# Technology Update

## by B4 Networks

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

## In this issue

"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!"

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# Keeping Your Business Computers Safe

### Small Businesses Are Big Targets

In the world of IT security, larger companies have traditionally been the target of choice. That's no longer the case, we are now seeing an increase in news reports indicating the trend that smaller companies are becoming the new easy targets. Sure it's true that security breaches on large companies have gained a lot of media attention over the past few years, however there has been an increasing trend where smaller companies are being targeted because traditionally their security is not as sophisticated. Criminals like to go for the low hanging fruit "the easy target", and many small businesses, are extremely easy targets.

### Why would they want to attack you?

It's not about you.   They aren't just attacking you, they are attacking everybody.   The old model of hacking was a person at the keyboard doing the hacking.  The new model of hacking, the person hacking disappears into the background, and automatic scripts and bots do the hacking.   And they are going after your data, credit card numbers, passwords, and any other data that can be used or sold.

### The implications of doing nothing is BIG

Financial loss if someone gets into your bank account,  legal issues if you leak private information and are sued,  regulatory infractions from privacy or other laws that apply to your specific business  or even the damage to your personal and business reputation.   Doing nothing can lead to a nightmare if something gets breached.   In this case, ignorance is not bliss!

### So what can you as a small business do to ensure your data and client information is kept secure?

The best way to secure and protect your network is to incorporate several layers of security at every level.   Gone are they days where you can just install a simple antivirus, and be secure.

I will briefly outline a few critical steps you can use that will dramatically help secure your business computer networks, and provide you with resources to find more information.

### 3 Key Security Measures You Should Take Immediately For Your Business To Stay Protected From Hackers, Viruses, and Malware.

1.   **Catch** and Detect malicious malware with good licensed antivirus / antimalware.
2.   **Patch** your systems to keep them up to date with all patches, updates, and service packs.  Not just windows updates, but also all 3rd party applications.
3.   **Match** people's security to the right privileges they need, and limit administrative rights.

By having these three simple items addressed, you can mitigate at least 85% of targeted cyber intrusions. Keeping your systems safe and secure, makes you a less tempting target.   That doesn't mean these are the only steps you should take.   We have a more comprehensive list available on our website, and I encourage all of you to  download our Free Security report available at:

www.b4networks.ca/free-reports

- Bryan Lachapelle

# b4

## b4 networks

## 3 Things You Need To Know About E-mail Marketing Before You Press "Send"

It's everyone's favorite application. Since its introduction, it has revolutionized the way we communicate, both personally and professionally. It has had a major impact on how companies market themselves, communicate with vendors, send out press releases, rally employees and alert clients to their latest and greatest promotion. The ease, low-cost and speed of e-mail in marketing is the biggest reason why our inboxes are overflowing with spam.

In response to the ubiquitous outcry "I hate spam," governments have crafted regulations surrounding the use of e-mail; and if you are one of the millions of companies using e-mail for marketing, then it's important that you familiarize yourself with these laws. But the danger doesn't stop there...

Even if you don't get caught by the feds for violating the rules of e-mail usage, you can still end up on a blacklist with the major ISPs such as Yahoo!, Gmail, GoDaddy and Earthlink. Once you get blacklisted, you are considered guilty until proven innocent, and ALL the e-mail you send to customers of those companies won't get through, **even to people who want to receive it**—a consequence that could end up hurting your business more than a fine would.

### What Are The Basic Guidelines Of E-mail Marketing?

First and foremost, make sure you are only sending e-mail campaigns to people who have solicited (requested) to be on your distribution list. This is called "opting-in" or subscribing, and e-mails sent to these folks are considered "solicited e-mail." You are perfectly within your rights to send them messages; but if you got their e-mail address by any other means and they did NOT specifically request to be on your list, that's considered "unsolicited e-mail" or spam. Sending promotional e-mails to people who have not requested might not only be illegal, but annoying...so don't do it!

Next, make sure you provide directions on how a person can remove themselves from your distribution list in EVERY e-mail. The best place to put this information is at the very bottom of your message. You should also include your full company name and contact information at the bottom so no one can blame you for cloaking your identity—another "no-no" of e-mail marketing.

### Our #1 Recommendation

Lastly, when sending e-mail out to your marketing list, we recommend using a service such as ConstantContact or iContact. These web-based applications will help you manage your e-mail distribution list with automatic opt-out and opt-in tools and will keep your e-mail server off an ISP's blacklist.

Naturally, you want to make sure the information you are sending is interesting and relevant. No one wants more junk filling up their inbox, so the better you are at marketing, the better your results will be. E-mail is not a magic marketing bullet that will solve all your marketing problems but, used correctly, it can certainly help you reach more customers and build stronger relationships with the people you already do business with.

## The Lighter Side

**PHILOSOPHY OF SPRING CLEANING**

I don't do windows because...I love birds and don't want one to run into a clean window and get hurt.

I don't wax floors because...I am terrified a guest will slip and get hurt then I'll feel terrible (plus they may sue me.)

I don't mind the dust bunnies because...They are very good company, I have named most of them, and they agree with everything I say.

I don't disturb cobwebs because I want every creature to have a home of their own.

I don't Spring Clean because...I love all the seasons and don't want the others to get jealous.

I don't pull weeds in the garden because...I don't want to get in God's way, HE is an excellent designer!

I don't put things away because...My husband will never be able to find them again.

I don't iron because...I choose to believe them when they say "Permanent Press".

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## Locking your computer - By Steve Lamarre

Locking your computer is quick and easy but most people don't even know about it. Why lock your computer? The most simple reason is to protect your private data, sensitive documents, and e-mail messages by prohibiting others in your office from using your computer account when you aren't around. Locking your computer keeps all your programs open and running but requires a password to get back in and is much faster to get back in than logging off. To lock your computer there are multiple methods but the fastest method is to use your keyboard by holding the Windows key and pressing the "L" key. You can also lock it quickly by pressing "Ctrl+Alt+Del" and selecting "Lock this computer" for Windows 7 or "Lock" for Windows 8.

Press CTRL + ALT + DELETE to unlock this computer
Mike Elia (B4NETWORKS\mike) is logged on.

Steve Lamarre
Service Coordinator

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

# Free Often Isn't As Free As You Might Think!

Ah! Getting things for Free.   We all love to get free stuff, it's human nature.   But is anything in life really FREE?

Freeware, shareware, Peer-to-Peer (P2P), and even pirated software (cracked paid software that allows you to run it illegally for free), these are probably all things we've heard of and may have even used at some point. One thing many people don't think about is how can anyone afford to provide these services for free. In most cases (not all) they can't, and don't.

When you download something for "free" such as emoticons, screen savers, a pirated copy of Office, you can unknowingly be downloading malware (including spyware, viruses and worms) that will in turn cover the cost for producing them!

Malware / spyware is a lucrative business and makes money through targeted ads, monitoring your favourite sites, silently taking over your computer, and even stealing your financial information. Consumer Reports estimated in 2010 that "cybercrime cost American consumers $4.5

billion over the past two years. And it caused them to replace 2.1 million computers." This is not including profits from email spamming.

Malware can be hidden in "free" software, movies, pictures, ebooks and more. It can also come from many other sources including hijacked websites, infected devices on your network or even downloaded by other malware that's already on your system.

Aside from the items talked about on page 1 of this newsletter, the key to preventing unwanted applications on your network is , employee education and a good Acceptable Use Policy.

Did you know?  Statistics show that 50% of employees that find a thumb drive in your company parking lot, will plug that drive in when they get to their desk. Add a company logo to the thumb drive, and that statistic goes up to 80%. A good hacker or prankster can load malware or viruses onto that drive and infect your network.

- Steve Lamarre

## Are You STILL Using Outdated Tape Backups?

If your computer network and the data it holds got erased or corrupted because of a virus, hard drive crash, fire, flood or some other random, unforeseen disaster, **how confident are you RIGHT NOW that your business could be back up and running again FAST**?

If your answer to that is, "I don't know," or "I'm not sure," you are taking a HUGE risk with your company's most important asset—the data on your network. Just imagine what would happen to your business if you lost your entire client database…

…Lost all accounting documentation and history…Lost all the work files you've spent YEARS developing…Lost the work files and documentation you so desperately need to service your customers…

**Can you even put a price tag on it?** Probably not—yet so many business owners aren't 100% certain that they could be back up and running after a disaster and are purely *hoping* that their current tape drive or backup is working and storing a usable copy of their data.

### Tape Drives Are The MOST Unreliable, Unsecured Way To Back Up Your Data

All tape drives fail; it's only a matter of "when," not "if." So if being able to get back up and running again in the event of a data-erasing disaster is important, then you need to know about our **ServerGuardian** Service.

This fool-proof backup service does more than just keep a copy of your files—it provides "continuous data protection" and enables near-instant disaster recovery because it takes a snapshot of your entire network throughout the day, giving you the confidence we could have you back up and running again within HOURS, not days or weeks.

**Want to know if your data is REALLY secure and being backed up properly?** Call us for a **FREE** Data Backup and Disaster Recovery Audit. Call us at 905.346.4966 or go online to: **www.b4networks.ca/backup-audit**

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# Client Of The Month

Founded in 2006, FENA Insurance Solutions Inc. has become a leading property and casualty insurance brokerage in the region. FENA offers innovative insurance solutions to protect consumers' businesses, commercial properties, homes, cars and Group Life & Health Plans.

With approximately 300 years of combined insurance industry experience, the FENA Insurance team helps you safeguard your hard-earned assets whether at home, work or play. They are driven to succeed and are

inspired by their belief that clients deserve the best service, value and expertise. Inspired by excellence is what makes FENA different.

In 2011 FENA Insurance was even voted #1 insurance company in Niagara voted on by the public.

If you are in search of a rewarding relationship with an insurance brokerage, you can count on FENA Insurance to make a difference.

http://www.FENAinsurance.ca

Over the years B4 Networks has helped *FENA Insurance Solutions Inc.* manage their technology needs from a small startup company, to an Insurance firm with over 18 employee's.   If you would like to know how we can help you improve your operational efficiency, increase productivity and profitability by leveraging technology, then please give us a call.

## Lachapelle Family Update

For those of you that don't know, our family has a wonderful golden retriever named Freddie.  Freddie is a really great dog, and he gets along with just about anyone, but he really loves Aiden .  Whenever Aiden is having tummy time, Freddie is right beside him, staring at him, and sometimes giving him kisses! Nate has been far more talkative lately, and just amazes me with the things he says and does.  He comes out with stuff like "You make my heart smile",  "Does the Easter bunny like me?". And now he's even a back seat driver, for example: When I do a rolling stop, he'll say  "You have to stop and count to three daddy!"

## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:
### Intel Ultrabook Convertible

The Intel-based Ultrabook Convertible is one of the most cutting-edge on-the-go laptops to date. Quite simply, it's a laptop when you need it and a tablet when you want it.

Ultrabook with touch display, using Windows 8, delivers stunning graphics and the ultimate in precision and control. And unlike an iPad or Android tablet, this convertible turns into a powerful laptop in an instant.

Additionally, models with Intel Smart Connect Technology continually update your email and social networks even when your Ultrabook is shut down. You'll wake from sleep mode in less than 7 seconds and already be completely updated so that you can resume what you were doing in the blink of an eye.

## 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