodore 64) and formatting was impossibly difficult. I used electrics at work for many years but the manual always had a place in my heart because i could really feel like i accomplished something when writing on that machine. now all i have is this laptop and every time i need to print something i have to plug in the printer. and hope the ink didn't dryout and ruin the printer cartridge.

10 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Nicholas Jackson** 1 year ago [in reply to SmackwaterJack](#)

Great stories everyone. Thanks for writing them here and leaving them for others. Perhaps we should collect some typewriter stories; if we put out a call for them, it'd be interesting to see what we get.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**bugeye58** 1 year ago

I had better buy some extra ribbons for both of mine. A Smith Corona and an Olympic. They still come in handy for filling out paper forms

that can't be done on the computer.
It's been years since I've seen carbon manifolds or even carbon paper!

12 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[Jerry Renshaw](#) 1 year ago [in reply to bugeye58](#)

They are indeed useful for filling out forms.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Guest 1 year ago

I once saw a Chinese typewriter, i.e. a typewriter used to type Chinese characters. Very large.
I bet they will become very valuable.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[Michael](#) 1 year ago

Is that really the last factory? I am pretty sure Olivetti et. al. still have them made in China, at least they did last year to supply the Hipster market with new typewriters.

7 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[spragued](#) 1 year ago [in reply to Michael](#)

Take any pronouncement you read on the internet with a grain of salt ("last", "greatest", "best", "worst"... etc.). No offense to the kid who writes the column, but I suspect we'll be reading this story every few years for awhile to come.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



woofa 1 year ago [in reply to Michael](#)

Olivetti no longer makes typewriters. They may still be making service parts, I'm unsure, but they no long manufacture typewriters and have not for a few years.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



[Andrew Ivers](#) 1 year ago [in reply to Michael](#)

A friend of mine sent me this same story, but through a blog at the Post -- and they seem pretty confident that this isn't the "last" typewriter factory:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/...>

Still, I relish any excuse to talk about typewriters. I'm 26 and, like the author, have been through a number of typing machines over the years. For the last few I've been using an old S-C Sterling (<http://farm4.static.flickr.com...>) that I got from my parents and had cleaned up back when I was in high school. It still works perfectly -- and has survived at least two long moves and even a few road trips. When asked to defend (or just explain) having an antiquated piece of office equipment lying around, I've always made the point that nothing can help you more as a writer than having to re-type an entire draft of a piece. Having actually done this when typing the occasional story or poem (and even a few times, as an experiment, writing papers in college), I can strongly attest that it is VERY HARD to put your hands through the tedium if you don't think what you've written is as good as it can be.

Like Reply



[Lizard Lizard](#) 1 year ago [in reply to Andrew Ivers](#)

More like "not worth the tedium". I was giving up 19th century technology right about the time you were born. I'm sure there's a lot of hipster chic in using typewriters, quill pens, or cuneiform, but I have too many ideas and not enough time as it is; I'm not going to make things harder on myself in order to earn points as a Suffering Artist. The same argument you make about correcting errors can be, and has been, made about punch cards and batch-oriented as opposed to interactive programming. If you had to wait a day to see if your program even ran, sure, you'd be a lot more careful about it, but I see very few modern programmers demanding a punch card option. When I think about rewriting something, even a very short something, from scratch, I get so infuriated that it's pretty much impossible for me to do it; I'd rather create something completely new than recreate something I've already done.

I actually wrote something about the process of editing, and how the digital age has changed it, a long, long, time ago... probably around 1999 or 2000. <http://mrlizard.com/OldSite/di...>

Like Reply



[Andrew Ivers](#) 1 year ago [in reply to Lizard Lizard](#)

I take your point: I work as an editor and could not imagine doing all of the work with ink and paper alone. I only meant to convey that re-typing a few pieces was once a good exercise for me as a young writer, to remind me how many mediocre things can be looked over if you're not careful when you re-draft. Re-typing a piece forces you to focus on them. You could easily do this on a computer or on paper. Or learn in some other way that doesn't involve re-typing at all. It was just what helped me. It was my typewriter story.

Also, thank you for presuming I'm a hipster and that I own a piece of office equipment (which no one except me sees) simply for superficial fashion purposes. I guess when the ideas come so fast and furious there's sure to be a little collateral damage.

3 people liked this. Like Reply



[Lizard Lizard](#) 1 year ago [in reply to Andrew Ivers](#)

Sorry for presuming, but phrases like "when asked to defend" just put me in mind of the people who jump into every conversation about a TV program with long dissertations about how they don't watch TV. If that's not you, I apologize. I do think "Collateral Damage" is a good description of my writing style, though. (There's the old joke about the guy who just walks up to every attractive woman he sees and asks them to sleep with him, getting constantly slapped in the process. When a friend asks him why he bothers, he replies, "Eventually, one of them always says 'Yes'." There's a lot to be said for the machine gun style; it only takes one hit to make up for a lot of misses.)

Back on the topic of typewriters, though, one thing which drove me away from them was when my beloved Smith-

Corona, with cartridges, including an 'erasing' cartridge, gave up the ghost, and was replaced with a cheap Brother that was clunky, ribbon based (how primitive!), and produced jagged, irregular, lettering. My mother, following the traditions of my ancestral people, got it from "a friend who knows a guy who works there, it was cheap, stop complaining, and maybe you could write me a letter some time?". Given the choice between using a machine inferior to the one I'd used for the past five or six years, and dealing with the hassle of wandering to the computer lab (this was in the days when only the rich kids had their own PCs) to write anything, I took the latter.

Like Reply



PrairieVoice2 1 year ago [in reply to Lizard Lizard](#)

As writers I'd like you both to ask, does the process of having to hit the keys extra hard on typewriters change what you write?

1 person liked this. Like Reply



Lizard Lizard 1 year ago [in reply to PrairieVoice2](#)

I wouldn't know; I always used electric.

Like Reply



LesterBallard 1 year ago

I still have the last typewriter I bought, and a supply of ribbons and correction tape. Smith-Corona Word Smith 250.

1 person liked this. Like Reply



Linda McCorkle 1 year ago

Interesting. I have a manual Olivetti portable that got me through college (although friends sometimes allowed me to borrow their Smith Coronas with the correction cartridges) and an electric Brother portable. Brother still has a few models on its website but they are all daisy wheel, not the old fashioned single strike letters. There are times when a typewriter is much more convenient than a computer and printer combination. I would like to think there will always be a market for them.

5 people liked this. Like Reply



gildavis 1 year ago

My very first new typewriter was a Brother...a manual in which the carriage raised to allow capital letters to be typed. It was purchased from Western Auto in about 1968 for high school for about \$70. Banged out a bunch of book reports and other things. Yes, they did offer a "business machines" course in high school where we learned how to type, use the rotary calculator (look THAT one up!), 10 key, and yes, we even had two electronic calculators in that class...one was a display only that used a 16 digit nixie display (cold-cathode tubes that displayed numbers), but wasn't smart enough to know where to place the decimal point, and the other a printing calculator along the lines of a 10 key adding machine that had 3 memories! I remember the teacher saying that it cost the school something like \$3500. And the other one was a bargain at about half of that.

Anyway, the Brother typewriter being a portable didn't last that long. I replaced it later with an old Underwood that was manufactured in the 1920s. That one lasted for YEARS and I ended up giving it away when I bought my first computer system (a Commodore 64, but that doesn't count the TI-99/4A previously that I had without a printer). I learned a lot about 'puting then. I had someone give me a wide-carriage IBM Selectric which brought back memories of high school. That was about 5 years ago. I went through it a bit, lubed it up, put a new ribbon on it...then donated it to someone taking typewriters to India. Typewriters are probably responsible for my interest in computers since I learned to type at about 50 wpm on an electric and got up to about 90 on a keyboard.

Kind of neat to reminisce about things like that, huh? Bet lots of others have even more stories to tell.

5 people liked this.

Like

Reply



HonoluluTom 1 year ago

Yeah, O.K. I feel the nostalgia, too. However, not all end up "in landfills" most metals are recycled. Emphasis on "most".

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



[TJ Dimacali](#) 1 year ago

Silence falls at last on what, to Gutenberg, must have been the Holy Grail of Typesetting.

Random trivia: Remington typewriters were manufactured by the same company (and likely using the same machines) that brought you the Remington rifle. Bang-bang!

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



[Nina Salvador](#) 1 year ago [in reply to TJ Dimacali](#)

The German Triumph-Adler typewriter was made by the same company to make Triumph motorcycles. Vroom.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



Relayman5C 1 year ago [in reply to TJ Dimacali](#)

No, to Gutenberg, the Linotype machine was the Holy Grail. Very few typewriters can justify type on one pass.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



rodneycolma 1 year ago

I've got a type-writer story! Back in the early nineties I was working as a production assistant for a team producing material for (I think) Showtime... Anyway, it was a brother team, and the two brothers asked me to meet a delivery person at the elevator to retrieve a typewriter they'd just gotten fixed. We all went to the hall, the brothers talking business, and when the elevator doors opened, low and behold, a gorgeous, electronic typewriter on a rolling cart. The repair man handed it off to me and I followed behind the bros. We began to walk down the hall towards the office, and I didn't become aware until too late that the carpet was gathering under the wheels of the cart. Soon enough the cart began to tip, and then this big heavy electronic typewriter brought it violently off-balance. I reached to grab it, but also lost my balance and we all ended up crashing to the floor. The brothers stopped and turned to find a few letter buttons bouncing towards their feet and me sprawled with

arms out, looking up with a terrible sense of dread.

5 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Kentuckycountry 1 year ago

Recently read, within the last 3-4 years that is, that the New York City Police Department with it's 25,000+ force had ordered thousands of typewriters. Main reason for not using computers was that they still do reports in triplicate. Wonder if this is still true, and what they are going to do now? BOLDLY step into the 20th century? :-} Oh, and I used a second hand IBM Selectric, into the 90's..Loved It!

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Lizard Lizard 1 year ago

My fourth grade teacher GAVE me a typewriter, because my handwriting was atrocious and not getting any better. I was never without one until my junior year of college (1985), when I got a pirate copy of WordStar for the IBM PC. (I can confess that, the statute of limitations has surely run out by now, right?). I pretty much haven't looked back since then, and the thought of using that ancient tech now is almost terrifying. Still, it surprises me that there was only one factory left -- I was under the impression a lot of places, mostly massive bureaucracies that consider glaciers "fast moving", still used them due to the requirements of carbon paper forms. (When I entered the workforce in 1987, you never saw a computer on a desk, except maybe a secretary or receptionist; by the early 1990s, you never saw a desk WITHOUT one. The change was astoundingly rapid.)

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Catherine Maino 1 year ago

This is sad. When relocating from MI to VA, I came across my electric typewriter. I just didn't have the heart to discard it and lucky for me I was able to pass it on! My niece found it fascinating and asked if she could have it. She is now the proud owner and after reading this....I will ensure it's legacy lives on in our family.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



coralgablesfla 1 year ago [in reply to Catherine Maino](#)

Good for you. I spent more than 25 years repairing all kind of typewriters including the antiques one. After I closed my business I was fortunate of keeping for myself 3 portable antique machines and have them on display in my living room and they are all running in good working condition.

Like

Reply



scott_lewis 1 year ago

"Well I pawned my Smith Corona, and I went to meet my man. He hangs out down on Alvarado Street, at the Pioneer Chicken Stand"--Warren Zevon, Carmelita

Somehow, replacing "Smith Corona" with "Toshiba Laptop" doesn't have the same emotional power.

7 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)[billstewart2...](#) 1 year ago [in reply to scott lewis](#)

Tom Robbins's "Still Life With Woodpecker" starts out with a rave about how he's going to write the Great American Novel and he's got his shiny new Remington XL-3 typewriter that just spits out electric Shakespeare all by itself if you even look at it, and "if this typewriter can't do it, then f--- it, it can't be done."

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)[Renee Lapham Collins](#) 1 year ago

In the 1970s, when I was in high school, my mother bought a Royal portable, which I used to type book reports, term papers and random creative pieces. I took typing in high school--all of the desks were equipped with the Underwood 5--and nearly failed the class because I couldn't memorize the keyboard. When I went off to college, the IBM Selectric had showed up and the office I where I was a student worker had one. I learned to type much faster and by the time computers came out, I was fairly proficient. I also had a Brother electronic with the changeable wheels and built-in electronic dictionary. Hard to believe that was state of the art not so long ago. My first newspaper job was in a small community newspapers before the advent of PCs. We had a variety of used machines, including an Underwood 5, an Olivetti, and a couple of Selectrics. I still have a portable Royal in my closet---just in case.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)[DNelson](#) 1 year ago

This actually is not true. Nakajima All in Japan still manufacturers typewriters as well as a factory in China.

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)[gecko46](#) 1 year ago

I learned to type as a sophomore in high school in the early 60s. Got a blue Smith Corona manual with a matte, stippled metal shell that looked very cool at the time. That saw me through high school and four years of university. I later moved on to a used office-sized Remington electric, which saw me through grad school. In between, I used Selectrics in numerous offices, which I always secretly coveted. It wasn't until the late 80s that I switched over to computers, first using Word Star 4, which required a 7 1/2 inch program disk and another 7 1/2 inch data disk to function. Formatting was horrific, but I mastered it. Missed my old Smith-Corona, though. I didn't miss carbon paper, however. Fortunately, I was/am a very skilled, very fast, very accurate typist, so I didn't make all that many mistakes when I was using the carbons...

[Like](#) [Reply](#)[Christopher Hanks](#) 1 year ago

But we are all still using keyboards, aren't we.

I was using WORD once several years ago when I managed to fat finger some secret combination on the keyboard causing my sentences to start erasing themselves backwards on the screen - a panic-inducing, losing-control experience right up there with hitting the brakes on an icy road. Another time, the Cascade virus in the 80's pounced and all my letters started sliding to the bottom of the page. At least with typewriters, the worst that would happen is that in the heat of composition, you'd hit the "s" and "x" keys just right so that the arms would fly towards the paper,

sideswipe one another, and jam. Click, clack - the good old days.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



RJR303 1 year ago

This article is NOT correct. I am with Royal Consumer Information Products in Somerset, NJ. We have been making typewriters for over 100 years. We still making both manual and electronic typewriters and we have no plans to discontinue them! True, the market size is small in comparison to what it once was but there is still a steady demand for both types of typewriters.

33 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Lizard Lizard 1 year ago [in reply to RJR303](#)

Thank you for the correction! It seemed very unlikely to me that the "last" typewriter factory on the planet would be closed, because, as others note, there's plenty of institutions still wedded to carbon paper forms. Also, "typewriters" is a great accidental neologism.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



janinec 1 year ago [in reply to RJR303](#)

If that is true, then maybe I will buy one from you guys! That would be nice...

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



David Gerard 1 year ago

I loved my acoustic typewriter back in the day.

These days? I heartily recommend the Model M, the finest computer keyboard ever made. Old ones by IBM, new ones by Unicomp. <http://www.pckeyboard.com> . TYPE HARD OR GO HOME. My wife stopped me using mine late at night.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



typewriteruser 1 year ago [in reply to David Gerard](#)

Acoustic? Did it yell letters onto the paper?

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



David Gerard 1 year ago [in reply to typewriteruser](#)

Acoustic as opposed to electric. It clattered VERY LOUDLY . So yes, it SHOUTED LETTERS ONTO THE PAPER!

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Wimpy3 1 year ago

Too bad we are going to continue to suffer from the QWERTY layout that deliberately separated the most common combinations of letters apart to keep the keys from jamming. I also heard that keystroke speed was hindered to slow typists down to telegraph dot-dash speed. A date of 1867 is listed as a start date -144 years ago. Yet our "Captain's of Industry" continue to let an antiquated keyboard design lose worker productivity, and cause people to be needlessly trained in typing speed to overcome deliberate design handicaps. My guess is that this design has wasted billions of dollars and will continue to do so. When will our leaders overcome paradigms and think outside the box? Maybe next century?

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Zach Stein 1 year ago [in reply to Wimpy3](#)

Dvorak keyboards don't automatically make you a faster typist. You would STILL need to train to be fast. Personally, I've been typing on a QWERTY since I was 3 years old (21 years now) and I type close to 120WPM... It wasn't from deliberate training either. Professionally, I'm a software engineer. And it may surprise you to know that my productivity, like that of anyone who has to think about what they type, is not speed-limited.

Plus we would actually lose billions of dollars retraining people for Dvorak keyboards because everyone already knows how to use a QWERTY keyboard. And if you don't like your QWERTY keyboard, you can remap it to a different layout on most modern computers.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Steve Hix 10 months ago [in reply to Zach Stein](#)

I picked up Dvorak back in the early 80's, and it took about 10 days to get my speed and accuracy level with typing on a Sholes layout. Switching back and forth is a bit annoying, when I had to use a machine not offering Dvorak, but it was a minor problem.

Seriously, not "everyone already knows how to use a QWERTY keyboard", unless people have started to pop out knowing it at birth.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



oldvle 1 year ago [in reply to Wimpy3](#)

In my advanced age I could never master the Dvorak keyboard, so spare me. There are plenty of typists (I guess I should say keyboardists) that can type 100 words a minute. It would be a major undertaking to retrain fingers/brains that have used the standard layout, with lots of complaining during the process.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



woofa 1 year ago [in reply to Wimpy3](#)

Suffer from QWERTY, that's hilarious! Your notions here a utter bunk. Any more conspiracy theories you'd like to champion?

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



janinec 1 year ago [in reply to Wimpy3](#)

I like QWERTY...

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



billstewart2... 1 year ago [in reply to Wimpy3](#)

It turns out that separating common combinations of letters to keep the keys from jamming also means you tend to alternate hands, or at least fingers, for those key combinations, and that lets you type faster than a simple ABCDE keyboard layout would. It does mean you waste a couple of months of high school learning where the keys are, but once you do that, your fingers pretty much do the work without you having to think about it, and you'd have to do that with DVORAK or any other system. Studies have shown that once you're past that learning curve, it doesn't make much difference.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



typewriteruser 1 year ago [in reply to Wimpy3](#)

You heard a myth.

Like

Reply



ispyce.com 1 year ago

If any one is sad about this, don't worry i will give you my old typewriter :)

Like

Reply



typewriteruser 1 year ago [in reply to ispyce.com](#)

I am very sad indeed. Please leave your typewriter outside my door. Thanks!

Like

Reply



AwkwardEngineer 1 year ago

I still use my manual typewriter every day for my blog, and I love it.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



rforzani1 1 year ago

What is the definition of a "typewriter"? If it is a machine which produces output by physically striking the paper with a key, then the article is correct. If the definition is extended to electronic devices with no moving carriage, word memory storage, and a moving inkjet type printhead,

then the typewriter is still alive, as in the Royal consumer device.

I prefer the former definition. The latter was actually a segue between true typewriters and the computer. My dad made his livelihood as a typewriter repairman for over 60 years. He died last year at 89, just about the same time as his specialty.

Like Reply



Zach Stein 1 year ago [in reply to rforzani1](#)

Brother is still making daisy wheel style type writers... The article is bunk.

3 people liked this. Like Reply



AwkwardEngineer 1 year ago

I use my manual typewriter every day and I love it.
[-www.awkwardengineer.com](http://www.awkwardengineer.com)

Like Reply



Zach Stein 1 year ago

Fact check:

<http://www.amazon.com/Brother-...>

<http://www.brother-usa.com/typ...>

Brother is apparently still making type writers and you can buy one on Amazon. This story should read "Last typewriter factory in India shuts its doors".

Like Reply



fuggidit 1 year ago

I ha

Like Reply



David Stuart 1 year ago

I know this has already been mentioned, but Royal and Brother both still make typewriters. This article's title is completely wrong.
<http://www.abcoffice.com/typew...>

1 person liked this. Like Reply



Paul Wagenseil 1 year ago

I'm sorry Mr. Jackson, but one of the first rules of online journalism is to never trust anything from the Daily Mail.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



Zach Stein 1 year ago [in reply to Paul Wagenseil](#)

True that. The Daily Mail isn't much better than the National Enquirer if at all... I think it's the fact that it's British that trips up American writers. I don't doubt that the type-writer factor closed its doors. But the claim that it's the last one is demonstrably false. A quick trip to Brother's website showed me that.

Like

Reply



woofa 1 year ago [in reply to Paul Wagenseil](#)

Another rule is that as a journalist you should verify information before publishing. This seems to be one rule that journalists never follow any more.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



Relayman5C 1 year ago [in reply to woofa](#)

It's all about page views, baby, and if you can make a bunch of people get all nostalgic, then you get the page views. Facts are so last century.

Like

Reply



fuggidit 1 year ago

I have a beautiful Smith Corona portable electric --- but I never use it. It will be worth a lot of money in the future since they don't make them anymore. The typewriter industry has gone the way of so many other products which have become obsolete. When I was in college many years ago we used to use slide rules---I loved my Keuffel & Esser model but it was only accurate to one decimal place, and was quickly replaced by the small hand calculator. Then when I went into business, you would see on millions of desks the Friden calculator --- a huge, clanking machine with gears grinding away and the result showing up in 10's of little windows. But this machine was accurate to many decimal places. The Friden was , of course, replaced by the computer. And how about the camera using film ---- mostly replaced by digital ones. And don't forget the land line telephone plugged into the wall. Also, does anyone want to buy my collection of 8 track tapes---try to find a player first! And the list goes on.

Like

Reply



stefanstackhouse 1 year ago [in reply to fuggidit](#)

There were some tricks that the real slide rule wizzes could use to work with quite a few more decimal places. It was an awkward, multi-step process as I vaguely remember - but that was almost 4 decades ago!

There was a portable alternative to the clunky desktop calculators: the Curta.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C...>

They were very cool, but way beyond the budget of most college students. I don't know about the future value of your SCM portable electric, but these old Curtas are definitely highly sought-after collectables.

Like Reply



stefanstackhouse 1 year ago [in reply to stefanstackhouse](#)

Of course, an ancient portable calculator that could also be mentioned was the abacus. One would occasionally see these in use during my college days, mostly by Asian students. Very few occidentals learned how to use them, even though they are an elegant design that allows for very rapid addition and subtraction.

Like Reply



Deb Sampson 1 year ago

Pretty sure other companies make typewriters but maybe this is the last exclusively typewriter factory?

Like Reply



Lizard Lizard 1 year ago

Dvorak, dshmorak. I pretty much taught myself to type (again, I was simply given a typewriter out of educator desperation), and I do pretty darn well (60 wpm) with, mostly, two fingers and my thumb on each hand, as anyone who has had the misfortune to be locked in a flame war with me on a forum or newsgroup will attest. I have tried to learn both 'standard' typing and 'Dvorak' typing on and off over the decades, but, at age 46, the time it will take me to acquire the muscle memory needed to type as quickly in the "proper" fashion as I currently to in my personal "improper" fashion is such that I won't profit from it -- something like paying 10,000 dollars to get a new mortgage that reduces your monthly payments by a hundred dollars a month: You won't break even for about ten years.

The QWERTY layout has such overwhelming network externalities that it won't go away until there's a completely new method of data entry which isn't keyboard based at all, and is sufficiently useful that it's worth overcoming market resistance to "not having a keyboard". It's difficult for me to imagine any keyboard-ish interface which uses a different layout that won't be met with "Why not just use a keyboard?" (I find it insanely frustrating that Insight's DVR system uses an A-Z ordered layout instead of a simulated onscreen QWERTY layout, even if I'm navigating it with a left/right/up/down button, simply because I am so used to QWERTY that it's actually harder for me to find letters in an array when they're in alphabetical order!)

1 person liked this. Like Reply



Harlan 1 year ago

False. <http://www.minyanville.com/dai...>

1 person liked this. Like Reply



cruzcop 1 year ago

Swintec in New Jersey still makes and sells electric typewriters.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



MTS 1 year ago

<http://www.mediabistro.com/fis...>

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



Shane Tennent 1 year ago

This story is incorrect. Royal Consumer Information Products in Somerset, NJ still manufacturers and sells both electric and manual typewriters... although their site only lists Electric typewriters for sale online <https://www.royalsupplies.com/...>

3 people liked this.

Like

Reply



spragued 1 year ago [in reply to Shane Tennent](#)

That didn't take long. Thanks, Shane, Harlan, MTS, et al.

Like

Reply



Giorgetta Bell McRee 1 year ago

About time, I say.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



1 year ago

The unfortunate thing is that you can't see how a computer works. A mechanical typewriter is a source of fascination for the young proto-engineer.

Perhaps someone will make a keyboard with a chromed return arm that "dings" when you actuate it.

Like

Reply



Tampanews 1 year ago

So in two years, they go from demand of 10,000 to 12,000 per year to less than 800? Why would that be?

Like

Reply



zingfee 1 year ago

Wow what a bummer, that is not cool at all dude.

www.complete-privacy.edu.tc

Like Reply



typewriteruser 1 year ago

Who calls typewriter ribbons 'tape'? You couldn't be bothered to get a photo of your Mom's typewriter?

Like Reply



Madame Hardy 1 year ago [in reply to typewriteruser](#)

I had a 1977 Smith-Corona Coronamatic that did indeed have tape cartridges -- they called them "film" IIRC. Every time you struck a letter, it transferred a piece of ink from the tape to the page. They were one-use only, and came in multiple colors for quick interchangeability. I'm sure they've been unavailable for years.

Like Reply



Miss Marcia 1 year ago

"banging out random nonsense, until I ran out of tape..."

Ran out or wore out? The ribbon spools could be reversed and used over again several times, iirc.

Like Reply



woofa 1 year ago [in reply to Miss Marcia](#)

On the older cloth ribbons yes. The newer cartridges are done once you go through them since they have a thin layer of "ink" on an acetate tape and once struck the ink is gone where struck. They do however make a much more clear impression of the letter on the paper than the cloth ribbons.

Like Reply



sunnylove 1 year ago

Technology promote the progress of historical, so some old things will be replaced by new things! <http://bit.ly/hchlww>

Like Reply



LadyDianeJ 1 year ago

Not exactly true. Swintec out of New Jersey still makes their own typewriters.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



Andrew Natoli 1 year ago

Brother still makes these, no? I still get people coming in to the office supply store I work at to buy them

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



steve4nlanguage 1 year ago

I love all of these stories. As a 9th grader back in 1978, I was one of only 3 boys in my typing class. We learned to type on manual machines, and I was determined to learn well since I loved to write. Later in the school year I came in first place in a school typing contest (63wpm on a manual machine!), but lost in the district competition. I still have that award certificate. Honestly, though, I much prefer using a computer keyboard, especially since I live in Taiwan now. Typing Chinese is infinitely easier and faster on a PC than on those old type-tray systems.

Like

Reply



Lorenzo 1 year ago

Read this item about a segment on NPR where they debated this thesis: "I say there is no species of technology that have ever gone globally extinct on this planet."

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/kru/w...>

Like

Reply



PrairieVoice2 1 year ago

I doubt there is a market for heavy electric typewriters but small, portable manual ones - you bet. In many a place where a person doesn't have reliable electricity (ex. military, remote parts of the world, expeditions) there will be a need to produce correspondence and documentations that are easily read. One can always scan a typewritten letter into a computer later on.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



Alan Milner 1 year ago

Is your fact checker on vacation? CNet news did a gloss on this piece in which it reported that Swintec is still making a full line of electric typewriters. It took me all of five minutes to verify that Brother is also still in business and still manufactures electric typewriters. The key word here is electric. I have not been able to find anyone who still manufactures manual or, more accurately, mechanical typewriters but there are millions of manual typewriters out there.

The problem isn't finding a manual typewriter. The problem is how to find ribbons, which are becoming increasingly difficult to come across. Smith Corona, a venerable brand name, no longer manufactures typewriters but they still manufacture and sell ribbons for some of their machines, which indicates that people are still using them.

In the meantime, this nonsense story has gained legs and is being repeated all over the internet despite the fact that it is simply not true. This is another proof that, as information overload continues to explode around us, the quality of the data is becoming increasingly suspect.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[Alan Milner](#) 1 year ago

And what really disturbs me are the sheer number of reader who, having read the article but not read the correction, will now exacerbate the situation by passing the story along. Terrific reportage, guys.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[joecassara](#) 1 year ago

I still use a typewriter in the office for forms and tricky things like telephone button inserts.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



[PrairieVoice2](#) 1 year ago

If so I see a business opportunity for some company wanting to build a nich product.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



[fnarf](#) 1 year ago

Why is this story still here? It's completely false, and the author has to know that by now. PLEASE CORRECT YOUR FALSE STORY HERE.

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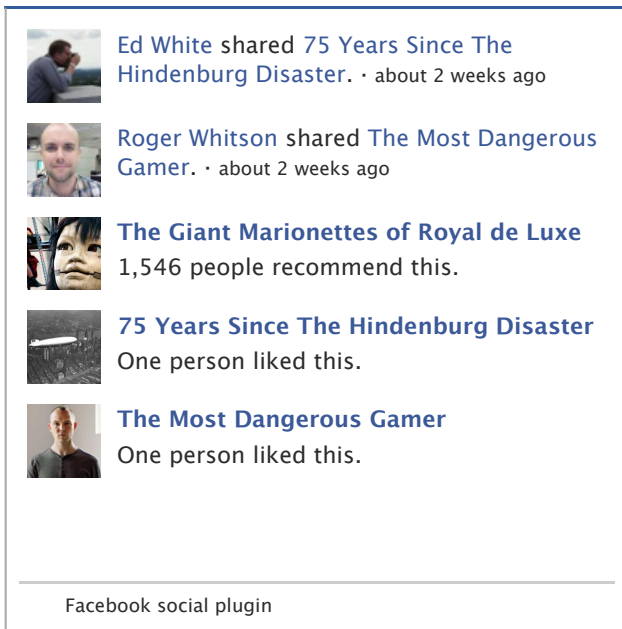
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