

Do as I say! (and not as I do)

By Dirk Hart

It started out with just a single PC. I swear I didn't know what a mess I was helping to create.

This client had 48 terminals and printers and there was loose talk of adding another 16-port serial board to the mix when some wag asked if it was possible to use a PC instead of a terminal. There it started, so innocently, so subtly but wires and mess go together as surely as yellow dogs and pickup trucks.

These folks like to do things themselves and besides, I just hate getting fiberglass ceiling tile bits in my hair, so I didn't complain - perhaps I even urged them along - when they started doing wiring themselves.

Sigh. I knew my days of reckless wiring abandon were coming to an end when I paid a visit to these otherwise good folks today, opened the closet for the backoffice wiring point and saw the wiring situation there.

Let this be a lesson to you: Start off right with your wiring center. Get a rack. Get a patch panel at least twice the size you think you'll need. For crying in the sink, always without fail use wire markers on BOTH ends of the wire. Use a nice faceplate and keystone jack at the workstation end. Get nice patch cords just a little long but not so long that it makes a mess. NEVER cinch those cable ties around CAT5 as tight as you can. Use velcro ties.

I could go on but before your attention wanders, just let me say this. Never be a party to this:

