

customer walked up to our sales counter, and angrily plunked down a modem package.

"I want my money back," he said sternly.

"Well..." my boss began, taking a deep breath. "...what's wrong with it?"

"The modem works, but not the way I want it to. When I bought it, I was assured that it had the feature I was looking for. That is why I bought it. Because I was assured. The sales person assured me that it would do what I wanted."

My boss slumped a bit, knowing that the situation was going to be painful. "What did you want it to do? I don't understand what my staff would have assured you of that the modem couldn't do."

"Well, when I dial up another computer...a friend's computer, and we're talking...typing text to talk, you know...when I press return to send the text the modem doesn't spell check what I wrote."

"What?" my boss started, face wrinkling up and eyes crossing.

"When I press return, my friend gets text with spelling errors in it. I wanted a modem that would spell check. Your staff assured me. Yes. The staff assured me."

"Look, sir," my boss began. "My staff is well trained and knows full well that modems do not spell check. That's a software function, and to date, I know of no terminal program that spell

checks." He looked for affirmation to the small crowd of staff members that had grown. We nodded our heads accordingly.

"Your staff assured me. Yes. Your staff did. Your staff told me it would. And the magazines, they say it too. They say modems can do that. I don't know what your problem is. You should stock better modems. I want my money back."

Sighing, my boss gave up the pointless fight. "Fine, sir. We'll give you your money back. I hope you find the modem you're looking for."

As he rang up the voided sale and processed the return, my boss muttered one final question to the customer. "Why would you need to spell check in a terminal program?"

Sternly, the customer replied: "I don't want to look foolish."

answered the phone one day to greet a very loud gentleman with a heavy accent.

"I'm calling from Montreal" he boomed. Though the phone line sounded quite clear, the gentleman seemed to think he need to compensate for the long distance by raising his voice.

"I need to know the other name for the printer I bought at your store three years ago. It's an HP 1100."

Overwhelmed by the gentleman's voice, accent and request, I struggled to remember if a Hewlett Packard 1100 had ever existed, and why in the world it would ever have a different name.

"Um...I think..." I began.

The gentleman cut in, and forcefully declared "If I don't have your full attention, please let me speak to someone else who is free."

Despite his irritation with my supposed ignorance, I managed to maintain the call. As it turned out, the gentleman had a \$200 dot-matrix printer named the Raven LP 1100, and was requesting the name of the equivalent Panasonic model.

And it was me who had attention deficit disorder?

verheard at the local computer store:

CUSTOMER:

I'm having trouble with the printer I bought here.

SALES REP:

Which printer is it?

CUSTOMER:

You know...The printer with the really complex cartridge that you snap in there.

CUSTOMER:

Will I hurt my desktop computer if I put the monitor on top of its case?

CUSTOMER:

Can I use my TV as a monitor?

CUSTOMER:

Is it bad to put disks in water?

SALES REP:

Or you might want to consider this model. It has an all-in-one design.

CUSTOMER:

Does that include the monitor?

CUSTOMER:

I work in a high-static environment and the wall plugs are not grounded. Should I use my computer? And if so, will static shocks affect my system?

SALES REP:

Just slip a sheet of Bounce under your computer. You'll be fine.

CUSTOMER:

Hi. I'd like to buy an Apple Compaq.

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