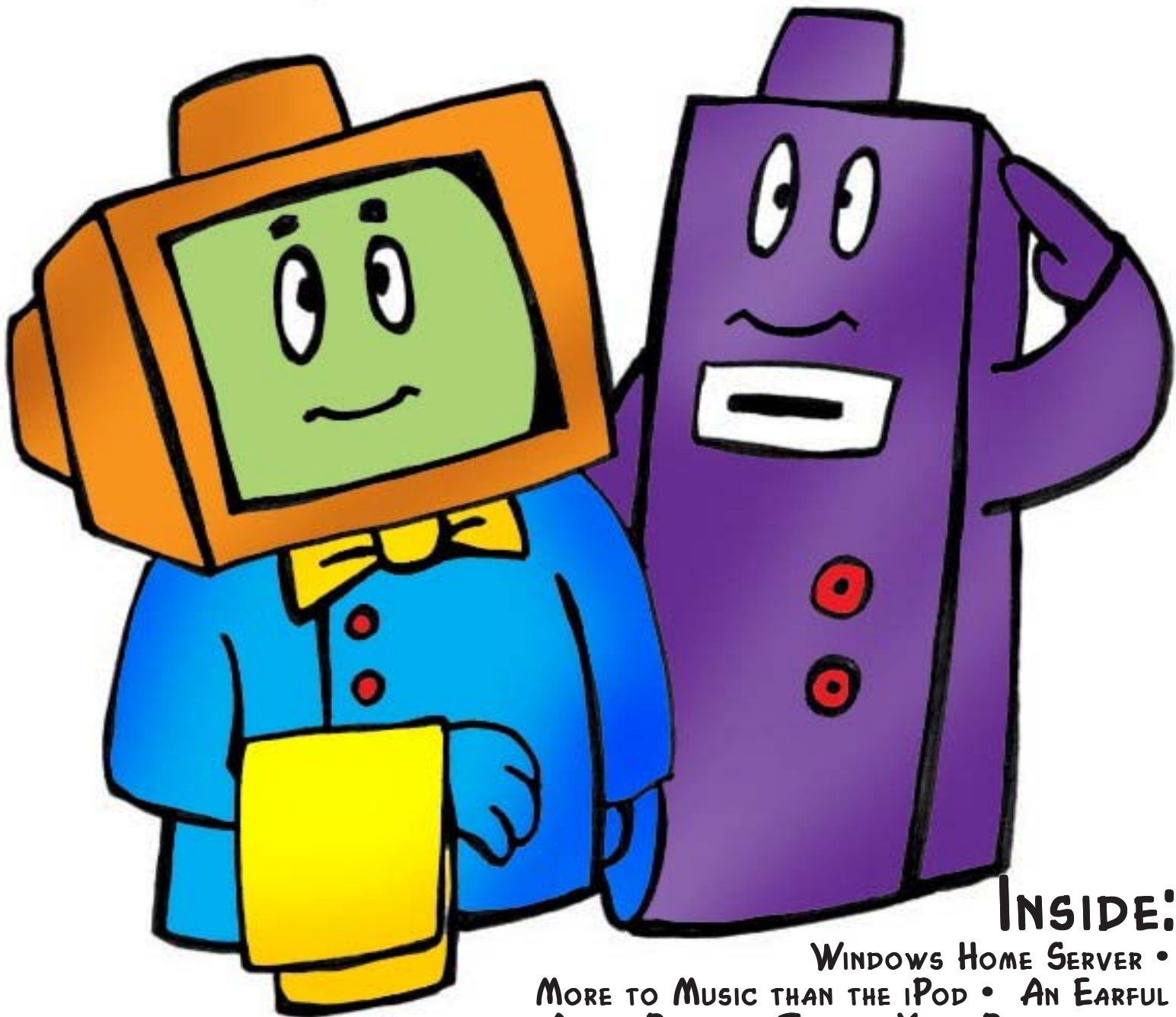


NEXT MEETING, MARCH 2:

IS IT TIME TO CONSIDER A HOME SERVER?



INSIDE:

WINDOWS HOME SERVER •
MORE TO MUSIC THAN THE IPOD • AN EARFUL
OF AUDIO BOOKS • JUICING YOUR BROADBAND •
SWITCHING INTERNET BROWSERS • PLUS, MORE SIG NEWS,
COMMENTARY, AND ANSWERS TO YOUR COMPUTING QUESTIONS

DIRECTORS' NOTES, Cont. from page 3
groups. Richard suggested DACS follow up to explore the possibilities.

Rob also reminded the board that members are entitled to a discount when purchasing O'Reilly books. Information will be posted in the members-only DACS forum.

Regarding the general meetings presentation schedule, Rob mentioned he is researching August meeting topics, perhaps to be centered on photo enhancement techniques. Authors for the meeting preview and review articles were tentatively established for the coming months.

March also brings up elections for Officers. Rob reminded the Board the positions of President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer are to be elected.

Howie reported on the DACS collaboration with the GDNRC Technology Committee. Five organizations have enrolled, and will enjoy access to the virtual environment. A computer equipped training center is available and DACS has the opportunity to offer software training in MS Office 07. Several suggestions were put forth as to the best level of training for DACS to provide. The logistics will be determined at future meetings.

Sean started a discussion about the roles and definitions of the DACS directors. He suggested the board consider renaming and/or reorganizing the structure of duties and the naming of committees to help clarify each position and role.

—Annette van Ommeren

Smart advertisers
can reach over
225
active computer
users and
software buyers
by taking
advantage of
the attractive
advertising rates
in
DACSDOC

Meeting Review

IP Telephony—Vantage Communications

By Richard Corzo

FEBRUARY'S presentation by Robert Andresen, VP of Sales at Vantage Communications (<http://www.vantageip.com>), was on the subject of IP

telephony; but before he dove into that subject, we got to hear about some other interesting things that the parent corporation Vantage (<http://www.vantage.com>) is doing. Vantage Linguistics provides software solutions that could help a user who typed in "your" but really meant to say "you're" by analyzing the context of the sentence. They also developed a search engine for Quicken to help those with tax questions. Taking the next step beyond spell check, grammar and thesaurus capability, Vantage Learning helps students learn the English language.

Search turned out to be a lead-in for the company into IP telephony, giving the ability to search voice mails, for instance. Robert explained how the Internet has driven change in the voice and data communications industry. We've gone from telephone company central offices, PBX machines on the premises, and trunk lines, to leveraging the Internet access companies already have to provide telephone service.

Vantage Communications has improved on a software switch which runs on a server. They also compete in customer relationship management (CRM) software. They provide customized billing information that allows one to drill down into billing details.

Vantage Communications provides a hosting platform, so should anything happen to a customer's facilities, their calls would still be handled offsite by way of voicemail. Unified communications allows employees to be reached wherever they are, so a caller doesn't have to try multiple numbers to reach someone. A soft phone can use the built-in speakers and microphone of a laptop. Unified messaging goes a step further to incorporate chat and instant

messaging. Convergence also allows audio and video conferencing.

Vantage IP and similar services offer a flat rate billing model which can be attractive for companies.

One of the productivity benefits Robert explained is called simultaneous and sequential ring. A desk phone and cell phone can ring at the same time. "Follow Me" allows calls to be automatically forwarded to a cell phone.

Unified messaging and Microsoft Outlook integration allows viewing of all messages, incoming call pop ups, and even out-calling from Outlook.

A hosted IP telephony solution can relieve a lot of work from IT staff, and allow smaller companies to provide services to their customers that normally only a larger company could afford to provide in house. Robert explained the advantage of using "the cloud" in a disaster recovery situation, enabling business continuity.

So, February's presentation really drove home how much further IP telephony, with quality of service guarantees, can take a company beyond voice over IP.

