

WWJ•950

NEWSRADIO

NEWSRADIO RESOURCES | WWJ FEATURES | LISTENER OPPORTUNITIES | INTERACTIVE WWJ | WWJ INFORMATION

://Technology

May 28, 2004



Your report for Friday, May 28, 2004

[ToolWorx selected for government RFID project](#)

[Bad news from Nasdaq for Covansys](#)

[New dot-com launches vacation rental site](#)

[Terrific Thursday for tech road trip](#)



No GLITR Monday: The *Great Lakes IT Report* will not be published Monday in observance of Memorial Day (which is actually on the real Memorial Day for a change). I suggest you go find some veterans and thank 'em for your freedom.



This 'mucky' organization smooths university technology commercialization

A few years back, the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University received one of the original 2000 Michigan Life Sciences Corridor grants to improve technology transfer activities.

The universities received another LSC grant a year later, with the addition of the giant Van Andel Institute in Grand Rapids, which is developing into a top-flight cancer research center.

This effort is now affectionately called "mucky," the pronunciation of the acronym MUCI, for the Michigan Universities Commercialization Initiative.

Over the past three years, MUCI has funded university projects through a \$2.6 million Commercialization Challenge Fund. And it's

ToolWorx selected for government RFID project:

ToolWorx Information Products Inc. of Brighton said Thursday that it had won a contract of \$750,000 to provide a radio frequency identification system to the federal Department of Defense. The hardware requirements consisted of Intermec Technologies Corp. RFID-enabled terminals, readers, and tags. ToolWorx is using its internal quality assurance program to ensure that all equipment is tested before being shipped to the federal government. This is ToolWorx's first significant government contract since launching its new government initiative in January. ToolWorx is a system integrator specializing in automated data collection applications. More at www.toolworx.com.

Bad news from Nasdaq for Covansys:

Farmington Hills-based Covansys Corp. said Thursday it had appealed a ruling from the Nasdaq stock market that its stock would be delisted June 4 because it hasn't yet filed a first quarter financial report with the federal Securities and Exchange Commission. Covansys said it received a "Nasdaq Staff Determination" letter dated May 26, indicating that not filing the financial statements was a violation of the stock market's rules. Covansys has said it is delaying filing the financial statements due to a lengthy review and analysis of accounting issues

://SPONSORED BY

WANT TO
ADVERTISE
ONLINE?
WWJ
CAN HELP!
://CLICK HERE

://THE FRONT PAGE

FORMER PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN DIES

Ronald



Reagan, 40th President of the United States dies at age 93 from Alzheimers.

[WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/MORE](#)

GREAT LAKES IT REPORT - MACKINAC POLICY CONFERENCE - JUNE 3-5, 2004

Matt Roush and the *Great Lakes IT Report* attended the Detroit Regional Chamber's Mackinac Policy Conference. His reports are listed here.

[WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/MORE](#)

FORMER CHAIRMAN AND CEO OF GM DIES

James M. Roche, who became chairman and CEO of General Motors Corp. in 1967 died in his home Sunday. He was 97.

[WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/MORE](#)

been expanded to include Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Grand Valley State University, Michigan Technological University and Western Michigan University.

According to Marvin Parnes, associate vice president for research and executive director of research administration at UM, "what we're doing is giving grants to accelerate the commercialization of university-based technology. Wherever it is on the path to commercialization, our job is to try to accelerate it on that path."

Grants are restricted to university technology only, and are capped at \$150,000. A 50 percent match is required, which may come from practically any source, from federal grants to private investments.

There's also a payback requirement from commercialization ideas that become either businesses or technology that can be licensed -- a requirement that the fund get back 20 percent of the royalties per year up to three times the amount of the MUCI grant.

Proposals are due Jan. 10, May 10 and Sept. 10 each calendar year, with decisions on grants coming roughly a month later. Selections are made by a nine-member panel composed of representatives from the state's universities, industry, venture capital and the Michigan Economic Development Corp.

So far, MUCI has made 27 grants worth a total of about \$1.5 million.

For more on the program, visit www.muci.org.

Note: For a schedule of the content for this special section, [click here](#). Sponsorships for the special sections are still available. Contact Wendy Baca, Great Lakes IT Report marketing director, at wjbaca@cbs.com or call (248) 455-7336.

[RETURN TO TOP](#)

regarding some of its property and equipment. The company's stock will remain listed pending a hearing and determination by the Nasdaq Listing Qualification Panel at an as-yet unspecified future date. Covansys said the delay in filing is the result of a recently completed physical inventory of its fixed assets. Covansys is working to resolve issues surrounding the proper accounting treatment for physical losses and obsolescence of certain of the Company's property and equipment, mainly computers and related peripherals previously reported as having a current net book value of approximately \$2.5 million (an original cost of \$15.7 million), or less than 1 percent of total assets.

New company launches vacation site:

Bloomfield Hills based GreatFamilyRentals.com, an Internet marketer of privately owned vacation rental properties, has launched its Web site at www.GreatFamilyRentals.com. The site features articles and reviews about vacation areas and instant translation into five languages. For rental property owners, it offers a flexible, custom Web site, combined with unique technology, strategic alliances and continuous marketing to ensure wide Internet exposure for their vacation rental property. For example, information -- like rental listings, in this case -- stored in a database is typically not visible to search engines, but GreatFamilyRentals.com's technology renders web pages for properties that are ideal for search engine 'spiders'. Unlimited free one-year listings are available for a limited time for cottage owners. As founder and CEO Dave Goldschmidt put it: "All is not doom and gloom in the small biz dot com world."

Clarity gets defense deal: Troy-based Clarity Technologies Inc. said it had received a federal Small Business Innovation Research grant from the federal defense department to develop new signal processing software technologies for audio voice quality enhancements. These new technologies will be folded into Clarity's Clear Voice Capture suite of software products to deliver better speech intelligibility, noise reduction and echo cancellation for applications using voice communications over land line or wireless phone connections, as well as over the Web. More at www.claritytechinc.com.

ProQuest, NYTimes.com to provide New York Times archive: ProQuest Information and Learning and NYTimes.com today announced an agreement to offer directly to the consumer market a historical digital archive of *The New York Times* newspaper dating back to 1851, when *The Times* was first published. The Archive will be available on NYTimes.com, the Web site of *The New York Times*, on a pay-per-view basis. ProQuest Information and Learning, a unit of Ann Arbor-based ProQuest Co. (NYSE: PQE), creates and publishes databases for libraries and educational institutions worldwide. ProQuest has digitized all of the issues of *The New York Times* between 1851 and 1995. These issues of *The Times* contain more than 15 million articles and NYTimes.com has now integrated these articles into its search tools and pages at www.nytimes.com/1851archive. Readers may search by date, keyword, headline or byline; read a free preview of the first paragraph of each article; and purchase the article image. Readers may also access *Times* articles from 1996 through 2004 in text format through NYTimes.com's premium archive database. Articles are available for \$2.95 each or in packages of four, 10 and 25 articles. *The New York Times* digital archive is part of ProQuest Historical Newspapers, an exclusive database manufactured by ProQuest Information and Learning and distributed by them to educational institutions and libraries around the world. Other newspapers in ProQuest Historical Newspapers are *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Los Angeles Times*.

THE U.S. ARMY AND GM JOIN FORCES

The U.S. Army and GM are joining forces to help confront a very deadly enemy at home: motor vehicle crashes.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

SEMCOG DECLARES JUNE 8 AN OZONE ACTION DAY

Tuesday, June 8, is declared the first Ozone Action day of the 2004 season.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

MAJOR IMPROVEMENT IN BRAIN CANCER TREATMENT

A major international study released Monday shows that giving low doses of chemotherapy to patients with most common and aggressive form of brain cancer at the very start doubles the chance of short-term survival.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

OFFICER KILLED

Sterling Heights police have had several reports of red Camaros, but none have been the car of the man suspected of murdering a police officer.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

DEADLY POLICE CHASE

An 18-year old Detroit man is dead following a police chase on Detroit's westside early this morning.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

EYES ON DESIGN

Eyes on Design is a celebration of automotive design. This year's theme, race cars, and how they lead to the design of passenger vehicles.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

ROBERTA'S NEWS AND NOTES

A rare sight in space involving Venus and the sun. A state Lawmaker from Clinton Township says he's sick about hearing about tax money for "Cool Cities" in Michigan.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

New Web site for TC travel agent: Traverse City-based Passageways Travel said Thursday that it had launched a new travel Web site, www.pways.com. Company officials said the site was specifically designed with Michigan travelers in mind, providing customers with the best travel rates on the Web from six Michigan airports to 20 popular leisure destinations. The site also features a daily fare review that notifies travelers if a ticket price drops after its initial purchase. The site is supported by 200 employees at more than 20 offices throughout Michigan. It's powered by the Worldspan Global Distribution System and Computer Reservation System, the same engine behind the Internet's largest travel sites. The site's opening also includes online ticket giveaways. The site was designed by TravWell Inc. of East Lansing, a designer of custom Web travel applications. Passageways was founded in 1980.



Terrific Thursday for Tech Road Trip: Folks, I am running out of adjectives here to describe the cool technology I'm seeing on my swing through outstate Lower Michigan this week, on the GLITR Tech Road Trip 2004. Maybe it's overload from the literally dozens of people and tech companies I met Thursday in Grand Rapids, the fourth stop on the trip, in an event sponsored by Glima West and hosted at the incredibly cool offices of Computer Products & Resources Inc., better known as CPR (at www.cprgr.com, by the way). I'm going to try to give every company a mention and I'm sure I'm not going to do most of them justice, but here goes: First up was **Media 1 Interactive Inc.**, a Grand Rapids company that offers the design of interactive training systems. Sales and marketing director Andy Cawthon said the company gets involved in designing training from the moment a product or a process is a gleam in an engineer's eye. The company is 11 years old and has 15 employees, and its biggest customer is none other than Hewlett-Packard Co. Founder Chris Willis started the company after being outsized out of a job, and met H-P at a training conference.

Next was EToolDevelopers, a one-woman company in the person of Luanne Brown, and her new partner in tech work, Deign N. Hughes, a partner in **GNetworks** L.L.C. The two companies are now working together to develop online products for the Performance Warehouse Association, a trade group for manufacturers, warehouse distributors, representatives and retailers in the performance racing industry. The work grows out of Brown's long association with doing e-commerce work for racing teams. GNetworks offers everything from custom application development to corporate Intranets to hosting and connectivity. More at www.etooldvelopers.com and www.gnetworks.com. The next visitor was Jerry Boersma, a principal at PEC Technologies, a Grand Rapids company spun off two years ago from Pathway Electric, a Holland contractor. This five-person Microsoft development shop has developed a product used in the mental health field, treatment planning software used by a variety of agencies inside and outside Michigan. More at www.pectechnologies.com.

Then a bigger Grand Rapids tech company stopped by, Sagestone. This 80-employee tech company now has offices in Chicago, Detroit, Columbus, Ohio and a new office in Shanghai, to take advantage of lower labor costs. The company has a number of really interesting projects under way, including a medical diagnostic application called NxOpinion, which was nominated by Microsoft's CEO, Steve Ballmer, for the *ComputerWorld* Application of the Year award. Sagestone and NxOpinion are one of the five finalists out of more than 400 entries. The winner is to be selected June 7. More on Ballmer's comments at www.microsoft.com/presspass/exec/steve/2004/05-24teched04.asp. SageStone also recently announced its Connected Learning Framework, an application that offers a variety of education management features. Sagestone also recently announced that Bob Kreha will serve as Chief Operations Officer, responsible for delivery of software. He was formerly at Xerox Global Services, where he served as its National Microsoft Practice Manager. Additionally, Tim Galante will join Sagestone as its vice president of business development. His background includes leadership positions at MCI/Worldcom. More at www.sagestone.com.

TAX REFUND CHECKS RETURNED

The Internal Revenue Service is trying to find 1,873 Michigan residents who are owed tax refund checks for the 2002 tax year.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

2004 ROAD CONSTRUCTION SEASON

As the weather warms, more and more road construction crews will be visible, and orange barrels will be blossoming all over Southeast Michigan. Stay up to date with projects underway by using the resources at WWJ.com. [Click here](#) for a list of links.

Or, sign up now for WWJ's weekly Construction Alert Newsletter, and get a list of road closings and delays delivered to your inbox every Friday morning. [Click here to subscribe.](#)

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

SIGN UP FOR WWJ NEWSRADIO 950'S NEWS INSIDERS

Sign up for WWJ's News Insiders! You can explore our e-newsletters and other news features.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

GLOVES FOR KIDS

Meet Detroit Tigers third baseman Eric Munson at The Home Depot in Farmington Hills (32525 Northwestern Highway) on Saturday, June 12th between 12:00 pm and 2:00 pm.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

IRAQ WAR

If you have a story about a loved one or yourself and how you've been affected by the events as they relate to the Iraqi war, please write us.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

GREAT LAKES IT REPORT TECH TOUR

WWJ Technology Editor Matt Roush is on a week-long tour of Michigan, sniffing out the latest in technology. Follow his reports here.

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

Then there was a fascinating little company called Marketnet, at www.marketnet1.com. This company, founded in 1996, had been "working in the background for large companies," according to its new account executive, Jennifer Jurgens. With just under 20 employees, this company handles management and distribution of sales leads for companies who sell by any means from reps to multi-level marketing. The company's big customers include Hon, Konica Minolta and SPX Corp. The idea is to parcel those leads out among a myriad of independent distributors, who may all use different sales systems. The company also handles fulfillment of marketing materials like literature and product samples. Next up: **Michwave Technologies Inc.**, a wireless broadband service provider offering service in Grand Rapids, Grand Haven, Holland and southern Muskegon County. Owner Steven R. Langelier is a General Motors IT retiree who is self-educated in the wireless biz. His customers include WZZM-TV, Grand Rapids' ABC affiliate. More at www.michwave.com.

Then there was Cadence Solutions, founded in 1999 by Adam Fenstermaker and Matthew Bidwell, a two-man shop offering custom software development focused on Lotus Domino technology. Its major work is for the human services industry, in particular the Kent County Family Independence Agency, where its software manages child abuse and neglect cases. Next up: **Web Experiences**, a company run by former *Grand Rapids Press* reporter Tonya Wilholt, which handles usability studies, quality assurance, content planning and writing. The company's clients have included Gordon Food Service and other big Grand Rapids companies. More at www.webexperiences.com. The presentations wrapped up with Randy Purdy of **IMart Inc.**, a company founded in 2000 that offers Web-based managed services and software for warehouse and call center management, catalog and mail order companies. The company has 20 employees. More at www.imart.com.

Think the day was over? Heck, it had hardly begun. I then got a tour of CPR itself -- a company that still offers hardware work, including computer and peripheral sales and repair out of a gorgeous 32,000-square-foot space. This 135-person company, with a branch office in Kalamazoo, also offers a wide variety of IT services, everything from software development to staffing to cabling to connectivity. Nice to see a company that still does honest-to-goodness hardware work. Then there was a tour of the absolutely amazing Van Andel Institute downtown, where 15 world-class cancer researchers and hundreds of other staffers are pushing the borders of biotech to cure cancer. CIO Bryon Campbell gave us an insider's view of the institute's tech backbone, while Patrick R. Kelly, vice president of communications and development, gave an impassioned talk in favor of more state funding for the life sciences. (Kelly isn't about to hear the state poor-mouth the industry, either, not when it can come up with \$80 million in incentives to save one vacuum-cleaner plant in Greenville with 2,000 jobs.

The day finally ended with a tour of the West Michigan Science and Technology Initiative Product Development Center on the top floor of the new Grand Valley State University health sciences building just east of Spectrum Health's main hospital downtown (which is itself a mere block east of the Van Andel -- quite a concentration of life sciences brainpower there). The 50,000 square feet of lab space there is almost full, despite the fact that it opened only in January. Included are companies the center lured from Los Angeles and technology originally developed at universities in Texas and Wisconsin. "We find technology wherever we can, and try to match it up with local startups or entrepreneurs," said Matt Dugener, executive director of the initiative. Well, all I can say about all of this Grand Rapids technology is -- wow. I'm sitting now on the seventh floor of the Park Place Hotel looking out across downtown Traverse City, the fifth and final stop on the road trip, and I can't wait for what I see next. You'll see it Tuesday.

EDS wraps up sale of UGS PLM: Electronic Data Systems Corp. said Thursday it has completed the sale of a software-design business to three private-equity firms for \$2.05 billion. EDS, which runs computer systems for other companies, announced the sale of UGS PLM Solutions in March. EDS said it would report a large one-time gain from the sale in its second-quarter results, due to be released in July. The buyers are Bain Capital, Silver Lake Partners and Warburg Pincus. They called it the largest private-equity investment ever made in a technology company. The reported sales price excluded working capital adjustments, which EDS did not specify. The unit, now called UGS, makes software for product design and development. Under EDS, the UGS unit reported net income of \$106 million and \$927 million sales in the 12 months ended March 31. Tony Affuso, who led the division at EDS, was named chairman, CEO and president of the independent company. Michael H. Jordan, chairman and chief executive of Plano, Texas-based EDS, said UGS was not part of its strategy for growth. The sale is one of several moves designed to shore up EDS' balance sheet to prevent credit-rating agencies from downgrading its debt to junk status. The company is also considering cutting its dividend by two-thirds and issuing up to \$2.5 billion in new securities. EDS spokeswoman Kelly Altmeyer says all 500 of UGS' Michigan employees are to remain with the newly independent company.

GET GREATSTUFF!



You can get a free e-newsletter each week that makes planning your free time easy and fun.

GreatStuff is customized to your interests, and tells you what's going on each week in Southeast Michigan.

GreatStuff is produced by ArtServe Michigan, the *Detroit Free Press* and WWJ Newsradio 950. Get GreatStuff today!

[WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/MORE](#)

LISTENER BONUS: WIN GREAT PRIZES FROM WWJ

Register for one of this week's WWJ's Listener Bonus prize packs: a pair of lawn tickets to see Chicago and Earth, Wind & Fire at the DTE Energy Music Theatre on June 17 7:30 pm show or a copy of *Lead or Get Off the Pot!* by bestselling author, Pat Croce.

[WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/MORE](#)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Be prepared for power failures, snowstorms, thunderstorms, and any other emergency situation. WWJ Newsradio 950 has some quick and useful tips.

[WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/MORE](#)

MICHIGAN LOTTERY NUMBERS

Normally, the lottery numbers live on the "News" page under Newsroom Resources. But so many of you have asked for them, we've temporarily moved them here. [Click here for Club Game info.](#)

[WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/MORE](#)



Midland conference to spur Michigan entrepreneurs: A variety of organizations are sponsoring the Launching Tech Start-Ups Workshop on June 22 at the Ashman Court Hotel in Midland. The workshop runs from 8:30 am to 1:15 pm and is open to novice and experienced entrepreneurs eager to network and learn the newest trends in business formation. Innovators in science and technology are especially encouraged to attend. The conference fee is \$35 per person, which includes lunch. Seating is limited, so participants are encouraged to register early. Professionals in business, legal, and science fields will make presentations on how to craft a start-up business in today's business climate. Workshop panelists will address critical legal, marketing, funding, and operational issues. Start-up materials from local, state, and federal resources and sign-up sheets for those seeking one-on-one assistance will also be available. Attendees may register for the Workshop by calling (989) 839-0340 or e-mailing info@midlandedc.org. The event is an outgrowth of a project led by Michigan State University and funded by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Tri-Corridor Initiative. A partial list of Sponsors includes the Midland Economic Development Council, Michigan Economic Development Corp., MSU, Michigan Molecular Institute, Small Business Association of Michigan, Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center, and North Coast Technology Investors, L.P.

DaVinci awards extend deadline to July 1: The Engineering Society of Detroit and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society Michigan Chapter have extended the deadline for nominations for the 2004 DaVinci Awards to July 1. The awards recognize individuals, organizations, companies and corporations in the engineering, construction, health and technical fields whose design innovations have enabled people and improved accessibility, regardless of their abilities. To encourage future innovation, research projects of merit also are recognized. Achievements should exceed any legally mandated requirements, such as those expressed in the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Telecommunications Act of 1996. More at www.esd.org/davinci/. The ESD also announced that Joe Liemandt, CEO of Austin, Texas software and services company Trilogy Inc., has been named chairman of the leadership committee for Dinner with DaVinci, the event where the awards will be presented, Oct. 29 at the Ritz Carlton Dearborn.

June 3 TechKnow event adds another segment: The Ann Arbor TechKnow Forums Thursday announced a new segment within the June 3 program at the Michigan Theater. Called "Geeks Gotta Know, it combines sports trivia, audience participation, "man-on-the-street" video, and humor that will entertain and inform. To register, visit www.techknowforums.org. Registration begins at 4:30 p.m., with the main event at 5:30.

Altair names China business development manager: Troy-based Altair Engineering Inc. Thursday promoted Molly Hong to China business development manager. This new position was created to support growing client manufacturing interests in China and Altair's expanding Shanghai operations. According to Mike Heskitt, Altair vice president, product design and development business line, "This new position reflects the dramatic rise in clients partnering with Altair to reduce the cost of manufactured products by leveraging favorable labor markets like China." Hong will manage Altair's manufacturing outsourcing in China. Over the past four years, Ms. Hong has served as a lead product design engineer for the company's product design and development business line. Prior to joining Altair in 2000, she worked in product design and manufacturing engineering with First Auto Works and Changchun Institute in China. Altair offers product design consulting, engineering software and grid computing technologies. More at www.altair.com.

Wi-Fi coming to TA truck stops: AT&T and V-Link Solutions will provide WiFi service at more than 40 TravelCenters of America service locations, including centers in Ann Arbor, Monroe and Sawyer. The service allows vacationers, business road warriors, RVers and professional drivers alike to stay in touch with friends, families, businesses and the rest of the world while on the road. Called TA SpeedZone, the high-speed Web access will be available in a variety of locations on each property, including the restaurant, fast food court and most areas of the car and truck parking lots. Rates will range from \$1.49 for 60 minutes of access to \$169.99 for a year's worth. AT&T, under a three-year contract, is providing a complete TA data networking solution that links the Internet to the WiFi hotspots as well as also providing voice services at the centers. It will deploy a flexible networking connection that can be rapidly configured to maximize efficiency of the integrated voice/data connection. V-Link will build and manage the WiFi hotspots. Westlake, Ohio-based TA expects that SpeedZone will be available at all 125 company-owned centers by July 3. More about Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.-based VLink at www.vlinknet.com.

JAMBALAYA STREET FESTIVAL

The JAMBalaya is coming again to downtown Pontiac on June 18-20. The festival will offer plenty of entertainment including the Carnival, Mardi Gras Parade, Stilt Walkers and Drummers from New Orleans, and great food! For more information, call: 248-334-4600, or visit: www.pontiacfestivals.com.
WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

SALUTE TO AMERICA

The 12th Annual Salute to America at Greenfield Village will be held on July 1st through July 4th. Join us as we celebrate Independence Day with a musical tribute to our American heroes by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, topped off with a spectacular fireworks display in Walnut Grove.
For tickets call: 313-576-5111 or visit: www.thehenryford.org.
WWJ://SPECIAL EVENTS/
[MORE](#)

WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)

ARE YOU FIT TO BE CEO?

The Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan, WWJ and Crain's Detroit Business search for the 50 fittest CEOs of 2004.
WWJ://THE FRONT PAGE/
[MORE](#)



Orion Township plant gets \$300 million makeover, including tech: Found in *AutoTech Daily*: General Motors Corp. says it spent \$300 million to upgrade its Orion Township plant to build the Pontiac G6. GM says the improvements are designed to increase manufacturing flexibility, boost quality and enhance productivity. Key features include increased operator involvement, error proofing, visual controls and standardized work assignments. The plants also are implementing GM's "C-Flex" programmable body shop tooling system in place of body-style-specific tooling. The system allows multiple body panels (floor pans, deck lids, hoods, engine compartments) to be welded with the same set of tools and robots. GM says the system will enable it to reduce the size of its body shops by as much as 150,000 square feet and save \$100 million in changeover expenses. The upgrades also included environmental improvements. GM notes it already has reduced its energy consumption by 22 percent and water consumption by 37 percent over the past eight years. And during the past four years, GM has reduced the total amount of waste generated by its facilities by 13.7%, which it calculates is the equivalent to the amount of waste created annually by 352,000 U.S. households.

Scheele, Zetsche to keynote Auto-Tech 2004: Nick Scheele, president of Ford Motor Co., and Dieter Zetsche, Chrysler Group president and CEO, will deliver keynote addresses at Auto-Tech 2004, the annual automotive industry trade conference organized by the Automotive Industry Action Group. Scheele will be the featured speaker at AIAG's annual Outstanding Achievement Awards dinner, on Aug. 31, to honor individuals and AIAG member companies for contributions to the auto industry. The dinner, held in conjunction with Auto-Tech 2004, will begin at 7 p.m. at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Hotel. Zetsche will be the keynote speaker at Auto-Tech's Industry Leader Luncheon on Wednesday, Sept. 1. The noon luncheon will be held in the Riverview Ballroom at Cobo Conference Center. More at www.aiag.org/autotech/.

Mackinac conference next week: The IT Report will be back Up North next week for the Detroit Regional Chamber's annual Mackinac Policy Conference at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island June 3-6. Among the keynoters will be Pfizer Inc. CEO Henry A. McKinnell Jr., who will speak at 2:30 p.m. June 4. Pfizer is the world's largest research-based pharmaceutical company and employs more than 9,000 people in Michigan. Now in its 24th year, the Mackinac Policy Conference is the state's premier public policy conference. More than 1,700 of Southeast Michigan's business and political leaders will attend the conference to discuss issues of importance to the Detroit region and the state. Other highlights of the conference include addresses by General Motors Corp. CEO Rick Wagoner, Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the ever popular Big Four panel, comprised of the county executives and the mayor of Detroit. More about the conference at www.detroitchamber.com.



Looking to save money and grow your business?
Join the Detroit Regional Chamber during the month of May and receive
TWO YEARS of membership
for the price of ONE.

Detroit Regional Chamber
Powering the economy
for Southeast Michigan

The advertisement features a yellow and red background with a large white number '2' and a smaller white number '1'. The Detroit Regional Chamber logo is in the bottom left corner.

Detroit biz index rises sharply: In April, Comerica Bank's Detroit Area Business Activity Index held at 114, compared to a year-earlier reading of 100. The latest monthly reading represents a 14 percent increase from April 2003. Comerica chief economist David Littmann said vehicle output and steel production rose during the month, gains that were partially offset by lower sales of cars and energy consumption. The labor and financial sectors were stable. Comerica compiles the Detroit Area Business Activity Index monthly from eight different measures of regional activity which are seasonally adjusted, corrected for inflation, and expressed as an index with 1996 as base year equal to 100.

Yahoo adds anti-spyware to browser toolbar: Internet media company Yahoo Inc. unveiled a feature on Wednesday for its Web browser toolbar aimed at making it easier for users to remove unwanted "spyware" programs that snoop on Web surfing habits and other activities. The technology is provided by PestPatrol Inc., a company that claims to have been the first to offer commercially available anti-spyware, back in 2001. The new offering is part of Yahoo's free, downloadable toolbar, and can help users find "potentially unwanted software ... then lets consumers decide whether they want to disable/remove, ignore, or keep the files that are found," the company said in a statement. [The toolbar is available here.](#) [More.](#)

Government computer surveillance rings alarm bells: Nine months after Congress shut down a controversial Pentagon computer-surveillance program, the U.S. government continues to comb private records to sniff out suspicious activity, according to a congressional report obtained by Reuters. Privacy concerns prompted Congress to kill the Pentagon's \$54 million Total Information Awareness program last September, but government computers are still scanning a vast array of databases for clues about criminal or terrorist activity, the General Accounting Office found. Overall, 36 of the government's 199 "data mining" efforts collect personal information from the private sector, a move experts say could violate civil liberties if left unchecked. Several appear to be patterned after Total Information Awareness, which critics said could have led to an Orwellian surveillance state in which citizens have little privacy.

[More.](#)

Amazon to work with Bombay Co.: Amazon.com ([AMZN](#)) is going to build and manage Internet sites for Bombay Co. ([BBA](#)), the Ft. Worth, Texas-based furnishings and home décor retailer. Bombay Co. had \$17 million in online sales last year and hopes the link with Amazon will boost that number while also driving traffic to its mall-based stores. Bombay Co. thus joins Target ([TGT](#)), Toys "R" Us ([TOY](#)) and the National Basketball Association in using Amazon's technology for e-commerce. The online retailer said almost a quarter of its sales in the first quarter came through one of its partner retailers.

Cable news Weblogger IDed: Brian Stelter, an 18-year-old sophomore at Towson University near Baltimore, has been identified as the author of Cablenews.com, a Web site that reports on the cable news channels. "I would always scream at the TV and wish I had somewhere to write it down," the student told the *New York Times*. Now, he's doing that with his Web log. Launching the site a few months ago, Stelter hid his identity. "It seemed wise to be anonymous," he said. "I'm just a kid. I'm just a student." But Cablenewser.com attracts about 3,500 readers daily, and the report quotes a producer at MSNBC as saying, "It's pretty credible ... because he's quoting legit sources." (All your humble narrator can say is... *eighteen*. Sheez.)

California adopts new wireless regs: California on Thursday became the first state in the nation to adopt consumer protections for cell phone customers, after a four-year tussle with the industry. The state Public Utilities Commission adopted the so-called Telecommunications Consumer Bill of Rights on a 3-2 vote. The commission said it received more than 5,000 complaints from consumers last year about wireless companies; nationally, the Council of Better Business Bureaus said wireless carriers are the No. 2 topic of complaints filed with its bureaus, second only to auto dealers. The regulation passed after an acrimonious debate about whether the reforms represented enlightened regulation or ham-handed meddling into the free market. "These are 'Thou Shalt Not Deceive The Customer' rules," said PUC board member Geoffrey Brown, who wrote the proposal passed Thursday. [More.](#)

Spammer gets seven years: A man who sent 850 million junk e-mails through accounts he opened with stolen identities was sentenced to up to seven years in prison on Thursday. Atlanta-based Internet service provider Earthlink Inc. said it hoped the sentence and an earlier \$16.4 million civil judgment against Howard Carmack will deter other spammers. "Before spammers send one more spam e-mail, we think they should remember that what happened to Howard Carmack can happen to them," said Karen Casion, Earthlink's assistant general counsel. Jurors sentenced Carmack to seven years for convictions in March of forgery, identity theft and falsifying business records. He must serve a minimum 3 1/2 years.

[More.](#)

NEC pays \$20 million for E-Rate fraud: NEC-Business Network Solutions Inc. agreed to plead guilty and pay \$20.6 million criminal fine to settle charges of defrauding the U.S. government's program to subsidize the Internet in schools, known as E-Rate, the U.S. Justice Department said on Thursday. The Irving, Texas-based company, a subsidiary of Japanese chip and electronics maker NEC Corp., was charged with collusion and wire fraud by allocating contracts and rigging bids for E-Rate projects at five school districts in Michigan, Wisconsin, Arkansas, and South Carolina. The \$2.25 billion E-Rate program, created by Congress in 1996, provides funding for needy schools and libraries to connect to and utilize the Internet. Under the program, schools apply for money for cabling, Internet backbone equipment and monthly connectivity service fees. [More.](#)

Stocks: U.S. stocks ended higher Thursday as the Nasdaq Composite posted a fifth straight session of gains and blue chips soared, in a market buoyed by falling oil prices, a rally in bonds and largely positive data. Crude fell below \$40 per barrel and gasoline futures dropped to their lowest level in over two weeks on the New York Mercantile Exchange. In addition, economic growth for the first quarter was revised upward and the latest jobs data showed a dip in weekly jobless claims. The Dow Jones Industrial Average ([\\$INDU: news, chart, profile](#)) ended up 95.31 points, or 0.9 percent at 10,205.20. The benchmark index erased the prior's session's modest pullback, which came after a 159-point rise on Tuesday. Twenty-six of the Dow's 30 components posted gains. The Nasdaq Composite Index ([\\$COMPQ: news, chart, profile](#)) was up 8.35 points, or 0.4 percent, at 1,984.50, after coming back from a midsession dip into negative territory. Since the tech-rich index started rallying last Friday, it has risen 4.6 percent. The S&P 500 ([\\$SPX: news, chart, profile](#)) rose 6.34 points, or 0.6 percent, to 1,121.28, while the Russell 2000 index ([\\$RUT: news, chart, profile](#)) edged up 0.1 percent at 568.56.

All contents copyright 2004, Infinity Broadcasting Corp. All Rights Reserved. Written and edited by Matt Roush, Technology Editor, WWJ Newsradio 950, Detroit. For coverage comments or news tips, e-mail Matt Roush at mnroush@cbs.com or call (248) 455-7380. For marketing and advertising queries, contact Marketing Director Wendy Baca, wjbaca@cbs.com or (248) 455-7336.

The Great Lakes IT
Report is an
e-publication of



LEGAL NOTICE: This email may be considered an advertising or promotional message. If you no longer wish to receive commercial email from this Station, please reply to this email by sending a reply email by clicking on the "reply" button at the top of this page or by sending an email to Michelle Ganz at glitr@earthlink.net. Insert this message into the reply email: "Please remove me from your commercial email list." Or you can change your subscriber profile: «Reserved.Unsubscribe»

You must use this method to notify GLITR and WWJ of your opt-out request, as we cannot guarantee that other methods of notification will be effective. Please be aware that we may continue to contact you via email for administrative or informational purposes, including follow-up messages regarding contests you have entered or other transactions you have undertaken. By law, such messages are not considered to be commercial email.

EYES ON DESIGN
2004 Automotive design exhibition

[cars.com](#)

[click here](#)



SAE International™

Copyright © 2004 WWJ-AM and First MediaWorks
Powered by First MediaWorks