IBM Links SatNav to Car Radios

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(PhysOrg.com) -- IBM has filed a patent that could put an end to losing your favorite radio channels while you are driving long distances. Their idea is to combine satellite navigation with the car radio to automate the process of finding new radio stations as you move out of range of your first choice.

The U.S. patent, filed earlier this month, may also have safety benefits, according to IBM, since finding a new station while driving can be a distraction.

Robert Peterson, of the IBM laboratory in Austin, Texas described the idea as a radio fitted with software to communicate with the car's satellite navigation system. The radio would be supplied already programmed with details of the national radio stations, including the genre and signal strengths.

The way the system would work is that before you set off on your journey, you enter your destination and your initial radio station choice and its genre, such as classical music, talk shows, country music, or whatever you like. The satellite navigation system calculates your best route, and the radio software works out your best radio stations along the way. As you travel, it automatically switches to the next radio station as you move out of range of the previous one.

The patent claims the system would improve safety since the driver would no longer need to search for a suitable station, a process that has been blamed for traffic accidents ever since car radios first appeared, back in the 1920s.

via Newscientist

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