

THE 10 BIGGEST *Problems* WITH *Wireless* & HOW TO *Fix Them*



MISSED CALLS

Another big hassle for cellphone users is calls that get bumped to voice mail without warning. Sometimes the local cell tower is overloaded and can't complete any additional calls. Sometimes the signal gets interrupted by a tall building or a tunnel. With smartphones and BlackBerrys, incoming calls get shunted aside when users are browsing the Web or sending an email; the gadgets can't support voice and data simultaneously.

Some solutions to these glitches are beginning to appear in Europe. For instance, some European carriers can alert you to an incoming call if you're sending an email or Web browsing: The call gets converted to a text message, which you can then answer with the click of a button.

Similar fixes may soon be making their way to the U.S. Sprint Nextel, for one, says it is exploring solutions similar to the ones used by European carriers. And a New York-based start-up called SimulScribe Inc. has launched a service that uses voice-recognition technology to convert voice mail into text, which then gets delivered to BlackBerrys and Treos as email, or as text messages to phones that aren't equipped with email. The company says it's testing the service with one of the largest U.S. wireless providers, but won't disclose which one.