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Don't Miss Our Cloud Webinar

Are you evaluating a move to the cloud? Do you want to learn how you can leverage the cloud to improve productivity and reduce costs? If either of these are true then you NEED to go to our website at:

www.connectability.com/cloud

And sign up for our FREE webinar.

When: Tuesday, May 16th

Time: 1:30 pm—2:30 pm

Admission: FREE (limited to 25 virtual seats)

Where: In the cloud! (You'll receive a confirmation by email once you register)

We'll be discussing pros, cons and legal considerations to keep in mind when moving to the cloud, so don't miss out!

May 2017



This monthly publication provided courtesy of Ted Shafran, President of Connectability Inc



Use This 9-Step Checklist To Ensure Your Data Is Safe, Secure And Recoverable

Summer is upon us... Time for a stroll in the park... baseball... fishing... a few rounds of golf... Yet how can you possibly relax if some random bit of malware, software glitch or cyber-attack catches you off guard just as you're walking out the door? A well-designed secure computer network gives you the confidence that "all systems are go," whether you're having fun in the sun, or just getting things done with your team.

Here's a quick nine-step checklist we use to ensure that a company's computer network, and the data for that business, is safe and secure from disruption, if not absolute devastation:

1. **A written recovery plan.** Simply thinking through what needs to happen when things go south, and documenting it all IN ADVANCE, can go a long way toward getting your network back up and running quickly if it gets hacked, impacted by natural
2. **Have a clear communication plan.** What if your employees can't access your office, e-mail or phone system? How will they communicate with you? Make sure your communications plan details every alternative, including MULTIPLE ways to stay in touch in the event of a disaster.
3. **Automate your data backups.** THE #1 cause of data loss is human error. If your backup system depends on a human being always doing something right, it's a recipe for disaster. Automate your backups wherever possible so they run like clockwork.
4. **Have redundant off-site backups.** On-site backups are a good first step, but if they get flooded, burned or hacked along with your server, you're out of luck. ALWAYS maintain a recent copy of your data off-site.

disaster or compromised by human error.

Continued pg.2 >>>

5. **Enable remote network access.** Without remote access to your network, you and your staff won't be able to keep working in the event that you can't get into your office. To keep your business going, at the very minimum, you need a way for your IT specialist to quickly step in when needed.

6. **System images are critical.** Storing your data off-site is a good first step. But if your system is compromised, the software and architecture that handles all that data must be restored for it to be useful. Imaging your server creates a replica of the original, saving you an enormous amount of time and energy in getting your network back in gear, should the need arise. Without it, you risk losing all your preferences, configurations, favorites and more.

7. **Maintain an up-to-date network "blueprint."** To rebuild all or part of your network, you'll need a blueprint of the software, data, systems and hardware that comprise your company's network. An IT professional can create this for you. It could save you a huge amount of time and money in the event your network needs to be restored.

8. **Don't ignore routine maintenance.**

While fires, flooding and other natural disasters are always a risk, it's more likely that you'll have downtime due to a software or hardware glitch or cyber-attack. That's why it's critical to keep your network patched, secure and up-to-date. Deteriorating hardware and corrupted software can wipe you out. Replace

and update them as needed to steer clear of this threat.

9. **Test, Test, Test!** If you're going to go to the trouble of setting up a plan, at least make sure it works! An IT professional can check monthly to make sure your systems work properly and your data is secure. After all, the worst time to test your parachute is AFTER you jump out of the plane.

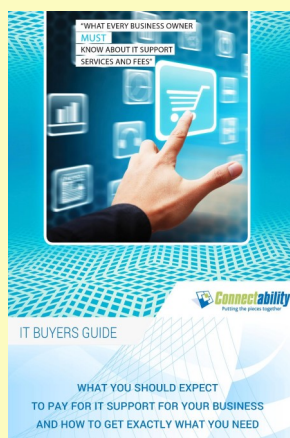
THE #1 cause of data loss is human error. If your backup system depends on a human being always doing something right, it's a recipe for disaster. Automate your backups wherever possible so they run like clockwork."

Be certain that you have all 9 steps fully covered with our FREE Disaster Recovery Audit

Contact us at (416) 966-3306, info@connectability.com, or visit

www.connectability.com/protectmybusiness to schedule our **Disaster Recovery Audit** FREE of charge, now through May 31. **Contact us TODAY to get**

Free Report Download: The Business Owner's Guide To IT Support Services And Fees



You will learn:

- The 3 most common ways IT services companies charge for their services, and the pros and cons of each approach.
- A common billing model that puts ALL THE RISK on you, the customer, when buying IT services; you'll learn what it is and why you need to avoid agreeing to it.
- Exclusions, hidden fees and other "gotcha" clauses IT companies put in their contracts that you DON'T want to agree to.
- How to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid disappointment, frustration and added costs later on that you didn't anticipate.

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Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Surface Studio: All Beauty, A Little Brains

“We want to move from people needing Windows...to loving Windows.”

So said CEO Satya Nadella after taking over Microsoft. And their new Surface Studio takes a bold step in that direction.

In a bid to win over creative types, they designed the Studio with a gorgeous desktop screen that easily glides from vertical to almost horizontal, like an artist’s sketchpad. With its Apple Computer-like brushed aluminum finish and ultra-thin screen, it’s feels right at home in an open-plan office with microbrews on tap.

The guts of the machine are stuffed into a nine-inch-long base that’s joined to the screen with an überslick hinge design, allowing it to fold nearly flat for stylus- or touch-driven design work.

Downsides? Well, you’ll pay at least \$3,000. And it’s a bit underpowered to be in that price range. But all in all, even the graphically challenged will find this machine tantalizing.

What EVERY Business NEEDS To Stay Secure:

As IT consultants it’s our job to secure our customers against cyber threats. That’s why our Managed Services plans include the premium security tools we feel are necessary for **ALL businesses**. That means no “free” tools! You get what you pay for in terms of security.

These tools include: Antivirus, Antimalware, Remote monitoring and management (prevents small issues from snowballing), and remote access software (allows us to fix problems faster).

Unfortunately, even with these protections, you still need a **properly configured, managed business-grade** firewall. A firewall

basically controls the traffic in and out of your network. Consumer grade firewall/router combos aren’t sophisticated enough to scan the traffic, and are known to let infections through. Additionally, **NO** firewall is properly configured out of the box. Properly configuring a firewall requires a lot of technical skill, so if you think it’s protecting you fresh out of the box, think again!

For a nominal cost you should get an enterprise-grade firewall, a subscription license, and daily updates and management from your IT provider. If you don’t have this, call us right away! It could save you some serious headaches later.

Windows 10 Creators Updates: What You Need To Know

This past week Microsoft released the **Windows 10 Creators Update**. If it hasn’t already installed, it will likely be applied soon. Don’t try to install it yourself though! Microsoft specifically rolls the update out to a limited number of machines to test, so wait until they push the update to you. This could have a major effect on the way you use your computer so read on to learn about some of the changes:

User privacy. Microsoft collects a lot of data, but with Windows 10 they haven’t been particularly clear about what data they are collecting and what it is used for. With the update you can now go to the Control Panel and turn off individual data collection settings as you please.

Windows Updates. Windows 10 has a reputation for forcing restarts at inopportune times. If you’ve ever been in the middle of a task when Microsoft insisted you restart your computer to apply updates you know what I mean. Sometimes it’s annoying, but if you’re working on an important document, it can be potentially disastrous. Now Microsoft gives you the option of “Snoozing” updates for up to 3 days. You can even snooze updates indefinitely (although we seriously recommend against it). You can even specify longer “Active Hours” during which Microsoft will never restart to install an update. No more losing unsaved documents to an unexpected restart!

Restrict unauthorized apps. This is a significant improvement for those in charge of network management. You can now restrict users from downloading applications from outside the Windows Store. That means one potential avenue for virus or malware infections is neutralized. If you’d like us to set this up on your office PC’s just give us a call!

Security. If you pair your smartphone with your PC using Bluetooth, your computer will now lock automatically when you walk away with your phone. It takes 30 seconds to recognize that you’ve moved it, so it’s not going to be mistaken for Fort Knox, but it’s better than no additional security at all.

If you have any more questions about the Windows 10 Creators Update or getting the most out of Windows call us today!

■ **The Cloudflare Screw-up: Have your passwords been compromised?**

Little bugs can cause huge problems. Like when web performance and security company Cloudflare's code upgrade leaked sensitive data to 3,438 unique domains this past February. Everything from API keys to personal data was exposed. And scariest of all is that any bot could have accessed every bit of it. The good news is that Cloudflare was alerted to the tiny leak before hackers discovered it. The bad news is, a more moderate-sized leak could bring down the web. It just brings home the point that you need to be more vigilant than ever. Change passwords routinely. Use strong passwords that hackers can't easily break. Upgrade to two-factor authentication. *Gizmodo, 02.17.17*

■ **"There aren't enough hours in the day!"** This is a common complaint of modern day employees. Often it's not

about having too much to do, but rather not being able to handle the load efficiently. Here are 3 new apps that can help improve your efficiency and productivity.

- 1) **Timely:** Organizing schedules and logging hours can be time consuming. This app allows users to set up projects and estimate times for completion. It even has a real-time stopwatch function.
- 2) **Gero Time Management:** This is a useful app for people who like to work with a lot of structure. It's said to improve focus and efficiency a la the "Pomodoro Technique".
- 3) **Pingpad:** If you've used *Slack* then the idea of digital collaboration tools isn't new to you. Pingpad is similar to Google Docs and Slack, but involves a combination of document sharing, messaging and time management, while most available tools focus on one or the other. *Globe and Mail 10.29.15*

■ **Is your in-car GPS necessary anymore?** Smartphones offer turn-by-

-turn navigation, satellite-tracked speed readings, voice guidance and real-time, crowdsourced traffic alerts. So why dish out another 300 bucks for your own on-dash, in-car system? Well, those in-car systems have come a long way too... Having voice-command capability, Bluetooth connectivity, geo-based suggestions and a large fixed screen might be reason enough. But if your phone's monthly data allotment and battery life concern you at all, that in-car GPS, with its own data and power sources, starts looking pretty good. And with features like a streaming dash cam and sensor that warns you if you're following a car too closely, in-car GPS is definitely worth a second look.

DigitalTrends, 02.24.17

■ **Get weird with Virtual Reality (VR) tools.** You may not have a clue about how to draw, much less in 3-D.

Doesn't matter... Whereas VR used to be a tool for techies, now amateurs can get in on the act. A-Frame by Mozilla, for instance, lets you easily type in commands that place 3-D objects like blocks, balls and more into a VR scene you create. Tilt Brush lets you paint in the air wearing a Google Vive headset. And Second Life inventor Philip Rosedale is building software that lets you invite friends into a VR world you design. Most of what any amateur creates will likely be grotesque, ugly or flat-out lame, but somewhere in all that mess, amazing new products will be born.

Wired, 02.24.17

Client Spotlight: Kim Graham & Associates

We're delighted to welcome a new customer to the Connectability Family: Kim Graham & Associates (kg&a). kg&a is an award-winning boutique public relations firm, established in 2003. Over the last decade they've earned a reputation as one of the only communications companies in Canada specializing in the urban landscape.

kg&a has a niche focus on design, architecture, interiors, residential and commercial real estate, urban design and economic development. Their unique approach is focused around creating brand narratives, and fostering partnerships.

We feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with kg&a and we're looking forward to building a lasting partnership!

*Want to be featured in our "Client Spotlight" ?
Call 416-966-3306 Now!*