

publishers' corner



DOWNTIME IN A DISTRACTION DERBY

Since we acquired SNEWS® five years ago, it has been our mission to find ways to deliver more of our news, analysis, features and information electronically, so it's timelier and more convenient.

We've done that by linking GearTrends® magazine stories to articles in SNEWS® or on the GearTrends® website to offer additional resources and information relevant to each story.

We've also launched SNEWS® Live to bring you news, profiles and interesting industry stories via audio and video podcasts. This venture has proven so popular and successful, with thousands listening each month, that we're doubling the number of podcasts originally scheduled for 2007.

And, in an effort to ensure you receive your news when you want it, we enabled RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds for all of our SNEWS® content—which means headlines from posted stories appear in your desktop news reader within minutes of going live. If you haven't yet enabled your RSS feeds for SNEWS®, you can do so now by going to www.snewsnet.com/rss.

So what does all that have to do with downtime you ask? Not much, other than it highlights the fact that in our effort to ensure you are connected, we've forgotten to remind you to disconnect occasionally.

A recent *Fast Company* article cited a Day-Timers survey confirming instant communications technology is actually making it harder, not easier, to get things done. In fact, the number of folks who reported feeling productive dropped from 83 percent in 1994 to less than 51 percent in 2006. As the article's author, Joe Robinson, said, "It's hard to perform in a 24/7 distraction derby that constantly disrupts focus and feeds an epidemic of false urgency."

When was the last time you disconnected? Left your cell phone off, your Blackberry in a drawer, and your laptop on your desk when you went home? When was the last time you let your mind wander aimlessly, just enjoying the moment without any thoughts toward work? There is nothing wrong with working hard—but only if you also disconnect hard, have good fun, and spend quality time with family and friends.

As grateful as we are for the clamor we hear when we take a week off and folks think something is wrong with their email or browser because they see no SNEWS® headlines or emails, there is nothing more urgent for us than taking time to be outside. We've discovered that our team is more productive, more creative and more energetic when we take time for ourselves. Our challenge this year to each of you—and to ourselves—is to use all your vacation time, whether it's one, two or three weeks, to get away from the office, away from the computer and away from the work phone. Find your downtime in today's distraction derby.

Thanks for being a part,

Michael Hodgson and Therese Iknoian
Co-publishers, SNEWS®/GearTrends®



Susan Mantle Photography

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