Hail to the IBM
May 4, 1939

As part of "IBM Day" at the New York World's Fair, the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy, gave the first public performance of the IBM anthem – "Hail to the IBM".

It had been composed by Vittorio Giannini, with lyrics by IBMer Fred W. Tappe, to honor Thomas J. Watson's [Feb 17] 25th anniversary with the company. The idea for the song came from the composer's sister, Dusolina Giannini, dramatic soprano of the Metropolitan Opera Association.

The piece was performed during that evening's banquet organized by the "IBM Hundred Percent Club" to honor IBM's top sales performers of 1938. All attendees were expected to sing.

The first verse:

> Lift up our proud and loyal voices, Sing out in accents strong and true, With hearts and hands to you devoted, And inspiration ever new; Your ties of friendship cannot sever, Your glory time will never stem, We will toast a name that lives forever, Hail to the I.B.M.

It thereafter entered the "Songs Of The IBM" song book, a hallowed text that was published regularly between 1927 and 1953. An audio clip of a song from the book (not "Hail" unfortunately) can be found at `https://www.ibm.com/ibm/history/exhibits/music/wav/100percent.wav`

The World's Fair ran for over a year (April 30, 1939 to Oct. 27, 1940), so two IBM days were held; the second occurred on May 13, 1940.
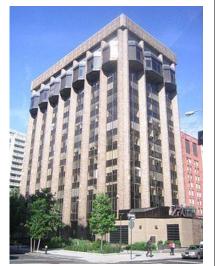
Computer Ransom
May 4-5, 1970

News of the bloodshed at Kent State on May 4 triggered protests at colleges and universities across the US.

On May 4 and 5, students at New York University forcefully occupied several buildings in the school's Washington Square complex, including Warren Weaver Hall, home of the Courant Institute of Mathematical Science which housed a $3.5 million computer (a CDC 6600 [Sept 00]) owned by the Atomic Energy Commission.

The strikers demanded a $100,000 ransom for the computer's safe release, which they intended to use as bail for imprisoned members of the Black Panthers, a militant African-American organization.

Warren Weaver Hall. Photo by Japhethwood. CC BY-SA 3.0

However, facing forced removal from the building, the students gave up their ultimatums and departed on May 7, but not before setting up gasoline bombs to blow up the computer.

Two assistant professors, Fred Greenleaf and Emile Chi, discovered the makeshift bombs when they re-entered the institute. Greenleaf recalled, "They had knocked the doorknobs off the door so you couldn't open it." But there was a small window, high up in the door. "We could see there was an improvised toilet paper fuse," he said. "It was slowly burning its way to a bunch of containers, bigger than gallon jugs. They were sitting on the top of the computer." The fuse was doused by aiming a fire extinguisher under the door.

For more May protests, see [May 9], [May 19].

PvP Begins
May 4, 1998

PvP (http://pvponline.com/), also known as Player vs. Player, was an early webcomic written and drawn by Scott Kurtz.

The storyline concerns the office of a small magazine that produces the gaming periodical "PvP". It features a great deal of "nerd culture" humor, especially related to comics, roleplaying, and video gaming.

The earliest webcomic was probably "Doctor Fun" by David Farley, which started in [Sept 24] 1993. However, PvP is usually seen as having the most influence on later webcomics [Oct 17].

CAPTCHA Coined
May 4-8, 2003

The idea of including a test on Web pages to separate humans from software agents has been around since the late 1990's. However, the catchy name, CAPTCHA ("Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart") was coined in 2003 by Luis von Ahn (aka "Big Lou"), Manuel Blum [April 26], Nicholas J. Hopper, and John Langford in a paper they presented at EUROCRYPT 2003.

The first popular type of CAPTCHA, where the user typed in the letters hidden in a distorted image, was invented in 1997 by two separate groups: (1) Mark D. Lillibridge, Martin Abadi, Krishna Bharat, and

Andrei Z. Broder at AltaVista [Dec 15]; and (2) Eran Reshef, Gili Raanan and Eilon Solan who usually worked on firewalls at Sanctum.

On May 27, 2007, "Big Lou"s team released reCAPTCHA. Rather than randomized distorted words, reCAPTCHA asked users to retype words and numbers visible in images taken from archival texts. They later sold the technology to Google, who used it to transcribe old books [Oct 6].

reCAPTCHA's first slogan was "Stop Spam, Read Books."

"Don't be Evil" Dropped
May 4, 2018

Google's [Sept 7] unofficial motto was "don't be evil," enshrined in the company's corporate code of conduct since 2000.

It had been suggested either by Paul Buchheit (the creator of Gmail [April 1]) at a meeting about corporate values in early 2000 or, according to another account, by Google engineer Amit Patel in 1999.

However, after Google was reorganized under a new parent, Alphabet [Aug 19], in 2015, Alphabet adopted the motto, "do the right thing," although Google stuck with "don't be evil" .

During May 2018, reports began to appear that a study of Google's code of conduct via the Internet Archives' Wayback Machine [May 12] showed that some time between April 21 and May 4 the phrase had been removed.

To be fair, there's was still one small reference to it in the document, on the final line:

"And remember… don't be evil, and if you see something that you think isn't right – speak up!"