

If you want to watch games on your tractor, please use your own iPad

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Raymond Chen

One of my friends worked for a company that develops technology to help farmers manage their crops. The software component runs on an iPad that is mounted on the dashboard of the farm equipment (think tractor or combine), and it uses GPS and other sensors to track the tractor's precise location, determine the location of each plant, and then calculate and deliver the optimum amount of *farm stuff* to *farmify* each plant, in order to minimize costs while maximizing *farmness*, while reporting back to the operator on the amount of *farmitude* and provide guidance on the best path to take.

She told me that the software pushes the iPad to its limits, and the slightest hiccup would result in suboptimal *farmization* because the correct amount of *farm stuff* was not delivered in time.

(You can tell that I'm an expert on farming.)

The farmers would often complain that when they returned from the field, the system would report a ton of errors. "Why am I paying all this money for your flaky system?"

The software team studied the data coming in from the field and found that the software was failing to meet its real-time targets due to CPU starvation. They added additional code to identify what was sucking away the CPU time, and quickly they found their culprit.

They told the farmers, "The system would work much better if you stopped using it to watch baseball games."

Today is Opening Day of Major League Baseball, the top level of professional baseball in the United States and Canada. If you want to watch games on your tractor, please use your own iPad.