

GM thinks you want to poke a tiny TV screen

The folks at GM research showed me a Cadillac last week that jammed every known mobile communications feature into a single car, turning it into a kind of surrogate office on wheels.

Heart of the system is the tiny television screen in the dash that GM has been playing around with for a couple of years. The tiny TV screen, which up to now has been used mainly to display radio and heater controls, was adapted to serve as a computer monitor and display for navigation system on the test car.

IT'S ONE of those so-called "touch screens," which gives it a kind of magical quality as you poke at little messages that kind of twinkle and

then spit up new messages, or maybe turn your radio on and off.

Actually, the difficulty of reaching down and poking the right message so that your radio changes its tune rather than resetting the air conditioning to 90 degrees is one reason nobody is buying tiny television screens in the dashboard these days. But I digress.

WHEN YOU poked the tiny TV on the demonstration car, it responded by showing a road map with a triangle that indicated the present location of your car. Then another panel, and stored information on local hotels would come on.

Another poke and information appeared such as room rates, the



auto talk
Dan McCosh

quality of the roast beef, etc.

Likewise for restaurants and other travelers' amenities. The car also was equipped with a cellular telephone, which could be activated by poking a sign called "Westin," for instance, and it would dial automatically.

Not content with dial-a-poke, the car also could be voice-trained to recognize the driver's command, so you could just grunt "Westin," for instance, and get the reservation desk.

Unfortunately, this leads to the possibility of your family dog getting hold of the system, bark-training the voice recognition system and booking himself into a luxury suite, but that's something GM will have to work on in the future.

THE TINY TV also keeps business records. Information that can be downloaded from a central office computer through the telephone into your car's computer.

The demonstration included mini-biographies and telephone numbers of potential contacts, all available on the tiny TV screen. You should have seen what they had on Don Runkle.

While I was still poking and marveling at the tiny TV, the demonstration went on to the fax machine in the armrest, the CD player, the overhead microphone for the hands-off cellular telephone, etc.

At which point it dawned on me that GM had created the potential for a genuine upheaval in the way we do business. While this thing might have started out as a way to get things done while stuck in traffic on the way to the office, it clearly presented the option of never getting to the office at all.

IT'S ACTUALLY a mobile version

of the ultimate information society office, where people roam around and exchange information and perform services, afloat from the world that grows, builds and produces.

Another thing occurred to me. If everybody has an office like this, how do you go about meeting somebody in his or her office? Instead of those crowds of sales reps at GM purchasing, we could have streams of cars chasing important people down the freeway, calling each other on their cellular telephones, faxing memos and poking at the TV screens for the next drive-in up ahead so that they can do lunch.

Franz Kafka would have liked that.

Dan McCosh is the automotive editor of Popular Science.

Meetings to look at Reagan legacy

The eight years of the Reagan Administration were characterized by economic growth, a decline in unemployment, a reduction in inflation and a generally healthy economy. Is this apparent success due to what George Bush in 1980 referred to as "Voo-Do Economics" or what Reagan called the miracle of Supply-Side Economics?

During the Reagan Administration the federal budget deficit reached an all-time high as did the U.S. trade deficit. In the last eight years the national debt increased more than it did during the previous 200 years, and the U.S. became the world's largest debtor.

CLEARLY, THE Reagan economic legacy is one of accomplishments and anomalies. Consequently, it is appropriate to undertake an examination of the entire scope of economic policies that characterized the Reagan years.

Fortunately, an outstanding conference has been organized that plans to do just that. This conference, to be held June 30 and July 1 at Oakland University, will feature personalities such as Martha Seger, member Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Thomas Moore, Hoover Institution and former member of the Reagan Council of Economic Advisors, Kenneth Lehn, chief economist, Securities



finances and you
Sid Mittra

and Exchange Commission, Don Fullerton of the National Bureau of Economic Research, and Craig S. Hakkio of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

A list of the main topics and their presenters follows:

June 30, 1989

8:15 a.m. — "Tax Policy and Business Fixed Investment During the Reagan Era" Charles W. Blschoff and Edward C. Kokkelenberg, State University of New York, Binghamton.

8:45 a.m. — "The Supply-Side Legacy of the Reagan Years: Effects on Labor Supply" Gary Burtless, The Brookings Institution.

10:15 a.m. — "Two Revolutions in Economic Policy: Growth-Oriented Macro Policy in the Kennedy and Reagan Administrations" Lawrence H. Meyer, Washington University; Joel Prabhakar and Chris Varvaras, Laurence H. Meyer & Associates.

10:45 a.m. — "Economic Efficiency in Recent Tax Reform History:

Policy Reversals or Consistent Improvements?" Don Fullerton, National Bureau of Economics Research and James B. Mackie, U.S. Treasury Department.

12:45 p.m. — Keynote address: "The Reagan Economic Performance" Thomas G. Moore, Hoover Institution and Former Member of the Reagan Council of Economic Advisors.

2 p.m. — "Trade Policy of the Reagan Years" Alan V. Deardorff, University of Michigan.

2:30 p.m. — "The Reagan Trade Deficit: A Bilateral Analysis" Steven Husted, University of Pittsburgh.

4 p.m. — "Exchange Rates During the Reagan Years" Craig S. Hakkio, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

8:45 p.m. — Keynote address: "Monetary Policy in the Reagan Era" Martha Seger, Member, Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System.

July 1, 1989

8:15 a.m. — "Monetary Policy, Deregulation and Interest Rates" Patrick H. Hendshott, Ohio State University and Joe Peek, Boston College.

8:45 a.m. — "Monetary Policy in the 80s: Admirable Objectives and Failed Realizations" Robert Rasche, Michigan State University.

10:15 a.m. — "Reagan Regulatory Reform: Did It Happen?" Arthur Denzau, Washington University.

10:45 a.m. — "Securities Regulations During the Reagan Years: Corporate Takeovers and the 1987 Stock Market Crash" Kenneth Lehn, Securities & Exchange Commission.

I urge you to attend this seminar. For further information and registration, call 370-3282 and ask for coordinator of Meadow Brook Conference. The conference costs \$250. See you at the conference.

The seminar, sponsored by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and Coordinated Financial Planning, will be 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, July 18, in the offices of Coordinated Financial Planning, Sheffield Office Park, 3250 W. Big Beaver, Suite 540, Troy. For reservations, call 643-8888.

Sid Mittra is a professor of finance, school of business at Oakland University and owner of Coordinated Financial Planning.

focus: small business **Mary DiPaolo**

Listening practice is worth the effort

How do you rate as a listener? Author Kerry L. Johnson has written "Salespeople: Are You Listening?" . . . to help those who may have problems with speaking before thinking—or listening.

According to Johnson, a good listener adjusts to emotionally laden words. This suggestion represents the fourth point in the eight-step process of developing successful listening skills.

As we listen to another speaker, there are certain words that trigger emotions. These words can cause a person to stop listening and focus on a bad or good experience. Examples include usage of the words, "inflation," "administration" and "expenses," to name a few.

Because these words may conjure intense feelings, Johnson recommends that the listener act, rather than react to their usage from the client's point of view. By avoiding associations of your own emotions to that of the client, the listener is in a better position to find out exactly what the client's concerns are.

Along with this, remember that a good listener listens to emotions as well as to the facts. Theoretically, 20 percent of communication is strictly facts and 80 percent is emotion.

Listening to emotions as well as facts ensures that a person will be better able to receive the entire message and respond accordingly. A good listener hears the speaker out. Everyone dislikes being interrupted, especially when speaking may be used as a means to think

aloud before a decision is reached.

By waiting until the other person is finished speaking, the listener is in a better position to respond to what points have been made.

A good listener prepares for a conversation. By having an outline of previous conversations, relevant notes or other material, information may then be gathered through a logical and flowing framework for ready referral.

This not only gives the listener a good idea of other questions to ask that may not have been previously covered but builds on the rapport that has been developed up to that time.

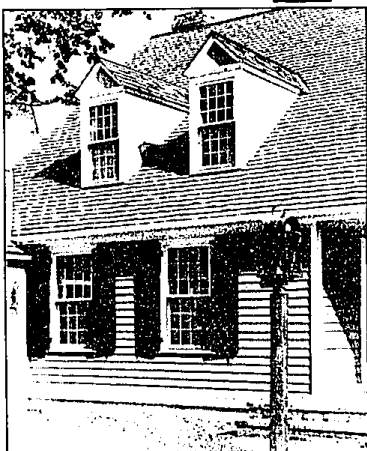
Finally, a good listener adjusts thought speed to speech speed. We speak at approximately 200 words per minute and think four times as fast.

A poor listener drifts off and easily becomes distracted. Rather than letting this happen, Johnson suggests mentally summarizing what the client has said, anticipate what he or she may say next, and keep track of the main points that have been made.

Being a good listener takes work and practice as does the ability to listen, think and then speak. For a copy of Johnson's listening skills self test, call MarkeTrends at 474-1149.

Mary DiPaolo is the owner of MarkeTrends, a Farmington Hills-based business consulting firm. She is also producer and host of the cable television series, "Chamber Perspectives."

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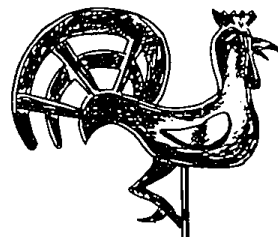
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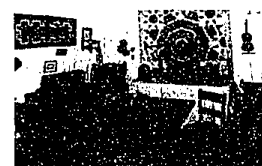
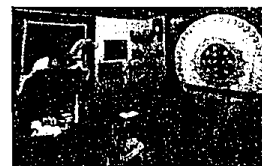
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