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## Festive Greetings from Invisik!

**NOVEMBER** always feels like the shortest month of the year. I know February has the shortest numbers of days, but between all the festivities and the anticipation of year-end in December, it just never feels like there are enough days in November. If this rings a bell with you, too, and you have tons of Fourth Quarter IT Tasks still left to complete, give us a call to get on the schedule or to start planning for 2012.

We continue our series this month with part two of our discussion regarding the return on investment of technology implementation. Our thanks to the many of you who have responded kindly to last month's introductory piece, and we hope you will continue to follow the series through the final part next month. And of course, give me a call if this topic stirs any questions you may have about your own IT infrastructure.

Last but not least, congratulations to Margaret Benson of Benson Accounting in Eagan. She is October's Invisik Trivia Bowl winner with the first correct response: B. 1985. This month's prize is a gift card to Subway, and it can be yours if you are the first to correctly answer the Trivia Bowl question. Email your answer to [trivia@invisik.com](mailto:trivia@invisik.com) or call 612-298-3000.

Good networking,

*Matt Jurcich*

Matt Jurcich, President  
Invisik Corporation

## INVISIK TRIVIA BOWL

Which great American statesman preferred the wild turkey rather than the bald eagle to be the national symbol?

- A. Thomas Jefferson
- B. George Washington
- C. Benjamin Franklin
- D. Samuel Adams

Did you know? The first Thanksgiving Day Parade was held in 1920 by Gimbel's Department Store— four years earlier than their biggest rival's, Macy's.

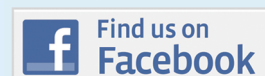
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## Windows 7 and 2008 R2: Does it Matter?



### Windows 7

A standard expectation when using technology is the inevitable need to upgrade and change. Technology moves forward on the principle that things that already seem great can be made even better— and more often than not, the improvements are worth the change. This principle applies to the operating system and SMB platform you may be using now. If it has served you well in the past, your first inclination may be “if it ain't broke, don't fix it!” However, should you really discount that an upgrade will make things even *better*— and in such a measureable way that improves your productivity?

With systems like Windows 7 (which is not exactly “new” because it has been around for a good while) and Windows 2008 R2 gaining ground in the market and proving their worth, it may be time to start thinking about upgrading your current software. To get your thought process rolling, consider that industry tests have shown that Windows 7 and 2008 R2 outperform their predecessors in almost every

conceivable situation. And with Microsoft announcing that they will discontinue support for Windows XP by 2014, the possibility of needing to upgrade becomes more pressing.

It would, of course, be great if upgrading was as simple as waving a magic upgrade wand, and that would be that. It is important to understand the way your company does business in order to accurately assess how an upgrade will affect your operations. Give us a call to discuss options for implementing an upgrade in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible for your company. Call (612) 298-3000 or email support@invisik.com. ♦



*Wishing one and all  
a very Happy  
Thanksgiving!*

*~Team Invisik*

## Is Facebook Bad for Business?

When it comes to Facebook and other massive social networking platforms, the usual default attitude of businesses is to shun it completely. While there is merit to the argument that social networks— Facebook in particular— can hamper and derail a company's productivity, Facebook can also do a lot to help grow business.

Recent reports cite that as many as 800 million people around the world are on Facebook— that is a larger-than-life audience that makes marketing experts giddy with excitement. Facebook presents a huge marketing opportunity for businesses to connect with potential clients. In other words, a business Facebook page is like a mini-website of sorts.

So when using Facebook as a medium to establish rapport with potential clients, it is wise to follow the advise of experts who suggest that a business Facebook page should contain interesting content related to the company's business, but designed in such a way as to attract readers and visitors

rather than hard-sell information about products and services. That is, the Facebook pages should complement a company's website, not duplicate it. If a company's Facebook page consistently delivers interesting and useful information, people will eventually go to the company's main website for more detailed information.

Marketing experts also suggest not being hesitant to establish more personal relationships with people who visit your business Facebook pages. Answering queries promptly helps make the company more visible and decreases the feeling of intimidation most prospects feel about stiff corporate businesses. A business Facebook page tells potential clients that your company wants to hear what they have to say.

For more information or to discuss strategies to increase your online presence and potential client base, give us a call. Better yet, visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/invisik](http://www.facebook.com/invisik) corporation and tell us what you think. ♦

# The ROI Series:

## Calculating the ROI of Technology Investments

### Part 2: Predicting ROI

As we discussed in part 1 of this series, it is not wise to measure ROI simply by asking what a technology implementation will do for your bottom line, but instead to also consider strongly the indirect benefit the new technology will impart to the company. For example, if the new technology leads different parts of your company to collaborate, which in turn produces better goods and services that lead to top-line growth, then your ROI is likely strong. Getting at those indirect ROI numbers, however, may be the greatest challenge of ROI analysis. Few models exist to guide businesses because determining ROI involves looking at many components, then applying those components to a company's particular situation. That said, there are certain things that should be taken into account— from both a cost and indirect benefit perspective— when considering the ROI of a technology investment.

- **Your existing technology infrastructure.** There are few companies without existing technologies in place, and any new solution will need to work with these systems to be effective. There will likely be costs associated with the new technology's impact on existing systems, but there will also be benefits. For example, a new technology might automate the tracking of hourly employees' work hours, or offer more efficient collaboration between departments.
- **Your business processes.** A new technology can clearly improve your business processes by reducing downtime, improving productivity, and lowering costs. However, implementing the new technology will likely involve training staff in using the technology, and that can have associated costs.
- **Your external relationships.** Finally, no business is an island. Your systems may link to customer and vendor systems. As a result, any new technology may impose constraints on or require changes of external organizations or individuals such as in the way information is delivered or received.

To tackle these pieces of the puzzle, it can be helpful to ask three different but related questions about the technology solution's direct and indirect costs as well as its efficiency:

1. **Direct costs:** Can you afford the technology, and will it pay for itself? To answer these two questions, you must know the cost of the solution itself and the monetary value of the resources used to implement it, measured in standard financial terms. Then compare the dollar cost of all expenditures to the expected return in terms of the projected savings and revenue increases. You may need to project the cost and return over a multi-month or multi-year time span in order to show a payback period.
2. **Indirect costs:** How much bang for your buck will you realize? Now the analysis becomes more complex. Analyzing the effectiveness of a technology solution requires you to look at its costs in relation to how effective it is at producing the desired results— in essence, to expand your measurement of ROI beyond cost savings and revenue increases to include performance relative to your company's goals.
3. **Efficiency:** Is this the most you can get for this much investment? Finally, you will want to ask whether the technology will produce the greatest possible value relative to its direct and indirect costs. This may present difficulties as it will require you to conduct a similar analysis on many different alternatives, and even perhaps simulating the performance of the alternatives in certain ways.



These three types of measurements differ in several ways. While the first is based simply on financial metrics, the second includes the quality of goods or services, customer satisfaction, employee morale, or in the case of some companies (such as manufacturers of “green” products or non-profits), social and political benefits. All of these measurements, however, will help you answer the same basic question: Which technology investments will pay off in the long term?

In next month's issue we will tackle the last part of this series: specific tips for measuring new technology ROI. ♦



At Invisik, we value our clients' feedback. One of the most important feedback we can receive is a client's referral. To show our gratitude, we want to give you a \$25 Visa® Gift Card when you refer your business colleagues to us to receive two **FREE** hours of guaranteed, no-strings-attached tech support to use anyway they want—that's a \$300 value for **FREE!**

Our only requirement is your colleagues must be the owner or the person in charge of IT for a company with 10 or more PCs and a server.

You already know the benefits you receive as an Invisik client: sleeping like a baby because you have zero tech worries, increased productivity because of minimal downtime, protected and secure data because your backups are safely stored, and enjoying more time for yourself because you aren't agonizing over your IT network. Why not share all this with a colleague who will then owe you a big favor that you can call-in whenever you want?!

**YES!**

Please contact the people below and let them know I referred them to receive 2 **FREE** Hours of guaranteed, no-strings-attached, tech support with Invisik.

Your Name: .....

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Please fax or mail your completed form to receive a \$25 Visa® Gift Card!  
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## The Top 5 Long-Life, Lightweight Laptops for Business Travelers

If your business requires you to travel a lot, and you are tired of anemic laptop batteries that make you hunt down a power outlet at every stop, then these new portable models may be the ticket you need. The top five netbooks/notebooks below are listed in order from longest to shortest battery life, and they can range from 7 to nearly 9 hours. With battery power like that, cross-country— heck, even international travel— will be a breeze!



### Lenovo X1

The X1 is the new standard business laptop. With a comfortable 13.3” screen and low 3.7 lbs weight, it is great to use at the office as well as on the road or at home. Fast Intel processors, spill-resistant keyboard, and battery rapid charging keep you working all day. This laptop starts at \$1,199.

### Lenovo X220 series

This lightweight laptop offers maximum battery life of over 8 hours when tested with the big 9-cell battery option. The battery adds less than a pound to the unit, bringing the total weight to only 3.7 lbs. These laptops with 12” screens start at \$899.

### Lenovo X120e

The smallest notebook (almost a netbook) in the round up has up to 7.5 hour battery life and a 11.6” HD screen. It weighs in at about 3 lbs, so it is very easy to carry everywhere. These super portable systems start at \$359.

### Lenovo T420s

For good reason, the T-series has been around for ages. The T420s is the perfect balance of maximum speed with thin portability. A 14” screen gives a little more room, but the 3.68 lbs keeps it small. This series starts at \$1,149.

### HP Slate 2 tablet

For a different spin on mobile computing, try the HP Slate tablet. It’s like a netbook without the keyboard and runs Windows 7 just like your office computer. You can run all your office programs (add portable keyboard for comfort), but then use it as a tablet for web browsing and sharing. These units start at \$799. ♦

## Simple Tips to Prevent Identity Theft While Online

Security experts are seeing a rise in the incidence of cyber-crime as more and more people use the web for their day-to-day needs. Our growing reliance on the Internet makes it even more important these days to guard your data and personal information. While there is no 100% guaranteed way to be safe from identity theft when online, there are a number of steps you can take to ensure a safer and more secure online experience.

- 1. Have the right security software.** One of the keys to keeping your identity and data secure is having the proper security software in place to protect your system. Also make sure to update the software regularly.
- 2. Know the modus operandi.** It’s also important to be aware of the different scams and techniques hackers use, such as phishing, which involves duping the user into clicking a legitimate-looking (but fake) link that has the victim enter personal information or download a file that introduces malware into the system. The rule of thumb is that if an email is unsolicited, there is a high probability of it being a scam or phishing email.
- 3. Be stingy with your personal information.** Be sure to only fill out personal information on sites that are legitimate and that you trust, and even then, only if you absolutely need to. Check and double check things like the URL or the company’s tag line to know if a site is what it says it is and whether it is secure. Phishing sites also look legit - but a careful look should be enough to tip you off that something’s amiss.
- 4. Create unique passwords.** The more complicated your passwords are, the harder they are to guess or hack. So don’t pick generic passwords like “password” or “12345” or things like your birthday or wedding anniversary. The best passwords are alphanumeric - a combination of both letters and numbers.
- 5. Secure wireless networks.** It’s important to allow only the right people to have access to your wireless networks. Besides saving bandwidth, this also prevents leechers and hackers from using your connection to tap into your system or use it for unscrupulous activities.

For more tips to help keep your identity and data secure online, give us a call at (612) 298-3000 or email [support@invisik.com](mailto:support@invisik.com). ♦

## 7 Tips for Creating a Secure Password

We have one for every site and every application we use: e-mail, online banking, and social media sites just to name a few. With so many password protected applications to juggle, we often slip into the bad habit of using the same password for every site, or making it so easy so that we don't forget it (like using Password1234— Oops! Did I give yours away?).

Unfortunately, using the same or an easy password for all your protected files really compromises your data, and makes it easy for cyber-criminals to steal sensitive, confidential information. Studies have shown that password security is still the weakest link in keeping data secure. Fortunately, there are simple and easy to remember tips you can apply— even today— to create stronger passwords.

1. Use special characters and numbers.
2. Mix up upper case and lower case letters.
3. Make sure your password is a minimum of 10 characters.
4. Be sure it is not something that can be guessed easily (zip code, phone number, birth date, your name or address).

5. Randomly replace letters with numbers or special characters, i.e. shake becomes \$h@ke.
6. Pick a sentence or phrase, and reduce it to first letters of each word only, i.e. "A Golden Key Can Open Any Door" becomes AGKCOAD.
7. Reverse the spelling of a word such as 'partnership' so it becomes 'pihsrntrap'.

Of course it is impossible to say that *all* cyber-attacks can be avoided, but we don't have to make it easy for them, right? Being proactive by updating (and diversifying) all of your passwords is a great start.

### *MORE HELPFUL TIPS INSIDE INCLUDING...*

- WINDOWS 7 AND 2008 R2: DOES IT MATTER?
- IS FACEBOOK BAD FOR BUSINESS?
- THE ROI SERIES: PART TWO
- TOP 5 LAPTOPS FOR TRAVELERS
- SIMPLE TIPS TO PREVENT IDENTITY THEFT WHILE ONLINE

*PLUS WHO WANTS A \$25 VISA GIFT CARD? GET THE DETAILS!*

**MORE INSIDE**

