

The Inside Scoop: Tips, Hints & Strategies from Telecommuters Just Like You

Telecommute

The magazine for today's flexible workplace

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THEY'RE EXTREME!

Teleworkers Go Wild

The **BLAME** Game Resolving Remote Conflicts

A PERFECT MATCH What You Need to Telework **NOW**

Your Aching Back Home-Based Ergonomics



Extreme Pedaloading

An odd-looking boat left England in January 1995 captained by two Brits on a quest to navigate their way around the world using only human-generated power. Steve Smith, 30, and Jason Lewis, 29, have since biked from France to Portugal, crossed the Atlantic in their pedalboat, roller-bladed from Miami to San Francisco, biked and kayaked to Honduras (where they had to turn back because El Niño had reversed the winds and currents) and pedalboated from San Francisco to Hawaii. Their project, "Pedal for the Planet," was born of the team's passion for the environment.

Their boat, named *Moksha* (which means "freedom" in Sanskrit), resembles the Beatles' yellow submarine. Reaching speeds of about 3 knots an hour (about the speed of a fast walker), the boat is powered when the pair take turns at a recumbent bicycle-like command post. Only 26 feet long and 5 feet wide, *Moksha* was designed to be self-righting and was fitted with a number of high-tech devices to avoid collisions in the sea lanes.

To finance their journey, the duo sell T-shirts and newsletter subscriptions, and give lectures and slide/video presentations of their adventures in towns and cities along the way. While en route, they post a daily diary on the Internet, describing their adventures. It makes pretty amazing reading. They've been brushed by a whale, weathered storms with 25- to 30-foot seas and survived a rogue wave that upended the ship and tossed Smith overboard. Lewis broke both legs in a hit-and-run accident near Pueblo, Colo., and was laid up for nine months. It took 111 days to cross the Atlantic and 54 to get to Hawaii, and they lost 25 to 30 pounds apiece each time. In spite of these hardships, the pair continue.

Staying in touch is quite a challenge. On the Atlantic voyage, they were restricted to outgoing satellite coded messages. Most days, the message was No. 18: "We're OK." On the Pacific leg, however, they have e-mail capability. Still, the team carefully watch their pennies. Each character (including spaces) costs 1 cent to send, so a lengthy e-mail could easily set them back \$10. Sending a digitized photo as an e-mail attachment costs around \$50.

Then there are the physical telework challenges they face. Hunched over their ruggedized laptop in the bow of a tiny boat, the pair send daily reports of their activities. When a wave crashes over the canopy, it drenches writer and laptop. "We really gave our ruggedized computer a workout," says Lewis. "It got completely soaked on several occasions, we spilled food on it, saltwater got into the keyboard, and it kept on working." They found that if they stared at the computer screen for

Hardware:

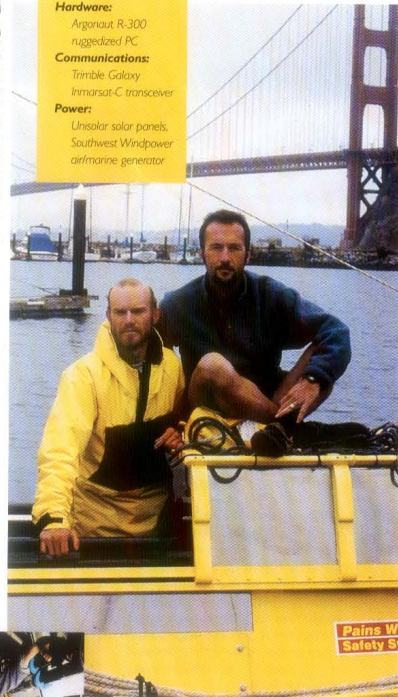
Argonaut R-300 ruggedized PC

Communications:

Trimble Galaxy Inmarsat-C transceiver

Power:

Unisolar solar panels, Southwest Windpower air/marine generator



Above: Smith and Lewis (in blue) aboard *Moksha* leaving San Francisco en route to Hilo, Hawaii. Inset: Smith works on his laptop in *Moksha's* cramped quarters. "We really gave our ruggedized computer a workout," says Lewis. "It got completely soaked, and it kept on working."

PHOTOS BY KENNY BROWN (ABOVE) AND JASON LEWIS

more than 30 minutes, they got seasick. To compensate, they mentally composed while pedaling and whizzed through keyboarding tasks before sickness hit.

By December 1998, the team had reached Hilo, Hawaii, nearly halfway around the world. Next stop...the Gilbert Islands, en route to Australia. To follow Smith and Lewis as they continue their journey, check their Web site at www.goals.com/PedalPlanet.