



“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!”

- Scott Phillips, Synergy Computing

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“That’s mistletoe. We like to give every passenger a chance to kiss their luggage good-bye.”

Technology Times

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

“Growing Good Corn”

There once was an old farmer who grew award-winning corn. Every year he entered his corn into the state fair and won the blue ribbon.

One year, after winning yet another competition, a young newspaper reporter requested an interview with the famer to try and uncover the famer’s secrets to his prize-winning corn. Although he expected to be turned down, the farmer welcomed the interview. He asked the old famer several questions about his techniques and then discovered something interesting about how he grew it: the reporter discovered that the farmer shared his seed corn with his neighbors!

“How can you afford to share your best seed corn with your neighbors when they are entering their corn into the same competition with yours every year?” the reporter asked. “Why sir,” said the farmer, “didn't you know? I can’t afford not to! The wind picks up pollen from the ripening corn and swirls it around from field to field. If my neighbors grow inferior corn, cross-pollination will steadily degrade the quality of my corn. If I am to grow good corn, I must help my neighbors grow good corn as well. It’s one of my secrets to success.”

The moral of the story is simple: If we are to grow “good corn” in our businesses, we must be willing to help our fellow business owners grow “good corn” too. When times are tough, it affects us all. That’s why we’ve decided to offer a FREE “Network Tune Up” to any business in Santa Barbara, Ventura, or San Luis Obispo counties during the month of December.

At no charge, we’ll send a technician onsite to conduct a complete 27-point audit of your computer network to make sure your data is secure, protected from hackers and viruses and being backed up properly. We’ll also look for ways to cut costs and save you money on hardware, software and services.

While this may not make a huge difference in any one company’s success, it’s our way of helping our neighbors “grow good corn.” To request this service, simply call or e-mail our office and ask for the “good corn” offer. There is zero cost or obligation; and if you know of someone who could use a little technical support during these tough economic times, please forward this on to them!

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month

PC On A Stick Technology

Road warriors know that packing light on business trips is a must; but one of the things you just can't leave behind is your laptop – until now...

Thanks to new "PC On A Stick" technologies, you can carry your desktop around on a simple USB device. Simply plug this specially equipped USB device into any PC and you're instantly working on what appears to be your own desktop. Unplug it, and all traces of your data vanish! Here are the top 3 options:

MojoPac: This is a free software option that enables you to "clone" or copy your desktop applications and files to a virtualized machine that will work with any USB device, be it a pen drive, iPod or external hard drive. However, it will only work with Windows XP computers and lacks encryption capabilities.

Ceedo Personal: This inexpensive software product will give you a near-perfect facsimile of your desktop on any USB device. At \$39, you'll get Windows 7 compatibility and integration with secure TrueCrypt devices.

CheckPoint Abra: Out of the three mentioned here, this is the most secure. You'll pay a bit more (\$140 to \$210) but it will give you security encrypted access to your cloned desktop.

The Shocking State Of Data Security In Small Business: Are YOU Making These Terrible Mistakes?

According to a survey of 2,100 businesses conducted by Applied Research and commissioned by Symantec, the vast majority of businesses are frequent victims of cyber attacks, data loss and non-existent backup and recovery systems. Here are just a few of the shocking facts discovered:

- 74% of the businesses surveyed were affected by cyber attacks – including hackers, viruses, worms, etc. – in the past 12 months.
- 62% had lost at least one mobile device in the last 12 months, and 100% admitted they had no password protection on these devices.
- Less than 1/3 of the devices lost had a way to wipe these lost devices clean to prevent unauthorized access to confidential data.
- 42% of businesses have lost confidential data in the last 12 months and 40% reported a direct financial loss because of this.
- 47% of those survey said they STILL do NOT backup their data!

To be perfectly blunt, this is just plain stupid and irresponsible behavior on the part of businesses who allow these attacks to happen. Even worse, it's a black eye on their PR if the confidential information is CLIENT data, such as credit card numbers, bank account information, medical records or other important identity information like social security numbers, birth dates, passwords, etc.

ALL businesses know of the threats to their computer network, be it viruses, hackers or internal employees; not taking some simple measures to protect against theft and loss of confidential data is completely foolish – not to mention expensive!

If you have any doubt whatsoever about whether you're backing up your data properly, protecting mobile devices and maintaining up-to-date firewall, patches and security updates, NOW is the time to get this fixed! Call us for a free, no-obligation consultation, and we'll be happy to review your current network security and backups to see if you truly ARE protected, or if you're more likely to end up another statistic.

FREE Tips, Resources, Reports, and Services Available To Our Clients and Friends

Your Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Please () Mail, () Fax, or () Call me immediately with the following FREE info:

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- 12 Surefire Signs Your Business is Ready for a Server and How It Will Skyrocket the Speed, Security, and Reliability of Your Computer Network.
- What Every Small Business Owner Must Know About Protecting And Preserving Their Company's Critical Data And Computer Systems
- What Every Small Business Owner Should Know About Backing Up Their Data To Get A FAST, Easy, And Economical Recovery In The Event Of A Disaster
- Ultimate Small Business Owners Guide To Setting Up A 'Work From Home' Program Or Remote Network Access
- Small Business IT Advisory Guide for Choosing an Honest Repair Guy
- Office Move Checklist
- How To Pick A Good Password

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The Lighter Side...

Heaven Knows Results

A minister dies and is in line at the Pearly Gates. Ahead of him is a guy in sunglasses, a loud shirt and jeans. The guy ahead of him says, "I'm Joseph O'Neill, taxi-driver in Noo Yawk City." Saint Peter smiles and says, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the Kingdom."

Next in line is a minister. He steps up to Saint Peter, stands erect and booms out, "I am Michael Snow, pastor of Saint Mary's for the last 43 years." Saint Peter consults his list. After a moment he says, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter."

"Just a minute!" says the minister, a bit shocked. "That man ahead of me was a taxi-driver - and he was given a silken robe and golden staff! How can this be?" Saint Peter says, "Up here, we work by results. While you preached, people slept; while he drove, people prayed."

The Tardy Bagpiper

A bagpiper was asked to play a graveside service for a man who had no family or friends. He got lost and finally arrived at the funeral site an hour late.

Rushing in, he spotted a backhoe and a crew of men eating lunch, but the hearse was nowhere in sight. Feeling guilty, he assured the workers that this was the proper thing to do and gathered them around as he poured his heart and soul into his performance. Many of the workers began to weep. When done, the bagpipe player overheard one of the workers say, "Man, I never seen nothin' like that before and I've been puttin' in septic tanks for 20 years!"

SEO Poisoning On The Rise

One of the latest tricks hackers are now using is search engine optimization to promote malware infected websites for popular search terms. This new threat is called "SEO Poisoning." In fact, at any given moment, three of the top ten search results contain at least one malicious URL within the top 70 results! Here's how it works...



Hackers use well-known search engine optimization tactics to create web sites that will rank in the top results for popular keywords. For example, the BP oil spill and World Cup keywords were riddled with these infected sites. When you click on them, you are presented with pop ups, free software downloads, fake virus warnings and other ads. If you click on anything, you're instantly infected with malware.

What makes this so dangerous is that most of us have come to trust search engine results and click on the links of web sites without question of security. Plus, hackers have learned that the more "normal" their web sites look, the easier it is to get users to trust them. To protect yourself, make sure you have up-to-date anti virus software installed. Some security companies offer a free browser plug-in that will warn you if it detects a site is a poisoned site that will harm your computer.

Client Spotlight:



The Unity Shoppe serves the low-income clients of 300 non-profit organizations, social service agencies, churches, schools and hospitals. Over 22,000 unduplicated people are referred for food, clothing, school supplies, furniture and basic necessities. Over 70,000 visits are made yearly by low-income families, children, the elderly and the disabled. We are proud to support the Unity Shoppe, and they have been a Synergy Computing client for the past 10+ years.

The **24th Annual Unity Telethon is Saturday, December 11, 2010 from 1pm to 11pm.** For more information on this great non-profit, check out their website at www.unityshoppe.org

Would you like your company highlighted here in our "Client Spotlight?" Then give us a call today at 805-967-8744 or email info@synergyinc.net.

Please note our office will be closed Friday, December 24th, and Friday, December 31st. Synergy Complete IT clients will have access to emergency support by calling the office. Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for the New Year!

Get More Free Tips, Tools, and Services At Our Web Site: www.synergyinc.net

Dirty Money? Here's What You Can Do With It...

Here's a job that belongs on the popular TV show "Dirty Jobs" with Mike Rowe: The US Treasury's job of replacing and cleaning up dirty money.

You probably didn't even know this service existed unless you have lost a lot of cash, usually through fire, flood, exposure to chemicals, rodent or insect infestation or deterioration from being buried. But each year, the Treasury exchanges unusable currency for new money. It fields about 30,000 claims and exchanges about \$30 million every year for some very relieved people.

In one case, a farmer dropped his wallet in a field and a cow ate it. He slaughtered the cow and sent its stomach to the Mutilated Currency Division. Though identifying the money was not a pleasant task, the farmer got his \$600 back in the form of a check. In another case, a dog ate a lady's money, and it ultimately came out the other end in pieces. Identifying the pieces was smelly detective work, but she got her money back, too.

Cash buried in a dry climate can petrify, making it difficult to pry apart to determine denominations. Money buried in wet climates can turn into a mass resembling oatmeal. The Treasury has tactics to identify the bills and will redeem them. Sometimes the sender has to swear an affidavit in support of their claim.

Unified Threat Management: The "Swiss Army Knife" Of Security

With all the talk about security in this issue, we wanted to let all of our clients and subscribers know about a new, more effective and lower-cost way to have a complete "do it all" security system for their networks. The techie term is "UTM" or "unified threat management." That's simply a fancy word for an all-in-one security device that does the work of your firewall, anti-virus, spam filtering and web content filter.

There are several advantages to going this route. First, simplification. Instead of having to monitor and maintain several different types of security and software, you only have one device. That makes the entire process of maintaining, managing and even updating your security far easier. You also won't have the problem of conflicts between various hardware and software devices.

If you're about to upgrade, install or add to your current line of security systems (spam, anti-virus, firewall, etc.) contact us for a free consultation on how a UTM solution may be a better option!

Who Else Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card? "Take my monthly Trivia Challenge and you could win too!"

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is...drum roll please... Elvira Avina-Martinez at the Unity Shoppe in Santa Barbara! She was the first person to correctly answer my quiz question from last month:

**What superhero's alter ego worked for newspaper publisher
J. Jonah Jameson?**

a-Green Lantern, b-Superman, c-Spider-Man, d-Daredevil

The correct answer is c, "Spider-Man." Congratulations, Elvira, you've won a \$25 Gift Card! Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive a gift card to Starbucks.

**What is the name of the main newspaper for wizards in
Harry Potter's world?**

a-Words on the Wind, b-The Owl, c-Daily Prophet, d-Wizards Weekly

Call me right now with your answer! 805-967-8744