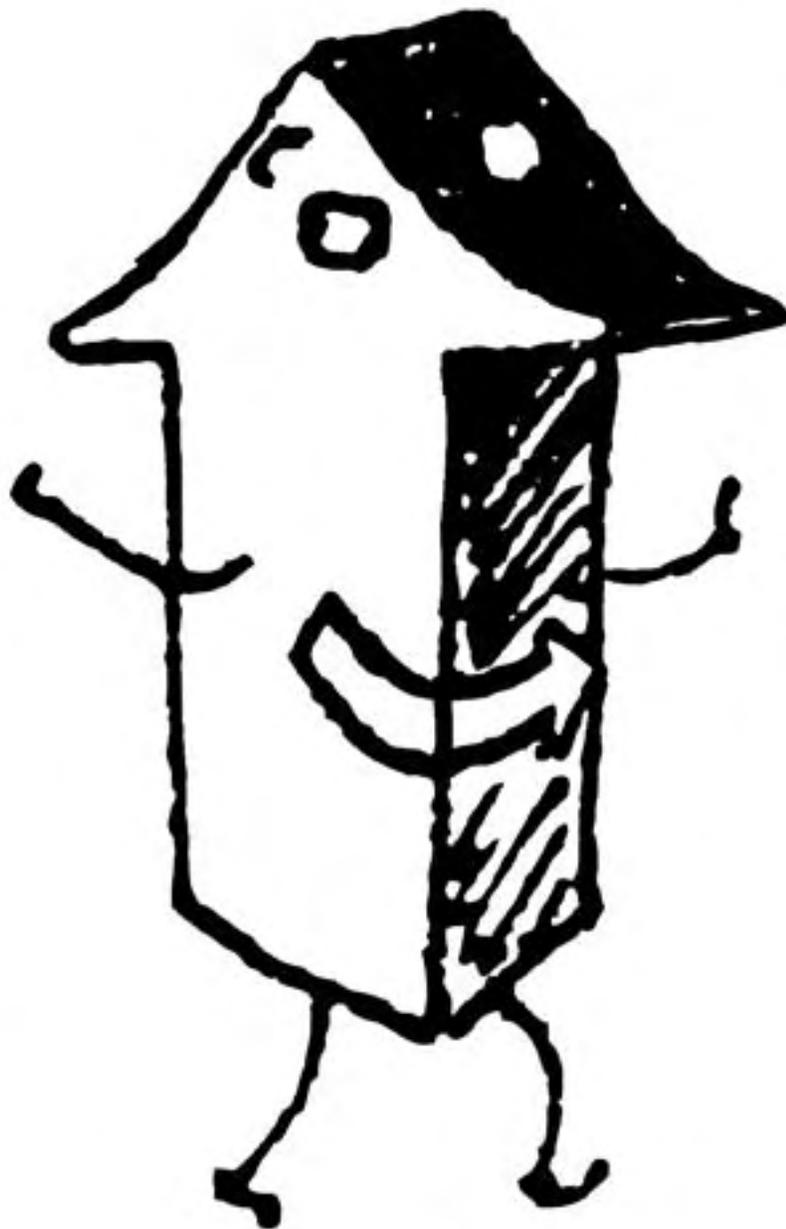


turn signals

snApsHots of Cultural PhenomenA From GVO's Customer AnALysis group

To: Gentle Readers

Date: 1995 - 2000



fast

% of Americans who say they're intimidated by computers:

30

% of children who have helped an adult use a computer within the last year:

57

% of Australian homes with a personal computer:

25

% of American homes with a personal computer:

33

1993 American sales of personal computers for the home:

\$8,000,000,000

1993 sales of books, magazines, and newspapers:

\$47,000,000,000

Number of American households with children and a PC in 1994:

15,000,000

Number of American households with children and a PC in 1997 (projected):

27,000,000

Source: WSJ 4/95, San Jose Mercury News 5/15/95, Internet Index, Morph's Outpost 3/95, Morph's Outpost 6/95



Uses for a paperclip: toothpick, tie clasp, Mac disc ejector, paperclip necklace, projectile weapon, earring, glue nozzle unclogger, fingernail cleaner, eyeglass repair tool, digital watch time adjustment activator

Check out the paperclip Home Page — <http://www.io.org/~rj/gi-hn/paperclip.gi>

calling cards

Number of Valentine's Day greeting cards purchased last year:

900,000,000

Number of telephone calls logged by AT&T, MCI and Sprint on Valentine's Day:

8,000,000

Number of Mother's Day cards purchased last year:

155,000,000

Number of telephone calls logged by AT&T, MCI and Sprint on Mother's Day:

200,000,000

Source: New York Times 5/14/95

on the internet, nobody knows you're a woman

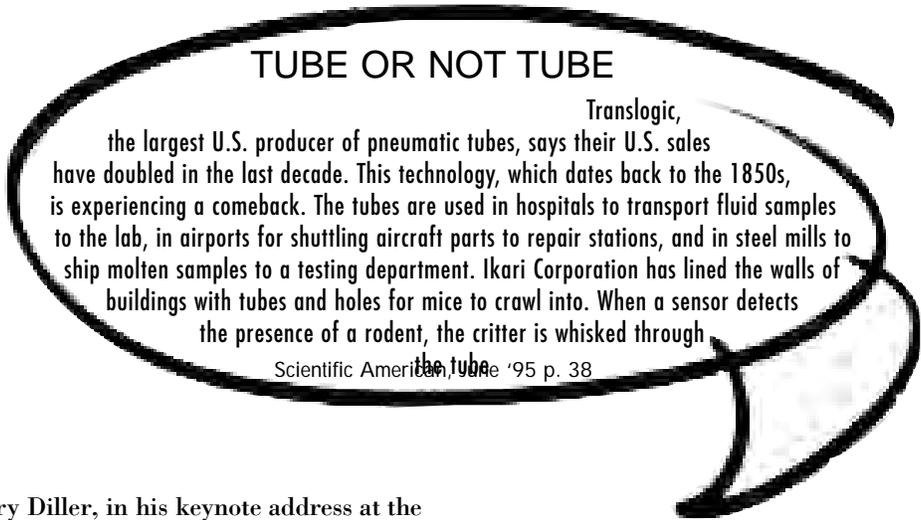
Japan Telescene reports that many Japanese women are opting to visit Nissan's Internet site to get information on cars, rather than brave the male-dominated showrooms. A recent study says that the gender imbalance on the Internet, long believed to be nine men to every woman, is now down to slightly less than two men to every woman.

Telecommunications Policy Review 4/9/95 p.11 Tampa Tribune 5/12/95



FLUSH WITH GREATNESS

French designer Philippe Starck has created a \$30 toilet brush which he describes as "the apotheosis of my career". (News of the Weird, 6/14/95)



New Stand

Former Fox Network CEO Barry Diller, in his keynote address at the American Magazine Conference:

“We will fall short if we impose our own familiar business models on the coming convergence

Telephones were not just telegraphs with a voice. Computers weren't just calculators with keyboards. And in the future, no one will call your product 'magazines with sound and moving pictures'". (Wired, 2/95)



WASTE NOT...

Owens-Corning Fiberglass in Toledo, Ohio, is building a \$100 million headquarters based on a design which does not include file cabinets, so the company has a little more than a year to create the "paperless office". The corporation's Chief Information Officer says that "the fact that we're building a new headquarters was such a wonderful icon for the workplace transformation". (Computerworld 3/27/95)

...WANT NOT ?

Figures from the American Forest and Paper Association indicate that the tonnage, since 1983, of annual shipments of U.S. office paper has gone up 51%. (Fortune 7/1//94 P.62)



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fast



Number of Oreo cookies consumed by Americans last year: **16 billion**

Percentage of those that were eaten whole: **50**

Percentage twisted: **18**

Percentage dunked: **15**

Value of RJR Nabisco, maker of Oreo cookies: **\$15 billion**

Gallons of milk produced by California's 1.3 million cows in 1994: **2,900,000,000**

Gallons of milk used annually by the Hershey plant in Hershey, PA: **63,875,000**

1994 income of Hershey Foods Corporation: **\$184,219,000**

Funds raised by dairy industry leader Borden Inc.'s February sale of all its RJR Nabisco shares: **\$675 million**

Number of bags of Doritos sold annually worldwide: **950 million**

Pounds of potato chips consumed by average American in one year: **7**

Percentage of **Giga Bites: The Hackers Cookbook** devoted to chip dips: **33**

San Jose Mercury News, 6/27/95; SF Examiner, 7/30/95; <http://www.hersheys.com/~hershey>; SF Chronicle, 2/17/95; SF Chronicle, 11/17/94; *Everybody Eats*, Marcia Mogelonsky, 1995; SF Examiner, 7/9/95

FACTs



What about the espresso machine?

A recent survey by Visa asked members of the demographic group commonly referred to as Generation X to rate the technological advances that had the most impact on their lives in the past 10 years. The winners in order were: microwave ovens, ATMs, supermarket scanners, CD players, personal computers, cellular phones, and fax machines.

St. Petersburg Times, 7/10/95

A Catchy title

In 1948, Swiss engineer George DeMaestral was walking in the woods with his dog when he noticed cockleburs sticking to his socks, his trousers, and the fur of his dog. Curious, DeMaestral examined the phenomenon under a microscope and seven years later patented the fastening device now known as Velcro. The Rip-Tie Company in San Francisco markets a range of Velcro products including heavy duty Earthquake Velcro which can be ripped and reclosed only 5 times (versus 10,000 times for regular Velcro) and is designed to hold furniture and other objects firmly in place during seismic shakes.

http://www.riptie.com/g/p/_1522b22f/velcro/story.html

FAMILY VALUES SELL... BUT WHO'S BUYING?

1994 U.S. Magazine Circulation

Health961,113
Home1,043,964
Self1,314,315
Parents1,776,470
Money2,100,039
TV Guide14,122,915



News Clip

The paper clip known as the Gem (as seen in the previous Turn Signals) accounts for the vast majority of the 20 billion paper clips sold each year. Yet inventors and designers continually try to develop a better clip. Several hundred new paper clip designs have been patented since the Gem was invented in 1899 by Norwegian Johan Vaaler. The Gem's long-time domination of this \$20 million U.S. market means that any new clip design could cost consumers five times more. The Gem's simple design also accounts for its popularity. Henry Petroski, professor of engineering at Duke University, feels the Gem endures because its graceful curves, "resonate with people's conception of what's nice and elegant."

Wall Street Journal, 7/24/95



FAX POPULI

A Gallup poll of Fortune 500 companies found that fax charges accounted for 40% of the average company's \$34-million phone bill last year. The mean number of fax machines per location is 27, up from 19.

Wall Street Journal, 3/23/95



Can you pass the salt?

IBM and TelePort Corp. are building 600 tele-dining rooms that will allow the breaking of bread over telecommunications lines. Each table is a large half-circle butted up against a full-size screen on which diners can see their counterparts on the other end. Hilton, Hyatt, and Doubletree have expressed interest in the \$150,000 set-up, and plan to rent tables for \$69 to \$149 an hour plus meals and tips. Wall Street Journal, 6/26/95

the Times/Roman they are A-changin`

Writer Steven Levy on technological advances:

“When I toiled on a typewriter, I never spent a whole morning installing a new ribbon.

Nor did I subscribe to Remington World and IBM Selectric User. I did not attend the Smith-Corona Expo twice a year. I did not scan the stores for the proper cables to affix to my typewriter, or purchase books that instructed me on how to get more use from my Liquid Paper.”

San Francisco Chronicle, 7/10/95

In July, Smith-Corona, which first patented its electric typewriters in 1956, filed for bankruptcy.

Communications of the ACM, 9/95

Welcome to the Next Level

Video game companies are starting to realize that they're missing out on half the market by targeting only boys. Sega of America has had a Girls' Task Force for the past two years, trying to understand girls and to develop a series of products for girls. It seems that the design of the interaction itself is more important than the marketing of the product. Observes a founder of Los Angeles-based e-Girl Interactive, "Girls have a different reward system. They want games that allow them to create, undergo personal transformations, and play socially. Boys are generally apt to compete, whereas girls compete with themselves." Trina Robbins, writer and artist of Hawaii High, a CD-ROM marketed to girls, says, "If we don't get girls interested in computers at an early age we're just going to have guys behind the wheel on that superhighway."

Digital Kids, 6/95; ID Magazine, May/June 1994



Dollars and sense

A study by two business school researchers at UNC-Chapel Hill suggests that consumers who get an unexpected discount will tend to treat the bonus money differently than money they saved by budgeting or other financial effort. When they get a windfall, the money goes into a *Spend Now* account in their mental ledgers.

Marketing Letters, 6:2, 1995



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fast

% of US households with cordless phones: **46**

% of Americans with cellular phones: 

% of Swedes: **16**

% of Canadians: **6**

Number of phone lines in the world:

645,000,000

Number of people per phone line (world): **10**

% increase in international telephone minutes over 10 years: **300**

Expected waiting time for a new phone line in Russia: **10 years**

Number of new cellular subscribers in the US, daily: **15,000**

Average monthly usage of cell phone (US): **6 hours 45 minutes**

Ad Age, 8/28/95, The Economist, 9/30/95, SF Examiner, 10/3/95, SF Examiner, 2/7/95, SF Examiner, 6/13/95



facts

Modus Operandi

Some HP scientists in England are being encouraged to use real-life experiences in developing the next technological break-through. One opera fan gets some of his best ideas while listening to Verdi. Another scientist has used an understanding of electric fish to develop ways of controlling a computer with hand signals.

Wall Street Journal, 10/16/95

Let the Butler Do It

A lawyer has developed the Phone Butler, a device designed to end annoying telemarketing calls. As soon as you realize you're the recipient of a junk call, you can touch the star button on your phone and a British voice will tell the caller, "Pardon me, this is the Phone Butler, and I have been directed to inform you this household must respectfully decline your inquiry. Kindly place this number on your do-not-call list."

St. Petersburg Times, 10/24/95

From your fingers to God's ears

For \$9.95, Lindsay Scientific will scan in your typed or handwritten prayer and send it via microwave deep into space, at which point electronic messages "become available to be intercepted by God." Their literature explains further: "Prayers, especially thankful ones, are often published as advertisements in newspapers, but we have to say (with no disrespect) that there is not much evidence that God subscribes to daily newspapers."

SF Examiner, 10/15/94
<http://www.primenet.com/~prayers>

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS ... EVENTUALLY

What section of the newspaper do Fortune 1000 presidents and vice-presidents read first?

Sports.....	32%
Lifestyle.....	21%
Front page.....	18%
Horoscope	16%
Comics	10%
Business	2%
Other.....	1%

Training & Development, June 1994

feeding frenzy

In the past five years, the popularity of all-you-can-eat restaurants in Japan has exploded. This fad is called **Viking** after the Imperial Viking in Tokyo, which pioneered this dining concept in Japan in the 1950s. Among men, the preference is for Chinese food and spaghetti. Women frequent restaurants like The Cheesecake Factory where they pay \$15 for cheesecake, Viking style.

SF Chronicle, 10/14/95

“ ... VRRROOOOOM (TM)
 Harley-Davidson is seeking a trademark for the roar of its engines, in order to prevent other companies from making motorcycles which have the Harley sound.
 SF Chronicle, 10/7/95

The ICing on the Cake

General Mills is holding a contest to come up with the new face of Betty Crocker. The faces of 75 winners will be blended into one computer-generated image from which artist John Stuart Inge will paint a portrait. General Mills spokesman Craig Shulstad says, “The company is attempting to reflect the diversity and evolving changes of American women.” Entrants must submit a brief description of how they enjoy cooking and baking, are committed to family and friends, are resourceful and creative in handling everyday tasks, and are involved in the community.

SJ Mercury News, 9/12/95

Attention Deficit

Economist Herbert Simon on the information glut:

Information “consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence

**a wealth of
 information
 creates a poverty
 of attention.”**

Scientific American, September 95

Backing up to the Future

Anticipating obsolescence, the director of the National Archives' Center for Electronic Technology says, “You can get an optical disk that may last for a hundred years, but in 10 years you won't be able to find a drive to read the thing... We figure we're safe for a decade. That means that in 10 years we expect to have to copy everything onto something else, but we don't know what that will be.”

New York Times, 10/1/95

Lord won't you buy me a Mercedes-benz

Mercedes-Benz has developed an experimental car with seven different airbag systems, and a total of 17 airbags. There are knee bags, side bags, a center bag to separate the driver and passenger, roof bags for rollover accidents, head-restraint bags for rear-end collisions, and a full set of rear bags for passengers in the back seat. Future production models will include a device to detect the position and size of the car's occupants.

Popular Science, July 95



Call and Response



New technology being developed at Johns Hopkins University will enable cell phones in cars to automatically call 911 in the event of an accident. This system would use global positioning satellites to obtain the location of the crash, and then relay the info to the 911 response team.

St. Petersburg Times, 10/5/95



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Help! I'm Trapped inside a Hosiery Factory

Enclosed inside each new package of Evan-Picone hosiery is a small card containing one of 45 uplifting messages, such as, "Dare to dream the outrageous 'what ifs' in life." Creative director Carin Ullman says the concept ties in with a growing interest in astrology, meditation, and spirituality.

Sales & Marketing Management, Dec. 1995



fast

Average number of stores visited during one shopping spree: **3**

15 years ago: **7**

Average number of mall visits per month: **1.6**

15 years ago: **3**

Number of catalogs mailed out to Americans last year: **13 billion**

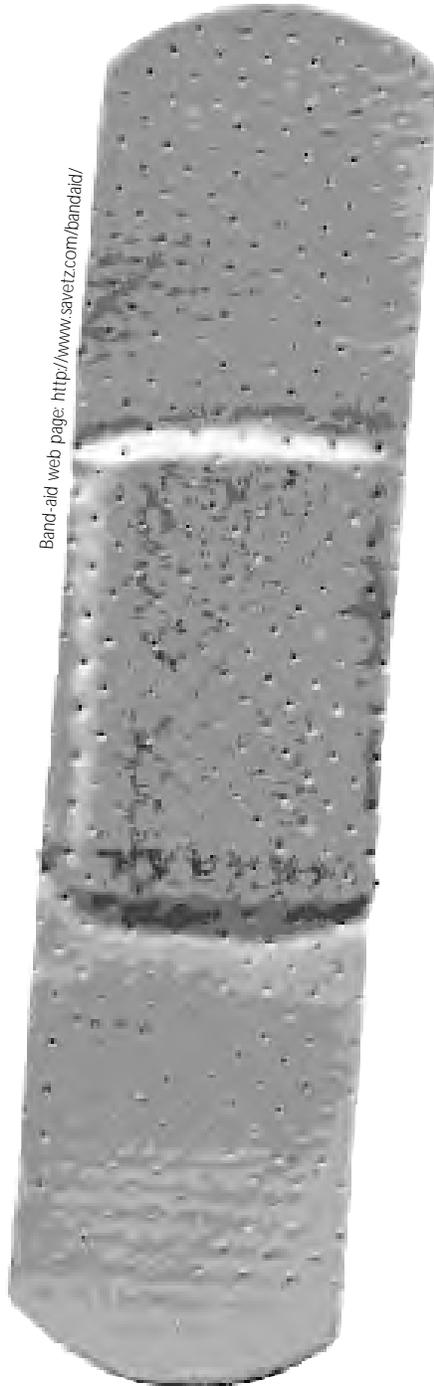
Average number of catalogs for every adult and child in the U.S.: **51**

Total U.S. catalog purchases last year: **\$63 billion**

% of Americans who made at least one catalog purchase last year: **44**

Business Week, 11/27/95; USA Today, 12/15/95; Industry Surveys, 6/15/95

facts



Band-aid web page: <http://www.saveitz.com/bandaid/>

Publish or Perish

As more academic journals are becoming available on the Internet, publishers of established, paper-based journals fear that their industry, based on high-priced subscriptions and esoteric publication topics, may be facing a total collapse. 700 journals are now available on-line, up 66% in the last year. While some schools are reducing library expenses — Louisiana State University has canceled subscriptions to 1,569 journals — the current prices for one-year subscriptions to stalwart snail-mail journals include \$5,500 for *Gene*, \$10,775 for *Nuclear Physics B*, and \$14,000 for *Brain Research*.

Forbes, 12/18/95



YOU MAY ENTER, GARLIC BREATH

A security system being developed at Tufts University will allow entrance to secure areas based on a person's unique body odor. The system detects smells via fiber-optic sensors and identifies them using a neural network.

Business Week, 12/11/95

WE'RE MAKING SWEATERS, CRANK UP THE OZZY

Kuraray, a Japanese manufacturer of synthetic fiber, says it has a method for making rayon yarn of different thicknesses based on the type of music played during the production process. The company will launch a new yarn this month, although the musical selection has not yet been specified.

San Francisco Chronicle, 12/4/95

PONG [SLIGHT RETURN]

Atari's Pong, which provided many with their first exposure to computer technology, is undergoing a resurgence in popularity. Game machines, originally manufactured in 1972, are being retrieved from attics while bar owners are installing the games in trendy night spots. Game designer Chris Crawford suggests that Pong's popularity is in response to the daunting complexity of new games such as *Mortal Kombat III* or *Street Fighter II*. Many game designers believe that consumers long for the simple playability of Pong.

San Jose Mercury News, 12/18/95

mashing Success

The computer-generated movie "Toy Story" has led to tales of big sales for back-to-basics toys such as Slinky, Etch-A-Sketch, and Mr. Potato Head. Hasbro expects sales of its 44 year-old Mr. Potato Head to increase 25 percent in the wake of the movie. The anthropomorphized vegetable originally sold as a collection of face parts that children would push into an actual spud. The plastic tuber made its debut in 1964. Mr. Potato Head later became a non-smoker, discarding his pipe in 1987.

San Francisco Chronicle, 12/1/95; <http://www.sepc.sony.com/SSI/Pop/PH/potato.html>

See Mr. Potato Head on-line at <http://westnet.com/~crywalt/pothead/pothead.html>



Preacher On Features

Author, Apple Fellow, cognitive psychologist, and user interface pundit Don Norman on *creeping futurism*:

"Business has been pulled into the software subscription model...You make more money in the upgrade than in the original item..."

My dream is specialized software, specialized hardware, essentially the appliance model...to get away from the complexity problem."

interactions, april 1995



ANOTHER BOTTLE OF INSPIRATION

French wine growers labeled a million wine bottles with profiles of unemployed people. A representative explained, "The table is a place for conviviality, but it's also a place where business is discussed."

The Georgia Straight, 12/28/95

FOOD CHAIN

Nabisco has introduced a line of animal crackers depicting endangered species such as camels, peregrine falcons, and Komodo dragons. Product manager Greg Price says, "Our hope was that children will line them up, match them up with the name on the box, learn about them and then decapitate them."

The Georgia Straight, 12/28/95

Back to the Drawing Board

Crayon leader Crayola is removing its food-scented crayons from the market in response to concerns that children might be inclined to snack on the piquant pencils. Aromas such as chocolate, coconut, licorice, and blueberry will be replaced by cedar chest, baby powder, dirt, and new car. More than 3 million boxes of the food-scented crayons have been sold since their release in July of 1994 and there have been 10 reported cases of children ingesting the non-toxic crayons. Meanwhile, at the Crayola plant in Easton, Pennsylvania, product designers get close to their end users by talking with some of the 2,000 children who tour the plant each month. One child, while drawing with a prototype shade of orange, said the color looked like "macaroni and cheese", which became the non-scented crayon's official name.

San Jose Mercury News, 11/15/95; ID, Nov. 1995



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Sweet Hearts

As times change, so do the sayings on the tiny candy valentine hearts made by Necco. Many of the 100 sayings, such as *Kiss Me*, *Say Yes*, and *Be Mine*, have appeared on the hearts since they first appeared in 1902. Phrases dropped in 1996 were: *Dig Me*, *Cha-Cha*, *Crazy*, *Hot Dog*, *Say Bud*, *Why Not*, *Far Out*, and *Yea Man*. Some of eight million sugary sentiments produced this year will contain up-to-date phrases such as *Fax Me*.

San Francisco Chronicle, 2/14/96



Turbulent Times

The 20-year-old Concorde is hitting hard times. With only 20 planes flying and declining ridership, it has yet to recoup its \$8 billion development costs. Air France's Concorde ridership fell 5.6% in 1995 while international travel rose 4.1%. The airline has discontinued the practice of lavishing *Conckers* (frequent Concorde flyers) with special gifts, such as underwear emblazoned with the Concorde logo. In an apparent effort to familiarize middle America with the benefits of supersonic travel, residents of Wichita, Kansas this summer will be able to walk through a visiting Concorde for \$5 or take a one-hour flight for \$545. As well, the Concorde will be on-hand to help Dayton, Ohio celebrate its 200th anniversary this summer. Despite these measures to appeal to a wider audience, neither Air France nor British Airways will be lowering Concorde airfares (\$4,509 New York to London, one-way). A British Airways spokesperson says, "It would ruin the integrity of the product. The people who fly this plane aren't the type who call their travel agent for the best price."

Wall Street Journal, 2/23/96



Doesn't Ring a Bell

Students at Happy Valley Elementary are finding the rotary phone in the school office a telecommunications challenge. The children, who have rarely seen a buttonless phone, regard dial phones as awkward and cumbersome. One fourth-grader expressed his preference for the ubiquitous touch-tone paradigm thusly: "I can figure it out faster. It'd take me at least an hour to make two calls (using the dial phone)."

San Jose Mercury News, 1/29/96

Coffee, Tea, or Vichyssoise?

As a special reward for frequent fliers, American Airlines is giving away an 18-page cookbook entitled *A Taste of Something Special*, as the preface states "because some of our customers frequently request recipes so they can prepare their in-flight favorites at home." Recipes include cream of yucca soup and, predictably, peanut-crusted chicken.

San Jose Mercury News, 2/8/96

Working on the fly

For as little as \$6 an hour, busy travellers can rent a Ziosk work booth. The Ziosk can be found in Chicago's Union Station, Thunder Bay airport, and Minneapolis-St. Paul airport. The smallest booth is 3'x7', and contains a desk, chair, clock radio, fax, phone, TV, and VCR. The largest booth also contains a couch. Because of low demand, Ziosks in San Jose and Miami were removed. Hub airports, where travellers may be marooned for up to 5 hours between flights, are proving to be good markets for the mini-offices.

Microtimes, 1/3/96



Slim Chance for low-fat

Despite tremendous press about health and nutrition, consumers still prefer heavier fast-food and restaurant fare. McDonald's is phasing out the reduced-fat McLean Deluxe hamburger, which contains a seaweed derivative. Meanwhile, a recent study by the Center for Science in the Public Interest discovered that Denny's "Grand Slam" breakfast has more fat than two Quarter Pounders with Cheese. Jeffrey Prince of the National Restaurant Association says that even when low-fat choices are available to consumers "the overwhelming majority choose the traditional breakfasts."

San Jose Mercury News, 2/6/96; San Francisco Chronicle, 2/22/96



Ma Bell Tower

GTE Mobilnet is placing cellular transmission equipment inside the bell tower of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in San Jose, CA. The place of worship will receive \$1100 per month to help offset the \$2 million in damages sustained in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, while GTE will have access to the only high spot in the neighborhood.

San Jose Mercury News, 2/10/96

CROSS TO BEAR

The Church of England dropped the crucifix from its printed ads promoting Easter because, according to Rev. Robert Ellis of the church-owned Advertising Network, it "carries too much cultural baggage." Marilyn Baxter, an executive with ad agency Saatchi & Saatchi commented that "the cross is arguably the best-known brand logo in the entire world."

The Georgia Straight, 12/28/95

Infomercial

Former techno-revolutionary and current Web visionary Steve Jobs

“We live in an information economy, but I don’t believe we live in an information society.”

People are thinking less than they used to. It’s primarily because of television. People are reading less and they’re certainly thinking less. So, I don’t see most people using the Web to get more information. We’re already in information overload. No matter how much information the Web can dish out, most people get far more information than they can assimilate anyway.”

Wired, February 1996

BUY A VOWEL

Wells Fargo Bank is taking over First Interstate later this year, freeing up a rare and coveted piece of corporate identity: the single-letter stock symbol "I" which currently represents First Interstate. The New York Stock Exchange may use this vacancy to lure Intel from Nasdaq (where it trades under INTC) to their exchange, where they also have M (abandoned by Montgomery Ward) to tempt Microsoft (currently MSFT on Nasdaq). Like logotypes, a good stock symbol can provide a memorable introduction to investors. Comfortably informal Southwest Airlines trades under the symbol LUV. Traders develop their own lingo around stock symbols, calling Caterpillar (symbol: CAT) "Cat Tractor", AT&T (symbol: T) "Telephone", and McDonnell-Douglas (symbol: MD) "Mad Dog".

San Francisco Chronicle, 2/15/96



FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

Office workers who scurry to the printer to pick up a confidential memo or a fresh copy of their resume can now relax, knowing that their laser printouts will remain private. Xerox has introduced a confidential printer bin, which will allow users to secure their printouts in one of 10 password-protected output trays.

San Francisco Chronicle, 1/25/96

I’d like to buy the world a coke

Now available in China, Coke products generated only \$119 million in sales last year. Recognizing the limitations of an American brand in this unique market, Coca-Cola has spent two years developing a beverage tailored for the Chinese consumer. The ad campaign for TianYuDi (which is Mandarin for Heaven and Earth) is designed to brand the product as a nationalistic beverage, mixing traditional and modern images of today’s China. The company hopes that TianYuDi can succeed not only in China, but around the world—Simon Yip, Coke’s director of brand development says he hopes that "a Chinese brand could be a global brand." However, beverage industry expert John Carlson suggests this may be a "short-term political opportunity rather than a long-term business proposition", since multinational investors are required by the Chinese government to provide technology-transfer benefit to China.

Wall Street Journal, 2/23/96; New York Times Magazine, 2/18/96



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ChoICE

"It is not the content but context that will matter most a decade or so from now. The scarce resource will not be stuff, but point of view."

Paul Saffo, Institute for the Future

"While technology can help enable or mediate experiences, even experiences which were never before possible, most meaningful experiences are the result of people interacting together or personal discoveries that are more important than the technologies themselves."

Nathan Shedroff, creative director of Web design firm vivid studios

"The imagination of the (computer) industry is focused on the machine and not on the lives of the people using it, and certainly not on the concrete activities within which the machine is to be used."

Phil Agre, UC San Diego, editor, the Network Observer

Words

You deserve a break today

In these times of ubiquitous advertising, ads can be found on grocery receipts, gasoline pumps, urban sidewalks, ATM receipts, and school lunch menus. In grocery stores, stickers placed on kiwis urge shoppers to try kiwi-strawberry Snapple. Golfers retrieving their putts may spot an advertisement for Subway or Budweiser in the bottom of the cup. Market Media Inc. is selling ad space on supermarket floors. "People today don't have time to read the newspaper or watch television," says Lee York, vice president. The floor "is a barren environment. It's similar to putting a billboard out on a cornfield, where there's literally nothing around, so your eye just sort of gravitates to it."

San Jose Mercury News 3/17/96; San Francisco Examiner, 9/15/95

Cup deVille

Following the design maxim "smaller, cheaper, faster, and with more cupholders," General Motors Canada has introduced the beverage-ready Chevy Venture. This minivan is bristling with 17 cupholders, providing 2.43 per drinker when fully loaded with 7 passengers.

Globe and Mail, 4/17/96



Freeze Frame

Researchers from Whirlpool Corporation have tried a new way to see how customers use their products. Seventy-five families agreed to have video cameras set up to automatically record the contents of their refrigerators. The results: more drinks and fewer raw ingredients than expected. Whirlpool concluded that refrigerators have essentially become beverage coolers. More beverage containers and pre-packaged foods means that Whirlpool refrigerators will continue to get bigger. The videotapes revealed few unusual items but an earlier phone survey found refrigerators stocked with oddities such as a shoe, a toaster, fish bait, a cordless phone, and a copy of TV Guide.

Globe and Mail, 4/16/96

Burning Love

Testimonials from longtime owners of major kitchen appliances show how people become emotionally attached to their ovens and refrigerators. The ritual of family meals generates a comfortable familiarity with the appliances. Ellen Teagarden, 84, of Dallas, owns a 55 year-old Magic Chef oven that is photographed each Thanksgiving Day. When Ellen considered getting rid of the oven recently, her four grown children protested. "I have such fond memories of that stove," says Ellen's daughter. Minnie Tucci of Maplewood, Minnesota hasn't defrosted her basement freezer in 15 years because she fears that the 50 year-old appliance might not start up again after being unplugged. "I don't want to put a curse on it. I might go downstairs and find it's dead," says Minnie.

Wall Street Journal, 2/23/96

Mything in Action

An 8-foot Jolly Green Giant, an Aunt Jemima doll, the Michelin Man, and a Buster Brown statue from 1911 are among the more than 5000 advertising characters that comprise the collection of San Francisco's Museum of Modern Mythology. The curators, who are proponents of the late mythologist Joseph Campbell, are interested in how popular icons reflect many of the same archetypes represented by ancient characters; for example, the Mobil flying horse and Pegasus. Museum board member Dean MacCannell observes that viewing these pieces is like "seeing American popular culture on fast forward." The museum has been closed since 1989 when its location was damaged by the Loma Prieta earthquake. Other cities have made offers to house the collection, but the museum's founders, as well as local advertising executives, want it to remain in San Francisco because of the city's strong presence in the advertising industry.

San Francisco Chronicle, 4/23/96; San Francisco



Interpreting Ambiguity

GVO VP of Design Synthesis Michael Barry, in a talk at GVO, April 1996

"We're looking at a shift in how people deal with the world around them.

The issue is being able to solve problems in wholes, not in parts.

We're shifting from brute facts to paradoxes, from empiricism to serious play, from rules to ideology, from stability to flexibility, from being objective to being subjective, from ends to means."



That explains all those tech support calls

our years ago literate simian Koko, who communicates using sign language, received her own customized Mac II computer. Since gorillas express their frustrations with considerable force, Apple technicians enclosed the computer in a framework of aluminum, polycarbonate, and tempered glass, and bolted it to the floor. Acknowledging that Koko's working environment differs from the average Mac user, Apple designed special ventilation slots to channel feces and bananas away from the unit.

Globe and Mail, 2/3/92

Yellowed Pages

"The Yellow Pages are a good reflector of social trends," says John Hess from the University of Colorado, who has studied Yellow Pages for 16 years. "They provide an annual record of what's happening." Pacific Bell Yellow Pages approves about 85 requests each year for new category headings and drops others that are no longer relevant. Categories in use since 1907 include: Attorneys, Detective Agencies, Pawn Brokers, and Skylights. Dropped in the last 10 years: Corsets & Girdles, Cuspudors, Fallout Shelter Contractors, Snuff, and Uranium. Some recently added headings are: Casinos-Equipment & Rentals, Churches-Pagan, Churches-Self Realization, Pain Control, and Volleyball Instruction. Among the categories rejected by Pacific Bell last year: Bird Sitting, Dreams, Face Painting, and Horse Therapy.

San Jose Mercury News 3/4/96

Excited? Confused? Annoyed? Tell us what you think - Phone us, fax us, write us, e-mail us.

Know someone else who should be receiving **turn signals**? Get in touch.



GRAtEFUL deAD

The Nation, a chronic money-losing magazine, is asking some of its readers for more than the usual \$35.95 yearly subscription. The left-leaning political publication is offering its subscribers the opportunity to remember the magazine in their wills. In response to inquiries from readers already planning to bequeath a portion of their fortune to The Nation, the periodical of pundits has sent out fund-raising brochures inviting subscribers to join The Legacy Group. The mailing describes this as "a new group of readers and friends being formed to insure The Nation's future well into the next century."

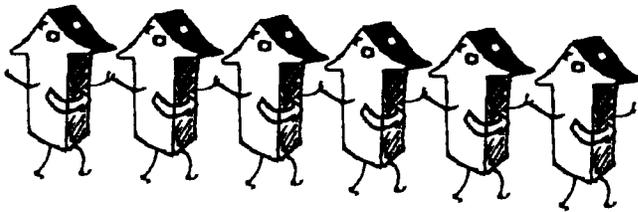
New York Times, 4/21/97

MAne mAn

Ethnologist Grant McCracken in his book, *Big Hair*:

"Haircuts and hair colors have become definitional resources for the constructions of our new, free-floating selves..."

**Hair has become
our best instrument
of self-invention,
our best solution to the problem of constant change."**



You cAN't HiDe
Your Lyin' Eyes

British Airways recently offered 25,000 frequent flyer miles—enough for a domestic round-trip ticket—to any Business Class customer flying between North America and Great Britain who was not completely satisfied with the experience. The TV ads for the promotion feature two embarrassingly smug customers boasting that they lied in order to get a free ticket. So far, only one-tenth of one percent of eligible customers have seized the opportunity to fib. Psychologist Joy Browne posits that few people responded because "if you ask for the mileage, you're one of life's losers." Meanwhile, at the University of Maryland, where one in 300 students is cited for academic dishonesty, those pledging not to cheat are being offered discounts at local shops.

New York Times, 3/22/97

Phone Home

For the past 35 years, Bob and Joan Thomas of Brandon, Vermont, have run an answering service out of their home. The 28 phones that line the wall of their bedroom ring day and night with business-related calls or with calls from folks who just plain want to talk. When local businesses—doctors, undertakers, lawyers, plumbers—leave their offices, they call the Thomases to have the ringer on their designated extension turned on. Figuring out which one of the black rotary phones is beckoning isn't a problem: "You just put your hand on it to see which one is ringing," explains Bob.

San Jose Mercury News, 7/8/97



EXCited? cOnFused? annOyed? Tell us whAt you think - Phone us, FAX us, write us, e-MAIL us.
know soMeone else who shOuld be reCeiving tUrN sIgnAlS? PASS it on, or get in touCh.

Looking for Love in all The Wrong PARKing SpACes

The automobile bench seat, long an icon of teenage romance, has virtually disappeared. In the early 1970's, 75% of all new cars had bench seats, but by last year the figure had declined to 5%. David Lewis, a University of Michigan historian who studies sex in cars, attributes this shift in interior design to a growing fear of crime, coupled with the increase in working mothers, affording more opportunities for teenage sex at home.

New York Times, 2/2/97



You are Getting Sleepy, Very Sleepy

Hal Goldberg, a consumer researcher in Irvine, California, is using recovered memory techniques to help companies probe the minds of their customers. For the same price as a focus group, Goldberg hypnotizes and questions mesmerized informants about their deepest purchase motivations. "People lie in focus groups," says Goldberg. One spellbound shopper, when asked to visualize an encounter with a tuna sandwich, muttered cryptically, "Onions help." Goldberg's post-hypnotic analysis of the session led to a new product concept: onion-flavored mayonnaise. "This technique seems a little scary," says New York ad exec Eleni Papadakis, "but hypnosis is perfectly valid in psychotherapy, there is no reason it can't be used in the business world, too."

New York Times Magazine, 6/11/97



Prints for a day

In order to better understand the problems of small business, Hewlett-Packard is asking its customers to compose essays (200 words or less) describing their most nightmarish experience with computer technology. The best stories in HP's "Geek for a Year" contest will receive prizes including computers, printers, scanners, and a visit from the Geek Squad, a Minneapolis-based computer support service. HP plans to use the collected tales of woe to help them develop new products for small business.

San Francisco Chronicle, 6/10/97

instant RAMen's Gonna Get You

Each year, 40 billion packages of instant ramen noodles are sold around the world. Purveyors of the noodly utility meal met recently at the World Ramen Summit in Tokyo, where they cooked up the Instant Ramen Noodle Association. Naomichi Ishige from the National Museum of Ethnology gave a speech titled, "The Cultural History of Noodles." IRMA Chairman Manofuku Ando, who in 1958 repackaged the traditional Japanese dish into its current iconic, bachelor-ready form, bubbled, "When the market was young, there were many who didn't accept the idea of instant ramen noodles. But now it is enjoyed widely overseas and represents a piece of Japan's lifestyle."

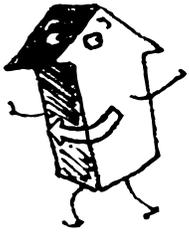
San Francisco Chronicle, 3/6/97

StArt mAKing sCents

At the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Center in Chicago, Dr. Alan Hirsch is working to bring aromatherapy—an alternative healing method that uses scents to affect the body—into the medical mainstream. Studies are beginning to show how aromatherapy can help people calm down, perk up, sleep better, and lose weight. New olfactory research has shown that the odor of green apples can relieve migraine pain and the smell of vanilla can help MRI patients with claustrophobia. Dr. Hirsch conducted a study of male impotency and found that the most arousing aroma combinations were pumpkin pie & lavender and donuts & licorice.

San Jose Mercury News, 6/19/97





Turn Signals

snapshots of cultural phenomena

Nov/dec 99

Note: Turn Signals was originally distributed by GVO, from 1995 to 2000. Check out more of these insights at www.portigal.com/FreshMeat.htmNote: Turn :

The final frontier

Attempting to cut through the clutter of the 3000 corporate messages Americans encounter each day, advertisers are thinking big. CarOrder.com is proposing to hang a banner on the Golden Gate Bridge toll plaza. Aduaction.com has a floating billboard in the San Francisco Bay. Pizza Hut set out to project its new logo onto the surface of the moon but discovered a limitation in available laser technology – in order to be viewable from the earth, they would need to project an image the size of Texas. Instead, the company is plastering their piping hot logotype on an unmanned Russian Proton rocket. "We needed a mythic symbol," explains Mike Rawlings, Pizza Hut's chief concept officer. The \$2 million cost for this launch is only about half that of a Super Bowl television commercial. But some marketers remain skeptical. Felipe Rubio, president of Results Marketing Consultants says, "they're not cutting through the clutter. They're making new clutter."

San Francisco Chronicle, 9/29/99; Wall Street Journal, 9/30/99

autoMATIC For the Steeple

The church collection plate is evolving, thanks to the birth of electronic funds transfer donations. This service, which automatically deducts money from congregants' bank accounts, is being embraced by hundreds of churches. However, "there's a stigma when the offering plate goes by and you have nothing to put in it," says Jeanne Rose of Vanco Services Inc., a company that helps churches go electric. These enterprising houses of the holy are providing bright turquoise stickers affixed to envelopes, metal tokens, or cards decorated with praying hands to allow their flock to participate in the fiduciary ritual. The clergy have faith that these highly visible symbols of electronic giving will help convert others to this latter-day form of tithing.

Wall Street Journal, 4/12/99



mutual Buns

A group of 100 Wall Street securities analysts and portfolio managers were put to work recently in McDonald's restaurants, preparing Quarter Pounders and cooking up McNuggets. The Chicago-based chain wanted to show off their new "Made For You" kitchen to the people in charcoal gray who rate the company's stock. Analysts such as John Ivankoe of Schroder & Co. experienced the new system up close: "It's very rare that we're able to see how something actually works instead of viewing it from the ivory tower," said Ivankoe. "This is stressful," sighed Kenneth Shank of Northern Trust Co. "The work's much harder than sitting and thinking about things in my office."

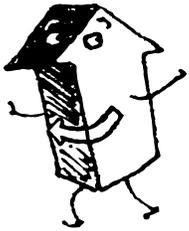
Wall Street Journal, 9/16/99; San Francisco Chronicle, 9/30/99

soCiAl studies

Characteristic of the growth in companies conducting market research in schools, students at Wachtung Elementary School in Montclair, New Jersey take part in focus groups, fill out activity journals, and are observed during playtime. The cable channel Noggin is paying the school \$7100 to learn from their students. At Our Lady of Assumption in Lynnfield, Massachusetts, students respond to opinion polls and participate in cereal taste tests. "It was a learning experience," reports the school's principal, Martha Marie Pooler, "They had to read, they had to look, they had to compare." Robert Reynolds, president of Education Market Resources, a company that arranges at-school research, adds, "Kids love the feeling of empowerment. We are empowering them, but we are doing it in a proper way." Participating schools are spending their additional cash on anything from new word processors to ice cream parties.

New York Times, 4/5/99





Turn Signals

snapshots of cultural phenomena

feb/MAR'00

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Downtown chowDown

Several businesses are selling hard-to-find foods that are sold only in select parts of the US. Companies such as Hometown Favorites, Homesick Gourmet, and A Taste of Philadelphia are using mail order and the Internet to satisfy the cravings of their customers. Popular items include breakfast cereals such as Quisp and Frankenberry, snack foods like Jiffy Pop Stovetop Popcorn and Necco Wafers, and essential staples including Stegner's Mock Turtle Soup, Roman Meal Cream of Rye, Habbersett Scrapple, and Tastykakes. Some manufactures are now making their classic products available directly. Redco Foods is selling Junket, a gelatinous custard, to consumers, and Nabisco responded to an intense public outcry by making New England staple Crown Pilot Crackers available by mail order.

New York Times, October 20, 1999

For Whom the Bell Tolls

Another chapter has ended for procrastinating patrons of public libraries. Unique Management Services, Inc. of Jeffersonville, Indiana, specializes in recovering overdue books and fines from delinquent borrowers. As libraries face budget cuts and rising material costs, they are turning to collection services to help balance their books. UMS currently works with 250 different libraries, employing methods that range from a polite nudge (phone calls from seminary student staffers known for their kind demeanor) to a more strong-armed approach (publishing the names of top offenders in local newspapers). The bookish collectors recovered \$10 million last year, an average of \$65 per remiss reader. "Libraries are traditionally nurturing places," notes Joe Burchill, of the public library in Westland, Michigan, a UMS client, "but business is business."

Wall Street Journal, December 14, 1999



This year's Toddler

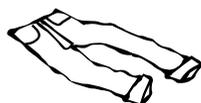
In the high-pressure, intense environments of TV and photo shoots, coaxing babies to flash just the right look has become a professional specialty. Baby wranglers make faces, sing, dance, and gesture behind the camera to get infant actors to look into the camera and smile. "It's delicate work," says baby wrangler Sally Nachamkin, "The gift of a wrangler is to create a spontaneous reaction in a child, and that reaction has to be a joyful one, no matter what the circumstances are." Alice Calabrese, whose twin babies modeled for Parents magazine, cooed, "the wranglers are great because they know how to work with babies. It looks like an easy job but it's not." Wranglers, whose fees range from \$450 to \$800 a day, are still fighting for professional respect. "I think wranglers are one of the most misunderstood crafts," fussed Nachamkin, "People say 'Oh, we just need someone to handle the kids.' But if that child isn't there to perform, that shoot won't happen. It takes incredible energy to do the job."

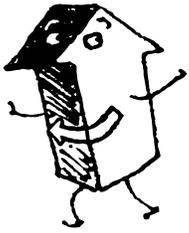
Wall Street Journal, November 24, 1999

Rolling in the aisles

The shopping cart, invented in the 1930s by an Oklahoma City grocer named Sylvan Goldman, is rolling into new retail channels. Encouraged by research that shows mass-market retail customers buy 7.2 items with a cart and only 6.1 items without, Sears and Montgomery Ward are each considering shopping carts for their stores. Studies suggest that carts, which relieve the physical effort of carrying goods and assist in child-management, encourage shoppers to impulse buy big-ticket items. Montgomery Ward believes customers who use the carts will be more willing to visit different departments in the store. However, not all retailers are cart-ready. "I'm not sure I could see someone buying a \$2,000 suit and hanging it over a cart," says Carolyn Biggs, Director of Stores for Saks Fifth Avenue.

New York Times, November 1, 1999





Turn Signals

snapshots of cultural phenomena

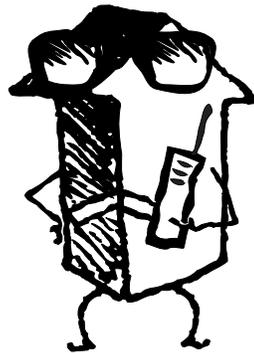
May/June '00

Note: Turn Signals was originally distributed by GVO, from 1995 to 2000. Check out more of these insights at www.portigal.com/FreshMeat.htm

IF You'll Be my Bodyguard

The bodyguard or "personal protection agent" is working for a new type of customer. Ordinary middle-class people are hiring them for everyday activities such as private parties, concerts, sporting events, or shopping trips. The number of U.S. professionals has doubled to 15,000 since the late 1980s. Costs start at \$40 per hour but can escalate with expenses for plane fare, hotel rooms, or event tickets. Janet Goodman of Tampa hired a bodyguard recently when she was concerned about a potential stalker, saying "having the agent at my bedroom door that first night gave me peace of mind that you can't put a price tag on." According to Richard Kobitz, president of the Academy of Security Educators and Trainers, the image of bodyguards has been rearranged to reflect their new clientele, "Protection agents have evolved from gorillas to socially acceptable human beings who make you feel comfortable and even add to the pleasure of an experience," says Kobitz.

Wall Street Journal, March 21, 2000



Beauty And the Beast

New social programs are leveraging the intimacy between hairdressers and their clients, training stylists to spot signs of domestic abuse. Beyond recognizing the visible cues, hairdressers in Connecticut and Nevada are being trained to focus on the ways their clients talk about their husbands or boyfriends, listening for signs of control, jealousy, or possessiveness. One Nevada beautician suspected an abusive relationship when a client told her, "My husband doesn't want me to see my friend anymore. He says she is putting bad ideas in my head." Psychotherapists are pulling their hair out over this development, saying that hairdressers are not qualified to provide counselling. John Reid, a clinical psychologist in San Antonio warns, "They may get in over their heads in terms of the therapeutic relationship and issues like transference and countertransference." Research going as far back as the 1970s supports the notion that "informal agents" like hairdressers, bartenders, and cab drivers are uniquely exposed to their customers' interpersonal problems.

New York Times, March 26, 2000



send in the clowns

The Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus, which has one of the oldest and most recognized of all brand names, is struggling to build revenues. Since the circus comes to town only once a year, the "greatest show on earth" generates zero revenue in any given market for 11 months of the year. In an effort to expand their three-ringed spectacle, the company has armed itself with new consumer research revealing that people attribute almost any circus experience to Ringling Brothers. They are hoping to extend their 130 year-old brand by juggling new marketing partnerships in the areas of packaged goods, automobiles, and financial services.

New York Times, March 12, 2000

Breaking the fourth wall

Orkin Pest Control is running a controversial TV commercial that begins with a mock advertisement for fabric softener. Soon, a cockroach appears to meander across the surface of the viewer's TV screen. The ad is so realistic that some deceived viewers have damaged their televisions while attempting to kill the video bug. One man threw a shoe at his set and a woman in Tampa lobbed a motorcycle helmet at the digitized arthropod. Both asked Orkin to pay for their shattered sets, but "that's not going to happen, I'm afraid," said scurrying spokesperson Martha May.

San Francisco Chronicle, April 6, 2000

