

magazine that focuses on hobbyist, "hardware-hacker" type projects. If I want reviews of consumer-electronics products, there are plenty of magazines that I can buy that review audio/video gear.

In short, I'm pretty happy with the magazine as it has been. I used to buy it solely for Don Lancaster's "Hardware Hacker" column, but lately that's gotten to be a little too self-promotional.

Thanks for asking for feedback!  
 STEVEN SPROUSE  
 via e-mail

### Alternate Executive Decision Circuit

I enjoyed the "Executive Decision Support System" (*Electronics Now*, September 1996). It has an answer for every question. (I didn't say it has the right answer, but it does have an answer!)

Figure 1 shown here illustrates a circuit that does essentially the same thing, but does not require a microcontroller. The heart of the circuit is IC1, a 6-kHz oscillator. When it's running, the LEDs light up, one after another, too fast to see. When you release the button, one LED stays lit.

To use eight LEDs instead of ten, disconnect pin 15 (RS) from ground and connect it to pin 9 (QS).

MICHAEL A. COVINGTON  
 Athens, GA

### Keep It Coming!

Please do not "improve" *Electronics Now*. There is a pretty good blend of consumer and technical articles and features in the magazine as it is. If I wanted more consumer and/or simpler projects, I would subscribe to one of the many consumer-oriented magazines that are out there already.

*Electronics Now* is one of the few magazines left that has not become entirely computer oriented. There is still a large area of electronics that is not digital, even though computer and digital circuitry is found as a part of most electronic items. With the demise of *Elektor Electronics USA*, *Electronics Now* is the only reasonably technical, readily available magazine left. Please remember that attempting to please everyone means that you could end up pleasing no one.

I especially enjoy the articles by Jeff

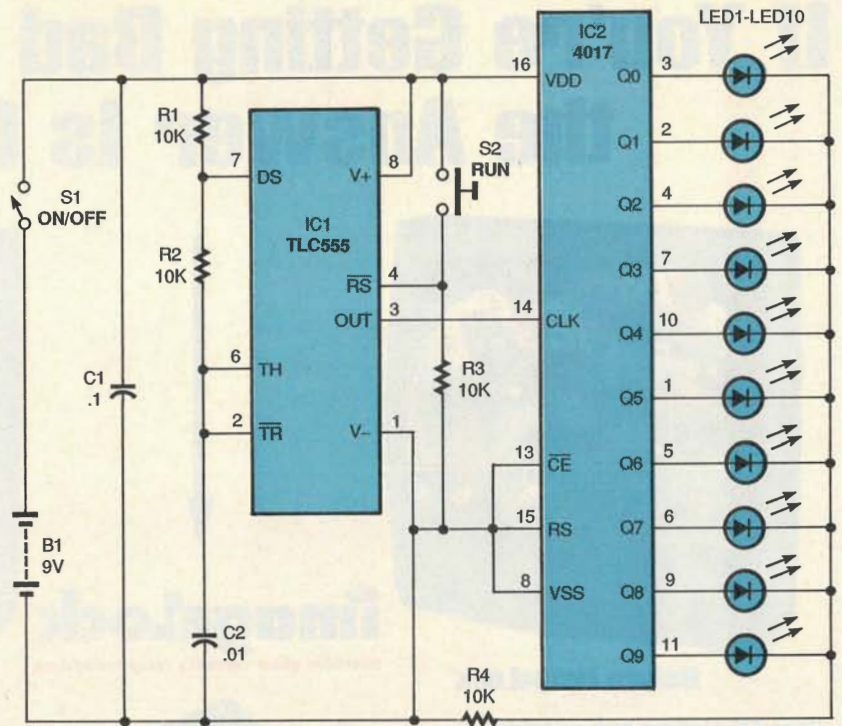


FIG. 1

Holtzman and Don Lancaster. I do not always agree with them, but they do keep me thinking! And the stereo compressor was just what I have been looking for to reduce the range of CDs when transferring them to cassettes for use in my car. It will also be useful for converting classical music to a background listening range.

KIRBY McREE  
 Jackson, MS

### Applauding Laser Experiments

I greatly appreciate Carl Bergquist's "Laser Experiments" column. In my job with the School Tour Division of Laser Fantasy International, I have the opportunity to perform educational laser shows in schools all around the country. After the shows, students and teachers usually ask me questions about different aspects of lasers.

Thanks to you, I can now direct them to Mr. Bergquist's concise and informative articles. I feel that anyone who wants to learn about the many uses of laser light should keep his columns handy for future reference.

I'm waiting for more! Keep up the good work.

In reference to Adam Rixey's letter (*Electronics Now*, September 1996), we

here at LFI design and manufacture a variety of professional, multi-color laser-performance systems. For the hobbyist, I recommend obtaining copies of catalogs from MWK Industries, Meredith Instruments, and Midwest Laser Products. All are long-time advertisers in *Electronics Now*. I also recommend studying a copy of the "Laser Safety Guide," available from the Laser Institute of America (12424 Research Parkway, Suite 125, Orlando, FL 32826; Tel: 407-380-1553).

Happy lasering, folks!

STEVE McHATTON  
 Redmond, WA

### No Hype, Please!

I have been reading *Electronics Now* for a long time— please keep it the way it is. If I wanted a review of a receiver or a CD player, I would read *Consumer Reports*, *Audio*, or any of the many, similar magazines.

The techs want magazines that are diversified. I guess Don Lancaster is kind of like the rest of us (he doesn't focus on just one small field of endeavor and likes to keep expanding his horizons).

Please keep the magazine as is, without the hype.

BOB MAKSON  
 via e-mail