Connecting the Dots…

CONNECTING THE DOTS

Is it Time to Connect with Windows 10?

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 to make sure the dots connect before upgrading to Windows 10.

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 marked 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:

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 29, 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.

It's better and/or faster, right?
Maybe… It depends. Here's what we're seeing:
- Windows 10 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).
- 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 may run slower on Windows 10 than on Windows 7 or 8.1.

Will my computer work with Windows 10?
Age is probably the biggest factor for any Windows-based device. Generally, we do not recommend upgrading anything older than four years. At four 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.

I've heard Windows 10 transmits all of your personal information to Microsoft. 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."*

In the News

Earth Day — April 22nd
Spring cleaning with a purpose!
During the month of April, drop off your e-waste at our IT Radix office between 10am-4pm.
For a list of acceptable items, visit
www.it-radix.com/recycling

Morris County Chamber of Commerce
Visit our table and hear Cathy as she serves as a panelist at the Annual Not-for-Profit Conference on April 28th—8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
For more info, go to the events tab at
www.morrischamber.org

Congratulations to Chris Scrivana
Chris recently passed the Interconnecting Cisco Networking Devices 1 Exam.

If you would rather receive our newsletter via email, sign up on our website or send an email to resource@it-radix.com

BLOG

More free tech tips at:
www.it-radix.com/news-blog

Introducing… John Lee

We first introduced John in our December 2015 newsletter and shared how he enjoys connecting with people around the world. His most recent trip was in January when he helped open a clinic in the Haitian mountains. Here's a little more background to get to know John better.

Armed with a certificate in Computer and Networking Support from Lincoln Tech and 4 years of experience in a variety of office-related positions, John is happy to continue his professional IT career here at IT Radix. Growing up fixing computers has been more fun than work over the years, and he always has been drawn to networks and security. John makes it a personal goal to learn something new every day. His goal is to position himself as an expert in networking administration. His favorite thing about IT is that it gives him the opportunity to learn something new every day. John believes that when a team really works together, it makes the workday not so much about work but about collaboration—which is infinitely more productive.

As an IT Consultant, John monitors offsite backups, supports clients with day-to-day issues, and configures workstations. He loves problem solving, and he loves being able to help our clients utilize technology to get the most out of their day. He believes that to best serve our clients, it's not only important to solve problems, but also to communicate clearly and effectively. John aims to make their experience with the "IT Guy" one of the highlights of their day!

A New Jersey native, John lived the majority of his life in West Milford, where he resides with his family today. When not working, he continues to enjoy expanding his technical knowledge—whether dissecting the theory behind a TCP/IP stream or removing a nasty piece of malware from a friend's laptop, there's always something changing with the technology we use every day, and he loves immersing himself in it. John also enjoys traveling the world and helping others! For the past 3 years, he spent some time in both Haiti and Honduras volunteering his time and construction talents at both a school and an orphanage. An avid reader, John enjoys fiction as well as reading books on philosophy and self-improvement. He also enjoys dabbling in creative writing and poetry, as well as hiking and gaming.

John's personal philosophy:
Everyone is always trying to get a leg up on someone else, and so many people seem to be focused around arbitrary gain. At the end of the day, we all leave this earth so as long as we're here, we may as well try to be the best people we can be.

"The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts."

—Marcus Aurelius, Meditations

Welcome!

A warm welcome to our newest **Managed Service** clients:

HRS Transport Inc.
Leonard Legal Group, LLC

Remember, IT Radix is here to service all of your technology needs!

Windows10 Connect?

(Continued from page 1)

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

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 would have you believe. However, knowing the pitfalls in advance will help you have a smoother, headache-free transition.

Want help upgrading your business to Windows 10? Give us a call! We're here to make IT work for you!

THE BUZZ

OUR CLIENTS SPEAK OUT:

"I often brag about IT Radix being my favorite of all vendors that I work with at Peace Aging Care. They have a terrific staff, and I truly appreciate the wonderful customer service I receive each and every time I call."

Deborah Vogt, COO — Peace Aging Care Experts, LLC

Staying Connected 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 life-saver.

Just ask retired Houston firefighter, Michael Herrara. 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 satellite 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.

Proudly folded & stuffed by Park Lake School

SPECIAL OFFER

Dot Your I's and Cross Your T's

Sign up for a year of IT Radix Management and Support during the months of **April, May** and **June**, and receive Bluetooth speakers!

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. Offer for new managed service clients only. Call IT Radix today to learn more!

Business Identity Theft: Protect Your Computers and Networks

Business identity theft is serious business! Steve Cox, from the Better Business Bureau, stresses that "Business identity theft is a very real concern in today's marketplace. From a criminal's perspective, it is significantly more cost-effective to steal business identities than consumer identities." Here are some ways you can protect your business networks and computers:

Use business computers ONLY for business
Using business computers for personal use (e.g., casual Internet surfing, social networks, online gaming, downloading programs, and file sharing) exposes your business computers to additional viruses, spyware, and other security risks that can jeopardize your business operations—placing the confidential information of your business, customers, and employees at risk.

> "Business identity theft is a very real concern in today's marketplace. From a criminal's perspective, it is significantly more cost-effective to steal business identities than consumer identities."
>
> Steve Cox — Better Business Bureau

Use up-to-date anti-virus/Internet security software
Anti-virus and Internet security software programs are paramount to the safety of your business. Don't rely on free software to protect your business. It's important to use software that actively scans and is frequently updated to keep on top of new threats.

Be vigilant about keeping software updates and security patches up to date
Regularly check for and install any security updates for your computer's operating system and Internet browser program to ensure that the latest versions designed to protect against known software vulnerabilities are in place. Set up an automatic update schedule with a specified frequency no less than weekly.

Encrypt your business' wireless network
If your business uses a wireless network that is not encrypted, others can gain access to your network. WPA2 is currently the strongest wireless network encryption standard. Use a strong password for your wireless router and disable broadcasting of your SSID (Service Set Identifier).

Use a firewall on your computer network
A firewall is a software program or hardware device that monitors and controls external connections to your computer and/or network. A firewall helps to prevent unwanted external connections. It is your first line of defense against unauthorized login attempts and malicious code attacks.

Questions? Connect with IT Radix and we'll be happy to dot the I's and cross the T's to ensure that your business computers and networks are protected from business identity theft.

IT Radix Resource ●●●●

> "Everybody laughs the same in every language because laughter is a universal connection."
>
> — Yakov Smirnoff

"I think the rule is: @ before # except after :-) "

From the desk of: Cathy Coloff
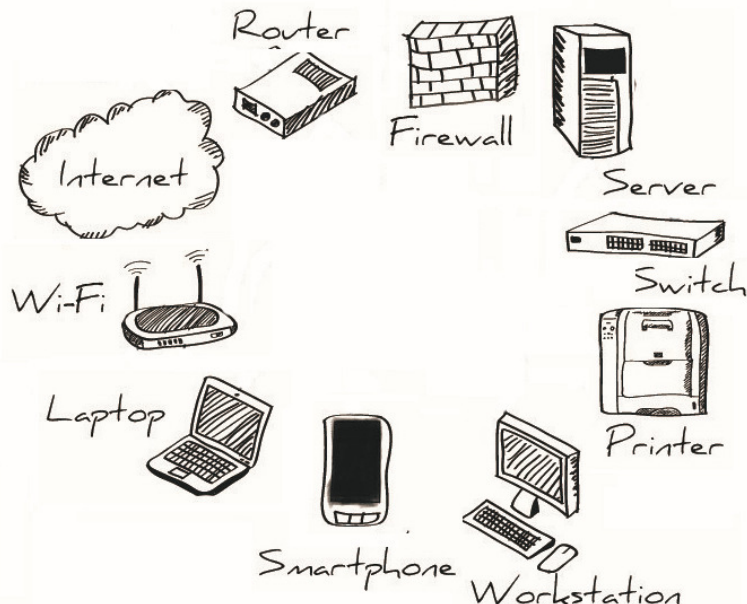## Subject: Thinking outside the box...

Sometimes it's not so easy to connect the dots especially in our line of work. For instance, in troubleshooting technical problems, often there are direct paths from one event to another—a hard drive failing will typically create alerts in the system logs indicating an impending failure. As long as you know where to look and keep an eye on the log, you can easily connect the dots, or preferably, take action before the connection or hard drive failure occurs. In other cases, it's not so easy. In these instances, our team is always up for the challenge, leaning on each other for clues, ideas and insights into possible causes and resolutions. It's fun to watch the team brainstorm and pull together to resolve a client's technical issue.

How many of you have seen the dot test where you need to connect the dots with just four lines. The trick is to think outside the box that is created by the dots. Quite often a client's unique environment requires that we think outside the box to come up with a solution.

While my son, Alex, has almost outgrown "connect the dot" puzzles, we still enjoy working together to figure out what the dots will reveal. These puzzles are now available for adults along with adult coloring books. Adult dot-to-dot puzzles have proven to increase short-term cognitive acuity, hand-eye coordination and concentration skills. I picked up an adult coloring book over the summer and found it surprisingly relaxing. Have fun connecting the dots in our network diagram below. Good luck!

Enter and Win!

Connections Contest

Draw connecting lines between the IT infrastructure components in the diagram on the right and email your revised "connected" image to resource@it-radix.com to win a set of adult Dot-to-Dot puzzle books.

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March Trivia Challenge

Who is the youngest host in history on *Saturday Night Live*? (Answer: Drew Barrymore)

Congratulations to our winner, David Kerner of Meisel, Tuteur & Lewis, recipient of a $25 AMC gift certificate.

Complete the Connections

Can you "connect" this diagram? Draw the connecting lines between the various components of this standard IT infrastructure, and send your "connected" diagram back to us to win a set of adult Dot-to-Dot puzzle books. Dot-to-Dot puzzles are not just for kids! They have been proven to increase hand-eye coordination, short-term cognitive acuity, and concentration skills. All entries receive a box of DOTS candy just for participating! What a sweet deal!