

Jive eXchange

IT Conversation Starters

Working at Home – The internet, broadband, emails and blackberry have allowed us to work from home but what are we actually doing. A recent US survey has shown that one in eight men don't bother getting dressed at all, just one third wash and shave and one in five take an afternoon nap! From the boss's perspective, women don't fair much better with one in 14 naked at their computer and only half taking a shower. 40% of people use the time to do regular housework but interestingly 75% believe working from home improved their productivity which begs the question what are they wearing and doing at work!!

Boredom Detector – Just when we thought we had a gadget for everything this was created, although its original purpose was noble. A talker, via a wearable camera and software that measures facial expressions and movements, could know whether he has lost touch with a listener (via signals from eyebrows, lips, nose, etc.). In studies it had 64% accuracy in detecting boredom in the listener. Some of us probably know friends and colleagues we would like to buy this for. Originally it was designed to help autistic people understand people they were communicating with.

The new sexual revolution – In Canada in an extensive study of young people, 87% of respondents reported having sex over Instant Messenger, Webcam or Telephone. As youngsters are more susceptible to utilise technology it is not surprising that these devices are being used more and more but the levels surprises the researchers. Some 2,684 students from more than 150 university and college campuses across Canada took part in the survey. Fifty-one per cent of the participants were female and 49 per cent were male. Of those surveyed, 53 per cent of students enjoyed sex over instant messenger, while 44 per cent did the deed using a webcam and over the phone.

Internet Tax – You think that if a Government could find a way to tax our breathing they would but it now seems at least 19 states in the US want to tax any purchases made over the Internet by individuals and organisations. Thus on the tax return form there is a line where you have to declare how much in purchases you made over the Net and then you will have a specified tax rate applied to it. Of course individuals are free to put \$0 in this field but if you ever got audited and were found to be lying the penalties could be severe. Let us hope that this is one US innovation that we don't adopt!

Charity Websites – Most of us probably contribute to the generous volunteers who come to our doors or the money tins located in various places but did you know it is now even easier to contribute to these many worthy causes. Two of our most worthy causes, Canteen (www.canteen.org.au) and the Starlight Foundation (www.starlight.org.au), both whom try to brighten the lives of seriously ill children, many of whom barely make it to their teens as well as help their families have a secure online donation facility. Just using your credit card you can make a donation and through very little effort on your part make an enormous difference to somebody else.

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