



“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

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Technology Times

*“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run
Faster, Easier, And More Profitably”*

How To Keep Your Laptop Secure When Using Public Wi-Fi Hotspots

They are everywhere these days. Wi-Fi hotspots for checking e-mail and hopping on the Internet can be found in airports, coffee shops, bookstores, and even most fast food joints. For the uninitiated, Wi-Fi hotspots are areas where you can use your wireless laptop to surf the Web and check e-mail.

But have you ever wondered, just how safe is it to connect? With the proliferation of hackers, viruses and identity theft at an all time high, you are smart to be concerned. Unfortunately, it is easy for a hacker to set up a Wi-Fi spot to access your laptop, called an “evil twin.” An evil twin is a wireless hot-spot that is used to lure people from a nearby, legitimate hotspot. For example, when logging in at your favorite coffee shop, you may have inadvertently logged into an evil twin Internet connection set up by the person working on a laptop at the next table.

Just like legitimate sites, evil twins allow you access to the Internet, but in the background they record everything you are typing. Log onto your email, investment website, bank account, or buy something online, and they are recording your keystrokes.

You may be asking, “How do I protect myself at Wi-Fi hotspots?” First you need to make sure the hotspot is legitimate. You can do this by asking someone who works at the Wi-Fi location; in fact some businesses will give you printed instructions that include the hotspot name. Even here you need to be careful. Many times, in an attempt to make you feel comfortable, the hacker will use an evil twin name that mimics the legitimate hotspot and, on some occasions, the fake site may even show up at the top of your network list by having a stronger signal than the legitimate site.

The best protection you can have is connecting via your company’s VPN (virtual private network) or SSL encryption-protected website. With an SSL encrypted-protected website, the identity of the website is verified by the SSL certificate and all data and passwords transversing the internet is sent using SSL encryption. A VPN protects your online information by encrypting your data and activity even if you’re connected through an evil twin. If you don’t have a VPN, the best protection is to surf the net, but never type in password, credit card, social security, bank account, or other sensitive information when connected to a public Wi-Fi hotspot.

Tip: Do you want an easy way to securely access your network and the Internet from anywhere? Call us today at (701) 364-2718 about setting up a VPN for your office!

It’s Finally Here! Contact us about our Total Care Services Program!

IF ONLY LIFE COULD BE LIKE A COMPUTER!

If you messed up your life, you could press "Ctrl, Alt, Delete" and start all over!

To get your daily exercise, just click on "run!"

If you needed a break from life, click on "suspend." Hit any key to continue life when ready.

To get even with the neighbors, turn up the sound card.

To "add/remove" someone in your life, click settings and control panel.

To improve your appearance, just adjust the display settings.

If life gets too noisy, turn off the speakers.

When you lose your car keys, click "find."

"Help" with the chores is just a click away.

You wouldn't need auto insurance. You'd use your boot diskette to recover from a crash.

You could click on "send" and the kids would go to bed immediately.

To feel like a new person, click on "refresh."

Is your wardrobe getting old? Click "update".

If you don't like cleaning the litter box, click on "delete."



New Company at theRLEgroup: ASBLT D3

Given just a few minutes to set up, Jeff Engebretson of ASBLT D3 is able to put your building into perspective - literally. This up and coming new Fargo company offers services in asset management that are unavailable in most other areas of the country. In North Dakota,



ASBLT D3 is the only professional service group that can provide this specific type of analysis and evaluation.

The process is uncomplicated and the results are fast. Using a 3D high-speed, high-definition laser camera scan, ASBLT D3 can collect data from just about anywhere. Engebretson uses the Leica ScanStation 2 and notes that it is accurate to within 4mm in a single measurement. "Amazingly accurate," says Engebretson.

Engebretson has operated the laser scanner on sunny days, in the dark of night, inside, outside,

and in all types of weather.

"Really, the only thing that interferes with the scanner's ability to do a perfect job is moving moisture, like rain and snowfall," says Engebretson. "Otherwise, we can work just about anywhere and anytime."

Most of the company's clients own or operate buildings and want evaluations of existing conditions. The evaluation substantiates their operation costs by focusing on those conditions, needed repairs, and heat loss / heat gain issues. Other clients are planning on purchasing or selling a building and just want an independent analysis.

The laser scanner can be used during construction of a building to provide progress reports, in a manufacturing facility for equipment retooling, and in an existing structure for code analysis. The thermal scanner component gives teeth to an energy code evaluation. "We will even work with those out of the ordinary requests like insurance, legal, or police investigations. Anything that has mass can be scanned," laughs Engebretson.



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The Lighter Side Prayers

Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served. When little Logan received his plate, he started eating right away.

"Logan, wait until we say our prayer," his mother reminded him.

"I don't have to," the little boy replied. "Of course you do," his mother insisted, "We say a prayer before eating at our house."

"That's at our house," Logan explained, "but this is Grandma's and she knows how to cook!"

Hitting the sales

The mall was festive with spring sales, and the judge was in a benevolent mood as he questioned the prisoner.

"What are you charged with?" he asked.

"Shopping early," replied the defendant.

"That's no offense," replied the judge. "How early were you doing your shopping?"



"Before the stores opened!" replied the prisoner.

Storm Season Is Just Around the Corner...Are You Protected?

Even though the first day of Spring is not until the 20th of next month, it's never too early to prepare for those pop-up storms that occur randomly at this time of year often resulting in everything from ice damage to lightening fires. During this time of year the threat of fire, flood, severe storms, water damage from office sprinklers, and even theft is very real.

One of the most valuable assets for any company is its data. Hardware and software can easily be replaced, but a company's data cannot!

As a reminder to all of our clients, here are some simple things you should do to make sure your company is ready for any natural disaster.



1. Back Up Your Data Regularly! Everyone knows that data should be backed up on a daily basis, but many people still store their data/tapes on-site where they will get damaged in a natural disaster or fire, and can easily be stolen. We recommend backing up all data in an encrypted format and storing the data/tapes in a secure off-site location.

2. Use a Quality Surge Protector With Uninterruptible Power Supply Battery. A high quality surge protector combined with an uninterruptible power supply battery backup will go a long way in protecting sensitive electronic equipment from surges and other electronic irregularities that can destroy your computer's circuitry.

3. Make Sure Your Servers Are Off The Floor. If your office gets flooded, having your equipment off the floor will prevent it from being completely destroyed. Server racks can be purchased and installed very inexpensively.

4. Have A Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan.

Every business should have some type of plan in place for continued operation after a disaster. Would people know where to go? Who to call? How to log in and access data remotely? Hopefully you'll never need it, but having a simple plan will make you sleep a lot easier at night knowing you have a way to continue to operate when disaster strikes.



"Today's specials are, 'Spam,' 'Cookies' or 'Spam with Cookies.'"

If you need help in any of these areas, give us a call! We can not only get you prepared, but also back up and running fast in the event of a disaster.

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'Beware the Ides of March'

If you believe in lucky numbers and dangerous days, remember that the Ides of March are upon us.

It was the 15th of March on the Roman calendar when Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C. There were also Ides on the 15th of May, July, and October, but for hundreds of years after Caesar's death, Romans avoided going into business, getting married, or entering any other venture on March 15. It became associated with disaster.

About nine percent of Americans are still superstitious about days like Friday the 13th. Statistics show that businesses lose money on that day.

Baruch University's Zecklin School of Business in New York reports that people tend to play it safe on Friday the 13th, according to their study of the marketing implications of superstitious beliefs on consumer behavior.

In addition, Continental Airlines uses the number eight when advertising in China, which is thought to be a lucky number.

We Want Your Input!

Do you have an idea to make this newsletter better? Would you like to submit a story, article or trivia? We'd love to hear from you!

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Client Testimonial — Tax Law Office, PA

As an established law office that specializes in tax and succession planning, it is essential that our tax law office can stay connected through an information system that won't let us down.

For more than ten years, Information Management Systems has established and maintained the network that we use. They have taken care of everything from the base network and file server to the integrated software that we use every day to efficiently complete our work. By using numerous Microsoft software programs, Amicus Attorney, QuickBooks and Timeslips, IMS helps our business organize our database systems, correctly bill our clients and keep our accounts accurate. They maintain and work with all of our systems so we can remain productive.

Not only does IMS keep our filing and document preparation systems working correctly, but they also integrate our communications systems. IMS has even gone so far as to consolidate our voice mail into our e-mail. It is very important that our company can also communicate through our cell phones, and IMS makes sure we can do this by integrating them with our Exchange server.

When we first started our business, we utilized another company's services. One of the problems we had with this company was always having someone different arrive to work with us when we had a problem. Since these ever-changing support personnel were never familiar with our business and systems, they always ended up wasting our time and energy.

With IMS, however, we don't have that problem. If we ever have issues, or if our file server goes down, they have someone onsite or working for us remotely almost immediately. One phone call from us is all it takes. IMS is always available within a matter of minutes, and rather than having 14-15 people in our office sitting around and wondering what to do, the problem is solved as quickly as possible. Lost productivity means lost revenue, and through the timely responses we get with IMS, we are getting the quality service that our company needs.

Regards,

Rodger Mohagen
Tax Law Office



Congratulations

to Jim & Marion Johnston (Rick's parents) on celebrating their 60th Wedding Anniversary on March 19th, 2009!!!

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