



TECH DECISIONS

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Quick Take

Be Very Afraid

As if the highways aren't bad enough, there's this offering from Mobile Desk (<http://www.mobiledesk.com/>). Of course, the company says: "Warning! Not to be used While Driving."

Tales from the Front Lines

The people who wrote in about jokes they played reminded me of one we pulled on "Peter," one of the tech writers here. He used to send e-mail every few days pointing out problems with the Web site (wrong color, typos, etc.). So one day we came in early and edited the hosts file on his machine. When he went to our site, it actually pointed to a version we ran through a "jive filter." He came running in, all upset about it. We told him it was supposed to be that way—that we were making the site more fun so we would get more visitors.

He eventually e-mailed the COO to say that he thought the "new" site was terrible. Of course, [the COO's] machine pointed to the right IP address, and he didn't know what our friend was talking about. Needless to say, we hardly hear him complain anymore.

—Name withheld upon request

One of the favorite things we do to annoying "civilians"—especially those who aren't familiar with Microsoft Word—is to customize their menus when they aren't around. We never touch "File" or "Edit," but we'll shift the other drop-down menus around just a little. We also change the spelling of the menus,



like making "Insert" into "Inzert." It takes a while for these folks to come to us, and we usually tell them we're busy and, since it isn't affecting their work, to simply ignore it.

—Name withheld upon request

On my boss's birthday, we once put a small DOS batch file on his machine. When he booted up, he got a blue screen with the words, "Press any key to format the hard drive" and a timer underneath that counted down from 60 seconds. He came bolting into my office shouting, "Hurry! Hurry!" I made sure to take my time getting there just in time to see it reach 0 and the words "Happy Birthday Dan" appear. He has never forgiven us.

—Robin Royke, Hubbardsville, N. Y.

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