Fifty years since ‘Dr No’, we have technology the like of which Sean Connery could only have dreamed...

**IF THE SUBJECT OF IT security is ever going to be glamorous it’ll be when the latest Bond movie ‘Skyfall’ arrives this month.**

Espionage has changed in so many ways since the Bond movie franchise burst onto our screens with ‘Dr No’, 50 years ago in October 1962. Cold War spies in greatcoats have made way for stateless political and technology-sponsored espionage. Hollywood’s villains are now more likely to have English accents than Russian ones. Foreign agents are often the allies, while the adversaries are now rogue agents gone bad or blackmailed by some unspecified central European country: Megalomaniac Dr Evils are so ‘Austin Powers’. Half a century is an awful long time in politics but it’s even longer in technology.

The Cuban missile crisis fell just at the time of the first Bond movie’s release. The Caribbean Crisis as it was known in the Soviet Union came at the height of the Cold War and was the closest the world came to a Third World War (as far as we know). Previously-classified documents show the crisis was instrumental in shifting electronics and information technology into a higher gear ahead of the Space Race and the Moon landings in 1969. We have the story of how in our feature on p60.

So fast has been the pace of technological change that Bond’s gadgets from the 1980s onwards looked out of date before the film made it to video. The screenwriters of the Piers Brosnan era tried to reinvent Bond’s gadgets with ludicrous ideas like invisible cars. Thankfully the dufest gadgets and most blatant product placement were pared back again for the Daniel Craig era.

Gadgets like remote controls for cars look more than any remote-controlled car ever could, however cool. GCHQ, we suspect, is where it’s really at.

The latest Bond plays catch up with the real world. The plot revolves around a data leak – not because Bond fails to understand his obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and leaves his laptop on a train. It’s less realistic than that. But Mi6 needs some top IT skills as well as Bond’s brute force to save the day. “I can do more damage on my laptop in my pyjamas than you can do in a year in the field,” boasts the new Q, a computer whizz-kid played by Ben Whishaw.

Some things about Bond never change. I am pleased to say. Why for example is Sean Connery on our cover and not Daniel Craig? Well, for my generation at least he remains the coolest Bond.

**Ed’s Letter**

by Dickon Ross

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**Editors’ Note**

by Dickon Ross, Editor of the Year (Business Media), shortlisted

PPA Awards 2011 Dickon Ross, Editor of the Year (Business Media), shortlisted

PPA Awards 2011 Judith Pollard, Columnist of the Year (Business Media), shortlisted

PPA Awards 2010 Editor, the Year, Business and Professional Magazines (non-weekly), Winner

ESME Letter to John Rooney, Art Director of the Year, shortlisted

PPA Awards 2011 Kia Sanguezi, Consumer Electronics Editor, Writer of the Year, Business Media, shortlisted

PPA Awards 2011 Vitali Vinchik, Features Editor, Columnist of the Year, Business Media, shortlisted (After All column) shortlisted

PPA Awards 2010 Columnist of the Year, Business Media, shortlisted

Q-oat from Thames river chase in The World Is Not Enough (1999), equipped with jet propulsion.

Aston Martin DBS from Goldfinger (1964), modifications included typewriter, shredders and smoke screen.

Q ship from The Spy Who Loved Me (1977) transforms into submarine with periscope, and surface-to-air missiles.


Ericsson mobile phone from Tomorrow Never Dies (1997), doubles as 20,000-volt stun gun.

Little Nellie autogyro assembled from four suitcases, armed with air-to-air missiles. ‘You Only Live Twice’ (1967).