

# No doubt: The Internet leaves its mark on us

Technology and the Internet continue to impact society in major ways. There are so many new developments each week that it's often impossible to catch up. Here's a sampling of Internet and computer stories that have crossed my PC screen in recent weeks that you may have missed.

## Hookers online

The Internet, says Wired Magazine, has been a boon to the world's oldest profession. Male and female prostitutes and husbands of all kinds have flocked to the Internet to arrange their assignments. But a growing vigilante movement is seeking out their Web sites and turning them over to police.

## PC rage

The experts call it "TRA," for Technology Related Anxiety, or

"Computer Rage." According to a British study, hostility caused by frustrations with computers is widespread and manifests itself in people kicking, pounding and swearing at their computer terminals and/or verbally abusing their company's IT manager.

## Computerized microwave

A new computerized microwave oven, developed by Rutgers University in New Jersey, could replace the typical household microwave of today. By scanning the bar code on the package of food, the Intelligent Microwave can cook food just as a company intended: at the correct temperature and for the right amount of time.

The new invention also has the capability of warning people with allergies if the ingredients in the food could harm them. To be a successful consumer product, the new microwave still needs support from the food industry to encode information about their products in the bar codes.

## New e-mail service

A new e-mail service called Onebox will allow customers to

have their e-mail messages read back to them by a computerized voice over the telephone. Similarly, if you're on the run, you can call in and dictate an e-mail message which in turn will be converted to text and then sent to the recipients of your choice. It's being test marketed in several cities right now and will soon be nationwide.

## Solar storms to peak with Y2K

Y2K isn't the only problem we need to fret about. In late December and early January the world could see electrical power outages, satellites veering off course and cellular phone and pager disruptions because of a sudden increase in solar storms. That's when the 11-year sunspot cycle will reach its maximum intensity and scientists are worried.

"We call this the other Y2K problem," said JoAnn Joselyn, leader of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Space Environment Center.

## Do we really need this?

It's called "Aibo," or "Robo-Dog," a remote-controlled "pet"

that went on sale earlier this month for \$2,500 each. The entire inventory sold out after 20 minutes of online sales in Japan. It will be sold in the U.S. later this summer. The 11-inch tall toy sits, wags its tail and can be programmed to do tricks.

## Web site rip-offs?

The average cost to build a Web site that sells goods or services is \$1 million, a price tag that will grow 25 percent annually over the next two years, according to a study by the Gartner Group that examines the bottom line of building electronic commerce Web sites. The study, according to Steve Colyer of the Detroit-area web development firm Awesome Pages, underscores what he says is a growing scandal.

"Too many web development companies are simply ripping off their clients. It seems as if many of the big web developers have gotten together and set these ridiculous fees. There is no reason e-commerce or any Web site should ever cost that much."

Awesome Pages is the developer of the pcmlk Web site and specializes in "affordable" e-com-

merce.

## Browser war updates

A new study shows that Internet Explorer now has more than 50 percent of the browser market. The study, by the research firm InfoBeds, found that IE was installed on 33.8 million U.S. PCs, and Netscape browsers were on 32 million PCs. The study included users who use Netscape through America Online, which acquired the browser company earlier this year.

## Pirated software

A recent survey found that fully two-thirds of the business software on all computers is either stolen or pirated. The poll, conducted by the Business Software Alliance and the Software & Information Industry Association, showed 231 million, or 38 percent, of 615 million new business software applications installed worldwide during 1998 were pirated. That represented an increase of 2.5 million pirated applications over 1997.

## Troubleshooting seminar

My Next PCMike.WXYT Computer seminar is set for 10

a.m. to noon Saturday, July 10, at the MSU Conference Center at Square Lake Road and Crooks Road in Troy and is devoted to troubleshooting, maintaining and improving your PC.

Learn from PC Mike and a panel of experts what you need to do to keep your computer in perfect working condition. The seminar will also feature lots of tricks and tips to make your Net Surfing more productive and efficient, too.

There is no admission charge. There will be exhibits and displays and the latest information on PC upgrades and add-ons. Reserve your space now by calling the PC Mike Seminar hotline at (248) 423-2721.

Mike Wendland covers the Internet for NBC-TV NewsChannel stations across the country and can be seen locally on WDIV-TV4, Detroit. His "PC Talk" radio show airs Saturday and Sunday afternoons on WXYT Radio AM1270. His latest book "The Complete No Geek Speak Guide to the Internet" is available in book stores or through his Web site <http://www.pcmike.com>

## Farmington area students among graduates from 76th Oakland Police Academy training

After 15 weeks of training, 51 students — including a couple from the Farmington area — graduated from the 76th Oakland Police Academy Basic Police Training Program June 11. Ceremonies were held in the Oakland County Commissioners' Auditorium in Pontiac.

Southfield Police Chief Joseph F. Thomas was principal speaker, arriving at the auditorium shortly after directing operations at the Southfield Town Center, where a gunman fatally wounded two people, then killed himself that afternoon.

Nineteen of the 51 graduates were from law enforcement agencies throughout the metropolitan area. Such students enter the academy as offi-

cer trainees once they have been accepted for employment by the agency. The balance of the class consisted of students who are accepted directly by the academy, then find employment after graduating.

Oakland Community College has played a key role in the professional instruction of the region's law enforcement and other public services personnel since its establishment in 1964. The college's highly regarded police academy, founded in 1967 has enrolled more than 2,600 law enforcement trainees over the past three decades.

In 1981 a 207,000 square foot Criminal Justice Center to house the growing program was constructed at the Auburn Hills

Campus, and in a regional training center to provide state-of-the-art instruction to law, firefighter, and emergency medical personnel is scheduled for completion in the next two years.

Graduates are: Julie Adams, Northville; Anthony Barlow, Dearborn PD; Janet Baxter, Wayne County Department of Airports; Christopher Belling, Ferndale; Patrick Bickett, Waterford Police Department; Jeffrey Brooks, Mt. Clemens; Cory Brummeler, Holly; Kevin Coney, Highland Park Police Department; Carmelo Crapanzano, Taylor; Shona Davenport, Pontiac Police Department; Joseph Demare, Clawson; Nora Downe, Southfield; Jeffrey Filizek, Shelby

Township; Christopher Fritz, Waterford Police Department; Gilbert Garrett, Pontiac Police Department; Robert Gintner, Berkley Police Department; Nicole Gradinscak, Novi; Nader Jamil, Southfield; Charles Janacek, Pontiac; Shawn Johnson, Waterford; Adam Kammer, Farmington Hills; Wesley Kipke, Davisburg; Brian Kreilach, Oakland County Sheriff's Department; Dale Labombard, Sault Ste. Marie; Jonathan Lamb, West Bloomfield; Timothy Larrison, Auburn

Hills; Craig Lewis, Waterford; Julia MacCormack, Waterford; Brian McBroom, Monroe; Melissa McClellan, Oakland County Sheriff's Department; Bradley McKenzie, Clawson; Brandy Mendicino, Sault Ste. Marie; Christopher Miller, Oakland County Sheriff's Department; Christopher Miracle, Pontiac Police Department; Lonnie Mullins, Oakland County Sheriff's Department; Thomas Nelson, Flint; Mario Palacios, Pontiac Police Department; Michael Parame, Pontiac Police Depart-

ment; Larry Perry, Oakland County Sheriff's Department; Andrius Radze, Farmington Hills Police Department; Jay Reynolds, Troy; James Rohrer, Whitelake; James Saunders, Oakland County Sheriff's Department; David Silver, Goodrich; Michael Sloan, West Bloomfield; Timothy Stevens, South Lyon; Daniel Torolaki, Wyandotte Police Department; Jacob Wagner, Palmyra; Millisa Warren, Shelby Township; Timothy Wilcox, Birmingham; Paul Zimmer, Waterford.

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## THE ASSISTED LIVING SERIES: N° 3

"What's the best way to select an Assisted Living Community? Visit them."



I did, and it was a real eye-opener. I was impressed by the warmth, friendliness and stimulating atmosphere.

Many seniors live a rather isolated existence and, as they age, even their own homes can start to seem like foreign places. If your parent doesn't require the intensive care of a nursing home, you might want to consider the cheerful and caring environment of an Assisted Living Community.

I think you'll be impressed—as I was—by what you'll discover. I didn't know what to expect, but I found a positive, caring environment alive with activity and filled with wonderful people.

## What should I look for during a visit?

Does the staff seem friendly and do the residents appear happy and well cared for? Check out the private suites, as well as the restaurant and common living areas. Are they clean and attractive? Ask to see a menu and sample the food. Are meals well-balanced, nutritious and tasty? Speak with the residents and their families. Are they satisfied with the care and pleased with the service?

## When is the best time to visit?

There is no best time, but often there are interesting activities scheduled as well as luncheons and seminars. At all times you'll observe a caring staff, treating the residents with the dignity they deserve.

## How do you set up a visit?

Just call ahead to select a convenient time. Marriott has more than 120 Senior Living Communities nationwide and there's one right in Northville. Your interest in an Assisted Living Community will be welcomed and a personal tour can easily be arranged. One of their experienced counselors will be glad to help. Simply call (734) 420-7917.

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