Technology Times

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

"As a business owner, I know you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we *shine*! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"

- Rick Johnston,
Information Management Systems

September, 2010
Fargo, ND

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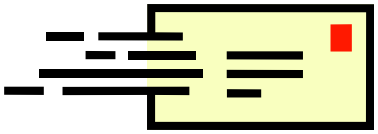
ATTENTION

Free Report: How can you verify if the emails you are receiving are *really* SPAM?

eMail us for the Free Report at info@imsnetworking.com



How To Think Like A Geek

(And Add An Extra Hour Of Free Time To Your Day)

Who wants to find an extra hour of free time in their day, every day? Considering we're all stressed out because there's never enough time to get everything done, this is what I would call a "leading" question.

So how can you do it? By looking at the seemingly innocent, time-sucking activities you are spending time on every day and either automating them or speeding them to completion using technology. Can it really be that simple? It can, but you need to understand one critical factor first...

The "Latte" Factor

Best-selling author David Bach coined this phrase in his book "The Automatic Millionaire." The latte factor is based on the simple idea that all you need to do to become wealthy is take a hard look at the small things you spend your money on every day and see whether you could redirect that spending into savings.

For example, a little $2 purchase made every day on common things like Starbucks (a latte), bottled water, fast food snacks, cigarettes, etc. RE-DIRECTED into an investment account earning 6% will become $10,199.30 in 10 years. If that's true, why don't MORE people do it? Because saving $2 a day seems so insignificant that people spend ALL their money on these things and then have nothing left over to invest.

5 Time-Saving Techie Tips That Will Add An Hour Or MORE To Your Day

So the question is, what are some small, time-saving technologies we can use to automate or speed up what we get done to save us that precious hour? Here are our 5 favorites:

1. Use an aggressive spam filter. Over 80% of the e-mails being sent daily are not-so-delicious spam. And if you're like me, you're getting dozens of these every day, which can easily add up to 5-10 minutes per day sifting, sorting through and deleting the spam from the e-mails you want. We recommend GFI MailEssentials because it features not one, but multiple anti-spam engines to give administrators an ultra high spam capture rate. GFI MailEssentials not only delivers one of the highest spam capture rates in the industry, over 99%, but it is also a market leader in reducing false positives. Plus, eliminating spam temptations from your STAFF will not only cut down on the time they waste on it, but will also drastically reduce your chances of getting viruses and spyware on your network.

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

Livescribe Pulse Smartpen

This month's gadget is PERFECT for not only students but also busy CEOs who love going to educational conferences and taking lots of notes. Here's why...

Taking good notes during class - even with the most rapid-fire professor - just got a whole lot easier. The Livescribe Pulse Smartpen may look like your average pen (it's about the size of a Sharpie), but it also packs in a voice recorder and up to 2 GB of storage. So far so good, but here's the really cool part: Not only does the Pulse remember everything you've written in digital form (you can sync your handwritten notes onto your PC or Mac and even share them online), it also keeps track of whatever was being said while you were scribbling a detail — just tap a word to hear all of what Professor Motormouth was saying at that particular moment.

What's the trick? The Pulse Smartpen's infrared sensor uses the tiny dots on the custom (and required) Livescribe notebook paper as reference points.

Price: $199, plus $13 to $25 each for the "dot" notebooks

2. Replace Old PCs. While it's hard to truly estimate how much total time is wasted waiting on an old, slow computer to process tasks, start up, etc., I can tell ya, it adds up. Let's say your old PC takes 10 seconds longer to process a task than a fresh, new one. Might not seem like a lot, but with users averaging 100-150 tasks a day conservatively are wasting 16-25 minutes a day. Add in the crashes and other problems old PCs cause and you're probably closer to 30-35 minutes a day. We propose IMS' Technology Refresh Option which offers our clients who are covered by the Total Care Services (TCS) Platinum Agreement the option to have their qualified PC desktops, laptops, or workstations replaced. We can add the Technology Refresh Option when you extend your TCS Platinum agreement to a 48 month term. All of your companies computers that are covered in the Technology Refresh Option will be replaced within the 4 year time frame.

3. Maintain Your Network. Another tip that will save you a lot of time is patching, updating and optimizing your server and workstations. You'd be surprised how much slower even a new machine will start to run if not maintained properly. IMS offers the Total Care Services plan to help with all the new patch work and updating and optimizing your server and workstations. This will help make your network run fast and smoother.

4. Document management. This is a HUGE time-saver if you are a paper-heavy office (like attorneys, doctors, contractors, etc.). But even if you aren't, scanning and storing paper documents so they can be searched on and located in seconds rather than minutes or hours is a HUGE time saver. Plus, it's a greener solution, improves document security, enables users to access critical documents remotely AND (if that's not enough) prevents important paper from loss or damage. Reduce regulatory, legal, and compliance risk by improving your ability to capture, identify, store, and dispose of records according to business requirements, we recommend Document Locator. With Document Locator it's easy to manage business documents and records.

5. Implement SharePoint or Other Business Collaboration Software. Be honest: how much time is wasted in your office because people are duplicating efforts, can't find information and documents they need or backtracking to FIX mistakes made? This, like time wasted on old PCs and downtime, may be hard to calculate, but I would conservatively guess that folks are wasting at least 30 minutes a day or MORE because of disorganization. That's why we recommend growing companies implement some type of collaboration software that will help organize projects and information, making it easier for everyone to get on the same page. In fact, Document Locator has excellent process rules that can help keep your tasks on track.

Want To Implement Any Of These In Your Office?

Contact us and we can show you how these technologies (and dozens of others we offer) can streamline your operations, saving you LOT of time!

info@imsnetworking.com

701-364-2718

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The Lighter Side…

Funny (And True!) Back To School Jokes

A teacher was explaining compound nouns to her class. "They are made up of two or more words, such as boxcar or townhouse," she explained, "Can anyone think of another?" To which one little boy eagerly raised his hand and said, "Asphalt!"

Teacher to student: "Give me a sentence that starts with the letter I"

Student: "I is…"

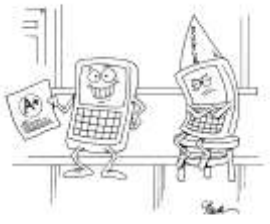
Teacher: "No, say, I am."

Student: "Okay…I am the 9th letter of the alphabet."

A teacher was assigned a new post of teaching English to prison inmates. Feeling a little nervous on his first day he started out by asking the class a basic question, "Okay, who can tell me what a sentence is?"

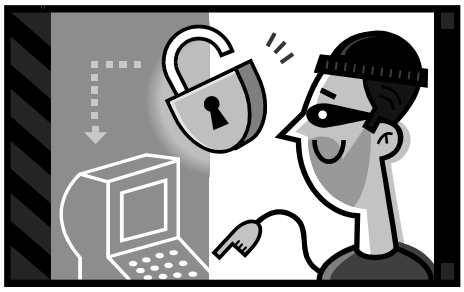
Driving through a neighborhood one afternoon, a teacher rolled through a stop sign. When she was pulled over, the cop realized he had just pulled over his 4th grade English teacher. "Mrs. Brown," he quipped, "those stops signs are a period, not a comma."

An elementary school had two second grade teachers; Mrs. Payne and Mrs. Hacking. One day a parent called into the main office to let them know her daughter would not be in class that day. The administrator asked, "Is she in Payne or Hacking?" Confused, the parent replied, "Neither…we have company today and I'm keeping her home."



A Smartphone And His Not So Smart Brother

The Enemy Within: The Biggest Threat **To Your Company's** Critical, Confidential Data Revealed



If you ask most business owners what's the biggest threat to their company's network and data, they might say, "viruses, hackers and cyber criminals," or perhaps "faulty hardware, software and system failures". But research is showing a much different reality.

According to a recent study published by Computer Economics (a research and metrics company for IT managers) revealed that employee sabotage – whether it be for financial gain, retribution or some other motivation – accounts for a bigger threat than viruses, hackers, hardware failures and natural disasters.

With so much critical data and operations tied up in a company's network, internal sabotage from employees becomes an even greater risk. In a matter of minutes, an employee can delete software or erase years of data vital to a company. They can purposefully download viruses or attempt to tarnish their employer's reputation by posting pornography on their company's web site or spamming all clients with racist, hateful and slanderous e-mails. Or they can simply download client lists and other confidential information and sell it to competitors, post it online or use it to start a competitive business.

What are the reasons why they do this? The biggest one given is simply "job dissatisfaction." Another contributing factor seems to be the recent downturn in the economy. Cut backs, layoffs and fewer raises have given rise to employees stealing data, equipment or money. For example, a law firm recently discovered their internal IT person was purchasing computer equipment on the company's credit card and reselling it on eBay. He had embezzled over $40,000 before the company caught up to what he was doing.

Another company suspected that one of their employees was stealing and suspended them from work until a further investigation could be conducted. When the employee caught wind of what was happening, they deleted over a year's worth of company e-mails – all containing important client records and history – in an effort to cover their tracks. Fortunately this company had a solid backup system in place and was able to immediately recover all the data within a few hours.

To protect yourself and your companies assets, we strongly recommend you have an offsite backup of your data in place. Our solution: IMS Business Continuity Solution. Many of our customers that are on our IMS Business Continuity Solution are at ease knowing they are storing their data offsite.

Demo Items for Sale:

Xerox WorkCentre Multifunction Printer- 6400XF

SonicWall - NSA240

Contact IMS ASAP for price and availability—with these great prices the items won't last long!

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Warning: iPods Earbuds Are Known To Cause Permanent Hearing Loss

Listening to music on the radio is about as antiquated today as using a payphone. Modern music lovers now carry thousands of songs around with them in their iPod and listen while driving, working, exercising, completing chores, etc. Problem is, the earbuds that come with the iPods (and similar products) let in a lot of ambient noise. That means users crank up the volume to drown out whatever is going on in the background.

The volume on an iPod can be raised to 115 decibels (db) which is the equivalent of standing next to a moving subway train and only 5 db short of an ambulance siren. The average individual can tolerate up to eight hours of sound at 85 db before suffering hearing damage. For every 5 db over 85, the exposure time before irreversible damage gets cut in half, say audiologists.

Because so many earbud users have suffered hearing damage, Apple was taken to court; but a federal appeals court exonerated the company, noting that Apple puts warnings on its packaging and iTunes site and offers instructions on how to set volume limits on iPods.

To hear music at a reasonable volume, users can purchase headphones with in-ear monitors (IEM) that reduce noise. You can also have an audiologist make custom earbuds for you to ensure a perfect fit and reduce background noise. They cost about $400 but will save your hearing.

Microsoft will no longer Extend **Windows 7 PC "downgrade" license,** what this means for you and your business

For Microsoft, having to repeatedly extend the date at which PC OEMs will no longer be able to sell a Windows 7 PC "downgraded" to run the almost ten-year-old Windows XP must seem eerily like the return of the undead.

That must be especially true this week when a company spokesperson explained that Microsoft has again extended that date, a shift likely to be important to PC managers if they still want the ability to downgrade to XP.

"An OEM's ability to generally offer downgrade facilitation options (e.g., pre-installing Windows XP Professional on a new PC that includes end-user rights for Windows 7 Professional) ends on October 22, 2010." Brandon LeBlanc, a Microsoft spokesperson said.

For years, Microsoft has offered downgrade rights — the ability for a volume customer to buy PCs that come preloaded with a new version of Windows but have it delivered with the previous version. Until the January 2007 launch of Windows Vista, which proved to be unpopular with many corporate customers, however, the offer didn't have a lot of takers.

Instead, with the advent of Vista, Many — Microsoft isn't saying how many — customers began buying Vista machines and downgrading them to run XP. The downgrade option became so popular that Microsoft had to extend the cutoff date at least twice.

"Prior to shipping Windows 7, we communicated that end-user downgrade rights provided in the software license terms of Windows 7 Professional or Windows 7 Ultimate editions pre-installed on a new PC would allow a customer to downgrade to either Windows XP Professional or similar Windows Vista versions for 18 months, or until the availability of SP1 [Windows 7 Service Pack 1], whichever came sooner," he said. "We have decided to extend downgrade rights to Windows XP Professional beyond the previously planned end date at Windows 7 SP1. This will help maintain consistency for downgrade rights throughout the Windows 7 lifecycle."

"Customers will not be able to buy a PC with downgrade rights to XP after Windows 7 is retired from market— which according to policy is two years after the next version of Windows is shipped."

"However, if you have a PC with Windows 7 already installed when that deadline hits, the downgrade right doesn't expire—it's there as long as you own the PC. You just can't buy a new PC with the downgrade right after Windows 7 is retired from the OEM channel," the spokesperson said.

What does this mean for you and your company? Microsoft will no longer offer downgrade rights on new computers purchased after October 22, 2010 and will come preloaded with Windows 7. Please consider this in purchasing computers after this date. Contact IMS with questions or concerns with moving toward Windows 7.

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* Note: article was found at http://itmanagement.earthweb.com/entdev/article.php/3892866/Microsoft-Extends-Windows-XP-Downgrade-Rights-Again.htm