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## Another IBM triumph

KABINDA, ZAIRE--In a move IBM offices are hailing as a major step in the company's ongoing worldwide telecommunications revolution, M'wana Ndeti, a member of Zaire's Bantu tribe, used an IBM global uplink network modem yesterday to crush a nut.

Ndeti, who spent 20 minutes trying to open the nut by hand, easily cracked it open by smashing it repeatedly with the powerful modem.

"I could not crush the nut by myself," said the 47-year-old Ndeti, who added the savory nut to a thick, peanut-based soup minutes later. "With IBM's help, I was able to break it." Ndeti discovered the nut-breaking, 28.8 V.34 modem yesterday, when IBM was shooting a commercial in his southwestern Zaire village. During a break in shooting, which shows African villagers eagerly teleconferencing via computer with Japanese schoolchildren, Ndeti snuck onto the set and took the modem, which he believed would serve well as a "smashing" utensil.

IBM officials were not surprised the longtime computer giant was able to provide Ndeti with practical solutions to his everyday problems. "Our telecommunications systems offer people all over the world global networking solutions that fit their specific needs," said Herbert Ross, IBM's director of marketing. "Whether you're a nun cloistered in an Italian abbey or an Aborigine in Australia's Great Sandy Desert, IBM has the ideas to get you where you want to go today."

According to Ndeti, of the modem's many powerful features, most impressive was its hard plastic casing, which easily sustained several minutes of vigorous pounding against a large stone. "I put the nut on a rock, and I hit it with the modem," Ndeti said. "The modem did not break. It is a good modem."

Ndeti was so impressed with the modem that he purchased a new, state-of-the-art IBM workstation, complete with a PowerPC 601 microprocessor, a quad-speed internal CD-ROM drive and three 16-bit ethernet networking connectors. The tribesman has already made good use of the computer system, fashioning a gazelle trap out of its wires, a boat anchor out of the monitor and a crude but effective weapon from its mouse.

"This is a good computer," said Ndeti, carving up a just-captured gazelle with the computer's flat, sharp internal processing device. "I am using every part of it. I will cook this gazelle on the keyboard." Hours later, Ndeti capped off his delicious gazelle dinner by smoking the computer's 200-page owner's manual.

IBM spokespeople praised Ndeti's choice of computers. "We are pleased that the Bantu people are turning to IBM for their business needs," said company CEO William Allaire. "From Kansas City to Kinshasa, IBM is bringing the world closer together. Our cutting-edge technology is truly creating a global village."

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