



Innovations

Review Twice, Implement Once. Doing IT Right the First Time. • January 2016

The Lighter Side....

Punography

I tried to catch some Fog. I mist.

When chemists die, they barium.

Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.

A soldier who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.

I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid. He says he can stop anytime.

How does Moses make his tea?
Hebrews it.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Than it dawned on me.

This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I can't put it down.

I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.

They told me I had type A blood, but it was a Type O.

A dyslexic man walks into a bra.

PMS jokes aren't funny. Period.

Class trip to the Coca-Cola factory. I hope there's no pop quiz.

I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.

How do you make holy water? Boil the hell out of it!

What do you call a dinosaur with a extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.

What does a clock do when it's hungry? It goes back four seconds.

Cloud Computing And Your Company: What You Need To Know

Like it or not, cloud computing is coming to your industry. The question is, will you happily be an early adopter of this technology or be frozen by indecision?

Here are some answers to questions you may have about how to best take advantage of this new and sometimes paralyzing technology.

Just what exactly is "the cloud"?

The cloud is simply storing and/or accessing data and programs over the Internet - rather than using a computer's hard drive. Simply put, the cloud is a metaphor for the Internet. Due to increases in technology, the cloud is a super-efficient and reliable data processing, storage and delivery system.

Why migrate to the cloud?

The cloud can integrate online apps for marketing, human resources, customer service and more, enabling faster scaling, growth and flexibility for your organization.

As with your electric bill, you pay only for the capacity you use, thus reducing your capital expenditures as well as ongoing expenses. It also allows instant access from any device and easy backup capabilities.

What about data security?

While there are risks in sending your data to the cloud, one way to protect it is to select a data security system that encrypts the data at the file level before it leaves your network.

So, is the cloud for you?

There's a lot to like about the cloud, yet we've just scratched the surface in this article. If you have more questions or would like help putting together your cloud strategy, call us at (847) 551-4626.

The Communications is Like Manufacturing Theory

Instead of the old “push” model—making as many products as the equipment had capacity for—manufacturers now use a “pull” model—creating demand for their products and then making the right number of them. Effective communication focuses on the other party and creates an interest in receiving information (pull), rather than the communicator shoving out more data (push).

You don’t have to look far for abuses of this one. The email thread that started two years ago and is still bouncing around with no resolution—because it’s so easy to hit “reply” and “forward” without thinking. The nearly daily e-newsletters you receive from people you don’t remember ever meeting. The analytical personality who sends you volumes of information on a topic because he truly believes “more is better.”

No wonder we’re all on information overload! It seems too few people are thinking about what we *need* versus what *they want us to do*.

It’s up to us to break this cycle. Here are some questions to keep us from being part of the problem.

Tip #1: Is this Communication Necessary?

In general, we default to wanting to share information. But we need to take that extra second to think about what the people we’re trying to reach really want from us. If it’s that analytical guy mentioned earlier: he can hardly wait until you send more data, so go ahead! But what if it’s someone who already received hundreds of emails a day—and is unhappy about it?

Do we need to send the email with a bit of information this morning, another with some more this afternoon, and a third tidbit tomorrow morning? Sometimes it’s better to wait until you have it all and can send just one. Why risk annoying the person you’re trying to reach?

Tip #2: Is this the Best Way to Communicate?

Back to that endless email—like those mythical fruitcakes at the holidays that circle the globe. One of the main reasons this happens is no one picks up the phone and has a five-minute conversation—or even worse, people won’t walk down the hall and poke their heads into someone’s office for a quick decision. Ask what’s the *most efficient* way to get something done—rather than what’s the *easiest way* for you—and take that approach.

Tip #3: Am I Really Adding Value?

This is my beef about e-newsletters. I understand the theory: provide some good information to showcase the value my company offers, which encourages potential customers to contact me. But most of the ones I see seem to scream “me, Me, ME!”

They may begin with a chit-chatty tidbit about what the author has been up to lately. They may follow up with a project they just completed, which they thought was interesting (so you should, too). They may give you platitudes about your industry to show they know it (aren’t you tired of reading about “what you can do in a difficult economy”—which begins with hiring their firm?).

The best ones—and the only ones anyone really reads—are the e-newsletters that give us ideas we can use to make improvements right away. So when you’re doing this, put the value up front—and save the happy talk about your latest holiday for a Twitter or Facebook posting.

As long as I borrowed from the evolution of manufacturing to make a point, let me take a page from science, too. “Just because we can do something doesn’t mean we should.” By showing respect for the needs of the people you’re trying to reach, you will earn theirs. This increases the chance they’ll take or return your call and actually read the emails you send.



Lynne Franklin is a corporate and marketing communications consultant and speaker. What she does best is create meaningful communications to help businesspeople solve their problems and get what they want. To learn about how she can help you, contact Lynne at 847-729-5716 or lynne@yourwordsmith.com

Upgrading To Windows 10? Avoid Headaches, Downtime And Frustrations

For the past few months, we've been swamped with questions about Windows 10. If you're wondering whether now is the best time to upgrade your system, here's what you need to know:

First and foremost, if your organization relies on your computers in any way to make money or save lives, consider the risks carefully.

As with any software upgrade - but especially your computer's operating system - you've got to weigh the advantages of upgrading now against potential downtime if there are problems with the new code.

A good rule of thumb regarding any operating-system upgrade is to wait six months after the product release before deploying it into any system or group of systems that your business depends on.

Since January 29 marks six months since the Windows 10 official release date, it's a good time to look at whether it's wiser to upgrade now or wait for further fixes and improvements.

That being said, here are a few of the key questions we've been fielding - and pitfalls to avoid:

Q. It's free for a "limited time" - don't I have to act now?

No. You have until July 2016 to take advantage of the free upgrade. And, if your system hasn't prompted you to upgrade yet, you'll need to wait. If and when your system is deemed capable of adapting to the upgrade, your current Windows OS will notify you. Either way, you have until July 28, 2016. If you do plan to upgrade, we strongly advise that you get it done well before that date, in order to avoid any last-minute scrambling.

Q. It's better and/or faster, right?

Maybe... It depends. Here's what we're seeing:

Windows 10 radically changes how your system operates, compared to Windows 7. While some computers make the change with no problem at all, it can cause older systems to lose key hardware drivers (like networking or printing), rendering them an "instant brick."

Some systems, even those certified by their manufacturers as "Windows 10 ready," start misbehaving after being upgraded. That means undue downtime while you reinstall or upgrade MS Office or other software - or even revert back to your older OS.

Some older systems actually run slower on Windows 10 than on Windows 7 or 8.1.

Q. Will my computer work with Windows 10?

Age is probably the biggest factor for any Windows-based device. Anything older than three years is not worth upgrading. At three years old, your machine is nearing the end of its useful life. You are better off leaving the old operating system in place and waiting for Windows 10 until you upgrade to a new computer.

Q. I've heard Windows 10 transmits all of your personal information to Microsoft. Is this true?

This is true, unless you opt out of some of the most attractive features, such as the MS Store and Cortana, the voice-controlled virtual assistant. According to Windows 10 terms of service, Microsoft can: "access, disclose and preserve personal data, including your content (such as the content of your emails, other private communications or files in private folders), when we have a good faith belief that doing so is necessary to protect our customers or enforce the terms governing the use of the services."

If you decide that giving that kind of control of your personal and business data to Microsoft is not in your best interest, you can still install Windows 10; just call us and we'll help you adjust the settings to keep all your information from being sent to Microsoft.

Q. We use some custom software here. Will it run on Windows 10?

Until your custom software vendor blesses Windows 10 for that program, the answer is no. In all cases, we advise against upgrading to Windows 10 until your custom programs are 100% fully vetted, compatible and supported for it.

Deciding when to upgrade to Windows 10 isn't as simple as Microsoft and some pundits would have you believe. But if you know the pitfalls we've laid out for you here in advance, you've at least got a fighting chance for a smooth, headache-free transition.

Want help setting a target date and plan for your business to upgrade to Windows 10?

Call us at 847-551-4626 or e-mail us at support@bssi2.com to schedule a Windows 10 Readiness Assessment.

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computer problems go away
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Shiny New Gadget of the Month

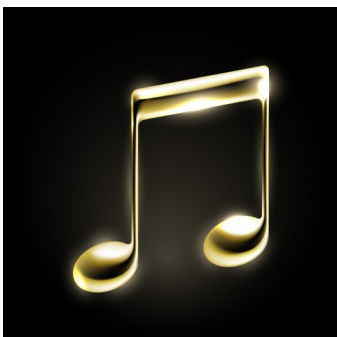
**Who Else Wants
A Little Music With
Their Light?**

The next time you replace a lightbulb, you can now pick one that will stream your favorite music and light up your life in your choice of over 16,000 colors, all with a tap on your phone.

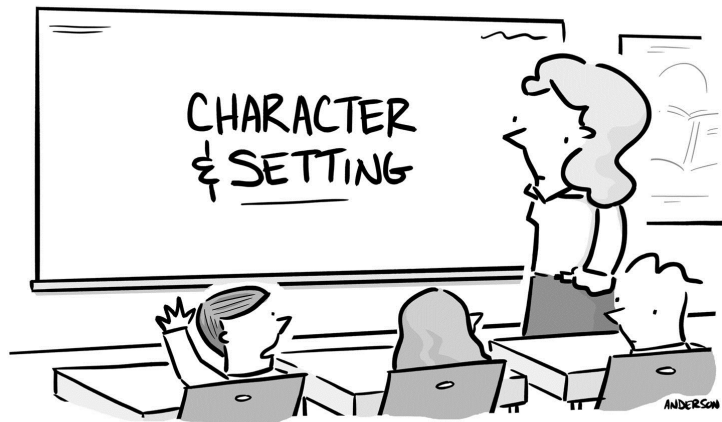
In case you haven't noticed, some LED bulbs now include a Bluetooth- or Wi-Fi-controlled speaker. And at least one, the MagicLight® Plus, available on Amazon, also lets you pick a light color to suit your mood.

At anywhere from \$15 to \$129 or more, these bulbs can add music - and light - throughout your home or office in a matter of minutes, at a fraction of the cost of a wired-in sound system.

How's the sound quality? It depends on the one you select. And it may not resonate like Carnegie Hall live...but hey, it's a lightbulb - what did you expect?



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