



## This Issue:

5 Signs Your Hard Drive is About to Fail

Prepare for Employee Turnover with a Foolproof Exit Checklist

How to Search the Web Without Typing

Why SMBs Need to Move Away from On-Premises Computing

Don't Let Underutilized Servers Hold Your Business Back

How Gamers Can Be an Asset to Your Business

### How to Search the Web Without Typing



How fast are you at finding the information you need using Google Search? In today's data-

driven world, knowing how to effectively use Google is actually a marketable skill. Did you know that there are ways in Google Chrome to search for what you need that take less time than typing your query in...



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## About Celera Networks

We are a technology consulting firm specializing in technology implementation and management for businesses. We're known for providing big-business, Enterprise-Level IT services to small and medium-sized businesses.

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## 5 Signs Your Hard Drive is About to Fail



We all know the fleeting moment of fear as a computer slows to a grinding halt, taking forever to perform the most basic of tasks. At the same time, we also know the relief of when you find out there's nothing wrong with your PC. Still, what if that relief never comes? What if you're dealing with one of the most dangerous computer issues of all: a hard drive crash?

The risks of a hard drive crash are similar to any other type of hardware failure. If your drive is used for storing data, it can lead to data loss. If you're not using a quality backup and disaster recovery solution, you can bet that it'll be difficult, if not impossible, to restore your infrastructure to its former glory.

### Frequent Computer Crashes

If there's anything you've learned from reading our newsletter, it should be that computer crashes are never a good sign of anything. Ever. The reason it crashes is because it's incapable of locating or accessing important files that are crucial to the operation of the system, and it's a clear sign that something is not right with your machine.

(Continued on page 3)

## Prepare for Employee Turnover with a Foolproof Exit Checklist



One of the most dreaded situations in the modern office is the resignation of experienced talent. It's always sad to say goodbye to a colleague and friend... under the right circumstances. What would happen if an angry employee left your company and used their privileges to wreck havoc on your IT?

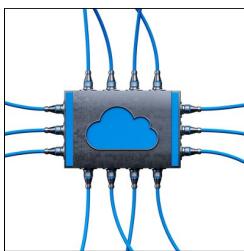
If you've taken proper precautions to ensure your former employees can't sabotage your network and steal your data, you're golden. However, this simply isn't the case with a lot of companies, mainly because they don't count on their former coworkers backstabbing them. This isn't the entire issue at hand. Even if a former employee doesn't intentionally take data from your business upon resignation, they could get hacked in the future, leaving sensitive data exposed. The best way to avoid employees walking off with corporate data is to take proper precautions, starting before they walk out your door.

### Perform an Exit Interview

Besides getting the opportunity to discuss why they're leaving the company, conducting an exit interview is a good time to iron out details that shouldn't be left unchecked. This is a good time to talk about what accounts the exiting employee has access to, what devices they've borrowed from the company, important documents they might possess, and how to get in touch with them after they leave.

(Continued on page 2)

## Why SMBs Need to Move Away from On-Premises Computing



Most small and medium-sized businesses aren't new to IT. For the past 15 years or so, SMBs have been

attempting to keep up with their larger competitors through the implementation of technology systems. They've instituted computing systems from servers to workstations to mobile devices, peripheral technologies like fax machines and copiers, "state of the art" networking technology, and all other sorts of tech, just trying to keep a leg up on their competition.

The problem for these businesses is that every cent they spend on managing physical technology won't necessarily produce much of a return on their substantial investments as they need to actively maintain the technology in order for it to work properly. This has left many companies hemorrhaging money by just trying to compete. If your business is still hosting all of its own IT infrastructure, it may be time for you to consider moving your IT out of your office.

While hosting your own IT has its benefits, for the small or medium-sized business it may bring more expense than it's worth. In moving your IT infrastructure to the cloud or to a colocated data center, you may see a dramatic cost savings, or at the very least a shift in way your organization pays for its crucial IT systems. The cloud, in particular, offers many SMBs a very attractive value proposition: Receive a scalable IT infrastructure, hosted in a secure data center, with proactive maintenance, billed monthly as an operational cost.

For some SMBs it may not make sense to move your entire IT infrastructure to the cloud. In fact, some organizations, just like the idea that they are in complete control of their IT, or more specifically, their data. If your organization needs to adhere to often-complicated IT regulations, or if you just want the freedom to have control over your company's IT management, you still don't have to host your computing infrastructure on your premises. By purchasing server space in a colocation facility, you can set up a private cloud platform that provides your business with all the benefits of cloud computing (like cost savings) without

out having to relinquish complete control over your crucial IT systems.

The professional IT consultants at Celera Networks can assess your situation and find a solution that works for your needs. We have a complete technical understanding of cloud computing systems, and how they fit into a SMB's IT strategy. Our technicians can also assist your company in the proliferation of new computing systems to provide your organization with powerful functions such as communications (like VoIP and email), productivity application deployment, and even cloud-based security solutions.

It's hard to ignore the benefits that moving all or some of your company's computing infrastructure to the cloud can bring. For an organization that is looking to free up capital, or simply to increase mobility, cloud computing can be of real benefit. Call us today at (617) 375-9100 to learn more about how moving your IT out of your office can really benefit your company.



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## Prepare for Employee Turnover with a Foolproof Exit Checklist

(Continued from page 1)

### Take Back Any Company-Provided Devices

Once you've identified that your employee is indeed leaving the organization, you need to collect the devices they've borrowed from the company, like laptops, mobile devices, and storage devices like USBs or hard drives. This helps to ensure that you don't let corporate data slip through the cracks. Collecting these devices ensures that you're the one in control of your data, which mitigates the chance of the data being compromised, both voluntarily and involuntarily.

### Promptly Change Email Passwords and Remote Access Accounts

For obvious reasons, you need to revoke

access to their email accounts. This helps to prevent them from accessing information that they shouldn't have access to following their departure from your company.

### Change All Relevant Passwords

You never know just how many passwords an employee might walk out of your company with, especially if they're saved in their personal mobile device's browser cache or they use a password manager. This is why it's important to make sure that all passwords are changed. If an employee were to get hacked, or decide that they don't agree with their dismissal from your organization, it could put your data at risk of being compromised.

### Wipe Mobile Devices

If your network can dish out security policies to mobile devices that gain access to company email, you will want to make sure you remotely wipe your accounts. This is something you would have needed to set up prior, but it prevents the user from walking away with their email in their pocket. Even if your former employee isn't a threat, if the device is lost or stolen it could come back to bite you.

### Warn Your IT

As always, you need to keep IT in the...



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## 5 Signs Your Hard Drive is About to Fail

(Continued from page 1)

### Disappearing Data

Another sign that your hard drive is failing is that data isn't where it's supposed to be. You'll probably notice this when you try to access a mission-critical application, but the software can't load because a file is missing or some other complication. Unless someone is behind the scenes messing with the location of data, your hard drive is probably just about done.

### Out-of-the-Ordinary Noises

You know there's something wrong when you hear strange grinding noises coming from your hard drive, but really, if anything at all sounds out of the ordinary, you probably have a big problem on your hands. If you start hearing noises coming from your hard drive that aren't normal, you should shut down

your PC and contact a professional for further consultation. These typically sound like a clicking noise coming from inside your PC. The last thing you want is your hard drive crashing on you while you're in the middle of an important project.

### Your Computer Doesn't Recognize the Drive

If your PC doesn't acknowledge the hard drive, it's a clear sign that there's something wrong. You can test whether this is an issue with the hard drive by testing it in another PC, but you should do so only if there's a professional on-hand to guide you through the process.

### Painfully Slow Processing Speed

If it takes your PC ages to open a basic folder or file, this means that it's having trouble locating and accessing it. Basical-

ly, if there's ever a problem opening files, you can assume that there's something wrong with the hard drive.

The idea behind these tips is to identify problems with your technology before they cause irreparable damage to your systems and, more importantly, your business. Unexpected problems can cause downtime, which is one expense your organization can't afford to deal with. By taking these proactive approaches, you can make sure you spot a problem before it harms your business's productivity.

What Celera Networks offers is a more comprehensive and equally proactive...



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## Don't Let Underutilized Servers Hold Your Business Back



How messy is your server room? When was the last time you took note of how many machines you have, and

what each of them are contributing to your business's goals? If either of these situations sound familiar, it might be time to take a closer look at your technology and examine how you can improve operations. One of the best ways you can do so is by eliminating unnecessary costs from unused and underutilized servers.

According to Processor magazine, a solid 30 percent of all powered-on servers aren't working to their maximum potential. In fact, support servers average only about a 12 to 18 percent utilization rate. This means that there are a ton of servers out there that are costing businesses money on unnecessary expenses. It's basically like wasted money, especially when you consider that many businesses

use several dedicated servers for email, file hosting, and more. The reasoning behind this is that the servers can function independently from one-another, but the reality of the situation is that servers use a ton of energy; energy that's wasted if not taken advantage of properly.

### The Benefits

There are many benefits to consolidating your server infrastructure. Performing a close analysis of your organization's server infrastructure is imperative to cutting unnecessary costs and optimizing your bottom line. Here are some of the great ways your company can benefit from elimination of underutilized or unused servers.

Dramatic decrease in energy costs. With less machines online at all times, you can save money on operational costs, maintenance, and energy. Servers eat up a ton of electricity, so it's natural that you do whatever you can to limit how much you use. Furthermore, maintenance is significantly less expensive if

you only have one machine that needs updating, rather than four.

Simplified computing infrastructure. Instead of having all of your technology spread across multiple pieces of hardware, you only need a minimal number of machines operating at all times. This makes it much easier to maintain and manage all of your mission-critical technology from one central location.

More physical space for activities and other technology. Regardless of how many servers you're able to eliminate, you'll be saving valuable space that can be used for other, more productive things. For instance, you can use the freed space for storage. You'll finally be able to get rid of that fax machine that's been collecting dust on your desk.

If you're unsure how many of your servers are underutilized, or if you need...



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## How Gamers Can Be an Asset to Your Business



"Do you think this is a game?" In the past, a boss may have used this line to criticize an employee for not taking their job seriously. However, in today's more creative work environments, many companies are using game mechanics to achieve their goals. This business strategy is called gamification, and it's the most fun way to get work done.

### Take a Risk with Gamification

Gamification motivates people by drawing from a person's desire for achievement and competition. Turning a goal into a game can be done with common tasks like employee training and even project completion. Gamification can also be used to get customers more engaged with your product or service. When customers engage your company as they would a competitive game, brand loyalty increases and you're provided with valuable feedback that can be used to improve marketing efforts, productivity, and customer service.

### Acquire Motivation Using Gaming Tactics

Gamification has broad (and

board) applications. Businesses using gamification tactics aren't necessarily dealing with customers playing cards and paying employees with Monopoly money, although, these strategies certainly qualify as legitimate gamification tactics. One successful example of gamification that you're likely familiar with is reward points. Credit card companies reward consumers with points in order to motivate them to spend more money. These points can be redeemed for something a consumer cares about like airline miles and credit at their favorite retailer. Motivating with rewards is a powerful gamification tactic that drives sales.

### Guess Who? Assembling Your Gamification Team

Implementing gamification for your business takes some "outside the box" thinking. Successful gamification tactics capitalize on a person's drive for fun competition. Therefore, you don't want the person in charge of gamifying a company task to be someone with a straight-laced and by-the-book personality. Instead, look for the guy or girl that has a knack for having fun and knows how to motivate others. You will also want to involve a staff member that has a proven creative side. With your gamifica-

tion team in place, all you have to do is roll the dice with your team and watch company morale improve! Before you know it, everyone will get the same enjoyment out of your business as a friendly game of poker (when the cards are going your way, of course).

### The Game of Life and Technology

In the same way that the most popular games of today are video games, there are great gamification solutions available for your company's technology. Many of these gamification solutions can be installed on your company's website. Gamification technology can also be utilized over your company's network in order to track staff performance. This can turn the completion of projects into healthy competition.

### Gamification Helps Technology Users Get a Clue

Gaming elements are showing up in more technologies. Software manufacturers are even making a game out of teaching users how to utilize their software. Adobe, for example, has an onboarding program for Photoshop called LevelUp...



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We partner with businesses in many different vertical markets throughout the New England area. The Celera team is focused on customer service and we strive to eliminate IT issues before they cause expensive downtime.

Our goal is for our clients to continue to focus on what's most important - their business.

Our dedicated staff is known for going the extra mile and doing what it takes for our clients to be successful with their technology investments.

Your firm's success is our success.

### Tech Fun Fact

Nokia was originally a paper manufacturer.

## Celera Networks

11 Elkins Street  
Suite 330  
Boston, Massachusetts 02127  
Voice: (617) 375-9100



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