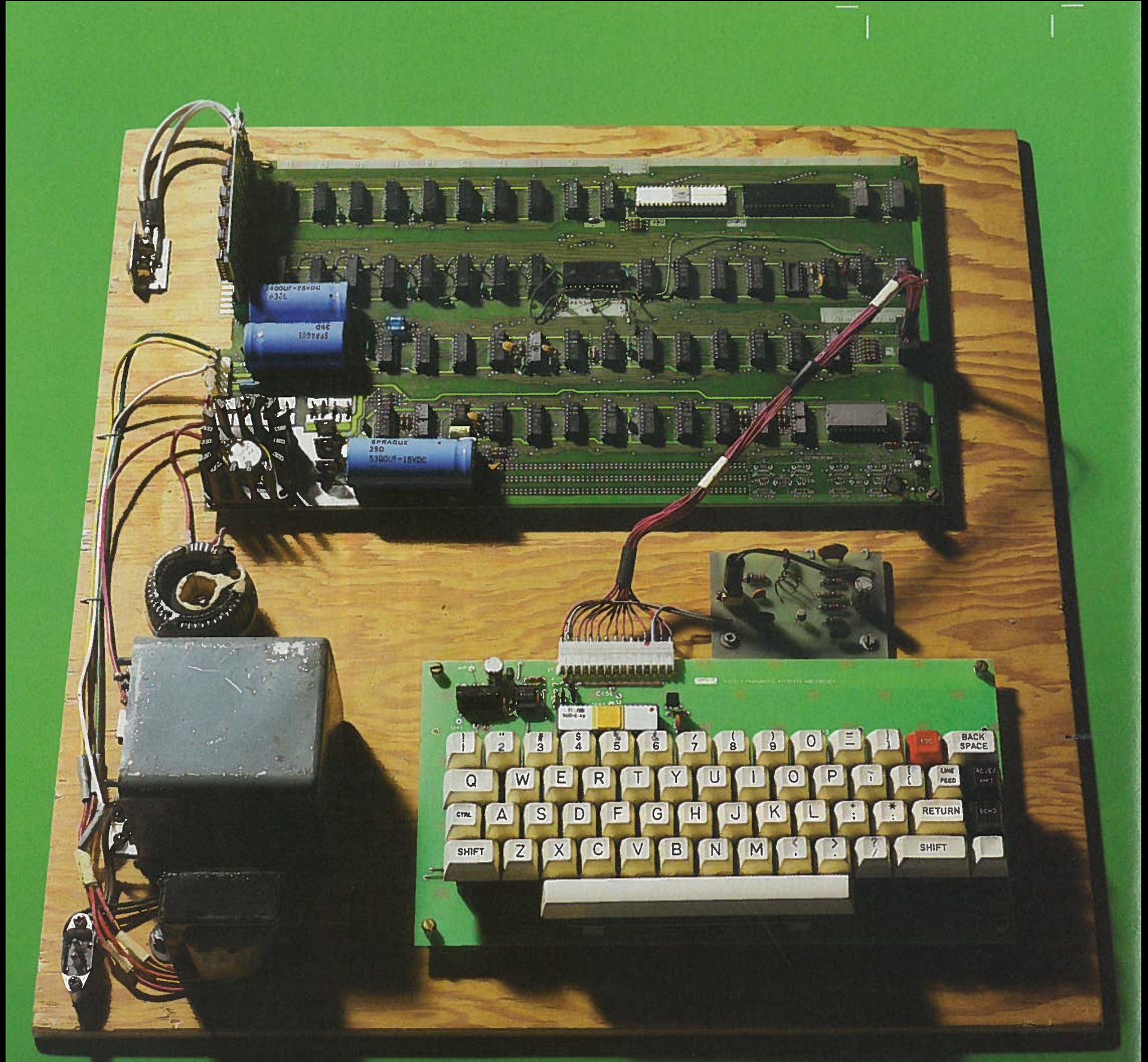
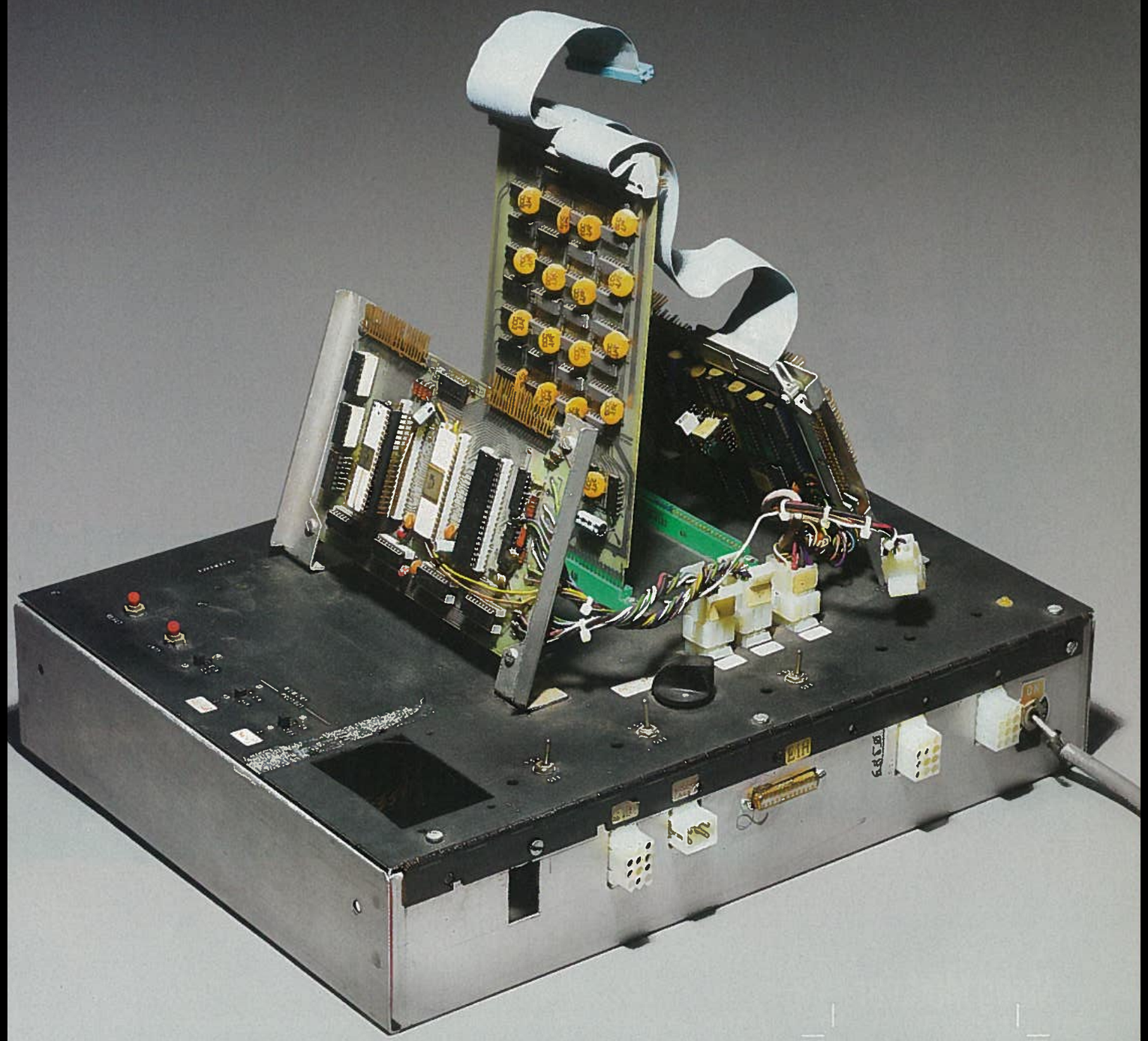


Apple I

Atari Video Computer System

Atari would have been in deep trouble had word gotten out that it was developing a revolutionary new gaming console. A June 1976 patent settlement granted Magnavox the right to any new Atari hardware introduced in the following 12 months. So head engineer Al Alcorn took the project, codenamed Stella after an engineer's bicycle, to a remote mountaintop lab near Grass Valley, California. The final prototype, put together by Cyan Engineering in just three months with less than $500 in parts, generated video on the fly and could run multiple games. Later, Atari would use Cyan's code as the brains for the Video Computer System — eventually rebranded as the 2600. Of course, the company waited until CES in June 1977 to brag about it. Atari went on to sell more than 30 million consoles and became synonymous with home videogames in the 1980s.



1976

ORIGINAL MODELS

PHOTOGRAPHS by DAN FORBES

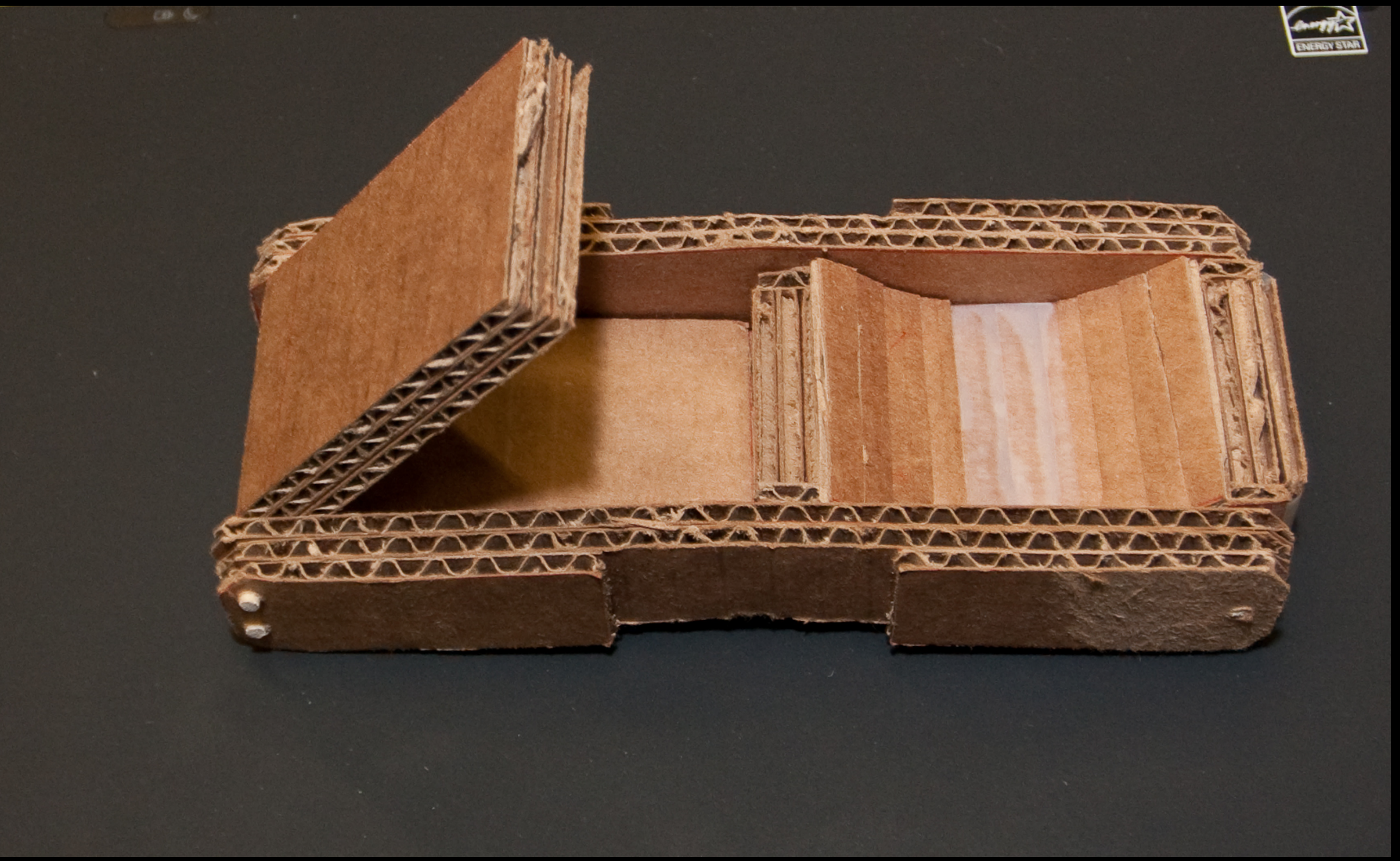
by STEVEN LECKART

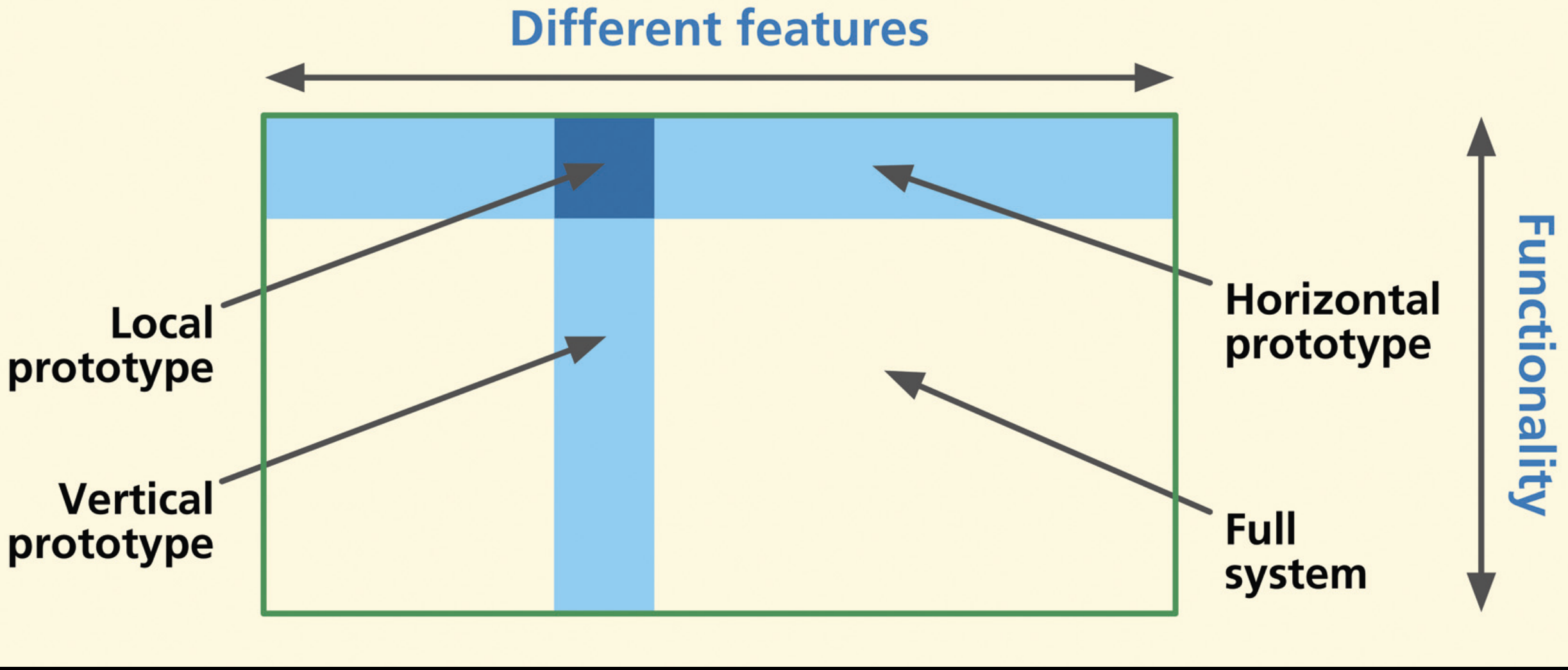
If necessity is the mother of invention, trial and error is the father. In these prototypes of now-iconic products, you can still glimpse the sweat and ingenuity it took to bring them to life.

1989

Super Soaker

Lonnie Johnson was trying to build a better refrigerator, based on a low-cost heat pump that circulated water instead of Freon. But when one of his custom-machined brass nozzles blasted a stream of water across his bathroom, Johnson—by day an engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory—realized he had the makings of something way more fun. A shotgun-style air pump and a series of check valves allowed for sniperlike range and accuracy with little exertion. Selling the idea to toy companies, though, was more of an effort. After seven years of frustration, Johnson scrapped his difficult-to-manufacture Plexiglas "pressure containment vessel" for an empty 2-liter soda bottle. It wasn't slick, but it was easy to make. In 1990, the toy maker Larami brought the Power Drencher to store shelves; it sold roughly 2 million of them in the first year alone. Rebranded as the Super Soaker, the line has raked in sales of more than $200 million to date.


ENERGY STAR


Different features
Local prototype
Vertical prototype
Horizontal prototype
Full system
Functionality

MR 3000 | MOVIE | REGAL 0 | 10/08/04
SCARY MOVIE 4 | MOVIE | REGAL 0 | 10/08/04
SHARK TALE | MOVIE | REGAL 0 | 10/08/04
THE FORGOTTEN | MOVIE | REGAL MAX 10 | 10/08/04
FIRST DAUGHTER | MOVIE | ROYAL 20 | 10/08/04

Event Name & Description | EDIT

EXIT

FUNCTION MENU

PREVIOUS MONTH

NEXT MONTH

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FUNCTION MENU

MyCALENDAR™

PREVIOUS MONTH ◀ ▶ NEXT MONTH ◀ ▶

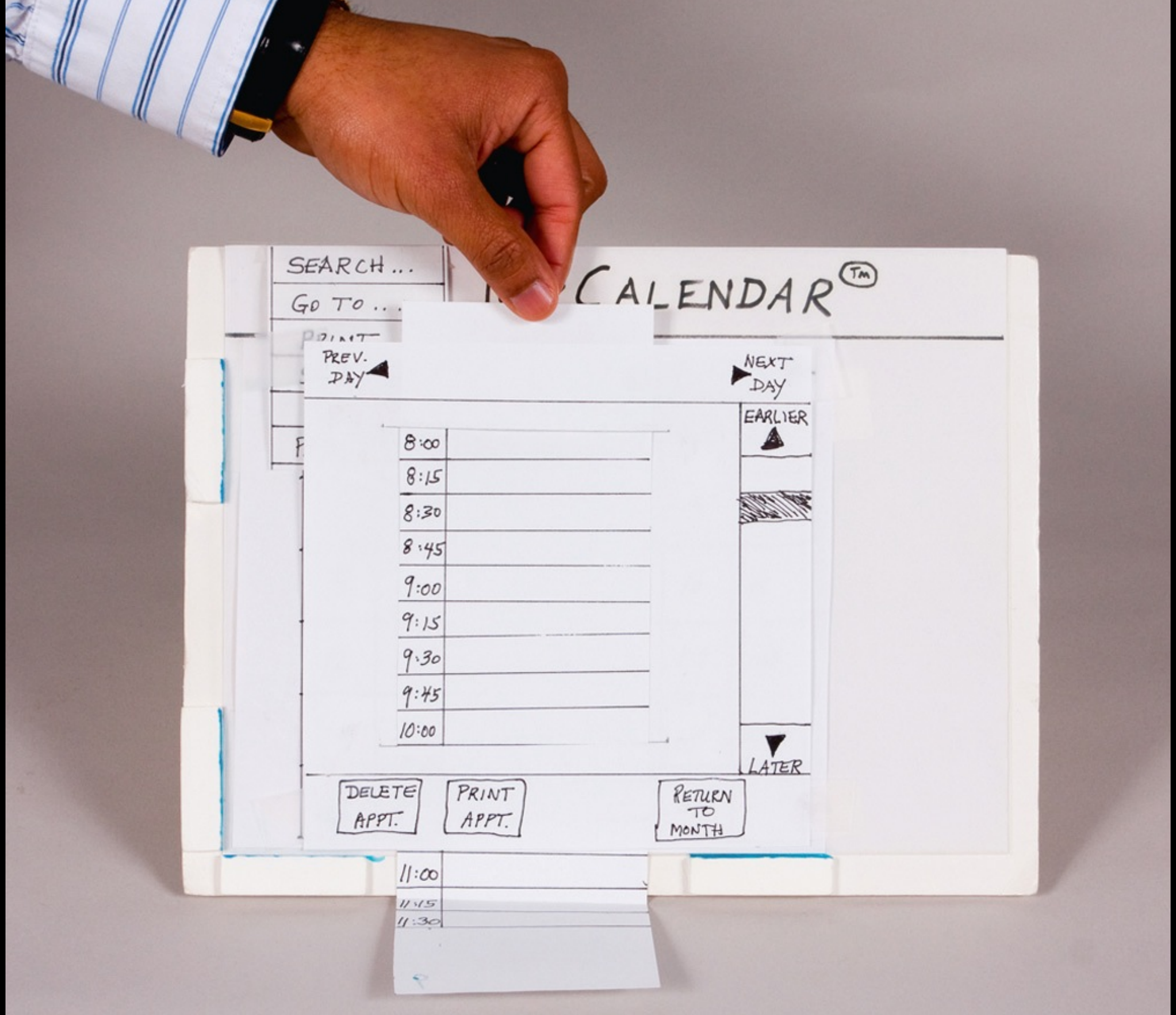
SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SEARCH...
GO TO...
PRINT...
SET ALARM...
BACKUPS...
PREFERENCES...

MyCALENDAR™

NEXT MONTH

		TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	


SEARCH ...
GO TO ...
CALENDAR™
PREV. DAY
NEXT DAY
EARLIER
8:00
8:15
8:30
8:45
9:00
9:15
9:30
9:45
10:00
LATER
DELETE APPT.
PRINT APPT.
RETURN TO MONTH
11:00
11:15
11:30

FUNCTION MENU

MyCALENDAR™

PREVIOUS MONTH ◀ ▶ NEXT MONTH ◀ ▶

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FILE
EDIT
SEARCH
HELP
NEXT MONTH
DAY VIEW
SATURDAY, MARCH 17
9:45
9:00
9:15
9:30
9:45
DR. KEVORKIAN
10:00
10:15

SEARCH...
GO TO...
PRINT...
SET ALARM...
BACKUPS...
PREFERENCES...

MyCALENDAR™

THE FUNCTION/TASK
YOU HAVE REQUESTED
IS
NOT YET
IMPLEMENTED

RETURN TO CALENDAR

TUE

5	6	7				
12	13	14				
19	20	21				
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Select Payment Type:
CREDIT
Cider House Rules
Change date
Submit
CANCEL
TOTAL
$14.20