

WEARABLE COMPUTERS

Techno
Gizmo

What are wearable computers?

The small personal computers can be worn either on the chest or hip and are being tested as a possible replacement for printed maintenance technical manuals currently used on the flightline.

How does it work?

The tools at the maintainer's fingertips are much like a virtual office on the flightline. Computers will have much of the same desktop software that's currently in use, like e-mail capabilities, but they will also be set up to identify, order, ship and pay for parts directly from the flightline.

The computers will also have an electronic copy of technical orders, which maintainers use to perform their jobs.

Not only will maintainers have their TOs at their disposal, but they will also be able to send video of damages back to the shop and aircraft engineers through a wireless network.

What is the benefit?

This system has the potential to change business on the flight-

line. The capability to order, ship, and pay for parts on the ramp will significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to repair an aircraft.

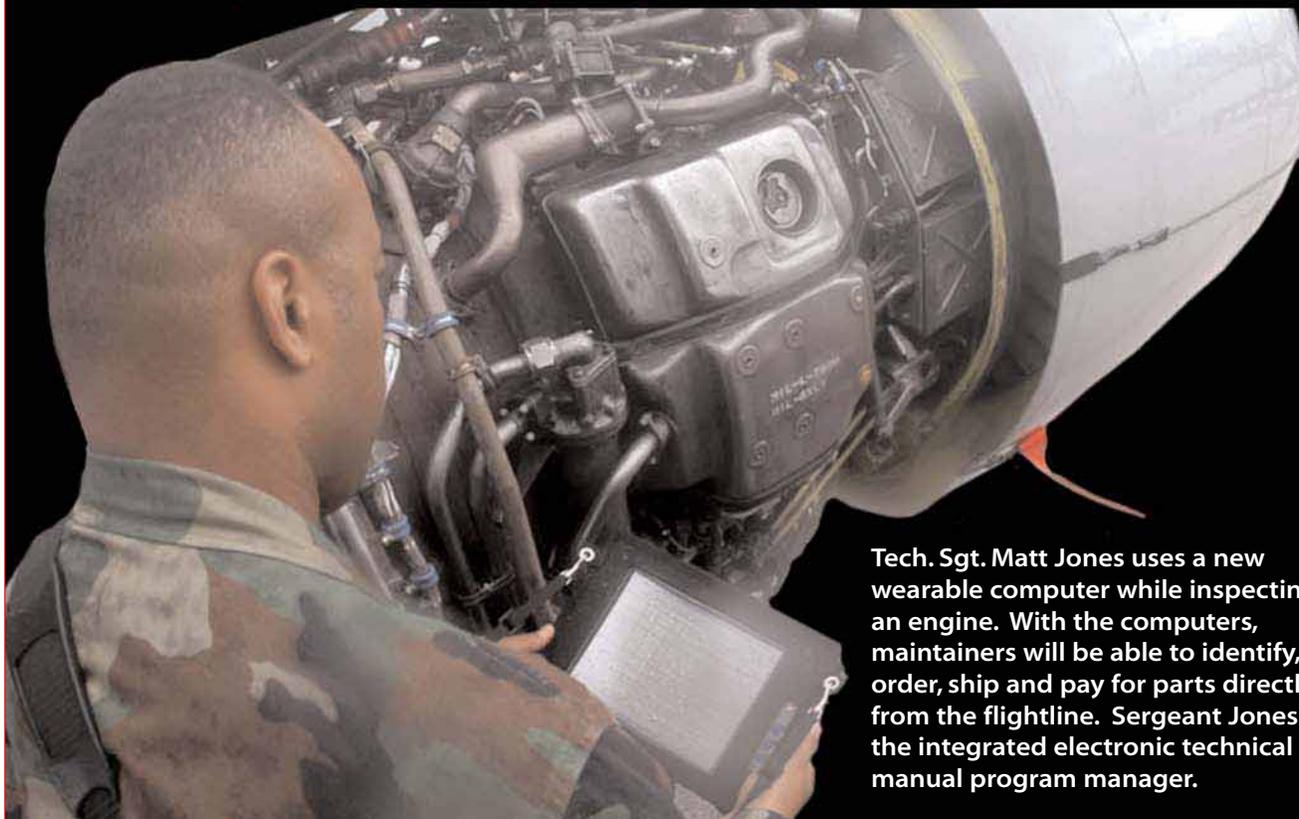
A spin off is that it will reduce the need for human intervention and potential administrative errors.

What does the future hold?

Testing is also underway for another pilot program that will incorporate using a unique-identification system, which may benchmark the way the Air Force controls parts inventory. The identification system is a Department of Defense-mandated program that goes into effect in 2005.

The vision for (the system) is to facilitate item tracking in DoD business systems and to provide reliable and accurate data for program management and accountability purposes in our engineering, acquisition, financial, property, plant and equipment accountability.

TECHNOLOGY @ WORK



Tech. Sgt. Matt Jones uses a new wearable computer while inspecting an engine. With the computers, maintainers will be able to identify, order, ship and pay for parts directly from the flightline. Sergeant Jones is the integrated electronic technical manual program manager.