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Upcoming Events CT Laserfiche User Training

Join us for CT Laserfiche User
Training via the web.

Basic User Training

- What is Laserfiche?
- Organizing and Retrieving
- Processing and indexing
- Viewing and printing

Date: Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Time: 10:00am - 11:00am

Advance User Training

- Advanced scanning
- Batch Scanning & Processing
- Import & Export
- Template Creation
- Customized Toolbars
- Keyboard shortcuts

Date: Wednesday, July 20, 2011

Time: 10:00am - 11:00am

To register:

Email - register@ctaccess.com

Call - 262-789-8210

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740 Pilgrim Parkway L3
Elm Grove, WI 53122
262-789-8210 ph
262-789-7356 fax

IF IT AIN'T BROKE FIX IT



**Scott
Hirschfeld**

The IT world has changed in so many ways, since the old days of the PC network. I started working at Computer Technologies in January of 1992. When I first started working for my father-in-law, Gary, the latest PC technology was the 386, and we still worked on many XT systems. Most units had little or no hard disk, and the memory was measured in KB instead of GB. Remember the old 5.25" truly floppy disks?

The old adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it", seems logical. Back in the old days of Novell before Internet connectivity, we even followed it to some degree. Despite its seeming logic, this advice really does not have any play relative to management of business technology.

As we all know, the biggest factor that changed the world of technology was the Internet. Our connected world has opened up a wealth of new abilities with email, VPNs, remote connectivity and all that comes with the worldwide network. Along with the benefits have come risks and these risks are the biggest reason that proactivity is key to effective IT management.

Unfortunately, all too often organizations are

still managing their network reactively with little or no proactive maintenance. So what are the important factors in proactively maintaining your network?


Patch Management

We are all familiar with the Microsoft updates that often want to load on our workstations and ask us if we want to reboot. This is an annoyance on our home PC. In the corporate environment, it very frustrating for users and often gets turned off, keeping updates from loading at all. These updates may seem useless, but they are important for two reasons. First, statistics say that around 70% of viruses/spyware are blocked when the latest updates are loaded. Second, important bug fixes for both Windows and Office products are included in these patches. Having a centrally managed approach to loading these patches weekly is essential to keeping employees productive and your network secure.

Anti-virus/Anti-spyware

It goes without saying, but you need a solution to block malicious code. It is definitely a must to have it on the workstations and servers, and also a good idea to have a gateway solution in place that blocks it at the entry-point to your network.





These protections are only good if kept up-to-date. Good IT management makes sure that updates occur automatically, and also insures that manual updates that come out periodically from the vendor get loaded. This is essential to stay secure, and to keep the speed of the PC up to par as speed issues are most often caused by hidden spyware.

PC Optimization

PCs slow down over time. We have all seen this happen. However, it is not the hardware that slows down. It is generally the operating system and the software that slows. By instituting a regular management policy to defragment the hard drive once a month and cleanup the non-essential temporary files that are generated during the course of using the computer, the speed at which the computer operates, and the speed at which employees can do their work is increased. Leaving this undone insures that the PC will slow the user down and ultimately cost your organization money.

Inventory and Cycle

It is quite common for a growing business to lose track of who has what computer, how old it is, and when it should be replaced. Tracking computer hardware, purchase date, and creating a schedule for replacement has a huge impact on improving the productivity of your employees. Without a planned replacement schedule, we either wait until someone complains about speed, or until a failure occurs. Either of these issues causes costly downtime. Plus, some people just aren't the complaining type, and they put up with a slow machine for years. The cost of a productive employee losing 10 to 30 minutes a day while waiting for a PC is huge if you multiply thing out, not to mention that fact that it creates bad morale. The added benefit of creating a replacement schedule is knowing your yearly budget!

Monitoring

Certain critical business functions should be monitored. Backups are one of these critical items. Backups require daily attention to insure that they are successful. And, if the log indicates a failure, there is some need to identify whether that logged error is critical or not, and if additional attention is needed. Good strategy insures that backups are monitored closely. Other critical items like disk space on the server should be monitored. By monitoring disk usage and taking action at a certain threshold, data corruption and expensive downtime can be avoided.

Documentation

When operating in reactive mode, documentation is often left undone. The focus is on solving problems that users are having. Being proactive brings about some discipline to documenting how certain problems are solved. In addition, documenting things like network layout, IP addressing, domain registration, software licensing, new PC rollout procedures, security policy, passwords, firewall rules, and more is essential. This documentation provides stability and insures that the technical knowledge is not lost or that the organization is not held hostage, because it lies in the hands of only one individual.

Being proactive with technology has become essential in today's world. If your technology management strategy is still focused on problem resolution and does not spend much time on these six items, I would urge you to consider becoming more proactive. If you would like to discuss proactive solutions, please contact me and ask about our Complete Care offering

Your feedback is welcome! Contact me at scotth@ctaccess.com or call 262-789-8210.

EYE ON IT Industry Trends

Microsoft Office 365

Microsoft's latest Cloud offering, Office 365 is set to launch this month. Office 365 is an alternative for business customers to the traditional Microsoft desktop and server products. It is sold as a subscription service with guaranteed 99.9% uptime.

Office 365 includes Exchange Online, Office Web Apps, SharePoint Online, Lync Online, Forefront and Office Professional Plus. Office Web Apps are the online companions to Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote. You can view and edit documents from your web browser. Lync Online includes instant messaging, video calling and online meetings. Office 365 integrates with Office 2010 and Office 2007.

The entry level subscription of Office 365 is \$6 per user per month and includes email, calendar, Office Web Apps, SharePoint Online, IM and online meetings. Small business plans can be setup for up to 25 users.

Office 365 for Enterprise is available with a few more options, including Microsoft Forefront and Office Professional Plus, as well as advanced archiving capabilities for \$10 - \$27 per user per month.