Technology Update

by B4 Networks

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

Inside This Issue…

WHEN ARE THEY GOING TO MAKE AN A/C APP?

7/25 STAHLER.

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"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,
B4 Networks Inc.**

**B4 Networks Inc.
1462 Pelham Street
Fonthill, Ontario, L0S 1E0
Tel: 905.346.4966**

Microsoft Releases Emergency Patch for a Dangerous Vulnerability in Windows

Security researchers from Google's Project Zero and FireEye have discovered a critical flaw in various versions of Windows, and Microsoft has released an emergency out-of-band patch to deal with the situation.

In a statement of advisory on Monday (July 20), Microsoft informed customers about the issue, warning that the vulnerability could "allow remote code execution if a user opens a specially crafted document or visits an untrusted webpage that contains embedded OpenType fonts."

They continued, "An attacker could then install programs; view, change, or delete data; or create new accounts with full user rights."

Basically what this means is that if the vulnerability were exploited, you'd be inadvertently handing operational control of your computer over to a cybercriminal, all by simply opening up an innocent looking document, or just visiting an infected website. The potential issues stemming from that are limitless, especially for businesses storing sensitive data on their machines.

Users working with Windows Vista, Windows 7, 8, 8.1 or Windows RT are all affected – that includes users running Windows Server 2008 or later. It should be noted that Microsoft has deemed the software update "critical" for those users. As of now, Microsoft says they believe the flaw is public, but they have no evidence to suggest it's being actively exploited.

The patch is available now through any typical update methods, including Windows Update. For your protection, it's crucial to make the update as soon as possible to prevent any issues with your system.

For our clients on our **Business Security** or **Preferred Client** programs, you have nothing to worry about, this update has already been deployed to your systems!

This is just another example of why having a comprehensive cyber security plan in place is so important. Most business owners I've met just don't have the time to take care of all these daily, weekly, and monthly maintenance routines.

Does your IT provider warn you about these and other security flaws? Do they automatically address issues like this to keep your business protected? When your ready to take cyber security seriously contact B4 Networks at help@b4networks.ca or (905) 346-4966, and ask how we can make it easy and affordable to stay secure.

Get More Free Tips, Tools and Services At Our Web Site: **www.b4networks.ca**

How To Avoid Runaway IT Projects That Empty Your Wallet

In 2002, McDonald's decided to implement a system to provide their corporate executives with a bird's-eye view of their 30,000 stores, to track, measure and monitor everything from profitability to cooking-oil quality. The project, named "Innovate," was a massive five-year project with a billion-dollar budget. Two years into its implementation, McDonald's executives abandoned the project and wrote off the $170 million invested, saying they needed to reduce capital expenditures.

Even though YOUR business isn't a McDonald's with a billion-dollar IT budget, chances are you've had at least one failed IT project that derailed, emptying your wallet and leaving you with nothing other than a grudge. And if you haven't had that happen yet, chances are, as you grow, you will. So how do you avoid going down a rabbit hole of spending on an IT project? Here are five key strategies to keep you on track:

1. Begin with the end in mind. The clearer you are on what "success" is for the project, the more likely you are to achieve it. Take the time to sit down with your executive team and decide exactly what the new system LOOKS like (including the interface, if you're developing one), how it performs, what it does and how it works.

2. IT projects need to be driven by an executive who understands the business need and outcome, NOT the IT department. If you and your executive team aren't going to be heavily involved with the process, decisions and management of the project, don't start it.

3. Think in smaller, "bite-sized" projects. One of the problems with the McDonald's project was that it was so complex, affected multiple business systems and had such an enormous scope, it was almost guaranteed to fail. If you have a major system to build or overhaul, break it into smaller, manageable chunks so that problems are contained and costs controlled.

4. Manage the project hours. Scope creep is the biggest challenge to keeping your project on time and on budget. If your project starts to take on a life of its own and goes over your budgeted time frame and your budget by more than 10%, it's time to start re-evaluating what's going on. Excessive overtime is a red flag that the project was not thought through properly, that you have the wrong team working on it or that it's being grossly mismanaged. Don't ignore it.

5. Missed milestones are a red flag. While it's normal to miss a few milestones by a small margin, your IT team should not be allowed to consistently miss key milestones in the project. We recommend setting clearly defined milestones every two weeks or monthly versus monthly or quarterly. This allows you to keep a tighter control on the budget and deliverables.

Tek Tip of the Month

Typing Tricks

Delete an entire word Instead of deleting a single letter, pressing CTRL + BKSP will delete the entire word behind the cursor. This makes deleting text quicker if you need to delete the whole word.

Move Cursor to beginning of the next or previous word Moving the cursor around manually while typing makes your work take longer than it needs to. To speed of the process, move the cursor around with keyboard shortcuts. To move it to the beginning of the previous word, use CTRL + Left Arrow. To move it to the beginning of the next word, use CTRL + Right Arrow. In OS X you can accomplish the same using the Option key.

Steve Lamarre
Service Manager

Making sub and superscript text If you need to make sub or superscript text (think exponents for superscript), press CTRL + = for subscript and CTRL + SHIFT + = for superscript.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

Rocketbook: A Super-Convenient Way To Store And Organize Handwritten Notes

If you're like me, you still like taking notes with a pen and paper. Problem is, note pages can pile up, get lost and be a pain to organize. But thanks to a special notebook called Rocketbook, you can still take notes the "old-fashioned" way of pen and paper, but then file, organize and store your notes digitally for quick access and retrieval!

Rocketbook looks like an ordinary pad of paper. To use it, simply take notes as you would on any pad of paper, using the Pilot FriXion pen. When you're done, the built-in app creates a high-quality JPG image of your notes and files it to the folder of your choice inside Evernote, Dropbox, Google Docs or OneNote. You indicate which folder each note goes to by marking clever little icons at the bottom of each page.

When the pages are full, simply microwave the notebook for 30 seconds to completely erase and reuse. Rocketbook currently comes in two sizes and is available at indiegogo. Just search on, "Rocketbook."

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

The B4 Networks Comic Strip

Meet *After Stuff Happens Networks*

After Networks is a fictitious computer company that provides terrible customer service, does everything wrong, takes days to respond to service requests, are very arrogant, talk down to clients, and are anything but helpful. In fact they are downright lazy.

This company does not actually exist. No one we know of is this bad at delivering their service. But we've all at one time or another run across a company that has one of these poor traits. If you struggle with your IT firm, call us for a second opinion. 905-346-4966

AFT ER networks

Note: The comic strip is not meant to insult or make fun of anyone. We decided to make this comic strip series to try and bring a little light and awareness to some of the situations we've come across, and hopefully affect some change within the IT industry.   Not all of the comics are real situations that have occurred, but all of them do address a particular issue we have encountered.

After Networks Plays The Blame Game

I'm sure everyone has run into this at some point or another.   You are having an issue with your computer system, so you call your IT provider, only to have them tell you it's someone else's problem.   You then call that "other company", and they tell you it's not their problem either, that it's likely an IT issue. So here you are stuck in the middle, unsure of what to do, and getting more frustrated by the minute.

At B4 Networks, we own our Preferred IT client's problems, if their internet is down, they call us, and we will work directly with the internet provider to bring them back up. Phone system issues, printer problem, cell phone headaches, yup those too. That's the way it should be. One number to call, to make all your technology frustrations go away.   For our clients not on our Preferred IT program, we give them the option if they would like us to coordinate with their vendors for them, or if they would prefer to do so themselves.
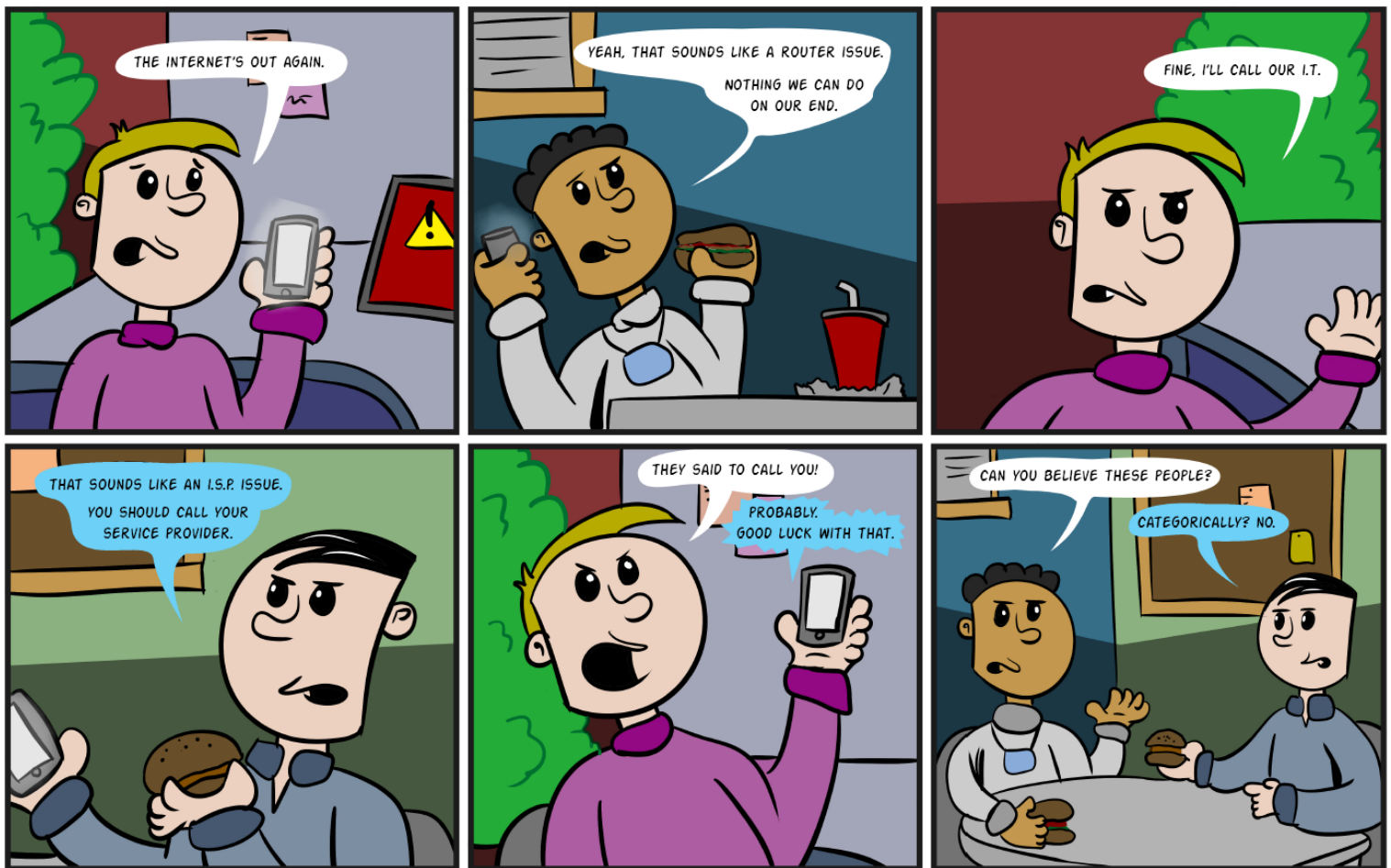

ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL VANDERSTEEN

FREE Report: The Niagara Business Owners' Guide To IT Support Services And Fees

If you are the CEO or Owner of a business in Niagara that is currently looking to outsource some or all of the IT support for your company, this report contains important information that will be extremely valuable to you as you search for a competent firm you can **trust**.

IT BUYERS GUIDE

"What Every Business Owner Must Know About IT Support Services and Fee's"

What You Should Expect To Pay For IT Support For Your Business; And How To Get Exactly What You Need

One of the most commons questions we get from new prospective clients calling our office is "What do you guys charge for your services?" Since this is such a common question — and a very important one to address — I decided to write this report for 3 reasons:

1.   I wanted an easy way to answer this question and educate all prospective clients who come to us on the most common ways IT services companies package and price their services. And of course the pros and cons of each approach.

2.   I wanted to bring to light a few "industry secrets" about IT service contracts and SLAs (service level agreements) that almost no business owner thinks about, understands or knows to ask about when evaluating IT service providers. These are the kind of secrets that can end up burning you with hidden fees and locking you into a long-term contract when they are unwilling or unable to deliver the quality of service you need.

3.   I wanted to educate business owners on how to pick the *right* IT services company for their specific situation, budget and needs based on the *VALUE* the company can deliver, not just the price, high OR low.

In the end, my purpose is to help you make the most informed decision possible so you end up working with someone who helps you solve your problems and accomplish what you want in a time frame, manner and budget that is right for you.

What you will learn:

•   The 3 most common ways IT services companies charge for their services, and the pros and cons of each approach.

•   A common billing model that puts ALL THE RISK on you, the customer, when buying IT services; you'll learn what it is and why you need to avoid agreeing to it.

•   Exclusions, hidden fees and other "gotcha" clauses IT companies put in their contracts that you DON'T want to agree to.

•   How to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid disappointment, frustration and added costs later on that you didn't anticipate.

•   21 revealing questions to ask your IT support firm BEFORE giving them access to your computer network, e-mail and data.

Claim Your FREE Copy Today at www.b4networks.ca/BuyersGuide

Do You Keep Your Server In A Closet?

Confusion. Dizziness. Fatigue. Muscle cramps. These are some of the first signs of heat exhaustion in humans. But did you know that your SERVER can also suffer from heat exhaustion and "meltdown," causing slowness, blue screens, random reboots and complete meltdowns? If you keep your server in a closed closet or other small, confined space, here are three things you need to address during hot summer months to avoid premature loss of your equipment and data.

Room Temperature. Server rooms should be kept between 68° and 72° Fahrenheit (20°-22° Celsius). If you keep your server in a closet with a closed door, the heat emitted will quickly elevate the temperature to levels that will damage hardware. Consider opening the door or putting in a good exhaust fan to pull the hot air out.

Ventilation. Good airflow is critical for maintaining a safe room temperature and reducing dust, the next culprit that causes damage to electronics.

Dust. Perhaps more dangerous than room temperature is dust. Dust acts as insulation, and traps the heat generated by your computer components. A regular maintenance routine to keep your components clean and dust-free is essential.

Computer hardware is expensive, and unexpected downtime is incredibly frustrating. If you want to extend the life of your equipment and avoid the sudden meltdown, make sure your server closet is set up correctly.

If you need help, give us a call for a FREE Summer Server Room Check at 905-346-4966. We'll be glad to do a free evaluation on your server closet or room and let you know if you're at risk of heat exhaustion and dust damage.

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

Client Spotlight

Lifetime Vision Centre is a team of dedicated eyecare professionals, committed to providing the highest quality of eye health care and compassion for each patient.

Based out of Fonthill, Ontario, the practice values the importance of continuing education for themselves and their patients. The practice strives to maintain the highest standards through state of the art instrumentation and commitment to patient wellness and care.

From experience, I know that Lifetime Vision Center provides a fantastic customer experience. Even before Lifetime Vision Center became a client, my little boy Nate (5yrs old) was cared for by their staff, and they were very good with him every step of the way, answering all his many many questions. You're in good hands with Lifetime!

Phone: 905 892-5191
Addresss: 1405 Pelham Street, Fonthill, Ontario

How B4 Networks Helps Support Lifetime Vision Center

We welcome Lifetime Vision Center as one of our Preferred managed client. Under this program, B4 Networks maintains the security, stability, and overall health of the computers systems and network, while at the same time providing backup services, and ongoing strategic consulting, all for a fixed monthly fee.

Guest Article: How Great Leaders Inspire Their Employees To Higher Commitment And Performance

It's probably true that most people who work with us will never care as deeply as we do about building our business. If they did, they'd probably be working for themselves! Yet there's a great deal we can do to raise the commitment level and inspire them to peak performance. The operative word here is INSPIRE. You can demand that people who work for you be punctual, or that they perform at a certain production level. Yet real commitment can only be INSPIRED. And inspiring people is what great leaders do best.

How do great leaders inspire others to commit themselves to their goals? It's not just their charismatic personalities, or that they give a lot of high-powered motivational talks. They communicate their vision so forcefully that other people adopt it as their own.

For example, Lee Iaccoca stepped into the ailing Chrysler Corporation and said, "We're going to turn this company around!" With clear goals, a solid plan of action and a strong conviction, he was able to inspire enough commitment from the US Congress that he secured the largest loan ever made to a private company. Then he inspired enough commitment in thousands of Chrysler workers to enable the company to pay back the loan ahead of schedule.

And that's the formula for any leader to inspire commitment – clear goals, a solid plan of action and a strong conviction. Communicate that to the people who work with you, and you'll have the kind of loyalty that makes them go the extra mile – if that's what it takes to get the job done.

Of course, it takes more than inspiration to run a successful organization. The people who work with you have to perform consistently at very high levels, and to get that kind of performance, you have to gain their trust. They have to believe that you will always be fair in your dealings with them, and that you are concerned about their best interests.

One of the most helpful insights I ever learned about leading others is that people do things for THEIR reasons, not for YOURS or MINE. So the goals, the plan of action and the strong conviction have to be communicated in a way that directly answers the question "What's in it for me?"

When people honestly believe they will benefit directly from their efforts, and that the more they give, the more they benefit, they perform at peak levels. So it's crucial that you show people how they will grow as they work individually and together to make the company grow, and then back up all your promises with solid actions.

People respond to clear opportunities for personal and professional growth. If I may paraphrase the Hallmark slogan, when people care enough, they'll give their very best!

It takes a lot of patience and effort to build a solid team of people who will share and help you fulfill your vision, but the results will be well worth all you put into it.

Dr. Nido Qubein is president of High Point University, an undergraduate and graduate institution in the U.S. with 4,300 students from 40 countries. He has authored two dozen books and audio programs distributed worldwide. As a business leader, he is chairman of the Great Harvest Bread Company, with 220 stores in 43 states. He serves on the boards of several national organizations, including BB&T (a Fortune 500 company with $185 billion in assets), the La-Z-Boy Corporation (one of the largest and most recognized furniture brands worldwide) and Dots Stores (a chain of fashion boutiques with more than 400 locations across the country). As a professional speaker, Dr. Qubein has received many distinctions, including the Golden Gavel Medal, induction into the International Speaker Hall of Fame and as the founder of the NSA Foundation in Arizona.

TRIVIA CHALLENGE

The Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is **Diane Tobias** from **Doral Holdings**

This months winner will receive a $50 Gift Card to a Fonthill Restaurant

This month's trivia question is:

August originally had 30 days. Why does it now have 31 days?

a) Augustus Caesar wanted as much days in his month as Julius Caesar had in his. So they took the extra day from February.
b) What! Seriously! They took it from February?
c) It's the sun. It's always the sun.
d) None of the above.

To enter email me your answer: **bryan@b4networks.ca** or visit the site below
www.b4networks.ca/trivia

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

The B4 Networks Family

Top Left: Another Elia is set to join the family. Congratulations to Mike and Christine for sharing this great news. **Top Right:** Bryan's boys in their school photos (Nate and Aiden). **Bottom Left:** Alex and Teegan at the Welland Canal. **Bottom Middle:** Sera likes BBQ'd marshmallows too much. **Bottom Right:** Nate and Aiden at the canal feeding the ducks.

How To Back Up Your Smartphone

Backups For Your Phone?

You regularly back up your computers (or at least you should), but do you do the same with your smartphone? Given the massive amounts of contact information, photos, videos and other data we all carry around on smartphones, it's critical to back them up or risk losing all that data forever. There are two basic ways to back up your phone: automatically to the cloud or manually to your computer.

To The Cloud. Cloud backups are secured with your password-protected account. They can easily be configured to run automatically so you can "set it and forget it." Apple users can use iCloud to back up photos, contacts, calendars and other data. Turn on and configure iCloud Backup by going to Settings > iCloud. Android users can back up to Google servers in much the same way, using a Google account. Configure your preferences by going to Settings > Backup.

To Your Computer. Both Apple and Android users also can back up data directly to a computer manually. Generally, connecting the phone to the computer by cable is the quickest way to do this. Apple users can also use iTunes Wi-Fi Sync to wirelessly back up phone data to a computer. Remember, though, when backing up your smartphone to a computer, your data is only as safe as that computer. Be sure to back up the computer regularly as well.

Services We Offer

- General Computer / Network Repair and Troubleshooting
- Network Design & Implementation
- Backup and Business Continuity Solutions
- Disaster Recovery Planning
- Anti Spam & Email Solutions
- Network Security / Firewall Solutions
- Fixed Fee Monthly Services Plans
- Remote Monitoring and Diagnostics, Troubleshooting and Repair
- Project Management
- Technology Consulting
- Hosted Exchange Service
- Cloud Services
- Virus and Spyware Protection

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Fonthill, Ontario, L0S 1E0
905-346-4966
www.b4networks.ca
We Make Technology Work!