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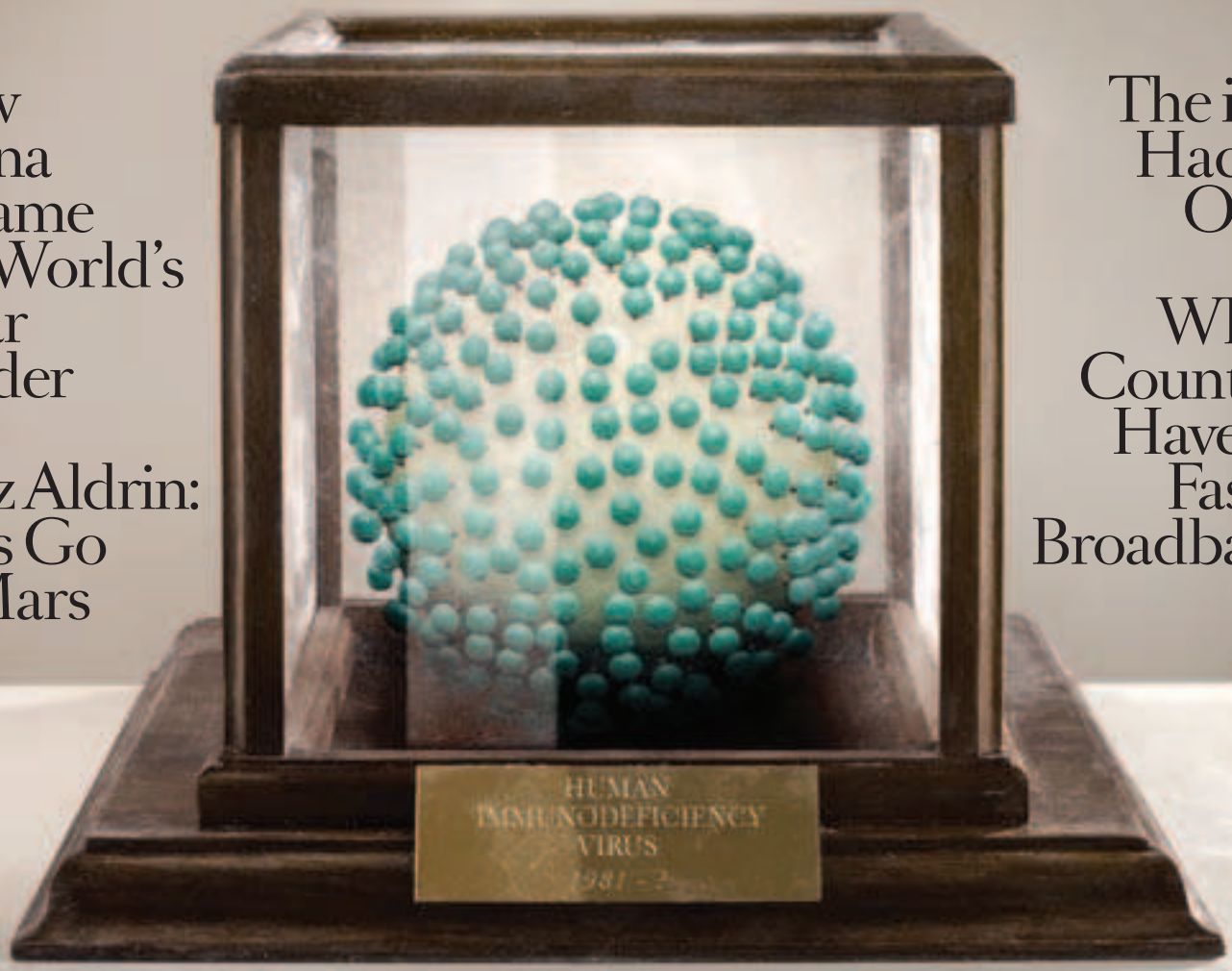

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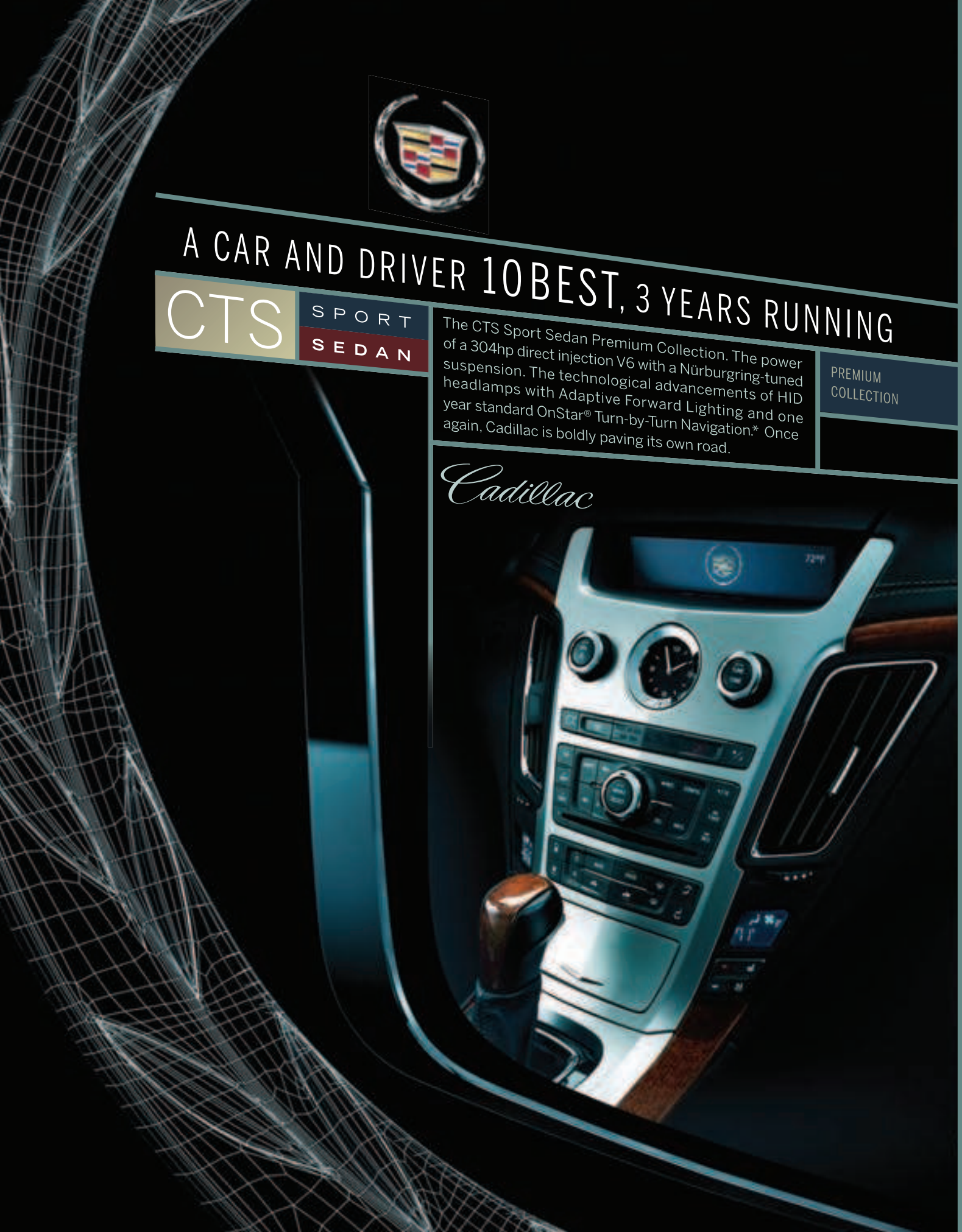

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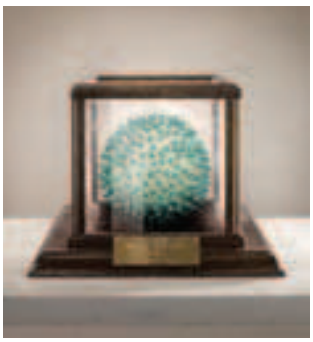

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GRADING OUR PREDICTIONS

I always enjoy reading the new-technologies article ("10 Emerging Technologies 2010," May/June 2010). It would be interesting to see how well your predictions over the years have done. What percentage are on track? Do you do better in certain fields? If it turns out you are good at this, maybe you could sell your picks.

Ed Macho
Hilton Head Island, SC

May/June '10

While we haven't formally looked at how well our predictions have done, we may do so in the future. Thanks for the suggestion! —Editors

DREAMS OF THE FUTURE

I find every issue of *Technology Review* useful in more ways than one. First, it's always provocative reading. Second, it provides ample material to inspire my boys with technological dreams of the future: OLED lights, 3-D smart phones, jet packs, renewable solar fuels, green concrete, and implantable electronics, to name a few. And to top it off, a novel chart of U.S. energy flows that I will be using in the next lecture for my global-warming class.

David Lea
Santa Barbara, CA

CHINA AND THE WEB

As a Beijing-based tech entrepreneur and blogger at Digicha.com, I thought David Talbot's "China's Internet Paradox" (May/June 2010) was one of the best articles I've read about the subject. Public opinion on the Internet has made a difference, from the revelation of the corrupt Nanjing official to the acquittal of Deng Yujiao. But its impact can be overstated. I haven't seen evidence that online discussions have changed any major policies. Nor have they led to investigations of anyone other than marginal officials. Also, the impact of Google's partial withdrawal from China may not have had as much of an effect as we think on Chinese residents. In fact, to many Chinese users, the "War of Internet Addiction" video, which satirizes the regulatory battles over the approval of World of Warcraft and the government's 2009 attempts to "cure" Internet addiction, probably had more of an impact.

Bill Bishop
Beijing, China

THE IMPACT OF E-BOOKS

There's a lot wrong with your review of e-book readers ("Going Out of Print," May/June 2010), beginning with the assumption that print will go the way of the CD. According to a PricewaterhouseCoopers survey published by the *Financial Times* on February 9, the impact of e-readers is expected to rise in the United States from about 1 percent of sales in 2008 to about 6 percent in 2013. Books and music are not analogous. The traditional publishing industry is beset by many woes, including its inability to agree upon a digital strategy, but the e-reader is not the chief culprit. I discussed the plight of the publishing industry and its probable outcome in a recent issue of the *New York Review of Books.*

Jason Epstein
New York, NY

The author is the creator of the trade paperback and cofounder of the New York Review of Books. *—Editors*

www I agree that newspapers and magazines could profit by offering professional design and writing, but books may be different. It is much easier to self-publish today than ever before, but publishers still offer professional editing, art, and marketing, and I'm not sure how a self-published author would obtain those services. And if costs of materials, printing, and shipping are reduced through digital publishing, do publishers really lose money at $9.99?

mwilson1962
(Mark Wilson, Rochester, NY)

Publishers will only survive if they evolve their business model instead of forcing Amazon to charge more than $9.99 for Kindle books. These publishers are rushing blindly down the same path as the recording industry, maintaining an outmoded business model. The resulting piracy will be devastating to agents, publishers, and, worse, authors.

rttedrow
(Richard Tedrow, Bethesda, MD)

U.S. COMPETITIVENESS

Good Q&A with Paul Otellini (May/June 2010). He should be commended for bringing up the decline of innovation. However, I take issue with his assertion that U.S. corporate tax rates are among the highest of developed countries. After all the tax breaks and generous loopholes, the tax rate for U.S. corporations is among the lowest in the developed world.

outsider
(Subramani Iyer, San Jose, CA)

Otellini scratches the surface of problems facing U.S. companies. When I started in business years ago, government-funded research could be counted on, but for the last decade we've been ruled by those interested in gaming financial systems rather than supporting competitiveness. Corporate execs increase short-term profits by outsourcing jobs to foreign countries. Most of the competent engineers I've known employed by U.S. companies were let go in their 50s, when they can be most productive in creating the next generations of technologies.

fiberman
(Jim Hayes, Fallbrook, CA)

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