

# Letters to the Editor

## ASCII Stupid Question, Get a Stupid ANSI

In the May issue of *Novell Connection*, we introduced what we envision as a new column that focuses on the lighter side of networking—the humorous challenges you face each day as you manage your company's network. Below are just a few of the funny responses we received. Keep those comments coming, and be sure to read this month's installment, "Just Go Back to Bed" on p. 45.

The best support call I've ever received concerned how to insert a floppy diskette into a drive. I support a secondary school with about 300 PCs connected to NetWare. One day I was walking in and out of a room where teachers access PCs. One teacher seemed to be having problems with one of the computers, but I did not pay any attention because I did not hear a call for help. Finally, the call for help came.

"Dennis, these are stupid computers. You can't take the floppy diskette in or out of them!" (Incidentally, these PCs were brand-new Pentium IIs.) Then I saw his problem. On our old PCs, the floppy diskette drive and the CD-ROM drive were side-by-side, high up on the PCs. On the new PCs, the floppy diskette drive was under the CD-ROM drive.

On the old PCs, getting the floppy diskette in and out was not a problem. The floppy diskette drive was high enough out of the way that the floppy diskette cleared easily. On the new PCs, if you had the keyboard up close to the PC chassis, the keyboard actually blocked access to the floppy diskette drive (especially if you had the keyboard legs extended, as he did).

To fix the "problem," I simply moved the keyboard back six inches from the PC chassis and inserted the floppy diskette. The teacher's hand hit his head so hard that it hurt me!

*Dennis Hagen*

I received a call from a user who was extremely upset. This user reported that he had a virus on his computer. I asked the user to disconnect the network connection from the back of the computer and explained that I would be right there to take care of the situation.

I arrived at the user's workstation to find a black screen with a white smiley face randomly scrolling across the screen. I moved the mouse and was not surprised to find that it was a screen saver that was set on the previous shift. I explained to the user what had happened, and the red-faced user apologized for overreacting—at least the user had listened carefully to my orientations concerning virus detection.

*Echo D'Uva*

When I interviewed a candidate for a network analyst position, this candidate outlined some of the projects he had managed at a previous job. He even claimed that he had "upgraded the LAN to WAN speed." We didn't hire him.

*Jody Falcon, Network Analyst*

One of our network engineers asked a night mainframe operator how much a mainframe backup tape held. The answer was that "it must be a lot. We dropped one once, it broke open, and when it stopped rolling, it stretched clear across the computer room." We couldn't help but shake our heads in disbelief.

*Carl A. Soderlund*

We had a new campus principal arrive. As he was trying to print a particularly long document, he had a great deal of trouble and called me. I checked drivers, toner cartridge, printer cables—the works. After I restarted the principal's computer, I said, "Let's make sure the printer has enough paper." Sure enough, the tray didn't have a single sheet of paper. The principal's comment struck me funny: "You mean it's an old fashioned printer—it needs paper?"

*Roy Walls*

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