

THE HAWK I VIEW



Hawk iSolutions Group, Inc.

What's
Inside

Could Your Business Survive A Major Disaster?

Hurricanes, Fire,
Flood, and Theft...

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To Find Out!

Are You Posting
Information
Online That
Could Cost
You Your Job?

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Declare Freedom From Computer Problems!

The 5 Biggest Mistakes Business Owners Make With Their Computer Network That Cost Them Time, Money, and Aggravation!

Want to avoid the most common and expensive computer problems most business owners experience? Then read on! We've compiled a list of 5 things you should be doing to save yourself a lot of time and money, by avoiding a big, ugly computer disaster.

1. **Install a server.** At one time, servers only made sense for large organizations because of their high cost and complexity. But today, there are very affordable and easy-to-implement server systems designed specifically for a growing small business. A server will not only speed up your network, but it will also make backups easier, allow secure remote access to allow you and your employees to work from home or on the road, and make it much easier to share documents, databases, and printers.

2. **Have an off-site back-up system.** I've outlined a bit more on this on page 3, but I cannot stress the importance of this enough. Having an off-site back-up of your data will be the equivalent of wearing a

seatbelt in a major accident. You don't think much about it until you need it, and then, you will thank your lucky stars you had it in place.

3. **Keep your anti-virus software up-to-date, and perform weekly spyware scans.** Almost everyone understands the importance of anti-virus software, but many businesses still do not perform weekly spyware sweeps. Spyware can cause a host of problems that include slowing down your systems, pop-up ads, and even identity theft.

4. **Create an acceptable use policy and enforce it!** One of the biggest threats to your network are your employees! Although that sounds harsh, it is true. Employees can accidentally introduce viruses and spyware through innocent activities online such as checking their Hotmail account, downloading photos, or visiting phishing websites set up by online criminals. There are several great programs available for monitoring employee activity online. If you would like a recommendation for your specific situation, call our office.





THINK TWICE BEFORE POSTING ANY INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF ONLINE

Whether it's a chat group, forum, or even an e-mail, take caution when giving out personal information or expressing your opinion about someone online.

Internet information is growing larger and more impossible to control every day. It's not uncommon for people to lose their jobs because of what they wrote about their boss or their company, not realizing that it would remain as a permanent record online for the entire world to see.

One 22-year-old answered an Internet inquiry about whether anyone had ever had a bad drug trip. His reply was so interesting and colorful that years later it *still ranks* No. 7 out of a total of 92,600 Google hits that come up when you type in his name!

That's why you should be very careful about what you post. Your boss or your future boss and head hunters can research your name online and pull up more information than you want *them* to have. They can also do continuous background checks on you, no disclosure required. They not only can see what you've posted, they might be able to see your age, marital status, the value of your house, things you wrote as a teenager, liens, bankruptcies, and political affiliations. Without the full story, a post or a question could be misinterpreted. For example, let's suppose you are doing research for a friend or relative with a drug problem. If you post a question asking how to help someone beat a drug habit, others may assume the person with the habit is *you*.

In a previous newsletter, we warned parents about the serious dangers MySpace.com poses to their children. What we didn't mention is aside from the fact that online predators use this information to stalk and harm them, the personal information they post can follow them for a lifetime (many use MySpace as a diary

confessional).

To protect yourself, Business Week gives the following recommendations:

- ◆ Register with an online profile manager such as Ziggs or LinkedIn. They're free.
- ◆ If you must use MySpace, refrain from posting the risqué. Consider cloaking or using an avatar.
- ◆ Order a background check from Zabasearch or Argali. Contact vendors if you find incorrect information.
- ◆ Think before you blog. Anything personal that you post may come back to haunt you for years in the future.
- ◆ Don't send anything in an e-mail you wouldn't want the world to see.



JULY SPOTLIGHT WATCHGUARD FIREBOX X5

Firebox® X Edge is a firewall and VPN end-point solution providing powerful protection for small businesses, remote offices, and telecommuters. It comes in three models, each in a wired and wireless version, that are secure, reliable, and easy to use—even for those with limited networking experience. With this model upgrade capability, a Firebox X Edge will adapt to handle all of your security needs, now and in the future. The X5 Model is best suited for telecommuters who require an easy-to-deploy firewall/VPN solution that easily connects to a central office, offering best-in-class performance, and separate work/home networks on the same appliance, up to twelve users.

Have a safe and Happy Fourth of July!

HURRICANE SEASON IS HERE! ARE YOU READY?

If nothing else, the hurricane disasters of last year should have taught us the importance of being ready for natural disasters. Even if you don't live in a hurricane zone, the threat of fire, flood, severe storms, water damage from office sprinkler systems, and even theft is very real.

As a business owner, one of the most valuable assets you have is your company data. Hardware and software can easily be replaced, but a company's data cannot. As a reminder to all of our clients, here are 3 things you should do to make sure your company is ready for any natural disaster.

1. Back Up Your Data and Store it Remotely

Everyone knows that data should be backed up on a daily basis, but many people still keep these backups next to their servers. These could possibly get damaged in the event of a natural disaster or fire, or can easily be stolen. We recommend storing your backup at an off-site location. (EX: Safe deposit box at a local bank.)



2. Use a Quality Surge Protector With Uninterruptible Power Supply Battery

A high quality surge protector combined with an uninterruptible power supply battery will go a long way in protecting sensitive electronic equipment from surges and other electronic irregularities that can destroy your computer's circuitry.

3. If You Have Time, Take Your Computer and Server With You

The business owners in Louisiana were given enough warning to evacuate and had the opportunity to take their computers and servers with them. Obviously, not everyone gets advance warning (in the case of theft or a tornado), but if you do, taking your computer or server with you is a good way of protecting it from damage. If disaster strikes and you discover your computer or service is damaged beyond repair, call in a professional.

Do not try to recover the data yourself or to save money with an amateur. This is not a situation where you want to pinch pennies. If the person recovering the data is not experienced, they can worsen the situation and destroy any chance of recovering your data.



The Lighter Side...

A Sunday School teacher was testing the kids to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven.

She asked if she sold her house and gave all the money to the church would she then go to heaven?

Then she proposed that if she cleaned the church, was kind to animals, and gave candy to the children, would she go to heaven? To each question, the Sunday School students chorused a resounding "NO!"

So she asked how she could get to heaven. A five-year-old boy shouted: "You gotta be dead!"

A lady pulled into a Wal-Mart parking lot with her dog, who was stretched out on the back seat. She rolled down the car window so the dog would have fresh air.

Walking a few steps away, she said, "Now you stay! Hear me? Stay! Stay!"

A guy in the next car gave her a strange look and said, "Lady, why don't you just put it in park?"

Sally was driving back from a business trip in Northern Arizona when she saw an elderly native American woman walking. She stopped and asked the woman if she wanted a ride and the woman got in. After a while the native American woman asked what was in the bag in the back seat. Sally said it was a bottle of wine she got for her husband.

After a moment of silence, and speaking with the voice of wisdom, the woman said, "Good trade."

HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!



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ATTENTION SMALL BUSINESSES:

Get all of the computer support you need without the expense of hiring a full time IT staff. Ask about our Small Business Computer Support Program.

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5. **Perform regular maintenance.** Just like your car, a computer network needs regular maintenance. This includes monitoring of critical components, performance, security patches, and your back-up system. Regular maintenance can dramatically improve the speed and reliability of your network, as well as the security of your data. If you cannot afford to lose data or be down for days, you must perform regular maintenance on your network!

I'd Love To Hear From YOU!

Is there an article or a feature you would like me to include in this newsletter? Do you just want to sound off about something or share your opinion with my other subscribers? Let me know!

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