



JFF... (Just For Fun)



Embracing Change

Change is good! We've all heard this, but there might be a hint of skepticism out there. After all, we're all human, and our human nature tends to prefer what's familiar to us. I mean, what's the point of changing if "IT's" working for us?

To quote an early American Politician, Adlai E. Stevenson, "Change is inevitable." In fact, "change for the better is a full-time job" and one that should be embraced. Quite honestly, if you can't change for the better and move forward, you'll get left behind.

This life lesson is as true in the IT world as it is in our personal, day-to-day lives. If we adhere to an "if IT ain't broke, why fix IT" mentality, we're destined for disaster. Talk about positive changes in the IT field...think back to the 80's when companies first started providing personal desktops to ALL their employees. How cool was that?!?!? Remember how we were blown away by the Graphical User Interface (GUI) in Microsoft Windows? Working on our personal computers became more intuitive and multitasking became a breeze. Even storage devices changed for the better. Large, flimsy floppy drives made way to much smaller and resilient memory sticks with exceedingly expansive memory capacity that can fit in our pockets. Aren't these changes for the better?

So why do most of us still cringe when some new technology enters the scene? Perhaps it's our age. Maybe we should take a lesson from our children who aren't afraid to go outside their comfort zone when it comes to a new hands-on device or app. They just dive right in there, and make it work. Why can't we more "seasoned" adults take their lead?

Windows 8

When Windows 8 debuted in 2012, many of our clients, quite honestly, were put off by the new modern UI-derived Start Screen. But let's rethink this...remember, change is good! Windows 8 has proven to be faster and more secure. Microsoft did a lot to speed up Windows 8, especially boot times, which are much lower than older versions of Windows. From a security perspective, Microsoft did a lot of hardening to the system under the hood to make it more resilient to exploits. IT Radix Network Technician, **Tom Quitt**, loves some of the under-the-hood features of Windows 8 like the built in *Hyper-V* available on the Pro versions



"I'm guessing you don't like the computer system."

because it makes it possible to run test versions of operating systems, as well as older operating systems alongside your main one. Tom also thinks the *BitLocker Drive Encryption* data protection feature is pretty cool. BitLocker encrypts the hard drives on your computer to provide enhanced protection against data theft or exposure on computers and removable drives that are lost or stolen. Data deletion is more secure when BitLocker-protected computers are commissioned as it is much more difficult to recover deleted data from an encrypted drive than from a non-encrypted drive.

(continued on page 3)



In This Issue

Embracing Change	1
Take a Swing at IT Frustration	2
File Explosion!	2
Zzzzzzz...Wake Up!	3
Windows Server 2003 End of Life...No Joke!	3
Technology Trend Towards Telecommuting	4

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Take a Swing at IT Frustration

When your computer or smartphone doesn't respond as expected, it's frustrating. A recent study of workplace and academic computer users showed high levels of frustration and time loss with just daily computer activities. So, when an interaction with a computer or an application turns sour, it's easy to understand the desire to reach for that baseball bat!

However, there are better ways to approach your relationship with computers. Optimally, you need to have a resource like IT Radix to minimize risks that lead to frustration. You can think of IT Radix as a hands-on counselor for your IT. We not only understand your business, but also your computer network and how you use it. Computers need regular maintenance and updating just like cars do. Ignoring maintenance only leads to disaster down the road—when you don't have time to deal with it! Relying on IT Radix to perform ongoing tasks that minimize catastrophic events means less frustration in the long run! IT Radix takes a proactive approach to computer and network management. With our **Capstone**, **Cornerstone** and **Keystone** IT Management and Support Plans, IT Radix provides client-customized approaches that fit our clients' specific IT needs.



"Are you sure that hitting it with a baseball bat will work?"

To eliminate IT frustration, IT Radix provides:

- **Comprehensive Knowledge** – We understand far beyond just the basics of both your hardware and software. When we see an entry in a log or a seemingly benign message, we recognize when it needs immediate attention in order to minimize risk downstream.
- **Hardware Recommendations** – Cutting corners can result in IT frustration and less reliability. We provide our best recommendations to clients on the proper equipment to purchase for their technology needs.
- **Backup** – We see our role with clients as first to ensure their networks are running correctly, and secondly to ensure that their data and applications are backed up. Disasters do not provide advance alerts...having an ongoing backup is key to reducing IT frustrations. We invest a lot of time and effort in creating backup programs for clients and checking daily to ensure they are actually working.
- **Support at the Ready** – We are here, and we are ready—when that mysterious window opens on your screen, when that application does not open, when your computer freezes or you cannot find your data. IT Radix is just a phone call away.

Whatever IT issue arises, giving us a call is much better than reaching for that baseball bat! More often than not, we can provide a solution quickly and affordably.

File Explosion!

It seems that there is a wealth of options for sharing large files over the Internet these days. From browser-based services like WeTransfer or JustBeamIt, to cloud storage drives like Dropbox, Google Drive or Microsoft OneDrive, it is almost as though there are *too many* to choose from! With the need to share larger files becoming more predominant, gone are the days of simply attaching files to an email—or are they?

Enter our new favorite tool: the **ITR Cloud Reflection Outlook Plugin**. ITR Cloud Reflection is our cloud file sync-and-storage solution. One of the tools included is an add-in to Outlook which allows users to securely send large or small files with a variety of options. You can easily attach files from your local computer or from ITR Cloud Reflection team shares—all from the same tool on your Outlook email ribbon. Now, sharing important files is a breeze, and you are no longer limited by file size!



"I hope you don't mind, but the size of the file I just sent you was 198,753 gigs."

**OUR CLIENTS
SPEAK OUT:**

THE BUZZ

"Love the confidence being an IT Radix client affords! I wish I didn't find out the hard way...but, we all can't be so lucky. IT Radix helped us recover from a computer MELTDOWN in 2014. I look forward to 2015 knowing that IT Radix is proactively monitoring my network. This newsletter is one of the few I make time for in an otherwise hectic schedule—there are always tidbits that I can put to immediate use."

Sarah Sockolof — Simms Jewelers

Zzzzzzz...Wake Up! Windows Server 2003 End of Life...No Joke!

Since we said goodbye to Windows XP, PC startup is not typically an issue these days.

However, if you are experiencing less-than-optimal performance, you may consider:

- 1) Upgrading your hard drive to a solid-state hard drive.
- 2) Editing startup options to exclude nonessential Windows programs from starting up when your computer boots.
- 3) Having an IT Radix technician do a tune-up on your PC to decrease startup time and improve general performance.

A healthy PC means a happy PC user. Don't hit the snooze button. Call IT Radix today...we'll be happy to wake up your PC.



"I don't know which is harder-- getting Smythe started in the morning, or his computer."

Proudly folded & stuffed by Park Lake School

SPECIAL OFFER

Fun Technology

Sign up for a year of IT Radix Managed Services during the months of **January, February** and **March**, and receive a Kindle Fire!

All three plans are eligible:
Capstone, Cornerstone, Keystone

Visit www.it-radix.com to learn more about what's included in each of these proactive maintenance plans. Call **IT Radix** today to learn more!

With just about 5 months away, Windows Server 2003 end of life is rapidly approaching. We know you've heard it from us before, but the average migration can take upwards of 100 days. What does this mean for a business still running Windows Server 2003? To put it simply, it's time to get serious about removing this 12-year-old operating system from your IT infrastructure. End of life means that Microsoft will no longer release security patches. Vulnerabilities will not be fixed. After July 14, 2015, when Server 2003 misbehaves, you'll be on your own. As soon as support stops, it is inevitable that hackers will be working around the clock to find vulnerabilities.

If you are in a regulated industry or handle regulated data, including healthcare and payment card industry data, you may find that you will be out of compliance, which could mean fines or being cut off from partners that strive to protect their own regulatory compliance status. Perhaps you are not governed by PCI or HIPPA. Maintaining an unsupported and unpatched operating system is not "best practice" for any business. Wouldn't you agree?

The reality is a lot has changed over the past decade. Think about it, back in 2003 the average computer weighed more than your dog and your computer monitor was the size of a microwave oven. To put it into perspective, the GSM BlackBerry 6210 was the only smartphone you could get. How many are in use today? How about the iPhone which would be introduced four years later in 2007? How many iPhone upgrades have you had since then? It goes without saying that significant engineering improvements have been made to operating systems since then. How long can we squeeze value out of Server 2003? We've benefited from manufacturer warranties and updates. However, now we've come to a point in time when deferring an upgrade could cost more than time and labor such as data loss and application failure.

The complexity of migrating off of Windows Server 2003 is unique to each business. The planning process can be daunting. We'd like to ensure that you have the best plan in place. We may already be discussing a plan with you to phase out Windows 2003 Server; if not, it's time to get serious!



"My company's IT department is prehistoric."

Embracing Change (continued from page 1)

Windows 10 (coming Fall 2015)

Microsoft is taking community feedback very seriously. The most notable change is the new, revamped Start Screen which incorporates much of the manipulative functionality of Windows 8 with the look and feel of Windows 7 that users seem to prefer. Plus, there's a smooth integration of the Start Screen when switching between desktop and tablet, allowing for an enhanced user experience. Windows 10 is also introducing a new, tiered update approach to distributing updated fixes and enhancements. Users in the FAST tier get updates faster and help test and work out the kinks, while users in the SLOW tier get updates after they've been thoroughly tested. Tom is impressed how Microsoft is openly accepting feedback from the current beta testing community while they are still in the developmental phase. By the time Windows 10 is ready for release, it should be a smooth running system.

"Any change, even a change for the better, is always accompanied by drawbacks and discomforts," states novelist, Arnold Bennett. Let IT Radix help you embrace changes that make a positive impact to your IT infrastructure. A year from now you'll be glad you did!

“Laughter is a gift,
a choice, a discipline,
and an art.”

— Tim Hansel



From the desk of: Cathy Coloff

Subject: *You don't stop having fun because you get old,
you get old because you stop having fun!*

—Author Unknown



As I approach the big “5-0,” I occasionally stop and think, “Wow, I don’t feel that old!” I think it’s because of the presence of fun in my life. I’m very lucky to have a job that—despite the headaches and risks that come along with it—I think is fun. I get to meet and work with a lot of great people; I get to “play with” and use technology every day; and so much more. And at home, I’ve got a 7-year-old son, Alex, who enjoys trying to entertain me with his bad jokes and silly antics. I’m so grateful to have these opportunities for fun in my life.

January 28th was “Have Fun at Work Day,” and when we announced it at our staff meeting, I was pleased to hear someone say “But we have fun at work every day!” Now, for everyone, I’m sure this isn’t always true but at IT Radix, I hope it is mostly true. We celebrate a lot of unusual holidays at IT Radix (I’ll admit most are food-centric for our hungry crew); so you can rest assured that we will always celebrate “Have Fun at Work Day.” Did you?

This month we invite you to come have some fun with us on February 27 at our annual **Pancake Breakfast**. The smell of pancakes is irresistible, and I think the company can’t be beat. It’s a great opportunity to get to know our team better, and it’s one of the ways we thank our clients and business partners for everything throughout the year. For more info, visit our website at www.it-radix.com/appreciation. Hope to see you there!



Geeky One Liners

- Fixmykeyboard. Thespacebarisbroken
- A user friendly computer first requires a friendly user.
- Best file compression around:
"DEL *.*" = 100% compression
- Computers follow your orders, not your intentions.
- Don't let the computer bugs bite!
- Home is where the computer is plugged in.
- Hardware: The parts of a computer system that can be kicked.
- If at first you don't succeed, call it Version 1.0.

Technology Trend Towards Telecommuting

Telecommuting has been on the rise since technology made it possible. Today 24% of U.S. workers telecommute at least some of the time. It’s not just the U.S.—telecommuting is on the rise all around the world! Thanks to the Internet and cloud computing, we live in a world where physical location has become unimportant and where people are able to connect seamlessly from almost anywhere.

Based on a recent international survey, the percentage of employers offering telework to employees has increased drastically. In 2012, 90% of U.S. companies provided some type of telework options for their employees. The stereotypical office as we know it is becoming a thing of the past. Workspaces are changing from places where employees access necessary data and equipment to places centered on collaboration and interaction with colleagues. The trend is towards open-plan spaces with a minimum of physical barriers. Additionally, by 2017, it’s estimated that half of employers will require that employees use their own devices for work purposes.

While technology can’t replace the human connection and comradery in the office, it helps. *Instant Messenger* can be used to pose a quick question; while, *email* can be used for longer correspondence. Communication can also be facilitated by *Voxer* which is a combination of a walkie-talkie and text messaging. *Skype* can be used as well as *Google Hangout* providing a virtual place for people to drop in and visit.

For some people, virtual connections are enough, while for others nothing takes the place of being able to stroll down the hall to chat with a colleague face to face. Who wants to be just another name on an email? Ideally, a combination of home and office work truly is the best of both worlds—one that benefits both employers and employees alike!



“It might be time to telecommute.”