

Mizra Computing

HQ: Poughkeepsie, New York; satellite offices in NYC, San Francisco, Oak Ridge

Staff: 500

Ostensible purpose: high-end computer repair

Actual purpose: permanent interdimensional refuge

While the company was founded in 1967, Mizra Computing **actually** came into existence in April of 2006 as part of an interdimensional... something. Not exactly a planar shift, not really a temporal alteration; more like the universe itself temporarily flickered into a new, distinctly more unpleasant, form. In that one endless moment of the Flicker, the individuals who would go on to have always been Mizra Computing's management and staff attempted to somehow anchor themselves so that when the Flicker was over, they would remain in our 'reality.' And it worked, to the point where the universe itself created new identities and histories for its new immigrants.

Mizra's staff did not cause the Flicker, mind you. Nor did they create the horrible conditions that existed in the moment of the Flicker. Their only interest was in escape, and when they accomplished that, the refugees set up the

new company simply to have something to pay the bills while they lived out their exile in hopefully some comfort and security. And they have indeed done very well for themselves, on both counts. Their greatest aspiration is to be quiet neighbors, and this has been done.

Mizra Computing maintains and repairs high-end computers; mainframes, so called super-computers, and other arcane types of very expensive digital computing devices. Their customers are drawn from American corporations and government agencies, and Mizra has an excellent if hyper-specialized reputation as being a company that does reliable work on short notice without playing games with the invoices. It's not that Mizra's services come *cheap*; it's simply that the corporation gives good value for money. Mizra also hires heavily from those with existing security clearances, and they maintain an aggressive and scrupulous attention to maintaining proper information security. Given their client list, they have to.

Naturally, the alphabet soup that is the American intelligence community has examined Mizra to a fare-thee-well for evidence of espionage, and has cleared the company numerous times. As far as they can tell, Mizra is not spying on the American government (true) and has no real secrets (very much not true). But it's not

surprising that nobody's caught on to Mizra Computing's deepest secret; after all, nobody's asking the right questions. Nobody even knows what the right questions *are*.

Not every member of Mizra Computing is a refugee. The ones that were brought their families with them, and some of them now work for the company, but at least a fourth of the company joined Mizra after the Flicker. The new workers have no idea that some of their colleagues are interdimensional refugees; at this point, some of the refugees have difficulty remembering that themselves. Which is honestly fine with all of them, given that, again, the Flicker was an unpleasant place to be from.

Mind, the Board of Directors for Mizra are less sanguine. They worry that there might be another Flicker, some day. They worry that some other groups -- nastier ones, with no long-term interest in being quiet neighbors -- might have already taken advantage of the *previous* Flicker to infiltrate this reality already. And they absolutely worry about being caught by the authorities here. Hence their vigorous security procedures; most companies don't like having people snoop around, but Mizra Computing has more reason than most to be scared of it.

But they're not bad people. Really and truly, they are not. They **ran away** from the bad people, on the other side of the Flicker; and they refuse to go back. Alas, people like that can be even more dangerous, sometimes.

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