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"Face it, we all talk in our cars. We sing. We make comments about the drivers around us. So it seems a natural to have a voice-activated computer in the car," says Gookin. Microsoft agrees. They've recently upgraded their in-car computer operating system to Windows CE. That operating system, already popular with hand-held computer users, would be a natural to have in the car "provided that it's voice activated.

"Voice activated is good. We don't need another distraction in the car," said Gookin. "I don't think the highways are ready for drivers typing at a keyboard or fumbling with a mouse. But saying "Dial Don at the office," would be better than picking up a cell phone."

Microsoft, as well as other high tech companies, envision a car with voice-activated features such as the radio, a DVD player or a trip computer. And yet, while there doesn't seem to be a pressing need for a voice-activated computer in anyone's car, Gookin seems to think it's a good idea. "People aren't clamoring for it," he notes. "But imagine finally being able to say "I'm lost!" in the car and have the car be able to tell you how to get found again."

"Then again," Gookin adds, "the real question is that if such a device is available, would some men still be reluctant to ask for directions?"

Dan Gookin is the author of more than 80 books on personal computing, including the original bestseller, DOS for Dummies. His latest book is Naked Windows XP, available in May from Sybex Publishing. Visit the Wambooli Website at www.Wambooli.com



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