

Tip for March 2005
Courtesy of Wyvern Technology
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Dear Readers,

Got a virus of the human kind at the end of last week – shame that I can't get rid of them as easily as the computer type.

My little white van now has signage – hate that word – signs. And I realised the other day that the signs are in the colours of my Dad's favourite Rugby League team – the Bears. So he will be watching over my van as well as me. If you admire the signs, a very nice young man named Adam Vagg did them for me. When I am ready to sell the van, I just take a hairdryer to the signs and off they come. Neat,eh?

Finally getting to your tip. A lot of the problems caused by viruses come via Internet Explorer and it is also the target of many of them as well. Had an interesting problem the other day: I had cleaned the machine of all viruses but one kept popping up. I tracked it down to MSM Messenger which had been corrupted and every time the client logged on to MSN messenger, in came the virus. Simple solution: don't use MSN messenger for your email. The best internet browser on the market (free of course) at the moment is Firefox. The people who created it were the creators of Netscape which has now been bought out by one of the big companies, so the quality has fallen off. Download it from mozilla.org and you will be free of pop ups and a lot of other problems that come with the "industry standard" browser, internet explorer.

I am always grateful for feedback and one of my dear readers criticised my use of hertz when talking about the speed of modems. What follows is my rationale for my use instead of bits per second (bps):

The rate of bits being sent is the normal method of measuring transmission rate. But since pulses per second is measured in kiloHertz and each 'pulse' is carrying one bit then there is no meaning lost on using either term.

There is an ongoing discussion of the symbol used for Bits and Bytes i.e. which one should have the capital B. One group suggests that since bits were invented first they should have the B.

On the other hand when using these abbreviations based on the Systeme Internationale, there is a stipulation that the first used term should have a lower case letter and only use capitals if there are two and then the capital is used for the larger unit or the one named after a person -

c = centi and C = Celsius m = milli and M = Mega

So, using this standard, we should take it that kbps is the correct expression for the rate of transmission. This argument over the B and b is probably why most technical discussion uses the more general kHz or MHz for the rate of transmission along all other network, both local and the Internet.

See you around the traps – ah, autumn, my favourite season!