Volume II
Issue 4
April
2013

Technology Update

by B4 Networks

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

In this issue

How To Determine The TRUE Cost Of Any IT Upgrade	P.1
5 Easy Ways To Spring Clean Your Computer For Maximum Performance	P.2
On The Lighter Side	P.2
Tek Tip of the Month	P.2
Is Microsoft's New Cloud Based Office Licensing Model Going To Affect Your Business?	P.3
Referral Contest	P.4
Client of The Month	P.3
Trivia Challenge	P.4
Family Update	P.4
Shiny Gadget Of The Month	P.4

"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!"

Bryan Lachapelle, President
B4 Networks Inc.
706 East Main ST,
Welland, Ontario, L3B 3Y4

Tel: 905.346.4966
www.b4networks.ca

b4 networks

How To Determine The TRUE Cost Of Any IT Upgrade, Transition Or Addition

I'm often asked about the ROI (return on investment) for technology. Truth is, I don't believe you "invest" in technology. Investments are things that provide a measurable, quantifiable return for your money.

Of course it can easily be argued that technology *does* provide a return for your money. If you don't think so, try communicating with your clients and market without e-mail or tracking inventory with pen and paper. And the right technology applied with a smart strategy can certainly give any business owner a strategic advantage in faster delivery of goods and services to customers, greater productivity, lowered production costs and the like. In fact, there aren't too many businesses that can operate without a few core IT applications. But the reality is that your bank account is going to be a bit lighter after you install that new upgrade or technology, so how do you know if that IT upgrade or project is worth the money?

The right way to look at the true price of any IT project or upgrade is to look at TCO or "total cost of ownership" and not just the PRICE of the project or upgrade. For example, if you buy a car, the price of the car is only one cost of owning it. You also have to consider insurance, gas and routine maintenance like new tires and oil changes to get an accurate look at what you'll pay. Therefore, the total COST of owning a car is far more than just the price tag – and a cheaper car up front can end up costing more in the long-haul if frequent repairs are needed.

In IT, the same principle applies. You have to look at the TOTAL cost of a particular IT decision, not just the price tag, when comparing options. For example, the real cost of not upgrading a network may actually be higher than spending several thousand dollars on new equipment and upgrades when you accurately assess the total cost of maintenance, service fees and poor performance. These days, many business owners are looking at "going to the cloud" because they want to save money. And in many cases, it will do just that, but the cost savings will often come in the form of cheaper devices, less maintenance and low (or no) upgrade costs over a 3 year period – not in a month to month service fee. So before you say "No" or "Yes" to that next IT project, make sure you are taking into consideration the TOTAL cost of your decision, and make sure you are talking to a true pro who understands the difference between the price of something and the total cost.

- Bryan Lachapelle

Computer Problems?
We Will Fix Them For
FREE!

If you are the owner of a small business with 5 or more computers, I'd like to give you a special "get to know us" offer and make your first 2 hour service call absolutely FREE. Why am I willing to do this? Because I know once you see how well we resolve your computer problems, you'll become a client for life!

Visit: www.b4networks.ca/2freehours
Or Call Us: 905-346-4966

5 Easy Ways To Spring Clean Your Computer For Maximum Performance

With Spring in the air, now is a good time to do an annual clean up of the computers, servers and electronic equipment in your office, both inside and out. Failure to thoroughly clean your computers and servers at least once or twice a year will result in decreased performance and possibly even system failures.

Here's why:

Dust clogs the computer's cooling system causing it to heat up, damaging sensitive electronic equipment. Dust can also cause fan noise and (believe it or not) slow performance!

Crumbs and dirt in your keyboard can cause keys to stick and crunchy sounds when typing. Plus, it's just gross and unhealthy; do you know there are more germs on your computer keyboard than the average public toilet? Even dust, fingerprints and dirt build-up will make your computer monitor dim and fuzzy.

We covered how to physically clean your computer in our February issue a few months ago, but...

The physical "dirt" is only the beginning…

Here are 5 quick steps you can take today to clean up your systems and improve performance:

1. Use Disk Cleanup to delete temporary files, unused programs and any other files taking up space and slowing things down. (Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools > Disk Cleanup)
2. Defrag your hard drive to speed up access to your data. (Start > Control Panel > System and Security > Administrative Tools > Defragment your hard drive).
3. Update your spyware and antivirus software with the newest definitions. The internet changes fast. Having outdated security can slow you down dramatically.
4. Make sure you have the latest security patches and updates installed and configured properly.
5. Check your backups and conduct an emergency "restore" of the data. Remember, the best time to check your backups is when you DON'T desperately need to recover your data!

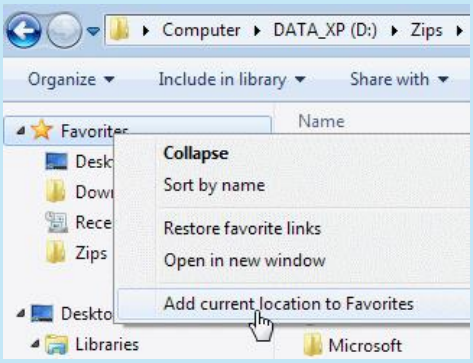
Want Us To Spring Clean Your Computer Network? Call Us For Any Service Between Now And April 30th And Receive…

- 10% off any service, repair or upgrade.
- A FREE 27 Point Spring Network Tune-Up.

Tek Tip of the Month

Add Any Folder to Favorites

You can add any library or folder to the Favorites section in Windows Explorer. To add a folder, navigate to it in Explorer, right-click Favorites in the left navigation pane, and select Add current location to Favorites. Now you get quick access to your favorite folders in all File->Save As dialogs!



The Lighter Side

April Showers Bring…Laughter!

Q. What season is it when you are on a trampoline?
A. Spring-time!

Q. When do monkeys fall from the sky?
A. During Ape-ril showers!

Q. Can February March?
A. No, but April May!

Q. What flowers grow on faces?
A. Tulips (Two-lips)!

Q. Why is the letter A like a flower?
A. A bee (B) comes after it!!

Q. What's the best day for monkey business?
A. The first of Ape-ril!

Q. Do you know all about April 1st?
A. Yes, I'm fooly aware of it!

Q. Why is everyone so tired on April 1?
A. Because they've just finished a long, 31 day March!

Knock, knock!
Who's there?
Noah.
Noah who?
Noah body . . . April Fool's!

Is Microsoft's New Cloud Based Office Licensing Model Going To Affect Your Business?

Microsoft announced earlier this year that they are going to place all of their Microsoft Office desktop and cloud-based Office 365 software applications under one umbrella in a renewed effort to push their cloud-based subscription model.

Microsoft will still sell their existing desktop versions, but these will not be as "fully featured" as the upcoming cloud-based versions (note that any Microsoft software that ends in 365 is their cloud based software). It's becoming very apparent that whether you're a home user or a large company, Microsoft wants you to buy the cloud version of their products going forward. If you don't want the cloud version on a monthly subscription, you'll have to settle for a dumbed down version of the product instead.

Here's what this potentially means for you:

- The new "Office" family covers all different editions of Microsoft Office, from Student and Home Editions to the most powerful tools that Microsoft offers.
- You will never have to worry about buying CALs for Office 365.
- You will now be able to shift your budget dollars from one time or annual license purchases to an ongoing monthly operating expense, thus evening out cash flow.
- Things should be getting easier for you to manage. Whether you are starting from scratch or updating software licenses for your office, you'll be able to get everyone running on Office, Exchange, Sharepoint, Lync, Word, Excel and even Skype under one single license.
- Microsoft is also preparing a half-dozen bundles for Office and Office 365, many aimed at small business.

If you would like more information on Office 365, please contact us and speak with Bryan. 905.346.4966

Client Of The Month

The design/build process for any outdoor project can be daunting task for anybody. The team at Tree Amigos takes great pride in making this process worry-free and even enjoyable. I know this from personal experience as Tree Amigos is not just a B4 Networks client, I'm also a client of theirs.

Last year I had Tree Amigos come to my home to make a proposal for landscaping our front yard and an interlocking brick walkway to the front and side door of our home. Drew made the entire process extremely fun and easy. He came to our home, to get a general idea of what my wife and I wanted, and then made the whole thing come to life with an beautiful and very detailed proposal.

After accepting the proposal, Drew and his team came by and within a week, the entire project was completed exactly as detailed in the proposal, and right on budget.

If your looking for a high quality landscaping company to do install your next outdoor project, then I strongly suggest you contact the Tree Amigos team.

www.treeamigoslandscaping.com

B4 Networks was instrumental in helping Tree Amigos with their office move a few years ago and streamlined their IT by installing a new server, and 4 new laptops /desktops. Recently we've helped them migrate to Office 365 to not only allow them to synchronize email on their workstations, and their mobile phones, but also standardize on Office 2013 with little up front investment.

We can help you too! Contact Bryan via email: bryan@b4networks.ca, or call **905.346.4966**

A Quality Referral Is Music To Our Ears…A FREE iPod Is Music To Yours!

(See Below For Details On How The Two Are Related.)

We love all our currently client, and quite honestly, wish we had more like you! So instead of just wishing, we've decided to hold a special "refer-a-friend" contest for the months of April & May.

Even if your referral doesn't hire us, they'll benefit from having a third-party conduct a FREE security audit of their systems. Normally we charge over $300 for this service, but we'll give it to them free since you referred them.

All you have to do now is go online to: ***www.b4networks.ca/referral*** and give us the name of one or more fellow business owners you know who might benefit from our services. There's no obligation for them to buy anything. We'll award a brand new iPod Touch to the customer who refers us the most quality contacts (see link above for details). **We'll also give you a special gift, just for referring your friends to us** (for referrals of businesses with 5 or more computers)

If you have any questions about our contest, you can also call me direct at ***905-349-4966*** or simply e-mail me at ***bryan@b4networks.ca*** with the name and contact information of one of your business colleagues who might benefit from hearing from us.

TRIVIA CHALLENGE

This months winner will receive a $50 Gift Card to ***Canadian Tire***

Enter our monthly trivia contest for a chance to win a prize each month.

Congratulations to February's Winner:
Jessica Danyluk
From:
Goldhawk Accounting

To enter, visit the website below or email me: bryan@b4networks.ca and answer the question below.

www.b4networks.ca/trivia

April is named after the Greek goddess, Aphrodite. She is the goddess of:

a. Fire
b. Light
c. Love
d. Spring

Submit your entry by the 25th of the month, and if your answers are correct, your name will be added to the draw for a $50 Gift Card.
*See website for full trivia rules

Family Update

I have to say that as a father, I have been extremely blessed to have two wonderful, happy, and very fun to be with boys. On the left is a picture of my son Aiden, who is just about always smiling. Taken by the very talented Precious Laplante. On the right is a photo of Nate dancing at my brother's recent wedding. Nate loves to dance, and anytime dancing music comes on, he will start doing some very funy dances, and even tries to "Break Dance" by putting his hands on the ground and going in circles.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

Ultra-Small Bluetooth Location Stickers

With Stick-N-Find, never lose your keys again, find your remote control, track your luggage or keep a virtual leash on your pet fluffy so that you get notified when they go too far away.

About the size of a quarter and 0.16 inches thin, you can stick these just about anywhere! Stick them to any device, person or animal and find them with your smartphone.

With an Apple iOS or Android app, you can view your misplaced items on a radar screen and decide if you would like to have it buzz, flash or do both. Or create a "virtual leash" with the sticker – if that sticker moves away more than a selected distance, your phone will alarm you. Lastly, "Find It" alerts allow you to be alerted when your lost item comes in range of your phone.

Stick-N-Find Stickers have a Range of about 100 feet with a battery that lasts for over a year.

Find out more at www.sticknfind.com.

Services We Offer

- General Computer / Network Repair and Troubleshooting
- Network Design & Implementation
- Backup and Business Continuity Solutions
- Anti Spam & Email Solutions
- Virus and Spyware Protection
- Network Security / Firewall Solutions
- Commercial Wireless Networking
- Fixed Cost Monthly Managed Services
- Remote Monitoring and Diagnostics, Troubleshooting and Repair
- Project Management
- Technology Consulting
- Hosted Exchange Service
- Cloud Services

b4 networks
706 East Main St
Welland, Ontario, L3B 3Y4
905.346.4966
www.b4networks.ca
We Make Technology Work!

Meet The B4 Networks Team

Over the past 8 months we have welcomed quite a few new faces to the B4 Networks Team, and it's very possible that some of you have not had the opportunity to meet some members of our staff. Each of our team members are great customer ambassadors for B4 Networks, and thrive on helping our clients with all aspects of their computers and technology. I present to you the B4 Networks team. For a full bio on each visit our website: www.b4networks.ca/about-us/staff/

Bryan Lachapelle
President

This is me, I started B4 Networks back in 2004 (under a different name then), however the reasons for starting the company hold true to this day. I believe every business has the right to have an IT consultant that is Reliable, honest, competent, responsive, and fairly priced. I think we've achieved that and more with this team.

Amanda Lachapelle
HR Manager

You won't find Amanda at the office often, as she also runs a very successful Photography business. (www.amandalachapelle.ca) But she is responsible for helping me put together the team you'll see below, as well as assist with the development of policies and best practices. Amanda also helps with Marketing, and putting together this Newsletter.

Heather King
Office Manager

Heather has been part of the team since 2009. She is the first point of contact for our clients, and helps connect them with one of our growing support team members. Having graduated from the Dental Office Administration program at Niagara College, Heather brings lots of knowledge and experience to our team, and we'd be lost without her.

Steve Lamarre
Service Coordinator

Steve just started out with us in December 2012, and already he's an integral part of our team. Steve is responsible for coordinating all the service requests that come through email, phone, and any other avenue. He's the first person you should call when you need any type of service.

Adam Brown
Senior Network Analyst

Adam has been with us since the start. Back in 2006 it was just me and Adam, and together we've built B4 Networks to what it is today. Adam is our most senior consultant and currently works mostly on large complex projects including networking, server deployments, and maintaining systems for our manufacturing clients.

Mike Elia
Support Technician

Mike started with us in September of 2012. He's extremely skilled and has many certifications behind him. Mike primarily works at our help desk performing many remote service calls, and also installs the majority of our client's new desktop deployments. One of Mike's strong points is that has a knack at explaining things in easy to understand terms.

Derrick Thornbury
Network and IT Specialist

Derrick is the most recent member to join our team having started just a few weeks ago. He comes to us with a wealth of experience and knowledge with having spent over 10 working in the IT sector. His good sense of humor, and friendliness is sure to be a great fit for our company, and our clients.

Larry Lemelin
Public Relations and Marketing

If you see Larry around, it will most likely be while he is out at networking events and promoting B4 Networks through his many contacts. Larry's responsibility is to educate the public about the company and look for great companies that may need the services of B4 Networks. He is very approachable and loves to meet new people and comes to us with lots of experience having run his own successful Limo company.

Need Help Right Away? Call our team 24/7 at 905.346.4966.