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## Upcoming Events

### Sneak Peek Windows 7

Due to the overwhelming response, we have added a second session!

Join us for a Sneak Peek at Windows 7. Learn about some of the new features and benefits:

- Improved taskbar
- Enhanced Security
- Faster performance
- Reduced interruptions for alerts and prompts

Date: Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2009

Time: 1:30pm -4:30pm

To register:

Email - [register@ctaccess.com](mailto:register@ctaccess.com)

Call - 262-789-8210

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## THE DIGITAL DELUGE



**Scott  
Hirschfeld**

**Remember when, returning a phone call could wait a day, or sometimes two? Or, do you remember when documents had to be sent via mail or dropped off in person? Maybe you remember a time when you created a list of items to discuss at your next meeting, rather than firing off an email with each thought. Possibly, you can recall a time when your kids watched TV or even played outdoors, instead of spending their evening texting or Facebooking.**

Yes, it is with some sentiment that one looks back on the "good ole days" of only a few years ago. While I realize that those days were not really idyllic, sometimes a little slower pace does seem attractive. Oh for the days when technology was not attached at the hip! At times, it seems the whole world is on fast forward, trying to satisfy the appetite to have it all now.

Ok, I have to admit, that I am probably just as bad as most. I have a Facebook, Plaxo, Linked-In, Twitter, Email, Smartphone, and more. I can "tweet" with the best and update my Facebook status simultaneously. I can text in my status to Linked-In, and even login to the office from my Smartphone. I can get to my work schedule in three different ways, and can get on Internet from my laptop through a myriad of connections,

depending on my location. I even had a lady get really peeved at me the other day because she could see me reading emails while driving, something I vow not to do again unless ... I just really need to. I also have to admit that I have experienced the twitch. You know the feeling, that involuntary twitch of the arm to draw the phone from ones pocket and look for no good reason, just because something interesting or valuable might be flashing on the screen.

I think many of you can identify, at least to some degree. Studies show those of us with the need for digital input are increasing. Does the increased flow of information really help? I think the answer is a qualified "yes". Information is good. How we manage it is critical. Here are a few tips from my own personal list!

**1. Don't be an impulsive emailer.** Almost every time I fire off that impulsive email because I am fired up about something I regret it. Give yourself time to review the email before sending, particularly if you feel your ire rising as you write. Don't email what you wouldn't say in a face to face conversation.

**2. Gauge response time.** I struggle with this often. I want a response now. I find myself poised to fire off another email, and then realize when I look at my



“Sent Items” that I just emailed about the same item a few minutes ago, and just maybe I should give the recipient a little more time to respond. If it can't wait, sometimes the phone is a better way to resolve the issue.

**3. Make a list.** Sometimes it is best to create a list and review it over the phone or in person. If you have an upcoming meeting, or can contact the person by phone and work through the list, you get the gratification of getting the whole issue resolved without going back and forth and things falling through the cracks. If there are more than two items up for discussion, sometimes a list and phone call or meeting is more efficient.

**4. Recognize different personalities.** Some people work well by email and some don't. A good rule of thumb is to respond in kind. If the person calls, try to reach them by phone. If you can't reach them, then maybe an email is in order.

**5. Set expectations.** If it is an urgent matter, be sure and let the recipient of your communication know what your timeframe is. When do you need to hear from them on this matter? How would you like to hear back?

**6. Instant message and text with care.** Instant messaging and texting are tempting because they are instant, but there are a few problems. First, often there is no history, and no easy way to set a reminder. Second, because they are so instant, there often is not a chance to think a response through. Since the communication is non-verbal, how you say things is very important and often does not carry through in this form of communication.

**7. Don't cry wolf.** Don't use those exclamation points, urgent flags, and CAPITAL LETTERS unless you really mean it and time is of the essence. You may just be raising someone's stress level unnecessarily on the other end. Save these tactics for when you really need them.

**8. Reply with a status.** Let others know you have received their communication and will get back to them in a certain timeframe, and then schedule it and meet it. Sometimes just the absence of knowing the communication has been received creates concern.

**9. Be responsible and don't put off commitments.** This translates to digital communication and to the normal kind. Do what you say you are going to do and if you can't for some reason, let others know.

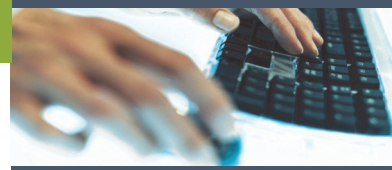
**10. Learn the art of gently nudging.** I know at least one person who is very good at this. Those around us are all very busy, so assume that they want to respond to your request and have just lost track. Nudging gently with an email or communication is sometimes more effective than shouting loudly.

**11. Set boundaries for yourself.** Protect your down-time. Protect family time. I think this is increasingly important as we have become so connected. Consider turning off that work cell phone on vacation or weekends if at all possible. Consider having someone else monitor your work email while you are gone. Discipline yourself to only check that work email when you are working, and not during family and personal time. Usually there is nothing you can do until the next day at work anyway.

It is a digital world, and it is not going away. Here's to using digital communication to our advantage and using it well! Gotta go... emails are accumulating fast and I need to update my Twitter status!

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*Scott Hirschfeld is Vice President of CTAccess/Computer Technologies of Wisconsin and appreciates your comment or ideas on how to manage the digital deluge. You can reach him at [scotth@ctaccess.com](mailto:scotth@ctaccess.com).*



## EYE ON IT Current Industry Trends

SmartPhones are not new technology, but they continue to evolve with every new release. The iPhone has shaken up the industry since it was first released in 2007. Why? Mostly because of the easy to use platform and the great apps. The iPhone comes with email, GPS powered Google Maps, text and multimedia messaging. Did I mention up to 32GB of storage? Plus the availability and ease of add-on apps from games to managing money and from fitness to recipes and books to read. It is like three devices in one: a mobile phone, an iPod and an internet device. It seems there isn't anything you can't do with an iPhone.

## SOFTWARE Monthly Picks



Can you think & talk faster than you can type? Voice dictation software like Dragon NaturallySpeaking could help you increase your personal productivity. You can write emails, create spreadsheets and automate repetitive tasks, like opening and closing programs or applications, all by just talking to your pc. Check it out at [www.nuance.com/talk](http://www.nuance.com/talk).

## Cool Tools

### Google Picasa

There are a myriad of tools for managing photos and photo formats. One that is worth mentioning is Google's Picasa. It is a free tool that lets you organize and share your photos with friends and family. It also has advanced tools for reading many formats and editing your photos to get rid of

that nasty red-eye. Sometimes with just one click. You can use Picasa to design and print photo collages and slideshows. Picasa web albums allow up to 1GB of free storage. Download Picasa at : <http://picasa.google.com/thanks.html>

