Technology Times

"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably"

ims information management systems

Inside This Issue...

"He was trying to get on board with these."

Do These 10 Warning Signs Sound Familiar?

Computers rarely stop working overnight. In most cases, there are early warning signs that problems are brewing. Below are 10 surefire signs that you need to get a professional to investigate your network ASAP:

1. Your workstation or server starts running very slowly, freezes up, or crashes.
2. Your web browser has been changed to another strange browser you've never seen before.
3. You are getting an unusual amount of pop-up windows, even when you aren't surfing the web.
4. You don't know if every computer on your network has the most current virus definitions.
5. You don't know if you have a firewall in place or the last time it was updated.
6. You haven't attempted to restore your data from a backup tape or other storage device in awhile, and you aren't checking your backup log for errors.
7. You receive e-mails accusing you of sending spam, and/or you find e-mail messages in your "outbox" or "sent" folder that you didn't send.
8. Your computer starts making a grinding, clicking, or loud whirring sound.
9. The fan is constantly running.
10. You are getting a growing number of error messages, and you are forced to create work-arounds to complete certain work tasks.

If any of these signs are present, you should contact a pro immediately to investigate further!

The old saying of an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is especially true in the world of computers and all things digital; and if you are like most businesses, your computer network is critical to the operation of your business so make sure you don't procrastinate if any of these signs are present.

Ideally, you should perform regular health checks and maintenance on your network to make sure problems don't crop up. Here's why:

· Critical security updates need to be applied at least once a month to protect you from a constant flow of new hacker attacks.

· Firewall, virus and spyware protection need to be monitored and updated on a daily basis because new attacks are released daily.

· Your data backup system needs to be monitored and tested frequently to ensure easy data recovery in the event of loss. The rate of tape drive failure is 100%; that's why you need to frequently monitor your backups.

*Want to Lock-in your IT Costs for the Next **THREE** Years? Sign up for IMS Total Care Services **TODAY**!*

FREE BUSINESS ADVISORY GUIDE!

12 Little-Known Facts Every Business Owner Must Know About Data Backup, Security and Disaster Recovery

PROTECT YOUR DATA

"12 Little-Known Facts Every Business Owner Must Know About Data Backup, Security And Disaster Recovery"

Discover What Most IT Consultants Don't Know Or Won't Tell You About Backing Up Your Data And Recovering It After A Disaster

If you are relying on tape drives, external hard drives or USB devices to backup your data, then it's critical for you to get and read this informative white paper. You'll learn what most IT consultants don't know or won't tell you about making sure your company's critical data is safe from loss, corruption, cyber criminals, natural disasters and employee sabotage, in addition to:

➢ The only way to know for SURE that your data can be recovered if lost, corrupted or deleted – yet fewer than 10% of businesses have this in place.

➢ 7 critical characteristics you should absolutely demand from any offsite backup service; do NOT trust your data to any company that does not meet these criteria.

➢ The #1 cause of data loss that most businesses don't even think about until their data is erased.

Download today for free online at www.imsnetworking.com/bcs

· Servers and workstations need regular tune-ups to keep them running fast and error free.

· Monitoring of disk space is important to avoid data loss, crashes, and storage problems.

· Server event logs need to be monitored for early alerts to network issues.

One of the biggest mistakes business owners make is taking a reactive approach to network support and maintenance rather than a proactive one.

In other words, they wait until something stops working and THEN they call in the professionals to fix it. This approach not only costs more in the long run, but it also leaves you vulnerable to more devastating crashes such as data corruption and loss, virus attacks, and extended downtime. Even NEW computers and equipment need regular maintenance because new threats are constantly evolving.

Fortunately, there is an inexpensive and easy way for you to completely avoid - even anticipate and prevent - these problems while making your network far more secure, reliable, and problem free.

We call it our IMS Total Care Services Plan and it's designed specifically for the small to medium business owner that doesn't have the time, expertise, or staff to perform this regular network maintenance.

Thanks to advancements in support technology, we can now monitor your network 24/7/365 days a year and provide all the maintenance your network needs for a fraction of the time and cost.

For a flat, monthly fee, you'll get 24/7 remote monitoring of your network to not only ensure that it is running at peak performance, but also to guarantee that your data is being backed up and secured, that your virus definitions are up-to-date, that your firewall is configured properly, that your server is optimized, as well as keep an eye on over 100 system processes and alerts that could spell problems brewing.

If you hired a technician – even a junior one – to perform these basic network tasks, it could easily cost you $40,000 in salary, insurance, and hiring costs. If you were to outsource this type of service, it would easily run you $800 to $1,000 a month in hourly, on-site fees. However, thanks to the IMS TCS product we've created, we can deliver all of these services to you for as little as $475 per month (this is not a one size fits all plan, we custom this plan per company needs and expectations).

We're so certain that you are going to LOVE this service we are willing to give it to you for 1 month, absolutely FREE when signing up for a 3 year contract.

If at the end of the one month you aren't absolutely convinced that this service is worth every penny you are paying for the fast service and peace of mind, simply call or send us an e-mail that says, "this just isn't what I had in mind," and we'll stop the service immediately—no payment, no obligation.

That way, you have absolutely nothing to risk. What could be more fair than that?

But if you decide to keep the service, we'll bill you a flat monthly fee that you've agreed upon up front — no surprises, hidden costs, or extra fees.

And, to make it even more of a "no-brainer," I'm going to offer the first 5 clients a very special VIP discount to create an even greater incentive for you to sign up TODAY.

To take advantage of this FREE 1-month trial, contact us at 701-364-2718 or e-mail info@imsnetworking.com. You can also go online to learn all about it at: www.imsnetworking.com/freetrial

*Want to Lock-in your IT Costs for the Next **THREE** Years? Sign up for IMS Total Care Services **TODAY!***

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

PowerMat Charger

Do you and your family have a number of devices that all need charging at once? Then look into getting a PowerMat for your home or office. Instead of plugging your devices in, simply lay them on the PowerMat and they'll all charge simultaneously, eliminating the need to play power cord roulette and fight over outlets to charge your devices. Neat, huh?

Lose The Wires!
Connect your devices to PowerMat Receivers, and simply drop them on the PowerMat to charge wirelessly, as fast or faster than the stock power adaptor. A unique sound lets you know a solid connection has been made (an additional sound is heard when you remove your device—both are adjustable and can be turned off), and an indicator light—also adjustable—is displayed while a device is charging.

Use Only What You Need
Communication between the PowerMat and Receivers allows the mat to give exactly enough power for exactly the right time. When a device is fully charged, power is shut off to that device, so no energy is wasted. If a device is used while on the mat, the system knows it—charging starts up again until you've got a full charge.

Wired USB Connection
For legacy USB devices, or a quick charge while all your Receivers are in use, PowerMats also feature a wired USB connection. It may not be wireless, but it's better than finding another free power outlet.

If You Are Still Using Business Cards, Here Are 8 Keys To Using Them Effectively!

At gatherings I sometimes collect business cards. By "sometimes" I mean only if I have a reason to. Believe it or not, I don't put everyone I've ever met on my mailing list. So when I collect a card I either intend to contact that person or (on occasion) I intend to add them to a list. If you are going to use business cards, here are some key things that will maximize their effectiveness…

1. Your Name (you personally) should be clear and visible and readable from arm's length. That means it is also easy to find. Everyone hates a business card with strange font combinations so you have to scan all over the card to find the person's name. Where's Waldo? Or whoever I'm talking to.

2. Your Company name should be clear and easy to find.

3. Contact information is up to you. Some cards only have email or only have a phone number. It depends on how you want to be contacted. If you want to give your entire mailing address, fax number, and extension that's fine. Decide WHY you would hand out this information and what you really need on that card to fulfill your needs.

4. Company logo and slogan. If you have a nice logo or a slogan that really helps you differentiate yourself, then find a place for them on your card. Remember: They should contribute to the goal of making your card useful and easy to use. If they detract, get them out of the way, make them smaller, move them to the side, or drop them altogether.

5. Titles . . . hmmmmm. Some people need titles. But most of us don't really need titles on our cards. They're just one more thing that needs to be changed if you change jobs. Does a title do something for you? If yes, put it on the card. If not, leave it off. Sometimes we feel obligated to put something on the card for a title. If so, make it descriptive and useful. Or bland and boring. But whatever you do, do it intentionally and not because you feel you need to put something there.

6. Other Information (QR Code, Facebook ID, Fan Pages, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, AIM, Pinterest, 4Square, Yelp, Flickr, Reddit, RSS, Technorati, StumbledUpon, Digg, Yahoo Instant Messenger, Jagg, blog, Klout, etc.). I bet you know where this is going. There is simply too much miscellaneous stuff to fit it all on a tiny little business card. So if you want to put something else on there, be picky. Choose a few things that don't take up much space AND that contribute to your marketing goals.

7. Use the back wisely. Or leave it blank. Remember, the back of the card is not for ten little tips, quotations, IP Subnet calculators, etc. The back is primarily for notes. You can use some of the back for links, logos, QR code, etc. But leave at least half of it blank—or lined for notes.

8. Make your business card scan-able. You should have a business card scanner. If not, visit your more successful competition and borrow theirs. Make sure that your business card is clean and clear enough that it scans well.

Karl Palachuk is a managed service provider from Sacramento, CA. He is the author of ten books, including *Managed Services in a Month*. You can find his very popular blog at www.smallbizthoughts.com.

*Want to Lock-in your IT Costs for the Next **THREE** Years? Sign up for IMS Total Care Services **TODAY**!*

The Lighter Side:
Brutal Thoughts About Love

'I require three things in a man. He must be handsome, ruthless and stupid.'
~Dorothy Parker

'Women are cursed, and men are the proof.'
~Rosanne Barr

'Women with pasts interest men... they hope history will repeat itself.'
~Mae West

'Get married early in the morning. That way, if it doesn't work out, you haven't wasted a whole day.'
~Mickey Rooney

'My boyfriend and I broke up. He wanted to get married and I didn't want him to.'
~Rita Rudner

'The poor wish to be rich, the rich wish to be happy, the single wish to be married, and the married wish to be dead.'
~Ann Landers

'I married the first man I ever kissed. When I tell my children that, they just about throw up.'
~Barbara Bush

'Instead of getting married again, I'm going to find a woman I don't like and give her a house.'
~Groucho Marx

Windows XP : End of Lifecycle

On April 8, 2014 Windows XP SP3 will reach the end of support lifecycle and will no longer be supported.

What does XP end of support mean?

- No longer receive security patches, hotfixes, or incident support

- Running on an older OS platform is less secure, harder to manage, and expensive to maintain

- Running on an older OS platform also exposes people to possible business and regulatory risk

The risk and cost of staying with Windows XP:

- New applications may not be supported by XP

- Majority of new OEM hardware will not support XP

- Increased costs of XP support and application support

- Unsupported software = risks of security breaches and potential losses

What next? Contact us today at 701-364-2718 or info@imsnetworking.com. We will recommend what the best options are moving forward for you and your business.

Apple App of the Month: QuickBins

By: Eric Erdmann

QuickBins is an app developed by Chalk. It is a quick and easy way to call, text, email, or map your favorite contacts. The interface has four bins and your favorite contacts in the middle. You choose where and which contacts you have on the screen. All you have to do is drag their face to one of the bins and the app will do what each bin is designed to do. If you drag the contact to the bin that looks like an envelope, it will open your email and start a new message to that person. Another great feature is that the app is free!

*Want to Lock-in your IT Costs for the Next **THREE** Years? Sign up for IMS Total Care Services **TODAY**!*