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# One Last Compile...

## *Dear Santa*

Christmas bears down upon us, filling me with that mysterious tingle of hope and trepidation that I usually associate with installing the latest version of Microsoft Office. There's always half a chance that this year my cunning mistletoe strategy will pay off and I finally get to press lips with Jane the Temp rather than Doris from Accounts. There's the nerve-racking ordeal of deciding what to wear to the staff Christmas party. And there's that strange contented feeling that comes half-way through that party where I drunkenly survey my colleagues and realise that they're all at least as deeply tragic and socially inept as I am.

Christmas is ostensibly about goodwill to all men, but let's face it: Christmas is about presents. My list that I carefully placed up the chimney for Santa was remarkably short this year. I'd like him to arrange major hardware upgrades for all of my customers who still use Windows 3.1 and to place a copy of Windows 95 or Windows NT in their respective stockings.

You might be thinking that is remarkably public-spirited of me, and you might be touched by my concern that my customers have a relatively stable operating system upon which to run their businesses. Which is, of course, complete twaddle. The truth of the matter is I'm bored with 16-bit Delphi and I want to move to Delphi 3 so that I can write programs with coolbars in them. I feel that I'm currently in the slow lane of Windows development, and it's those irritating Windows 3.1 customers who are slowing me down. Their argument tends to be along the lines that they have several hundred employees who are used to, and rely upon,

the existing, mature, well-managed system, and there is not a sufficiently strong business case to justify the cost and disruption that would be caused by a move to a 32-bit based network. I feel they lack vision. I don't think they appreciate just how ground-breaking an inventory system which employs coolbars could be.

Not having to support Windows 3.1 would also mean no more worrying about running out of Windows resources. No more worrying about whether the screens look okay in both 3.1 and 95. It would also rid me of one of my recurring nightmares: no, not the one about me and Doris from Accounts, although that is pretty scary. It's the one where the phone rings and a bemused customer tells me that his database has just disappeared. Ever since I read about the potential problem with the BDE and Paradox tables and WfWG networks, I've just known that it's going to happen to me. I've employed all the defensive ploys recommended by the experts [*See Delphi Clinic in Issue 17. Editor*] indeed, I do a `DbiSaveChanges` every time the user exhales, and my caches are flushed more regularly than the loos at the local curry house, but it's still a source of worry. Admittedly, for once it wouldn't really be my fault, but that wouldn't prevent my customers from cheerfully kicking me to death.

Oh, and if he's got any time to spare, I'd like Santa to give Bob Swart a new hat, preferably one that he can't set at an irritatingly jaunty angle. And I'd like him to give that nice man in New Zealand who wrote me a fan letter eternal life and all the beer he can drink, but really, my dear fellow, you must try and get out more.