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2007 TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AWARDS

Ahead of the Pack

Among this year's winners: a hypertension drug, a device that pulls drinking water from the air and a service that delivers TV over the Web

(the following has been excerpted:)

By **MICHAEL TOTTY**

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE is a killer. Nearly a billion people around the world and one out of three in the U.S. suffer from the condition. Yet no new therapy has been developed in a dozen years. Until now.

Scientists at Switzerland's **Novartis AG** and **Speedel Holding Ltd.** have developed a drug that promises to control hypertension by blocking an enzyme that can trigger it. The drug, **Tekturna**, has been approved by U.S. and European Union regulators.

Tekturna is the Gold winner in The Wall Street Journal's seventh annual Technology Innovation Awards contest. Judges from business, research and academic organizations chose winners in 12 categories, along with overall Gold, Silver and Bronze winners and one Honorable Mention.

A Wall Street Journal editor screened more than 800 applications, narrowing the field to about 150 entries. The judges picked the category winners and runners-up. A technology had to be a breakthrough from traditional methods, not just an incremental improvement.

The Silver went to **Aqua Sciences Inc.**, Miami Beach, Fla., which has devised a way to pull drinking water from the air, even in the driest parts of the world. Similar systems work effectively only in places with high humidity. The technology uses a blend of salts to collect water, then employs a combination of heat, chemistry and mechanics to extract the water from the salts. **Aqua Sciences** has sold systems to the U.S. Army and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The Bronze went to **Joost NV**, Luxembourg, for a free service that delivers TV programming over the Internet. Unlike YouTube and other video sites, **Joost** offers full-length and full-screen programs. Founders **Janus Friis** and **Niklas Zennstroem** also developed the Skype Internet phone service and **Kazaa** file-sharing service. Like **Kazaa**, **Joost** uses peer-to-peer technology for faster, more reliable downloads. But unlike **Kazaa**, which faced charges that it encouraged piracy, **Joost** is signing deals with big media companies.

Honorable Mention went to **Electronic Learning Products Inc.**, Tampa, Fla., for **Tune in to Reading** software that helps students boost their reading

skills—while seeming to improve their singing. Students sing into a microphone, following along with lyrics on a computer screen. The software scores the singer by how much of the performance is on pitch; at the same time, repeatedly reading the lyrics improves word-recognition and sight-reading skills.

Here are the winners in the industry categories, along with comments from the judges.

COMPUTING SYSTEMS

NComputing Inc., Redwood City, Calif., won for a low-cost method of sharing a personal computer with as many as 30 users. People get a box on their desk, wired to a central PC, with connections for a monitor, keyboard and mouse—as well as software that shares the processing power and applications of the host PC. **NComputing** says that 90% of its sales are to the U.S. K-12 market, and that it has signed a deal to provide its system to schoolchildren in Macedonia in partnership with China's **Haier Group**.

NComputing®

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