



“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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FREE \$379 Gift!

**Remote
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Technology Times

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

How To Get Your Employees To Cheerfully Put In MORE Hours

Who doesn’t want employees that are more productive in the workplace? Yet personal issues, illness and family obligations often prevent employees from coming in. That’s why so many employers are now enabling remote access to their network.

Whether you call it “working from home,” or your “virtual office,” the idea is the same; your network is configured to give you and your staff the ability to work from some location other than the office. While most business owners and managers pulling 60 hour work-weeks love the idea of putting in some of those hours from the comfort of their home, they often fear that employees given the same luxury won’t be as productive.

However, studies have shown that employees working from home are actually far *more* productive than those who are limited to working at the office. The biggest fear is that employees will goof off and not take their job seriously; however, that fear is on the decline as more and more businesses are pursuing this (23 million and growing to be exact!)

While telecommuting will not work in every situation, there is no doubt that technology has made working from home extremely practical whether a few times a month or every week. As a matter of fact, offering work-from-home options can give you a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining the best employees. Here are some additional benefits to allowing your people remote access:

- Employees who are sick can continue to work without infecting the office or losing an entire day of work.
- Employees forced to stay home to take care of sick family members can continue to work instead of taking off long periods.
- Inclement weather or heavily congested traffic won’t shut down your office.

Shiny New Gadget of the Month



Motorola Droid Phone

Here's a quick run-down of the good, the bad, and the bottom line on this new phone.

The good: Most users of the new Motorola Droid Phone really like its display screen; fans cite the phone's large, crisp picture and vivid graphics.

The phone also has a pretty fast Web browser, (reportedly much faster than that of the Blackberry), a Google Maps Navigation app, and better messaging and contact management. With Verizon as its carrier, the Droid has very reliable service.

The bad: The QWERTY keyboard seems to be a bit awkward, especially if you don't exactly have dainty hands. Some people dislike its weight, too, since it weighs a full ounce more than its closest competitor.

Also, because the dialpad control is restricted to the home screen, driving and making a phone call is rather difficult.

Not surprisingly, music and video capabilities are not as strong as the iPod's. In addition, there's no Bluetooth voice dialing.

The bottom line: Overall, the Droid is a good smart phone with good service, useful Google maps, and a killer display screen. It's a great touch-screen upgrade from the Blackberry and gives its competition a run for the money.

- Key managers with a heavy workload will actually be more productive if given the ability to work from home on evenings and weekends.
- Allowing employees flexibility during peak workloads (eg. CPAs during tax season) makes employees happier to put in the extra hours from a home office.
- Employees with temporary or permanent disabilities can continue to be fully functional in a home environment.

How To Get Started With A Work From Home Program

While there are several options for remotely accessing your network, there are two primary ways used by most. They are:

Remote Web Workplace:

Pros: It's easy to use. This method of remote access automatically comes with most Microsoft Small Business Server software. As long as your server is configured properly, you should be able to use the remote features.

Cons: Your desktop in your office has to be turned on and functioning. Because this method actually takes over your computer, any issue with your computer that requires a physical reboot (meaning you need to be there at the machine) renders your work from home session impossible.

Virtual Private Network (VPN):

Pros: Doesn't rely on another computer in the office to work. Also, a VPN has some flexibility, since it can be set up as a hardware or software VPN.

Cons: Tends to run a little slower than remote web workplace. Basically, if you need to do a lot on your desktop PC, VPN may not be for you.

Want to find out which method is right for you? **FREE Remote Workplace Action Plan**

During the month of April, we're giving away a FREE remote workplace Action Plan development. We'll review your current situation, help you clarify what you want, discuss various options and put together an Action Plan on the most cost effective, hassle-free way to implement this in your business.

**Get Your Free Action Plan Today:
Call us now at 805-967-8744**

The Lighter Side...

Slow Down

A state police officer sees a car pattering along at 22 MPH on the highway. He turns on his lights and pulls the driver over.

Approaching the car, he notices that there are five old ladies - two in the front seat and three in the back - wide eyed and white as ghosts. The driver obviously confused, says to him, "Officer, I don't understand. I was doing exactly the speed limit! What seems to be the problem?"

"Ma'am," the officer replies, "You weren't speeding, but you should know that driving slower than the speed limit can also be a danger to other drivers."

"Slower than the speed limit? No sir, I was doing the speed limit exactly....22MPH!" the old woman says a bit proudly.

The officer, trying to contain a chuckle, explains to her that "22" was the route number, not the speed limit. A bit embarrassed, the woman grinned and thanked the officer for pointing out her error.

"But before I let you go, Ma'am, I have to ask...Is everyone in this car ok? You all look a bit shaken."

"Oh, they'll be alright in a minute, officer. We just got off Route 119."



"You didn't hear it from me, but the other hares in the office think you're getting your work done too quickly."

Could Buying A Computer Actually Increase Your Cash Flow?

Buying a new computer isn't cheap. Sure, the computer itself is pretty inexpensive, but then you have to purchase software and peripherals. Before you know it, you've tied up at least \$1,200 of your cash on the thing. Then there's the labor to install it. If you're not under an all-inclusive type of IT service plan, the labor could run you a few hundred dollars more. Of course, the situation worsens when you have more than one system to replace.

What's A Business Owner To Do?

Until recently, if you needed a new computer right away, but didn't want to tie up your cash, your only option was to lease it. Not anymore. The recent credit crunch took the option of leasing new equipment off the table for many businesses. This means that you either have to part with the cash, or forgo the new technology you need.

"Hardware as a service," otherwise known as "HaaS" is a new way business owners can gain financial benefits and peace of mind when purchasing computers, servers, and network equipment.

Like businesses who lease their computer equipment, HaaS customers also pay monthly for their infrastructure. This allows them to keep more cash in their pocket and gives them the tax advantage of converting a typical capital expense into an operational expense. But unlike leasing, HaaS can also alleviate computer headaches in these 3 ways:

1) No More Expensive Surprise Upgrades. If your computers or server don't meet the minimum hardware requirements when your line of business software releases an upgrade, you could be forced to lay out thousands of dollars that weren't in your budget. With HaaS, your computers are automatically replaced with new ones every 3-4 years, ensuring compatibility with almost any software refresh.

2) Dealing With Warranties Are A Thing of The Past. With a HaaS program, you get your equipment AND the service included in the monthly cost. Anything that goes wrong with the computer (like the inevitable computer crash just days after your warranty expires), is the provider's problem to resolve. Plus, since HaaS computers are replaced regularly by your provider, you don't have to settle for refurbished parts or old computers for very long.

3) One Easy To Understand Invoice. Simpler is better. Instead of receiving different invoices for hardware and labor, a HaaS plan means you get one invoice for virtually all your IT needs, giving you a truer budget number for IT related expenses. Think of it like this: Purchasing your computers with a HaaS program is like having a condo. You get control of what goes in it, yet you don't have to worry about maintenance, building code issues, or updating the façade. Plus all your services and amenities are included in just one monthly fee.

Want new computers without the big upfront outlay of cash?

Call us today to learn more about HaaS and find out if it's right for you.

805-967-8744 or e-mail us at info@synergyinc.net

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

Protect Your Kids Online For Under \$30

Nearly 90% of 8-16 year olds have seen inappropriate images online. Most of them stumble upon it as a result of conducting research for their homework. With frightening numbers of pornography, child predators, and other harmful online risks, protecting your children's online activity is a MUST.

With the following 4 features, Net Nanny Parental Controls software by ContentWatch (\$29 at www.hermanstreet.com) helps you do just that.

1. Blocks "Mature" Games. The software scans the online game for its ESRB ratings (like movie ratings, but for computer games). If the game isn't kid-friendly, the computer blocks it.

2. Filters Facebook. Net Nanny can provide parents with a report on who their kids' "friends" are, what pictures and videos they are looking at, and their Facebook Instant Message conversations.

3. Prevents Proxy Sites From Working. Content filters work by making a "blacklist" of sites that it won't allow. If you tried to type in a blacklisted website address, you wouldn't get very far. But there's a sneaky way around this called a "Proxy Server."

Proxy Server web addresses are usually content neutral, so users can go there without flagging the blacklist system. Once in, your child can navigate to their original blacklisted site. Net Nanny prevents this by blocking both proxy server entries and the inappropriate website itself.

4. Keeps Parents Informed. If your child is trying to gain access to something you have blocked, Net Nanny sends you an e-mail alert.

Proper Disposal of All Things Electronic

As much as you'd like to, it's really not safe to just throw away old computers, network equipment, or any electronics like TV's, cell phones, and DVD players. If disposed of improperly, these items contain toxic chemicals, like arsenic and mercury that can harm the environment. How do you dispose of these things properly? Check out these two tips:

1. Reuse. This is the most environmentally friendly of the disposal methods. Find another use for your old equipment. For example, you might be able to use an old PC as a firewall, run a basic program like an older voicemail system, or make it a toy for your kids or grand-kids to beat up.

2. E-cycle. Some major retailers, like Best Buy and Dell, offer recycling programs for computers and home electronics. If it's your cell phone you are looking to get rid of, you can find a local program by going to www.earth911.org or www.mygreenelectronics.org

Client Spotlight: Cutting Edge Hair & Body Salon

Cutting Edge had recently launched their website when they turned to us to help with some of the final setup. They also needed a way to keep in touch with their clients to let them know about monthly specials and new service offerings. Synergy Computing helped them get setup with Constant Contact. Stop by their website and sign up for their newsletter!

Would you like your company highlighted here in our "Client Spotlight?" Then give us a call today at 805-967-8744

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... Michelle Greene of Goleta! She was the first person to correctly answer my quiz question from last month: **The term "druid" comes from the Celtic for an expert on what tree?**

a) Oak b) Birch c) Cherry d) Apple

Congratulations Michelle, you've won a \$25 Starbucks Gift Card! Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive a gift card to Blenders In The Grass.

Who was the first female LPGA golfer to amass \$1 million in her career?

a) Kathy Whitworth b) Juli Inkster c) Jan Stephenson d) Amy Alcott

Call me right now with your answer!

805-967-8744

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