Bet You Missed It

Rosann L. Bazirjian

Florida State University

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Where Are You?  
by Rosann Bazirjian (FSU)

This article summarizes the various computerized phone directories which are available to PC users. Both CD-ROM and Internet directories are evaluated for their price and comprehensiveness. Search strategies as well as privacy issues are discussed. I found this a useful article as I am anxious to track down some old college friends and hope that the sources listed will help me. See — Steve Kichen, “PC411,” Forbes, 157 (5) (March 11, 1996), p. 158-159.

I'm Still Waiting  
by Rosann Bazirjian (FSU)

This is an informative article about what to do when your PC breaks down. It was surprising to learn that according to a survey by PC World magazine, 11% of all new computer systems purchased come with at least one component which is not working. The author then goes on to state that after your computer “plays dead,” fixing it can be a “truly horrific experience.” The reader is informed not to expect to reach a service representative via the telephone for at least 28 hours after starting to make calls! The rest of the article is filled with advice on how to troubleshoot your PC yourself and what to look for in a warranty when purchasing one. See — Michael J. Himowitz, “Surviving a PC Meltdown,” Fortune, 133 (7), (April 15, 1996), p. 195-196.

The New BeBox  
by Rosann Bazirjian (FSU)

This article focuses on Jean-Louis Gassee, who has developed a new PC operating system which he is marketing as BeBox. This is an extremely powerful machine, and is being marketed to what Gassee defines as “geeks.” Because it is based on an entirely new operating system, it will not run Macintosh or Windows software, and is therefore not being marketed to home PC users. Gassee claims his ideal user “already owns two other computers, is familiar with UNIX, can program in C++... and spends a lot of time manipulating large graphics files with a program like Adobe Photoshop.” The article speculates on the potential success of the BeBox. See — Michael Noer, “Calling All Geeks,” Forbes, 157 (5) (March 11, 1996), p. 156.

E-mail Filters  
by Rosann Bazirjian (FSU)

This is an amusing article filled with guidelines on how to filter out unwanted email messages. The author calls these filters “bozo filters.” Per Guy Kawasaki, the following types of messages are not important and should be ignored: 1) writing in all caps (no one wants to get yelled at); 2) mail carbon copied to more than four people (someone else will take care of it); 3) email longer than five paragraphs (just read the first and last paragraphs — nothing in between is usually important); 4) mail with the following phrases: “First, a little bit of backround about myself” or “For Immediate Release” (no one wants to hear someone else’s life story or read a certain press release); 5) a signature longer than six lines (the signature is the “digital mirror of a person’s soul” — people do not pay attention to it if it is too long, and; 5) any “suspicious” or “screencious” email addressed (here he cites “edu” as an example, saying the message is probably from a student). See — Guy Kawasaki, “Bozo Filters,” Forbes, 157 (6) (March 25, 1996), p. 120.

Internet Addiction  
by Philip Dankert (Cornell University)

Are college students spending too much time in front of their computers? Apparently the number is small but it is growing. Although the phenomenon of excessive computer use is too new to know whether it should be classified as a disorder similar to a gambling addiction, many health professionals suggest that it is simply a symptom of other problems such as depression. A few campuses are attempting to do something about the problem, although imposing time limits on computer use may not be a good idea in the opinion of at least one psychiatrist. See — Thomas J. DeLoughry, “Snared by the Internet: College Officials Debate Whether Students Spend Too Much Time on Line,” The Chronicle of Higher Education, March 1, 1996.

IBM's Comeback  
by Rosann Bazirjian (FSU)

This article focuses on the “comeback” of IBM, but questions how long this success will last. Thanks to Louis Gerstner Jr., IBM has lowered its operating costs and has managed a 6.3 billion profit. Much of their success has been due to the sales of a new mainframe product dubbed CMOS (Complementary metal-oxide semiconductor). IBM continues to sell mainframes to customers such as banks, insurance companies and motor vehicle departments. However, the author questions how long IBM will be able to maintain a captive mainframe audience now that many large businesses are turning toward networks of servers. See — David Churbuck and Gary Samuels, “Can IBM Keep It Up?” Forbes, vol. 157 (11) (June 3, 1996), p. 142-144.

Libraries on the Internet  
by Sandy Beehler (Cornell University)

In two pages the author describes a number of library Web sites, along with some library news groups and virtual library sites. See — “Cyberlibrarian,” Internet World, July, 1996, p. 32.

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