

## **Technology is nobody's fool!**

**Mark Loffhouse, CEO of Mortgage Brain.**

Remember the Swiss spaghetti trees? The Guardian revealing the existence of a hitherto undiscovered island called San Serriffe? Burger King's launch of left handed burgers? April 1st deceptions have a long and proud history in the UK and around the world, with companies such as BMW developing quite a reputation for the quality of their hoaxes.

And technology companies have been quick to join in the fun ...

Technology is a very fertile breeding ground for April Fools. With advances in technology coming around so quickly, it doesn't take much credulity to believe that in some cases 'this could be actually be true.' As a result, the hoaxes I like best are the ones which stretch people's belief systems to not-quite-breaking point rather than those which leave even the most credulous going 'yeah, right.'

In 2015, for example, Sony 'launched' the PlayStation Flow, the idea being that you could now take gaming in to the swimming pool. Its genius lay in the fact it took existing technology (wearables) and took them just one step further. Although the images of players using the kit out of the water were the first clues that things might not be as they first appeared.

It's possible the same thinking was behind Domino's Pizza 'introduction' of a driverless pizza delivery system using autonomous scooters. In an era when driverless cars are becoming a reality and the capabilities of drones are increasing, is that really so far-fetched? Like the Daleks, however, it didn't say how the scooter would get around the problem of stairs, so if you lived on the ground floor of a block of flats you could have been receiving a lot of free pizza.

Perhaps my favourite technology spoof came last year, when a company called Duolingo launched the Duolingo Pillow, a piece of tech that promised fluency in a language after a single night's sleep. At only \$99 it was such a bargain that I thought about buying the French one et voilà, ha ha.

And again, there is research which suggests that listening to things while you sleep can boost your memory, so it's not that far from the truth.

If I may, I'll also give a quick plug to Mortgage Brain's very own spoof, the Mortgage Brain Glove, which we announced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. Another bit of wearable kit, it was apparently, the industry's first ever mortgage sourcing glove, and came with the strap line "a whole-of-market sourcing capability at your fingertips".

Sadly, like all the other products mentioned above, it doesn't exist (or does it?) - we did have a number of genuine enquiries from people who will remain nameless! The attraction of these spoofs is obvious and for one day at least it's marketing with a big grin! So, this year we're pleased to announce...

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