

Internet access in your car changes driving experience



MIKE WENDLAND

Convergence and being connected has been the buzzwords when it comes to the Internet.

First, we saw Internet access move from the work place and schools, converging in our homes. Then we saw various forms of media converge around the World Wide Web, such as print and video, audio and video, that turned webpages into multimedia wonders.

Now, we're networking multiple computers in the home. And technology companies are working on so-called "Internet devices," things like toasters and microwaves, air conditioning and home security systems, that can be remotely controlled via the Net.

But General Motors thinks the ultimate convergence of the Internet will occur in our automobiles. Last week in Las Vegas, GM announced that starting

in 2000, it will offer Internet access in select Cadillac models. The service will later expand to other GM models.

Americans spend a total of about 500 million hours a week in their cars. That's a lot of down time. Being online while on-the-road could make for a much more efficient commute, GM reasons, thinking lots of us who live in "Internet time" will welcome the Net into our cars.

"We think offering personalized web-based services will usher in a new era in automotive communications that will change the role of cars and trucks for the American driving public," said Rick Wagner, GM's president and CEO.

The reason we haven't seen the Internet in our cars until now has largely been safety-related. The technology to reliably connect to the Net from our cars has been available for a couple of years. It's the danger of having to look away from the road to read Internet messages on an in-dash computer screen, that has stopped manufacturers from harnessing that technology.

GM's innovative approach will deliver

the Internet through something called the OnStar Virtual Advisor, a Personalized Advisor that uses wireless technology, state-of-the-art voice recognition and text-to-speech synthesis to audibly deliver e-mail, Net-based news stories, sports scores and stock reports.

There is no computer screen to distract the driver. The whole process is hands-free and works through driver voice commands. Saying something as simple as "Get e-mail" activates the system, sending it out on the Net to gather your e-mail. The text messages are then instantly processed by the OnStar system and read back by a synthesized voice.

GM expects that as many as a million people will sign up for its OnStar services in the next 18 months. Besides the Internet, OnStar offers driver navigation services through an in-vehicle Global Positioning System satellite device that keeps track of exactly where you are. Real, live people call OnStar Advisors are instantly reachable by a touch of a button for turn-by-turn directions. The advisors can also summon

help the event of an accident or breakdown.

The convergence of the Internet with all these on-board vehicle services is something all the carmakers are working on. But by announcing last week that personalized web-based services for a production model automobile will be offered next year, GM plans to out-pace the competition.

And e-mail and the other services are just the start.

At the sneak peek given journalists last week in Las Vegas, GM talked about other Internet innovations slated for our driving time. GM engineers showed me how a Palm VII personal digital assistant can be used to remotely unlock a vehicle, or flash the lights or sound the horn.

The automaker plans to offer Internet access capabilities that will allow MP3 music files to be downloaded from a home PC and then uploaded to a vehicle's entertainment system.

And just as many people now watch satellite TV at home, GM plans to offer satellite radio capabilities into cars and

trucks so that drivers can receive as many as 100 stations anywhere in the U.S.

PC Mike seminar

My "Maintaining and Troubleshooting Your PC" seminar will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Nov. 13 at Lawrence Technological University, 21000 W. Ten Mile Road, in Southfield (near Evergreen).

Organized by WKYT TalkRadio 1270, the session will cover the basics of maintaining your PC and diagnosing and repairing common problems. I'll also suggest ways to upgrade and improve your system. The seminar is free but you must have a reservation. Call the 24-hour seminar hotline at (248) 423-2721.

Mike Wendland reports about computers and the Internet for NBC-television stations coast-to-coast. His radio show is heard every weekend on TalkRadio 1270, WKYT. You can reach Mike through his Web site at www.pcmike.com

MEDICAL DATEBOOK

Items for Medical Datebook are welcome from all hospitals, physicians, companies and residents active in the Observer-area medical community. Items should be sent to: Medical Datebook, c/o The Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, e-mail kmortson@go.homecomm.net or faxed to (734) 591-7279.

TUE, NOV. 9
DOWN SYNDROME SUPPORT
 The Down Syndrome Support Group of Western Wayne County will meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 8:30 p.m. in the Plymouth District Library located at 223 S. Main Street in downtown Plymouth (734) 453-0750. Our group welcomes anyone that would like information on Down Syndrome. We host

various speakers that address issues concerning raising a child with Down Syndrome including medical needs, speech and language development, physical therapy, mainstreaming/inclusion, living wills & trusts, etc. For information call Michelle Gonzalez at (734) 394-0583 and Angela Malorana at (734) 414-0507.

WED, NOV. 10
WINTER READINESS
 Henry Ford OptimEyes will offer flu shots from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at their Westland Super Vision Center (35184 Central City Parkway). You'll also have the opportunity to "As the Experts," with AAA, Consumers Energy, Westland Car Care and Westland Police. Guest speaker: Mark Richter, M.D. from Henry Ford Health System. Call (734) 427-5200 for information.

THUR, NOV. 11
BIRTH AFTER C-SECTION
 A two part class for those women and their partners who have had a cesarean birth and are planning a vaginal birth for their next delivery. \$45, 7-8:30 p.m. Providence Hospital Southfield, 16001 W. Nine Mile Road, Southfield. Call (877) 345-5500. Second class Nov. 18.

NOV. 10 & 17
SUPER SITTING
 Part I: Instructions on basic baby-sitting skills, including safety, first aid, infant and child care. Part II: CPR for infants and children. Class for children in grades 5-8. \$30/Novi Park, Providence Medical Center Providence Park, Assarian Cancer Center, 47801 Grand River Ave., Novi. Call (877) 345-5500.

Procedure can detect blocked arteries

Residents have the opportunity to spend a few minutes doing something that could quite possibly save their lives.

Life Line Screening, in association with the Farmington Family YMCA, will offer three primary health screenings to detect the risk of stroke and vascular disease Wednesday, Nov. 10 at the Farmington Family YMCA.

On that day, Life Line Screening will offer a Carotid Artery Screening Test, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm, Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) and bone density screenings for women to detect osteoporosis.

These fast, painless, and low cost tests use ultrasound technology and are conducted by a registered or registered eligible



ultrasound Technologist. A board certified physician reviews the results of each test to ensure accuracy of the results. The findings are mailed to each individual. Individuals who's screening suggest further evaluation, are encouraged to seek appropriate follow-up care with their own physician.

Anyone interested in either the vascular or osteoporosis screenings must register at least 24 hours in advance. Please call (800) 407-4557 to schedule an appointment for the tests. The test are offered for thirty-five dollars each, which compare to between \$300 and \$500 for similar diagnostic tests offered by hospitals and imaging centers.

The Farmington Family YMCA is located at 28100 Farmington Road. Also available at the screening site will be free information on the identification and control of risk factors, how to recognize the warning signs and symptoms of stroke and other vascular diseases as well as helpful information regarding osteoporosis.

Midwives from page D4

an obstetrician. A healthy baby and mother is the bottom line. Sometimes intervention is necessary and sometimes it is not," Bachman said.

There are some circumstances that would cause a midwife to turn away patients and direct them down another avenue for their delivery. These high risk women include those with medical problems such as diabetes or high blood pressure and those

who are having multiple births such as twins.

Despite the many advantages of choosing a midwife, many women still don't consider it after becoming pregnant. Much of the reason may have to do with the misconceptions that have surrounded midwifery. However, many women don't feel they are eligible for a midwifery program.

Prisa was one such person.

"I just assumed that when I got pregnant with my third child that a midwife wouldn't take me because of the c-section I had with my second child and my age," said Prisa, who was 41 at the time.

"I found out that I was a good candidate. So if someone thinks like I did, they should check it out anyway. I would definitely use a midwife again."

Come join us on Sunday, November 21, 1999 at Jacobson's, Livonia for the

12th Annual Angela Hospice Light Up A Life Benefit

featuring celebrity guests, gourmet foods, shopping, and a live auction that will include:

Slot Machine
Fighter Pilot for the Day Fantasy Package
Vacation Packages, including Hilton Head, Macinac Island, Chicago, New York & California
Red Wing Tickets & Authographed Jerseys
Golf for Four at Tournament Players Club of Michigan
And much, much more!

General Admission Ticket: \$40
All proceeds from this event will benefit the many programs of Angela Hospice. So join us for all of the excitement on November 21.

For more information, call (734) 464-7810.

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FREE "LIVING TRUST" SEMINAR

"What You Ought to Know About Living Trusts"

(What you don't know could cost your family thousands of dollars!)

If you own a home...or you have assets worth at least \$100,000...you owe it to yourself-and your family-to get the facts on living trusts. If you think you're protected with a simple Will...think again...A Will *guarantees* that your estate will go through probate, which means that your family may not be able to take possession of your estate for many months, or even years!

Plus, if your estate is over \$50,000, your family may owe estate taxes which could amount to 37-55%.

This means that your family may have to sell some assets just to pay the estate taxes!

A living trust avoids all this by avoiding probate and minimizing estate taxes. Plus, a living trust will protect your estate if you become incapacitated during your lifetime by avoiding a conservatorship. This means that your estate will be managed as you see fit, not as a court-appointed guardian sees fit.

To find out more about the benefits of living trusts, attend one of these free seminars...

NOVI Tue., Nov. 9 7:00 - 8:30 pm Coffee & Cookies Novi Community Center 48175 Ten Mile Road	WIXOM Wed., Nov. 10 10:00 - 11:30 am Coffee & Cookies Whom Public Library 48018 Pontiac Trail	WESTLAND Thurs., Nov. 11 10:00 - 11:30 am Coffee & Cookies Henry Ford OptomEyes Building 35184 Central City Parkway	FARMINGTON HILLS Thurs., Nov. 11 10:00 - 11:30 am Farmington Community Library 32737 W. Twelve Mile Road	ROYAL OAK Wed., Nov. 17 7:00 - 8:30 pm Law Office of Einheuser & Associates, P.C. 28008 Woodward Avenue	ROCHESTER Thurs., Nov. 18 7:00 - 8:30 pm Coffee & Cookies Rochester Community House 810 Ludlow
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Refreshments Served-Plenty of free parking. Please arrive early, seating may be limited.

When you attend one of these seminars, you'll receive a FREE 1-hour consultation with an attorney (worth \$150... or you can find out how a living trust will benefit you.)

Law Offices of Einheuser & Associates, P.C.
Offices in Royal Oak, Uika, Brighton & Taylor

The attorneys at Einheuser & Associates speak to area residents about living trusts and property planning. They are members of the American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys-and their seminars are "informative & easy-to-understand."

Don't Delay - Call 800-884-8369 Now to reserve Your Seat or Register On-Line at www.EAestateplans.com (24-Hour Seminar Reservation Line)