IT Radix Resource

When it Rains Cats and Dogs...

Spring 2011

When it Rains it Pours!

- **An ounce of prevention— Disaster Recovery Planning**
- **Document management solutions**
- **Pet-friendly office perks**
- **Mixed environments**

Managed Services—More Than Insurance

When I talk with clients or prospective clients about our managed service plans, many turn tail and run because they think it's just insurance for when something bad happens. According to Wikipedia, managed services is the practice of transferring day-to-day management responsi-bilities as a strategic method for improved effective and efficient operations.

Let's face it, business these days is moving at a fast pace. Most businesses don't have time to check if their backup ran, if the anti-virus software is up-to-date and running, or if their server hard drive is exhibiting early warning signs of failure.

Insurance is reactive—it responds when something bad happens, which IT Radix most certainly does when our clients experience a problem or a computer failure of some kind. But *Managed Services* is most definitely more than just insurance because we are proactively investing in processes, monitoring, and tools to prevent bad things from happening.

Our proactive efforts happen at a micro level. They basically revolve around root cause analysis (figuring out how to prevent a recurrence of something bad that has happened) and predictive risk assessment (guessing the things that might break based on a knowledge of how the underlying systems work).

Here are some of the things IT Radix does to proactively prevent disruption, downtime, and data loss:

- Monitor servers and services running on those servers, computers, and network equipment— especially backup.

- Monitor and manage anti-virus software. Antivirus software is included in our service plans. It's not optional.

- Perform root cause analysis reviews of similar cases across clients and brands.

- Develop customized processes for each client (e.g., new employee, new computer, retiring computer, etc.). These are living documents that get updated as things change and help ensure that we only have to learn things once.

- Perform regular scheduled maintenance and updates.

- Perform a test restore on a regular basis.

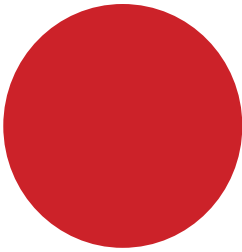- Test your battery backup unit...and more.
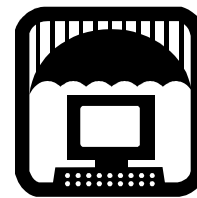
So, even when you don't see or hear us, we're working on ways to prevent IT problems, because as Grandma always said, *"an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure."*

Don't get caught with your tail between your legs. Give us a call today to learn more about our managed services.

Save the Date
Lunch 'n' Learn
May 24th

Raining Cats & Dogs...Say What?!?!?

We all know that the phrase, "raining cats and dogs," means an all out downpour, but does anyone know the true origin of this phrase? Apparently not!

One supposed origin derives from mythology. Dogs were attendants to Odin, the god of storms, thus linking them to "rain." While, witches would often take the form of cats, and ride the "wind."

Another supposed origin derives from the 1500's when houses had thatch roofs (thick straw with no wood underneath). All the pets (dogs, cats and other small animals) found refuge and warmth in these cozy beds. That is...until stormy weather hit and the straw became slippery causing animals to slip and fall off, or even through, the roofs.

Yet another supposed origin derives from the filthy streets of 17th-18th century England. The sewage and drainage systems of the streets of European cities were so poorly constructed that they were often littered with debris and dead animals after heavy rainstorms.

The phrase was first used in a modified form in 1653, when Richard Brome's comedy play, *The City Wit or The Woman Wears the Breeches,* referred to stormy weather with the line: "It shall raine...Dogs and Polecats." In 1710, Jonathan Swift's poem, *A Description of a City Shower*, suggests a morbidly graphic direct link between heavy rain that seems to precipitate dead cats and dogs. Later, in 1738, Swift quoted an expression in his book, <u>A Complete Collection of Polite and Ingenious Conversations</u>, that he himself may have created: "I know Sir John will go, though he was sure it would rain cats and dogs."

Where does the expression "raining cats and dogs" come from? We may never know for sure!

Introducing...Our Pets

Is it true what they say about people looking like their pets? Well, you be the judge. See if you can determine which IT Radix team member belongs to which pet...

Answers on Page 5.

OUR CLIENTS SPEAK OUT:

Vanilla & Chocolate ②

① Brownie

③ Roscoe & Daisy Duke

Gizmo ④

Bear ⑤

⑥ Sparky

⑦ Callie

⑧ Penny

⑨ Polly

⑩ 1 of 8 pond pets
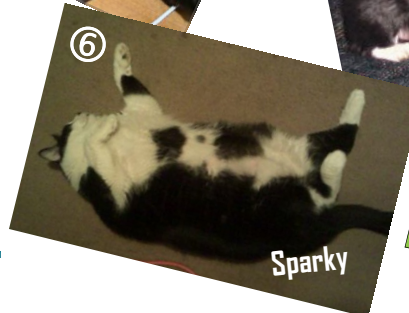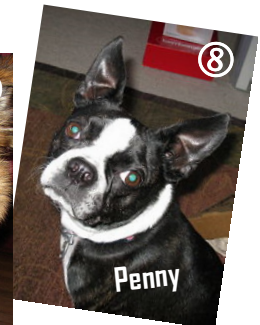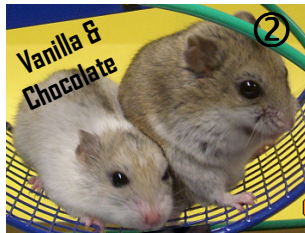
Microchip Technology…Not Just For Pets

Each year millions of beloved pets are lost and separated from their owners for various reasons. According to the American Humane Association, less than 20% of lost dogs and less than 2% of lost cats are reunited with their families. Most end up in shelters with no identification on them and have no way of telling rescuers where they live.

Pets should always wear a collar with their current license tag as well as a tag with their current address and phone number. If a stray pet is found wearing a current license tag, the license number can easily be looked up online. Collars and tags, however, are not enough. Collars can fall off or be removed. A more permanent form of identification is necessary, and that's where microchipping comes in! Microchips are inserted by a veterinarian beneath the surface of the skin between the animal's shoulder blades. They're about the size of a grain of rice and contain a unique identification code, easily read by a microchip scanner. The permanent microchip stays with your pet and will last their lifetime.

Don't stop here…you must also register the chip with your address and phone number for it to be effective, and if you move,

you need to update the information. Studies show that nearly 75% of dogs and cats brought to shelters with microchips are reunited with their owners. The reasons for the ones not reunited are largely due to incorrect or outdated information in the registry!

Pets are not the only things near and dear to your heart that can be lost or stolen. More than 2 million laptops are stolen every year, meaning that you have a 1 in 10 chance of becoming a victim of laptop theft. Laptops are not just stolen for their monetary value. Most laptops contain personal documents and important information that can be highly valuable to today's laptop thieves. Having your laptop stolen can cost you more than just the value of your computer; it can also leave you at risk of identity theft!

If your laptop is stolen and you want it recovered, IT Radix recommends *LoJack® for Laptops*, a software-based theft recovery and data security service. In the event of theft, *LoJack® for Laptops* can track, locate, and recover stolen computers while providing you with the ability to protect your personal information against identity theft. Product features include:

- <u>Theft Recovery</u> – The next time your computer connects to the internet, the Absolute Theft Recovery Team will forensically mine it to determine who has your computer. Then they will work closely with local law enforcement to recover and return the laptop.

- <u>Geotechnology</u> – The latest GPS or Wi-Fi technology is

used to track the laptop on an internet map, including current and historical locations. (Note: standard edition is limited to IP address information only.)

- <u>Data and Device Security</u> – To protect from identity theft, the Data Delete service can be used to remotely delete all personal and sensitive files from the hard drive. Limited access can be assured by remotely freezing the laptop and displaying a custom message to the user.

The technology behind *LoJack® for Laptops* is the Computrace Agent, a small software client that is embedded into the BIOS firmware of most computers at the factory. The Agent in your computer maintains daily contact with the Absolute Monitoring Center. If you report your computer stolen, Agent contact will increase to every 15 minutes. Increased contact allows for obtaining specific details like the physical location of the laptop, any activity that has occurred post-theft, and other important data that will aid in working with local law enforcement to catch the thief and return the laptop to its rightful owner.

For more information on implementing *LoJack® for Laptops* in your office environment, give IT Radix a call. We'll help you keep track of man's 2nd best friend…his computer!

Office Pet Perks

Is your office going to the dogs? Well, maybe it should! Businesses that welcome pets in the office are on the rise, and for good reason. Having an office pet can actually improve people's lives and build a solid community. New research suggests that people who work on teams with a pet underfoot tend to trust one another more and work together better than those without a four-legged friend.

Pet-friendly businesses observe that:

- Having animals around can significantly reduce stress.
- Taking a break to play with an office pet increases productivity and enhances brainstorming by promoting creative thinking.
- Pets have a knack for improving people's moods. They give people something to focus on when times are tough. Who can resist the urge to smile and laugh at some of their antics? Laughter takes years off your life and adds life to your years!

- Pets teach us about ownership and responsibility. Do you want your employees to take ownership of their responsibilities and promote loyalty to your company? Having a pet to care for and own with other people builds a sense of teamwork.
- Pets make a sterile office environment more "homey."
- Pets show a softer side to management's image.
- Pets are conversation starters and a great way to bond with other people in the office.

Don't take our word for it…a survey of small businesses commissioned by the animal charity group, *The Blue Cross,* found that 90% of companies who allowed dogs in the workplace noticed: a positive change in the working environment, two-thirds claimed staff morale had lifted, 56% said pets had improved work relations, and half even noticed a decrease in

absenteeism. Many prominent companies like Amazon, Google, Healthwise, Replacement's Ltd, Ben & Jerry's and the Humane Society have already adopted pet policies into their everyday business practices.

The key to a successful, pet-friendly office environment is to set a few ground rules. At the Humane Society, pets must pass a six-week probation period, and some areas are off limits (e.g., bathrooms, kitchens and some meeting rooms). Vaccines must be kept up to date, and pets must be on leash in certain areas.

Our faithful friends are important, but employee's needs do come first.

Friday, June 24

Each year on the Friday following Father's Day, dogs across the world join their owners at work to celebrate the great companions dogs make and promote pet adoption. Register for a **2011 Action Pack** containing information to help you promote TYDTWD at your office by visiting www.takeyourdog.com!

I Double Dog Dare You…

Can your business survive a disruption or crisis? Most companies believe they can—until one occurs. Don't wait for a large or small disaster to occur to build your disaster recovery (DR) plan to ensure business continuity. Be prepared!

The definition of a disaster could vary greatly from business to business. The loss of data on a single PC could have a disastrous effect on your business if you are not prepared. Having a clearly documented and tested business continuance plan is just as important as having the right DR technology. It's crucial to develop the plan in advance and review it with your employees.

Start by identifying business critical information and applications. Critical business information isn't always electronic data, but quite often is. Critical business applications could include simply having Internet access in order to perform research or to access a cloud-based application or an externally-hosted solution.

Next, you should evaluate the impact of the loss of the data or
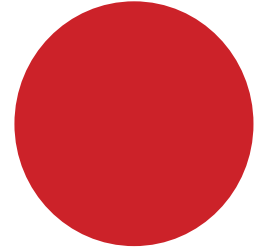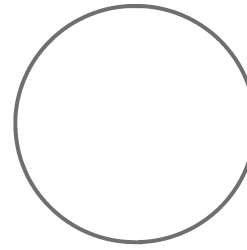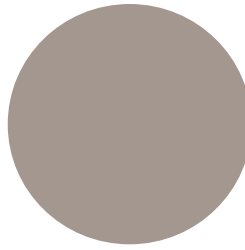
applications on a temporary or for an extended period. At the same time, evaluate the likelihood of various types of "disaster" scenarios. The answers to these questions will help focus and drive your DR strategies as well as your budget.

Now that you've clearly determined what to protect, it's time to evaluate your options to recover from a disaster, be it big or small. Some obvious questions include where is your critical data stored, how is it backed up, and is it available both on and offsite? IT Radix offers a host of backup solutions to answer these questions. Don't forget to include any special line-of-business applications that may not be readily available in the event of a disaster. Do you have the software safely stored both onsite and offsite with all the pertinent serial numbers and license keys to reload if necessary?

This next step requires some work almost everyone would prefer to avoid but it is critical to the success of DR planning—you need to develop a comprehensive written plan and communicate it

with your staff. I'll admit, I can think of more interesting things to write about, but documenting your recovery plan in advance will pay off when you're under the real pressure of a disaster and need to have clear plans and steps to follow.

Finally, IT Radix encourages all our clients to periodically test your DR plan. One of our clients is located along the banks of the Raritan River. In the past 10 years, they have had to test their recovery plan for real— 3 times in fact, as the river has overflowed the banks near their office. The company was unable to access their building and the power was shut down for safety reasons for a week or more. Could your business survive a "disaster" like this? Fortunately, our client was prepared and did survive, each time improving their plan and technology solutions to make it easier and faster to recover. Ok, still don't want to create a disaster recovery plan? I double dog dare you to survive a disaster without one. To make it easier for you, IT Radix has put together a free disaster recovery template to help get you started. Send us an email at be-prepared@it-radix.com.

Thanks for the referrals!

Referrals are the best form of compliment! We would like to thank the following for referring us to their friends and colleagues:

Jeff from *Preferred Benefits Group*
Mike from *Yodice & Co.*
Gene&Steve from *Steve's Landscaping*
Ian from *LForm Design*
Elizabeth from *KRA Insurance Agency*
Valerie from *TAG Online*
Hien from *Safari Telecom*
Scott from *Plantronics, Inc.*

Visit us at www.it-radix.com to learn more about our Referral Rewards Program!

Look What the Cat Dragged In…

Disgruntled Pet Craze

What's with all the disgruntled pets?

Angry Birds, an iPhone app in which players fling cartoonish birds from slingshots at fortified pigs who have stolen their eggs has sold more than 12 million copies since Dec. 2009. It will soon be landing on Microsoft's Windows Phone 7 platform in "late spring."

Mean Kitty, is a YouTube phenomenon. You won't be able to get Cory Williams' catchy tune, "Hey, Little Sparta," out of your head.

Will your pet be next?

Depending upon your perspective, what the cat dragged in could be a Mac or Windows device. But for us at IT Radix, it's becoming more and more common to support both Mac and Windows machines on the same network. And we're happy to help because Apple and Microsoft systems can and do work together.

This is particularly true on the front end—think what the user actually uses—it could be an iMac or a Windows 7 machine, or an iPhone versus a Blackberry. Quite often, it doesn't matter. We most commonly have requests from users to add Apple devices to existing Windows environments. Apple devices will happily co-exist and take advantage of many Microsoft platforms assuming things are configured and deployed correctly.

In the marketing and design world, the Macs have it—literally! Traditionally, Macs have cornered the graphics market including not only user machines but also server technology. A Windows machine in a marketing firm may feel like "a fish out of water" but everything works together just fine.

Where things can get tricky is when the business uses an application that will only run on one platform or the other. In these situations, it's not hopeless—today's virtualization technology makes it possible to run Windows in a virtual machine and in some cases, vice versa!

As Apple is making in-roads in other business environments, we're seeing an even deeper integration. For example, one of our clients is in the process of converting from a Windows-only environment to a mixed environment as a result of the selection of a new accounting system that runs on both platforms. So, if a user prefers a Mac computer, they get a Mac; if another user prefers a Windows machine, they get a Windows computer. With the rise of cloud computing, platform independence is increasing even more.

In our opinion, for businesses, this flexibility of choice is perfectly paws-a-tive!

Paper Chaos: Good Riddance

Paper is expensive. Ink, supplies, cabinets, storage, and payroll to handle the paper…it all costs money and time. Just 15 minutes a day of paper shuffling equates to a FULL work week of non-productive time per year.

Want to get that time and money back? Then consider a document management solution.

By using document imaging, your paper piles are converted into organized, easy to find electronic files. Good document management systems can also streamline processes, eliminate redundancy and increase the ability for your employees to collaborate on documents.

So, are you tired of running around searching through stacks of paper like a dog running around in circles chasing its tail? Contact IT Radix today to learn how you can incorporate a document management solution into your everyday business practices.

Bye-bye, paper…Hello, technology!

Time Saving Tip

Add a Webpage to your iPad Home Screen

Tired of looking through your Safari bookmarks for a webpage that you visit frequently? Place it on your home screen for quick access.

Tap the "+" icon in Safari and then click on "Add to Home Screen" and voila! One click access.

IT Radix

We make IT work for you

From the desk of: Cathy Coloff

Subject: Today's Technology is the Cat's Meow!

It was really fun putting together this issue of our newsletter…we got to learn more about each other and our pet-idiosyncrasies. While not all of us have pets, we all agreed that having pets adds joy to our lives. It got me thinking about technology and whether it has added joy to my life. While we deal with technology headaches on a daily basis, I can confidently say that it has also added much joy to my life.

On a raining weekend morning like today, I enjoy scrolling through digital pictures from 10 years ago and reliving happy memories, selecting the really special ones for continuous viewing on my screen saver. Or how about the ability to quickly share good news to family and friends or business colleagues using email, social media or text messaging. And, as I'm facing putting together my taxes for 2010, I'm very grateful for the software that makes, what used to be a very manual process, infinitely easier and a much less daunting endeavor. But most importantly, technology has allowed me to pursue a career that I truly love—helping people use computer technology to solve the challenges that life and business brings. Doing something you love everyday, to me, that's the cat's meow!

Cathy

WANTED:

P.S. I hope you'll encourage your child to participate in our essay contest outlined below. Need an incentive? The winners will receive an iPod nano!
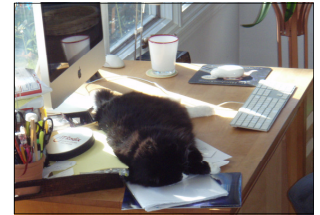
One of the fringe benefits of telecommuting—cat naps or the temptation of them!

Calling All Writers…Children's Essay Contest

Have a budding writer in your home? Here's their chance to make their mark.

In honor of Earth Day, IT Radix is sponsoring our first ever Children's Essay Contest. We are celebrating *mother earth, creative thinking, good writing,* and *insightful ideas* from the future stewards of our wonderful planet. Together, let's discover what our tech savvy kids have on their minds.

All 3rd-12th Grade students are eligible to participate.

Theme:
How Technology Helps Our Environment

Rules:
- Essays must be the original work of the child.
- Essays must be a minimum of 150 words.
- Essays must be typed, double-spaced, 12 pt font and single sided.
- All essays should have a title.
- The first page of the essay should have the name of the child, their current grade level, the name of the client representing this child, and the client's company.
- Along with essay, send a signed hardcopy of a *Permission to Post* form. (available online)
- Essays must be <u>received by July 1, 2011</u>.

Essays can be submitted electronically or hardcopy printed. Mail essays to:

IT Radix, LLC
P.O. Box 454
Mt. Freedom, NJ 07970 <or>
resource@it-radix.com

Essays will be grouped by school year, and one winner will be chosen from each of the following three categories:

Elementary (3rd-5th grade)
Middle School (6th-8th grade)
High School (9th-12th grade)

Three lucky winners will receive iPod nanos! All essays will be posted on the IT Radix website.

Visit www.it-radix.com for more information.

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Enter and Win!
Trivia Contest

The first person to send an email to resource@it-radix.com with the correct answer to our trivia question will win a $20 gift certificate to Maggie Moo's.

Q:
A cat with an important collar plays an integral role in the 1997 movie Men In Black. What is this cat's name?

- - - - -

Winter Trivia Challenge

In *Office Space*, what is the balance of the illicit penny-pinching scam account the morning after the computer virus is executed? (Answer: *$305,326.13*)

Congratulations to our winner, Mark Serao, from Grey Sky Films, the proud recipient of a *Speedfiler* license!