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Slaying the electronic dinosaur

The homemaker: Toby Moore finally confronted his technophobia and dragged his home office into the present day

Computer failure features in my recurring dream. So in my recurring life I cling to the elements of a home office installed three years ago — anything to avoid disturbing a temperamental, but broadly amenable, electronic monster in its nest of cables.



I have suspicions about new technology, too. These revolve around anything miniaturised, especially laptops. I worked on one once, its constant need for new keys was evidence of an unwillingness to be thumped heavily by two fingers. The robust, generic desktop with a 15in flat screen that I use now is unexciting but has never let me down. The word upgrade is, therefore, not the promise of some new dawn but the outrider to chaos. I have blocked my ears to its siren call — until now. Tom Breza, the managing director of PC Service, has set me up with a new photo printer, laptop, scanner and, let's go for it, a satellite car navigation system. In fact, pretty much all my nightmares at once. The broad improvements were obvious immediately: speed, image and opportunity. I was impressed also by how user-friendly the standard tools of office life have become.

The laptop, for example, freed up desk space and has a much better quality screen than my desktop; it is bigger, too. The scanner allows me to download old negatives from the 35mm films that I no longer buy in our digital age. I had never thought to print pictures off my digital camera at home. Now, after using an HP Photosmart, I can't imagine doing it anywhere else.

I had also never bothered with telephones but, in skittish mood, got a Jensen T-6 cordless. This does something that cannot be said of other home telephones: it makes you feel rather cool.

But the revelation for me was the car navigation system, which I

used to travel between two villages 60 miles apart in the Midlands, a complex journey on which I get lost regularly. It got me there without a hitch. Visually, the trip was like travelling above a colour Ordnance Survey map and “seeing” features otherwise invisible, such as rivers, as you approached. The electronic world, it seems, is moving my way at last.

Click [here](#) to read Toby's verdict

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