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Will The OSHA Ergonomics Act Be Implemented?

Cumulative trauma disorders are still the focus of the Federal OSHA bureaucrats...

Just before the historic election this fall, OSHA was staged to implement a new set of regulations which dealt with ergonomic work related disorders. This included such disorders as carpal tunnel syndrome.

As proposed, these new regulations would be even more pervasive and costly than the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). They would expand the OSHA bureaucracy and control of regulators to levels unheard of in the rest of the industrialized western world.

The new regulations would require that employ-
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It is time for us to all howl -- finally we will have a great year !!!!

Will Wine Tasting Skills Be Taken Over By The Computer?

The French are experimenting with computers that use neural logic and chemical analysis...

Many of us are not very comfortable in picking a wine for dinner. There is always the concern that after we taste the wine one of the others at our table will say the wine is "not great". This concern may soon be eliminated as technology moves into the wine industry.

In a recent trip to France's wine country we were surprised to find a computer in the wine

1995 Is The Year of Revolution In The Work Place.

As government is reinvented the benefits of downsizing will be realized by many...

In the first quarter of 1995 the effects of the election will begin to be felt. If the new and surviving members of this Congress really pass the laws that have been touted as the contract with the people, then there will be a major upheaval in the way business interacts with government.

The first proposed law that will have the most impact will be the one that will apply the same rules to Congress that they have applied to business. Imagine the impact of the ADA and

sexual harassment laws on them. They will see the impacts first hand. That alone will cause many lawmakers to redraft laws and make them
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master's work area. This wine maker was experimenting with a computer to tell him when he should harvest the grapes. In years past he would depend on his palate and sense of smell to tell him when to pick the grapes. Now he was training his computer to do that.

In time, with enough samples captured, coded and stored by the system the guess work in rating wines could be eliminated. Wine tasting could become a lost art.

For me this may be a step too far in the advancement of technology. Will the next advance be a computer that will generate a painting that is just like one of the great masters or compose a great symphony that does not require creative skills? I hope not.

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Will The Ergonomics Act Be Implemented?

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ers "experiment" without regard to cost and assume full liability even if the job related activities were only partially responsible for the "potential disorder". In addition to this OSHA could force employers to proceed with lowering job productivity even if there was no evidence that the job activities by particular employees could be a "potential hazard".

California had an era where it let OSHA get into areas like this in the 70's and 80's. There were some lessons learned that we should not forget.

- ✓ Jobs move to areas that do not have those same regulations;
- ✓ Cost of doing business increases to the point that new business is not started as rapidly as needed;
- ✓ Private litigation proceeds at an ever increasing rate even when the governmental agency starts to pull back; and
- ✓ More of managements time is focused on dealing with meeting the needs of the regulations rather than trying to solve problems the regulations were designed to fix.

The cost of compliance to these new regulations for American industry has been estimated at over \$8 billion per year. Add to this the increase in the size of OSHA and the fines that it will levy. The cost could well exceed \$20 billion per year. Now that would cause a great "sucking sound" as computer related jobs are moved out of the country or prematurely automated out of existence.

Currently the OSHA laws in place only require OSHA to have public hearings and then the regulations become law. Congress does not have a vote on this. We have a doomsday machine in place and it needs to be turned

off. With everything else the new House and Senate are doing, they can not forget to turn off the destructive bureaucracies of the well intentioned governmental agencies.

That is not to say that employers are not doing things that eliminate risk to their employees. Rather what needs to be done is to evaluate the risk workers have and then put solutions

in place that address the real problems. The solutions implemented would be more cost effective.

For example, as I fly around the country Denver, Chicago, Dallas, Miami and New York all exist under an orange ball of smog. Los Angeles, with its own air quality management process, has air that is the cleanest it's been since the late 1940's. California has done a rather good job in the area of air quality standards. On the down side of this is the EPA now trying to define what is best for the entire country.

OSHA could force employers to proceed with lowering job productivity...

In many industries organizations are looking at ways to improve the way jobs are done in conjunction with computers. Things such as display height, size and flicker are all being investigated and solutions are being implemented.


Microsoft has taken the lead with its mouse and keyboard that fit the shape of the hand. Most organizations have moved to high resolution color monitors versus the old green and white dot matrix. We need to take a studied approach and define solutions to real problems as shown by the two examples above.

Given that organizations are going to be investing in the next several months, it would be prudent to keep this potential new set of regulations in mind. In the long run they will not be implemented -- but better safe than sorry.

As any successful enterprise knows, the one resource that is critical to the business is a "happy" and "healthy" work force. Those employees are the most productive. It is for this reason that the best interests of the enterprise are met, most of the time, by market conditions. As the economy booms organizations will invest in solutions that will be the most productive. That is, the market will drive the ergonomic

changes necessary to make the workplace a good place to be. That is the only way that it can

work to everyone's benefit.

One thing that everyone should do is to see that their Congressman is aware of the burden that this will place on them, so that this new cross is not added to the scores of others that have been placed on our most productive resources. 



OSHA is like a yak -- It can not see what it is doing yet it still keeps on eating

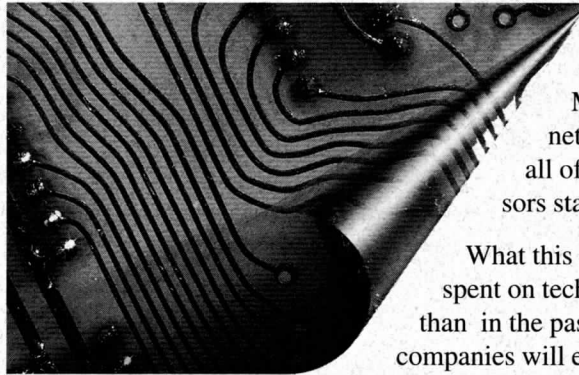
1995 Is The Year of Revolution In The Work Place.

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The second, is the emphasis that the new speaker of the house is going to place on the electronic highway. For example his bulletin board of all legislation -- taking out the mystery. In addition his comments on how "illogical" the IRS is in making it so difficult to have a home office. These two factors will depoliticize the "electronic highway" that Clinton discussed early in his administration.

Taking this into account, my forecast for the next year includes the following:


- ✓ **Color Printers** - will become standard for many organization's normal reports. The cost of the technology is falling so fast that organizations will spend more in the later part of the year and will continue to find new applications for color. This will be driven by the users and not the technologists.
- ✓ **CD-ROMs** - will become cost effective as a storage medium with the release of writing CD-ROM drives that cost less than a thousand dollars. In addition, there will be a strong push by the optical disk vendors to implement optical media as the standard. The driver and primary reason for success will be software vendors. If they continue to ship software on CD's then the capability of the optical vendors to penetrate the market will be significantly limited.
- ✓ **Multimedia** - applications will be the focus of many organizations' training activities. With the need to add staff to meet the demands of the rapidly growing economy, many organizations will turn to technology to see that training is imbedded with the actual application in the form of interactive help.



- ✓ **Inter-linking of commercial networks** and Internet will cause many organizations to rethink their security. In addition to the rapid deployment of the new smaller digital satellite dishes, many will begin to look at the interactive capability to use this as an option for video conferencing.
- ✓ **Microsoft will stumble** on its schedule to deliver one major product. It is taking too much on its shoulders to develop all of the drivers for the new operating systems. In the case of NT it has already missed two major requirements, Adobe Type Manager does not work and no driver for a FAX works on NT.
- ✓ **Client Server** - will continue to be the focus of most. With the stabilization of NT, Unix and OS/2 the magnitude of solid platforms will make it easier to deploy these applications.
- ✓ **Apple Computer** - will start to see the beginning of the end. The number of units that it will ship will be greater this year, but its market share will erode significantly.

As we look in the future, the demand for processing power will increase. 100Mhz will not be enough to do all of the things that are possible with the applications. The not-so-old 386's will not be fast enough to operate on the same networks as the 90-100 Mhz processors. Band width on networks will begin to be a problem as all of these new applications and processors start to dump more data on the network.

What this all means is that more money will be spent on technology in the next twelve months than in the past twenty four. Several software companies will experience explosive growth. This will be something that the media will not write about until next year.

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Forecast for the National Information Systems Market

The election was the extra boost that was needed to get it moving at full speed. This is the best that it has been since the mid 80's....

by M. Victor Janulaitis

The election was a real surprise to everyone. The recent increase in the prime rate has not dampened the prospects for this business cycle. The potential tax changes, including the \$25,000 capital expense credit will let many independents upgrade their technologies and shelter current income.

The emphasis on information sharing and the potential relaxing of the home office rule will be the engine for the next leap in the information highway. The Clinton administration had politicized it and only the democrats were involved in the decision making process. Now it looks like the "free enterprise" system will work and there will be a massive jump to wire up America.

One of the new data paths will be the digital transmission dishes that are just coming to market. Look for some of the vendors such as software companies (data processing and entertainment) and value added providers to begin to use this as a very cost effective information distribution channel.

At the same time there has been a resurgence in the mainframe world. Many have found that legacy systems will need to exist and are in the throws of getting the necessary additional capacity to support the current growth spurt. In Europe and

Asia, the economies are starting to show some life. The internationalization of corporate America will continue at an ever increasing rate.

Many incorrectly discount our productivity. As a nation we still have the most productive society with the best standard of living in the world. Given that the burden of excessive government and a burgeoning welfare state are stopped, as we enter the next decade we will still be the best economy in the world

In the last issue I forecast a number of firms to watch. Some interesting things have happened to several of them.

- ⇒ **Powersoft** - the company's revenues have continued to skyrocket and they are now in the midst of a buy-out. The question is will their products continue to be among the best as they are absorbed by Sybase.
- ⇒ **SSA** - layoffs continue and management is still floundering all the while they have lost some major new business.
- ⇒ **Gupta** - nothing of note has happened and the company continues to flounder. The

acquisition of Powersoft is a good omen for them since they are one of the only major independents left around.

- ⇒ **IBM** - they did not pull the plug on OS/2 yet, however they did pull the plug on supporting Apple. Brand management continues -- this not a good omen for longer term strategic systems.

If government really is going to be downsized, the ramifications are of such a magnitude that the impact on all of us is beyond anything we have seen in the last two decades. Everyone must be ready for all of the changes that are going to take place. From a systems perspective almost all of the core infrastructure systems of the government will need to change. This is only the tip of the iceberg.

Corporations will have to change the Payroll, Fixed Asset, Human Resources and General Ledger systems. This will have to be done in very short order. The large and small software vendors are not geared to do this very cost effectively. This is an area that will be of great opportunity in the next few quarters and rise to a fever by next December. ❄️

Vic



Published by:

M. Victor Janulaitis

Location	Prospects Short Term	Prospects Long Term
Northeast	Good/Excellent	Excellent
Mid-Atlantic	Good	Good
Southeast	Good	Good
South	Good/Excellent	Good
Midwest	Excellent	Excellent
Southwest	Good	Excellent
West	Good/Excellent	Excellent
Pacific Northwest	Good	Good
Best Location	Midwest	West