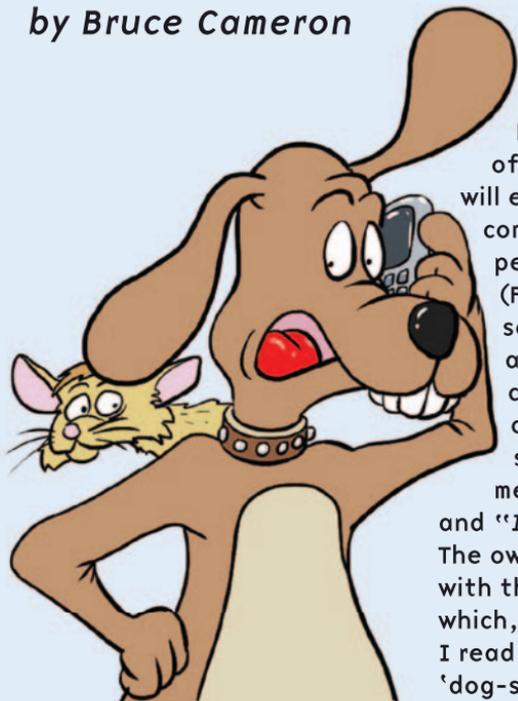


YOUR DOG IS CALLING ...

by Bruce Cameron



Last year a South Korean company began offering a service that will enable dog owners to communicate with their pets via cell phones. (Feel free to read that sentence as many times as you need to.) Using a cell-phone-to-internet connection, dogs will send their owners text messages like “*I am sad*” and “*I’m borrowing the 4WD.*” The owners can then respond with their own messages which, according to the story I read, will be translated into ‘dog-sounds’ ...

Your reaction to this story is probably the same as mine: *Oh come on*, you’re saying, *this is unbelievable!* But no, text-to-bark software is apparently on the way. And as soon as this application is available I’m going to sign up, in order to continue what my children have started, which is the transfer of every dollar I own to the cell phone companies.

I look forward to having conversations like this:

Dog: Dad?

Bruce: Why are you calling? I was in the middle of an important meeting.

Dog: There’s a possum in the yard!

Bruce: So?

Dog: There’s a possum in the yard!

Bruce: Okay, I get it; what do you want me to do about it?

Dog: I tried barking and smashing my face against the window and slobbering all over everything and tipping over a lamp and smearing my paws

on the glass, but it's still there! There's a possum in the yard!

Bruce: You knocked over a lamp?

Dog: Plus somebody's been eating garbage again. The rubbish bin is tipped over and there are pieces of chewed-up paper all over the place. I'm just warning you now so that you have time to calm down and not be angry when you get home.

Bruce: What do you mean, "somebody's been eating garbage again?" Who do you think might have done that?

Dog: Uh, the cat?

Bruce: The cat won't even eat *cat* food. I have to buy her salmon and tuna. The last thing she's going to do is root around in the garbage eating some stale donuts.

Dog: That's not true, there *weren't* any donuts! The only things worth eating were half a ham sandwich and some pizza crust.

Bruce: Then why did you chew the paper?

Dog: To see if there was anything edible on it.

Bruce: So you admit eating the garbage!

Dog: I meant, to see if there was anything edible on them as part of my investigation into the cat.



Bruce: That makes no sense. You're going to be in big trouble when I get home.

Dog: How about if I eat everything I spilled?

Bruce: No! Then you'll just get sick all over the carpet.

Dog: Which should be all the proof you need that this cat is a big mistake!

Bruce: What's a big mistake is this technology that enables me to run up my cell-phone bill talking to a dog.

Dog: Can you hold? I have another call coming in.

Bruce: What?

Dog: It's probably that malamute from next door. He's been calling all morning.

Bruce: What? Why?

Dog: Because there's a possum in our yard!

Bruce: You are not to use the phone to talk to other dogs. You are not to call me at work just because there is a possum in the yard. Your job is to guard the house while I'm away.

Dog: I'm bored. I barked at the postie, but she left mail anyway. I took a nap, chewed a shoe, watched the fish, ate some snacks from the cat's litter-box, and now ...

Bruce: Hold it! You chewed a shoe?

Dog: Uh ... Want to go for a walk?

Bruce: Don't change the subject! What did I tell you about chewing my shoes?

Dog: Uh, Dad? I'd like to talk about this, but I can't.

Bruce: Why not?

Dog: Because ... because there's a possum in the yard!



© 2010 W. BRUCE CAMERON – USED BY PERMISSION. BRUCE IS AUTHOR OF 'A DOG'S PURPOSE' AND 'THE CAMERON COLUMN' – SEE WWW.WBRUCECAMERON.COM.
