

Digital Spiders

Well, the spiders themselves are not digital. And the webs that they spin aren't digital, either. More or less. What the webs **are** are virtually perfect, organic optical fiber cables that work better than anything that's not the absolute cutting edge (and, in the early Interstellar Era, 'cutting edge' can mean 'mono-molecular'). The cables are also easy to repair; Digital Spiders can be easily trained to walk the webs and fix breaks as they occur.

What? Oh, yes, people have to keep the Digital Spiders around. While the Spiders may not be digital, they are definitely interdimensional; they first appeared several months after their typical prey (Gooey Silverfish) started showing up in various starship engine rooms and literally gumming up the works. Turns out that the Digital Spider's webbing is perfect for luring and trapping Gooey Silverfish, not to mention Blinking Flies, Whining Ants, and Death Chili Flatulence Crickets. The fact that the webs also make excellent electronics cables is merely seen as a fortunate side effect.

In appearance, Digital Spiders have eight legs, two blue glowing eyes, and a warm, slightly fuzzy carapace that

smells faintly of ozone. Their intelligence is subject to some debate, but they respond about as well to human commands as a well-trained dog would: Digital Spiders emit a variety of vaguely electronic-sounding noises, including one that seems to indicate contentment and relaxation. The Spiders are harmless to humans, but apparently like human body smell. Computer technicians either learn very swiftly to get used to Digital Spiders, or else they get a new job.

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