



Innovations

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

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The Lighter Side....

After every flight, UPS pilots fill out a form, called a "gripe sheet" which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems, document their repairs on the form, then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight.

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humor. Here are actual maintenance complaints submitted by UPS pilots ("P") and solutions recorded ("S") by maintenance engineers:

P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.
S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.
S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit
S: Something tightened in cockpit

P: Dead bugs on windshield.
S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent
S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.
S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny.

S: Aircraft warned to: straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.

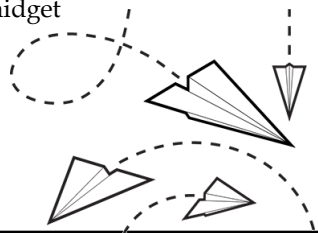
S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from midget



Skype versus Skype for Business

By Nick Espinosa

No one will deny that the app integration Skype for Business has is very nice, not to mention the 250 user count, but most companies do not need to make the jump from Skype.

BSSi2 has seen no real difference in terms of quality when it comes to Skype versus Skype for Business. After all you're only as fast as your slowest connection and those slow connections will ruin video for that user.

Most meetings are small group meetings, even in large companies. Truthfully, the only benefit we've seen is being able to add more than 20 users to the call. The app integration is nice but most everyone I know of on Skype has the program running on their desktop or mobile phone 24/7 and the IM feature is used by few (usually receptionists letting someone in a meeting know they have a call). Unless a large corporation is throwing a town hall level meeting, Skype for Business does not appear to be worth the money and most town hall level meetings usually have well over 250 people attending.

The only real drawback to the free version of Skype is that Microsoft will not guarantee Quality of Service (QoS) on the call, though it's very rare we've seen a call suddenly drop. Usually the problem is a video performance issue and that stems not from Microsoft but from the remote caller. If a caller is sharing a 1 megabit internet connection in a hotel, or has a connection with poor latency, then they can't possibly expect to see a perfect HD video broadcast or see everyone else in the call the same way.

Skype works well and spending potentially hundreds to thousands a year for Skype for Business is not needed.

The Words Make Bad Lovers Theory

If you fall in love with a turn of phrase you've created, you won't want to change it—even when you should. You'll make the words around it do backbends so you can keep it. Reviewers will be uncannily drawn to your phrase and try to change it. And you will react out of proportion to their criticism, which could leave you

It's that phrase or sentence or paragraph you think really shines. You smile every time you read it – and congratulate yourself on the moment of inspiration that led you to create it. Then why in the world is everyone who reads it trying to change it?

It's up to us to break this cycle. Here are some questions to consider ensuring we're not part of the problem.

Tip #1: Whose Purpose Does It Serve?

Does our deathless prose actually help readers understand the point we're making – or is its point to make us look good?

Let's be honest: anyone who writes something for others must have a bit of an ego – otherwise she wouldn't be *able* to write. But let's keep the emphasis on "bit of" rather than "an ego." It's quaint to read Victorian novels that address us as "dear reader," reminding us that the author has an active role in what we're reading. However, it's death to a communication or piece that's meant to persuade when our writerly fingerprints smear the important points.

Tip #2: Do Others' Suggestions Improve What We've Written?

This is perhaps the best test of the amount of ego in your writing. Spend that extra second asking, "What will my readers better understand: my presentation or the new one?" And if it's the new one, make the change. (Then find a way to work your beloved phrase

into a conversation with friends who will appreciate it.) When your purpose is to communicate with others, their needs trump yours.

Sometimes the suggestion doesn't improve the text, and your approach is the better solution – then keep it. Some people don't believe they've done their job unless they change something they're reviewing, so know when this is happening to you.

Tip #3: Don't Argue about It.

If you are (inwardly) jutting out your jaw as you explain to someone why your words are better than theirs, then you've already lost the battle. There's no way you can come off as anything but defensive or egotistical – calling your credibility into question. It's just not worth it. Over your career, you'll create many wonderful communications – if you don't antagonize the people who pay you to do this. Live to write another day.

OK, I'll fess up. I liked the "writerly fingerprints smear the important points" line. What do you think: did it improve this piece or should I change it?



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

Microsoft Outlook for iOS and Android – Worth a try?

The new Outlook for iOS and Android connects e-mail accounts, calendars and files all in one place. So what's the verdict from users? It gets mixed reviews, for an average of 3.5 out of 5 stars on Google Play. On the plus side, it's got a lean, easy-to-use UI. It sorts incoming e-mail by "Focus" and "Other" with an easy-to-use swipe gesture to move between the two. The scheduler uses color-coding and grays out info you don't need. On the minus side, some users report syncing and sign-in errors and incompatibility with certain systems. Still, once the bugs are worked out, it's certainly worth a test drive. *-Computer World, 10.29.15*

A Backup Plan You're Sure To Fall In Love With

In today's fast-paced, data-driven world, backups are mission critical to your company's survival and success.

Yet your data may be just one damaged drive, lost laptop, natural disaster, accidental deletion, malware attack, equipment failure, power spike or petty theft away from a profit-sucking, heartbreaking disaster.

So what measures must you take to keep your data safe, secure and where you need it, when you need it? While there's no one-size-fits-all-guns silver bullet, there are some general principles to be aware of.

Image-Based Backups

An image-based backup or "clone" serves like the spare tire for your car. If you get a flat, the spare will get you to a tire shop.

If the hard drive on any device in the network goes kablooy and its user is in a time crunch to complete a project, an image-based backup allows them to get right back to where they were. It saves all files, apps and settings that were on that device, exactly the way they were at the time of the last backup. And generally, that means the user can get right back to work with no need to reconfigure everything all over again.

But, just as a spare tire isn't designed for long road trips, an image-based backup may not perform as well as the original drive. It may, for instance, take a little longer to access data from the server, slowing down user workflow.

An image-based backup will be useful only to the extent that it has backed up data recently. For servers, daily or even multiple backups per day are recommended.

Archive Backups

Archive backups don't replace image-based backups, but are an efficient way to reduce the size of these backups because they take less-frequently-used data off the main computer or server.

You can't reboot from an archive, but if you've accidentally deleted a file, you can retrieve it from an archive. If any device on the network goes down, you can simply plug the external hard drive into another computer and regain access

to the archived files.

Cloud Backup

Backing up to the cloud can serve as an alternative to a rotating off-site backup and eliminates the human component of having to remember to rotate drives. However, for complete protection, you'll want a cloud backup that makes a nightly copy of the image-based backup files. Should the absolute worst happen, the cloud backup image can be "spun up," allowing access to your applications and data using just about any computer or tablet.

Automated cloud backup systems offer a variety of feature sets. Some only back up files, while others back up entire image-based backups and can even spin them up. Select a system that's simple, continual, fast, secure, easy to restore from, inclusive of different devices and operating systems, cost-efficient and, most importantly, provides the kind of protection and redundancy you need for your operation to run even if things go south.

A Fail-Safe System

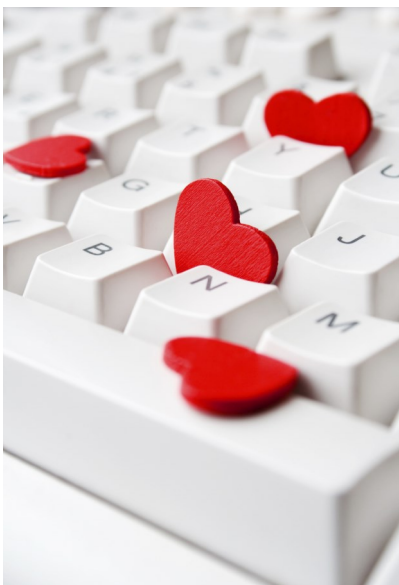
So, can you rest assured that your company's backup system is built to minimize downtime in the event of data loss or equipment failure?

If you're 100% certain you can answer yes, congratulations – you are one of the few! If not, NOW is the time to take action – rather than after you wish you

had.

Not only is our image backup solution highly affordable, it continuously backs up your entire server and/or computers – including open files – as frequently as you want (we have some clients doing backups every 15 minutes), so you'll never lose a whole day's work. Then, every night, it automatically backs up a snapshot of your entire server to an off-site military-grade data center where it's held safe and secure until you need it.

Don't put this off another minute! Contact us right now for a Backup System Audit. Let us make sure your backup system never lets you down. We can fix broken computers but a broken heart is another thing entirely.



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Shiny New Gadget of the Month

***Keeps You In Touch,
Could Save Your Life***

If you fly often for business, a satellite messenger may be just the thing to stay in the cloud when you're above the clouds. And if your travels for fun take you into the wild, it could literally be a lifesaver.

Just ask retired Houston firefighter Michael Herrera. After breaking three ribs and his collarbone in a hard fall from his dual-sport bike in a remote area in Alabama, he hit the SOS button on his messenger. Within 40 minutes an ATV was on hand to transport him to a trauma center.

Features to look for in a satellite messenger include data speed, battery life, coverage areas, size, weight and ease of use.

And, of course, an SOS button.



**Claim your
FREE Network Assessment today!**

Feel like your computer is out of gas? Having network issues that are delaying your daily operations? Give our IT professionals a call today for your FREE Network Assessment. We will inventory your current technology, check network security, review your back-up solution and deliver a report including outstanding issues and possible solutions. It's amazing how a simple review of your current operations can reveal cost and time saving opportunities.

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