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2015

Technology Update

by B4 Networks

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

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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,
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4 Warning Signs Your Computer Is Infected With Spyware

One of the biggest fears that people have when using a computer is the fact that they may pick up a computer virus, this is especially true when people are using the Internet. Many people ask my "Why someone would bother writing a virus, what's the point?". The truth is, viruses and malware are BIG business. The majority of the creators make them to profit from them in different ways, which I will touch on in my blog this month.

Even if you are a savvy Internet user it is still easy to pick up a virus by accident – whether you click on a link and land on a not so trustworthy site or if you accidentally open an attachment from an unknown email. We have to always be vigilant.

One of the main reasons that people are so fearful of getting a virus on their PC is due to the fact that we tend to store so many of our personal details on them – not to mention the fact that we often do Internet banking and other financial related tasks. Having a virus could lead to those details being compromised which no one wants to think about.

Luckily in many cases, it's possible to tell if you have a virus and the aim of this article is to highlight the warning signs that your computer might have a virus and also to provide some information on how to go about removing it if you have one.

1. You start seeing errors when you turn on your computer

When a virus gets into your computer it tends to put several measures in place to keep itself there. One of the most common measures is to add itself to the computers list of start-up programs. Fortunately for us this often causes problems – sometimes the program links added to the start-up don't work or fail to load when the computer next boots up. This often leads to errors and warnings when the computer is turned on and these are a good indicator that you have a virus.

Any warnings or error messages that you get when the computer starts up should be investigated and either ruled out as being unrelated or confirmed as being the result of a virus infected computer.

2. You see a program that you don't recognise

One of the common reasons behind modern viruses is to trick the victim into paying money to the perpetrator and this is most often accomplished by the virus itself posing as a legitimate antivirus program and requesting money for virus removal. In light of this, a very strong warning sign that you have a virus on your computer is seeing a program that you don't recognise. Any programs that suddenly appear should be investigated and an easy way of doing this is simply to search for the name of the program on Google and see what comes up.

3. You are automatically directed to unwanted websites when browsing the Internet

Many viruses also have the purpose of directing you to illegitimate sites – often to infect the computer with even more viruses but also sometimes as part of a black market advertising racket. As such, another common sign that you have a virus is when you find yourself redirected to sites that you did not intend on visiting – this can come in the form of popups but also can come about when you click on a genuine link but are redirected to an unrelated site.

(Continued on page 4)

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

How To Make Yourself ‘Invisible’ To Hackers

There's an old joke about two men hiking in the woods when they come across a big, grumpy black bear. Scared silly, one of the guys starts to run but notices his buddy stopped, bent-over, changing his shoes. He shouts to him, "Dude! What are you doing?!? Why aren't you running?" to which his friend replies, "I'm changing my shoes because I don't need to outrun the bear – I only need to outrun YOU."

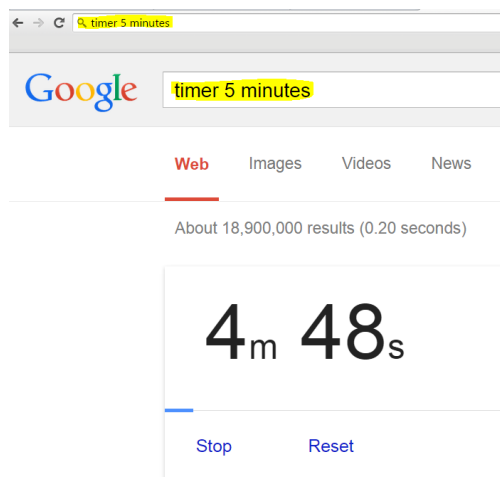
This is a perfect analogy for what's going on in small businesses: the "slow," easy targets are getting nailed by fast-growing cybercrime rings that are getting more sophisticated and aggressive in attacking small businesses. Last year, the average cyber-attack cost a small business \$20,752, a substantial increase from 2013, when the average was \$8,699. That's because most small businesses don't have the security protocols in place or the manpower and budget to implement sophisticated security systems. While there's absolutely no way to completely protect yourself other than disconnecting entirely from the Internet, there are several things you can do to avoid being easy pickings. Here's how:

1. **Lock your network.** While WIRED networks make you invisible to WiFi snoops because you have to access them by plugging into physical outlets or hacking modem ports, you can create a hidden or cloaked network on a wireless network. Simply disable the service set identifier (SSID) broadcasting function on the wireless router, and only users with the exact network name will have access. Small businesses like coffeehouses can also do this—just periodically change the network's information and place a small sign near the register with the current network name and passcode.
2. **Encrypt your data.** On your desktops, turn on the full-disk encryption tools that come standard on most operating systems: BitLocker on Windows-based PCs and FileVault on Macs. There is no noticeable performance lag; however, the encryption only applies when users are logged out of the system. So setting computers to automatically log out after 15 minutes without use is a good idea. And for mobile devices, use a VPN (virtual private network) to encrypt data traveling to and from your mobile devices and limit your employees' access to only the company data that they must have to do their jobs.
3. **Install firewall and anti-malware applications** on all of your equipment, including mobile devices.
4. **Disable features that automatically connect your mobile devices to any available network.**
5. **Disable printer and file-sharing options on mobile devices before connecting to a hotspot.**
6. **Check before connecting to hotspots.** If there is an unusual variation in the logo or name on the login page, beware...this could mean it's a fake hotspot designed to steal your data.

Can you guarantee that the person across the hotel lobby isn't looking at your data? Not really, but the chances of them being able to do that are greatly reduced if you take precautions to protect your business.

Tek Tip of the Month

Need a quick timer?



This simple "trick" will allow you to keep track of time for a task, project, or even for making hard-boiled eggs. You won't believe how easy it is...

Google Timer

1. Go to the Google Search Page: www.google.com
2. Enter: timer 5 minutes (or whatever time you want) and press enter
3. The timer will automatically start counting down! Click the speaker icon to mute the alarm. Click the frame icon to switch to the full-screen mode.

Voila. A quick timer at your desk.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

InfiniteUSB



As laptops grow thinner, USB ports become scarcer. This means that if you need to connect to many printers, phones, or a mouse, you need to carry around a multiport hub to plug in various devices. But Jiange has created a USB plug that is based on a daisy chain, allowing you to plug multiple devices into one USB port. It recently launched its product via a very successful Kickstarter campaign.

The design won an IF Concept Award from one of the most prestigious design competitions in the world. Jiange has a lot more design inventions underway. InfiniteUSB cables start at \$10, and will also come in varieties that support microUSB and Lightning connectors.

<http://getinfiniteusb.com/>



Steve Lamarre
Service Manager

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



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 Takes Days To Come Help, And In The End Does Not Fix The Issue.

When your dealing with a critical issue that is affecting your business, the last thing you want to hear from your IT provider is that they cannot help you right away, or that they will "come by as soon as possible". A few months ago, we had a call from a business owner who was having issues with their payroll. They had called their IT guy, but he wasn't responding. We remotely connected and fixed the issue for them that same day, and their current IT provider a week later still hadn't called them back.

A great IT Company will answer their phones live, and have some sort of service guarantee. They will keep you informed every step of the way from start to finish so you know what's going on.



ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL VANDERSTEEN

Have you experienced something similar with your current provider? Do you want to work with an IT provider that responds quickly to your business needs, and fixes things right the first time? Call us today @ 905-346-4966 - www.b4networks.ca

Disaster Recovery Planning

If Disaster Strikes, How Fast Could Your Company Be Back Up And Running?

You hear it all the time from us—back up your data, keep your virus protection current and install and maintain a firewall to protect yourself from hackers and other online threats. However, while these precautions will certainly help you avoid problems, they CAN'T do anything if you don't have a good backup and disaster recovery plan in place. Of course, just having a good backup while a good first step, it is by no means planning for a disaster.

12 Disaster Recovery Questions You Need To Answer

A disaster recovery plan doesn't have to be complicated, time consuming or expensive. Start by asking yourself the following questions:

1. Do you back up your company's data daily to both an onsite and offsite location?
2. Are you absolutely certain that your backup copy is valid, complete and not corrupt? How do you know for sure? Do you test regularly?
3. If disaster strikes, HOW would you get your data back, and how would you survive while your data is being restored?
4. Do you have copies of all the software licenses and disks in a safe location that could be accessed if you need to rebuild your server?
5. Do you routinely download your data from all 3rd party cloud applications just in case they go out of business or close your account?
6. Would you and your employees have a way to access your network remotely if you couldn't get to the office?
7. Do you store important passwords in a secure place that company officers can access if you are unavailable?
8. Do you have documentation on your network that details all the devices, workstations, laptops and software licenses you own?
9. If your IT guy wasn't available, do you know how to access your server, backups and other critical IT systems? Would anyone?
10. Do you have a UPS (uninterruptible power supply) device in place to keep your network and other critical data operations running during a power outage?
11. If your phones are down, where will you forward your business calls so you don't lose that business?
12. If a more common "disaster" occurs, such as server hardware failure, do you have an onsite way to get back up and running the same day?

Disaster Planning Essentials

"Little-Known Facts, Mistakes And Blunders About Data Backup And IT Disaster Recovery Every Business Owner Must Know To Avoid Losing Everything In An Instant"



Discover Important Planning Strategies you Should Have in Place Now to Protect Yourself From Common Data-Erasing Disasters Including Natural Hazards, Human Error, Cyber Criminals, Hardware Failure, Software Corruption and Other IT Failures.

Next Step?

The next step should be to download our complimentary Disaster Recovery Planning Guide:

<http://www.b4networks.ca/free-technology-reports/>

Do you want help to implement an effective Disaster Recovery Plan for your business?

Call our office now: **905-346-4966** or email me directly here: bryan@b4networks.ca

4 Warning Signs Your Computer Is Infected With Spyware (cont...)

4. Your computer becomes slow and unresponsive

If there are no obvious signs that you have a virus, such as those listed above, the last indicator is the overall performance of your computer. A virus will almost always slow your computer down so whenever your computer or laptop becomes slow and unresponsive it is a tell-tale sign that you may have a virus and should always be investigated.

How To Clean An Infected Computer

Finding that you have a virus in the first place is a large part of the battle – viruses will often try to go undetected so once you have found one it's a great start.

Getting rid of the virus can vary in its difficulty depending how malicious and resilient the virus is.

The first step in removing a virus is to run a virus scan with the antivirus program that you have installed on your computer – all good antivirus programs come with real-time scanners but also with comprehensive scan facilities that can be activated and run manually when needed.

Whilst antivirus programs will normally detect viruses using this scan they won't always and even when they do they won't always be able to remove them but it is a good first line of defence.

If the virus is not removed by this first step then the next option is to run a deep scan with a program such as Malware bytes – there is a free personal use version available online and the program will often find viruses that other antivirus providers miss.

If the virus is still present after these steps then it is advisable to seek professional advice as the virus may well have rooted itself deep into the system and will require more advanced removal procedures.

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

Client Spotlight

We are very pleased to announce that we have recently brought on **The Mentholatum Company of Canada** on our flat fee support service.

The Mentholatum Company of Canada, Ltd., is dedicated to providing effective solutions for health and wellness. They are manufacturers and marketers of non-prescription pharmaceuticals, health care and cosmeceutical products. They pride themselves in providing high quality innovative products that will delight consumers and exceed their expectations.



When it comes to IT Support, Mentholatum was struggling with a one technician provider that could only come once a week, and could not meet their growing expectations. With a new server installation around the corner, they knew they needed another solution.

With our flat fee support agreement, we installed their new server, setup a state of the art backup system, installed a new network security system, and now provide all their support requirements immediately as they are needed rather than waiting until the "tech guy" is in. To find out all the benefits of working on a flat fee support model, see our website: www.b4networks.ca/fixed-fee

Guest Article by: Mark Sanborn, CSP, CPAE Four Ways To Get More Performance, Productivity And Profit From Your Team

1. Your Team Needs To Learn Together

Rarely do teams learn together. Too often, increases in skill are confined to individuals. Sometimes that can become a barrier to teamwork: because there are dramatically different knowledge and skill levels, some team members aren't able to keep up. When an individual attends a course or discovers a useful practice, he or she should be encouraged to share it with the team. And periodically putting the entire team into a learning environment is critical.

2. Peer Recognition Is Powerful

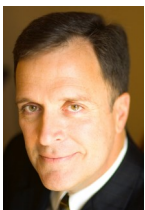
If you're a team leader, understand that despite your best efforts, you will be incapable of adequately recognizing every team member's efforts and contributions. Good work will slip by and go unrecognized. If this happens often, the team member may well become disillusioned. Relieve yourself of the burden to be the sole dispenser of recognition: ask team members to recognize each other. Make it a team expectation to thank other team members for their assistance and to look for opportunities to catch each other doing something praiseworthy.

3. To Win More Together, Think Together More

Have you ever held a team retreat? When was the last time your team came together for the express purpose of thinking about the work you do? Do you periodically pause as a group to reflect on what you've learned and internalize the lessons? Do you meet to consider opportunities, and not just to solve problems? The team that thinks more wins more.

4. You've Got To Expect It And Not Tolerate It If You Don't Get It

Some managers, knowing how difficult it can be to create great teamwork, undermine their efforts by making teamwork "optional." That is, they appreciate the people who are good team players but they tolerate those who aren't. As the old adage goes, what you allow, you condone. Those on the same team should know that figuring out how to get along and work with other teammates is their responsibility. Those who refuse to be team players should at the very least not enjoy the same benefits, and at worst, should be removed. It might sound harsh, but it is necessary if you want teamwork to work.



Mark Sanborn, CSP, CPAE, is president of Sanborn & Associates, Inc., an idea studio dedicated to developing leaders in business and in life. Mark is an international best-selling author and noted authority on leadership, team-building, customer service and change. Mark is the author of 8 books, including the best seller *The Fred Factor: How Passion in Your Work and Life Can Turn the Ordinary into the Extraordinary*, which has sold more than 1.6 million copies internationally. Learn more about Mark at www.marksanborn.com.

The Lighter Side:

Lost In Translation: Advertising Blunders



- Clairol introduced a new curling iron they called the "Mist Stick" to the German market, only to find out that "mist" is slang for manure in German. Not too many people had use for the "manure stick."
- When Gerber started selling baby food in Africa, they used the same packaging as in the US that featured the "Gerber baby" on the front. Later they learned that in Africa, companies put pictures of what's inside the package on the label since most people can't read, thereby causing African consumers to think there was pureed baby inside.
- Colgate introduced a toothpaste in France called "Cue," the name of a notorious porno magazine.
- Pepsi's "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" translated into "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave," in Chinese.
- The Coca-Cola name in China was first read as "Ke-kou-ke-la," meaning "Bite the wax tadpole" or "female horse stuffed with wax," depending on the dialect. Coke then researched 40,000 characters to find the phonetic equivalent "ko-kou-ko-le," translating into "happiness in the mouth."

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TRIVIA

CHALLENGE

The Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is **Dawn Mills** from **Keller and Associates**

This month's winner will receive a \$50 Gift Card

This month's trivia question is:

The name Google is a play on which word?

- a) Googol
- b) Back Rub
- c) Googole
- d) Doodle

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: Nate and Aiden (Bryan's kids) in their pioneer outfits.

Top Middle: It's always good to put the kids to work early! :)

Top right: Alex at the creek catching frogs.

Bottom Left to Right: Steve was doing some recycling, and figured he would try to scare the rest of us! Bryan with Nate and Aiden at the park!

How To Get Things Done Efficiently

Getting distracted by the little things in life is easy. By starting your day with trivial activities, you will not have the time for the things that actually matter.

The trick is to use the "Big Rocks of life" theory developed by **Dr. Stephen Covey** in the eighties. It's amazing at how much more you can accomplish when you do things this way. Here's the general concept, but I encourage you to all look this up. There have been many YouTube videos that have been made to illustrate this theory:

First Things First

A professor was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, he used an illustration which I'm sure they will never forget. After I share it with

you, hopefully you'll never forget it either.

The man stood in front of this group speaking on the subject of time. He pulled out a wide-mouthed jar and set it on a table in front of him. Into the jar, he carefully placed about a dozen fist-sized rocks one at a time, into the jar.

When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the class said, "Yes.". "Really?" he said. He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel, and dumped some it in the jar, and then shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks, he reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand.

He started dumping the sand in and it went into all the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, "Is this jar full?"

"No!" the class shouted. Once again he said, "Good!" Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim.

The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all."

The big rocks represent all the big priority you have, the things that NEED to get done. Unless they get first place attention, the smaller priorities will pour in, and consume all our time, and there will be no room left for the important things.

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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We Make Technology Work!