

# FORTUNE

## WINNERS AND LOSERS OF 2003

### Worst Technology

By Peter Lewis

**Paperless Voting.** Remember all the chads and dimples that made voting for President so chaotic in Florida three years ago? In a well-meaning effort to fix the system before the 2004 elections, many communities—in Florida and in other states—have begun to install direct-recording electronic machines (DRE), which instantly record and tabulate votes; some even use fancy touch-screen technology similar to automated-teller machines in banks.

Computer scientists are alarmed, however, by the potential to manipulate the new machines. Internal documents from Diebold Election Systems, which has sold more than 33,000 AccuVote DRE machines, acknowledge that there have been security flaws, although the company denies that the flaws could allow a hacker to cast multiple votes or alter the votes of others, as critics suggest. Diebold asserts that the problems have been or are being fixed, but it is waging a legal war to have the embarrassing documents removed from the Internet. *-December, 2003*