

September
2017

In this issue...

Virtualization
Saved SMBs
from Hurricanes

8 Free
SharePoint
Tool for IT
Admins

E-Safe Fall
Happy Hour!

New Phishing
Targets Office
365 Users



Virtualization saved SMBs from hurricanes

One of the most brutal hurricane seasons on record is coming to a close and many small businesses are already planning for the next. Regardless of your organization's location, you need to be prepared for any kind of disaster, natural or manmade. Virtualization is one of your best bets for staying operational through thick and thin.

Instead of logging on to an operating system stored on a hard drive just a few inches away from their keyboard, employees can take advantage of server hardware to store their files across a network. With barebones computers, employees can log in to these virtual desktops either in the office or from home. Floods, fires and other disasters won't prevent your team from working because they can continue remotely.

Virtual desktops

In most offices, employees are still dependent on desktop computers. Their workstations grant them access to everything from customer relationship software to company databases and when these computers go down, there's no way to get work done. Virtualized desktops allow users to access their files and even computing power from across the internet.

Virtual applications

Devoting a portion of your server's hardware and software resources to virtual desktops requires a fair amount of computing power. If the majority of your employees' time is spent working with just one or two pieces of software, you can virtualize just those applications.

If a hurricane destroyed your office and the hardware inside it, virtualized applications can be restored in minutes. They don't need to be installed on the machines that use them, and as long as you have backups these applications can be streamed to employee computers just like a cloud-based application.

Virtual servers

If you use virtual desktops or applications, it makes perfect sense to use virtual servers as well. With a little help from a managed services provider, your servers can be configured to automatically create virtual backups. Beyond preventing data loss, these backups also make it possible to restore server functionality with off site restorations.

Virtualized servers are incredibly useful when clients need access to a website or database that you maintain in the office. For example, if you provide background checks on tenants to rental property owners through your website, an unexpected power outage won't cause an interruption of service. Your virtualization solution will boot up a backup server away from the power outage and your customers will be none the wiser.

The benefits of virtualization extend far beyond disaster recovery planning. Your business can also reduce IT costs and increase hardware capacity -- all it takes is some help from trained experts. Call us today to learn more about what we can do for you.



8 Free SharePoint Tools to Make IT Admins Smile!

Microsoft SharePoint comes with a lot in the box, but many say the real strength of any software product is in the ecosystem that surrounds it. SharePoint is no exception, with many high-quality add-on products available from both Microsoft and third-party providers to enhance SharePoint and address some of its shortcomings.

Here are eight tools that are particularly useful in today's landscape — plus a bonus product that's practically free.

1. Marco Wiedemeyer's SPDeployment command-line tool

Many enterprise IT shops develop SharePoint solutions — programs and applications that live inside SharePoint — but developers often have a hard time deploying their solutions to the right spots within the SharePoint hosting infrastructure, whether that is on-premises or up in Office 365. Who wants to keep all those details straight every time you make a change to a SharePoint solution?

Marco Wiedemeyer has developed an open-source tool that developers can run from the command line; it reads a standard JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) file, automatically puts files where they should be, and marks properties as they need to be. It handles the credentials of logging into SharePoint as well. You can even use it with multiple sites and environments and trigger deployments as granularly as your developers need. **SPDeployment** is hosted on GitHub, gets installed via the NuGet Package Manager (NPM), and works right from a command console. Free.

2. The SharePoint Online Management Shell

If you have worked with Microsoft server products for any length of time in the past few years, you know that PowerShell is the way to get things done from an administrative perspective. Microsoft's **SharePoint Online Management Shell** is a pre-configured PowerShell environment that has called all of the SharePoint Online (Office 365) cmdlets into one safe space. You can do basically any SharePoint Online management tasks from here: create content packages to migrate file share data to SharePoint Online, create new document libraries, turn on and off external access to certain SharePoint sites, and on and on.

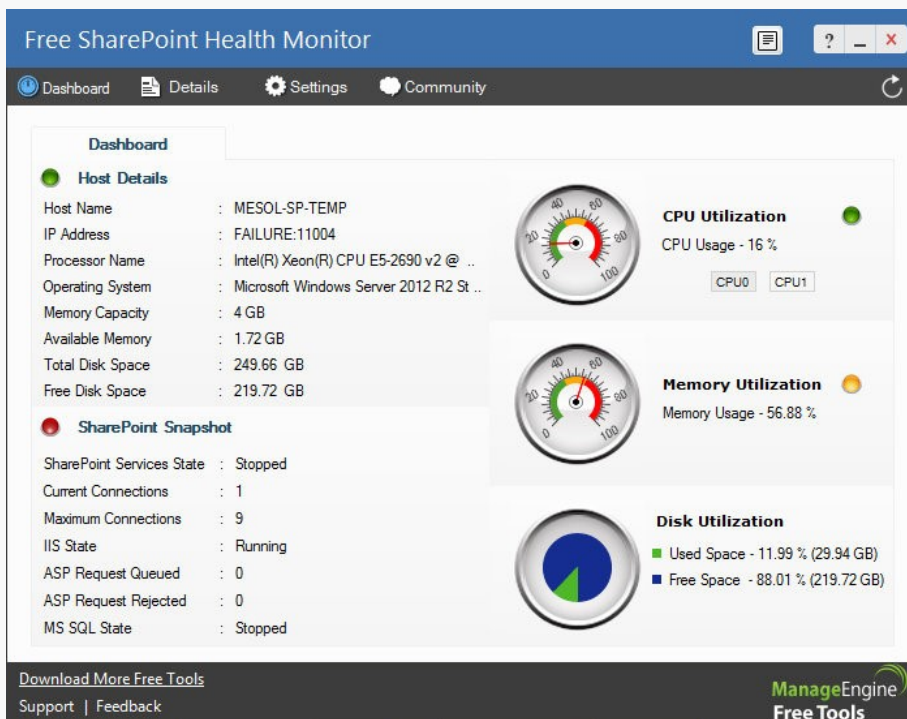
If you have even the slightest need to manage Office 365, then you should grab this shell — it is a virtual certainty that having it will make your life easier. Be sure to right-click it after installation and run it as administrator or essentially nothing will work. Free; runs on your local machine.

3. ManageEngine's Free SharePoint Health Monitor Tool

If you've not invested in a lot of systems monitoring tools or you have a smaller SharePoint deployment, you might want a lightweight tool that gives you just an overall rollup of your SharePoint farm's health status at a glance. The **ManageEngine Free SharePoint Health Monitor** fits this bill nicely, giving you a convenient dashboard view where you can see details about the CPU, memory and disk space usage for each server running SharePoint.

Then you can drill down into the SharePoint workload itself and see the response time, service status, web server (Internet Information Services) process details, and even SQL Server details like free pages, cache memory and buffer cache hit ratio.

While this tool won't help you with Office 365 deployments, and it does not appear to be supported for SharePoint 2016 installations, it does indeed work with SharePoint 2007, 2010 and 2013, which are still widely used. Free; runs locally.



4. Visual Studio Community Edition 2017

In a land long ago and far away, SharePoint Designer was the preferred tool for non-developers to use to reformat, re-scape, and develop simple SharePoint solutions. Unfortunately, SharePoint Designer is no longer supported and works only with SharePoint 2013 and earlier. The tool of choice now is the surprisingly good **Visual Studio Community Edition** with the **Office Developer Tools** extension.

The community edition is the free version of Microsoft's very capable integrated developer environment (IDE), and the Office Developer Tools plug-in lights up IntelliSense and debugging capabilities that let you run solutions right on the SharePoint Server itself, remotely in Office 365, or in an Office web app. This tool works with essentially all versions of SharePoint no matter where they are hosted. Free; runs locally.

5. Amrein Engineering's free Microsoft SharePoint Web Parts

Web parts — pluggable components designed to be run within SharePoint — have been around almost as long as SharePoint itself, but they have come in and out of fashion as the product has matured over the years. Still, there are many tasks for which a web part is the best tool for the job.

SharePoint 2016 comes with several built in, but groupware firm Amrein Engineering has developed **around 70 web parts** that do everything from reading Exchange conference room calendars to tracking individual stocks to performing overall task rollups across a given team. Your users can grab these web parts and build simple pages and project sites themselves. Some of the 70 web parts are free, while others are licensed for a one-time fee for anywhere from \$50 to \$175; all come with evaluation periods, and they are easy to license right from the page.

AE Task Rollup Web Part

Title	List	% Complete	Priority	DueDate	Status	AssignedTo
Administrator						
Set up Central Admin	SPTasks	80%	High	4/2/2012	Completed	Administrator
Juerg Amrein						
Test Task	Tasks	100%	Low	2/16/2012	Completed	Juerg Amrein
Task number two	Tasks	100%	Low	3/13/2012	Completed	Mehmet Erkan
Task Number 2	Tasks	35%	Low	9/26/2011	In Progress	

6. Veeam Backup Free Edition 9.5

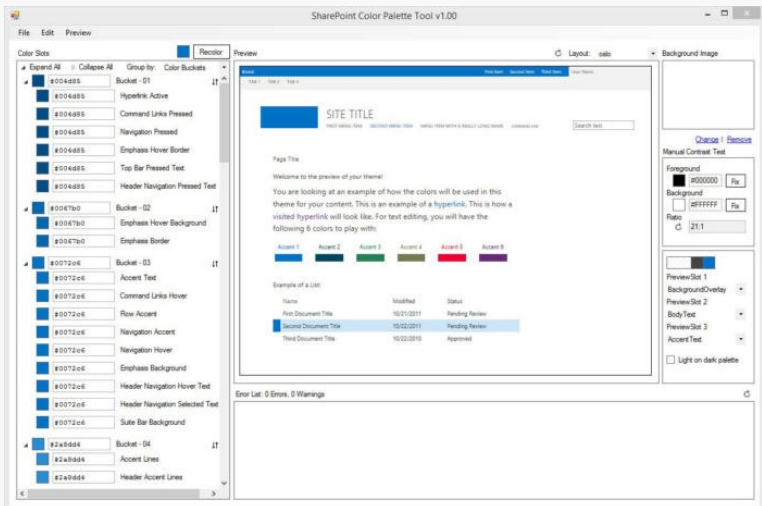
Veeam offers a really useful tool for shops with investments in on-premises servers. Sometimes your backup software isn't aware of SharePoint specifically, or maybe your backup just grabs virtual machines and copies them without doing anything intelligent on the processing side. **Veeam's free backup product** is really quite good — I use it myself in my Hyper-V lab — and works with both Hyper-V and VMware.

Picture your SharePoint VM farm: wouldn't it be nice to clone, copy, export and manage those VMs? Sometimes wouldn't it be useful to peek inside the VM to restore individual application items? Veeam Backup lets you do this on an unlimited number of ESXi and Hyper-V hosts or VMs. It is totally free and thus a great tool to have in your arsenal as part of a layered SharePoint on-premises backup strategy.

As an added bonus, you get Veeam Explorer, which lets you browse the backup database graphically, use full text search to find documents and items, restore individual items as well as their permissions if they have been backed up, export recovered items back into SharePoint directly or as email attachments, and more. Free; runs locally.

7. SharePoint Color Palette Tool

If you are not a web designer or graphic artist, coming up with aesthetically pleasing color palettes for new SharePoint sites, whether they are standard document libraries or "containers" for your custom solutions, can be a real challenge. Never fear: Microsoft has a nice little tool to help you create polished, composed color choices. The **SharePoint Color Palette Tool** works with SharePoint 2013, 2016 and now Office 365. Free; runs locally.



8. Refactored SharePoint SUSHI

An open-source project, SharePoint SUSHI is a powerful, user-friendly utility that enables you to accomplish common administrative tasks. Think of SUSHI (which stands for for SharePoint Utility with a Smart, Helpful Interface) as a Swiss army knife for SharePoint. But the original version of SUSHI supports only SharePoint 2007 and languishes unloved on the deprecated CodePlex platform.

Ivan Sanders, a SharePoint MCT, MCTS, MCITP and MCSE has refactored the tool for use with SharePoint 2013. It is unclear if the new tool works with SharePoint 2016, but it does not in any way interface with Office 365. With the **refactored SharePoint SUSHI** tool, you can view the lists and sites any given user can access, which is really helpful for looking at effective permissions; upload user photos as profile images; back up and restore sites; apply a theme to a group of sites with one click; and much more.

This is a Visual Studio solution that you download from GitHub and build yourself, or you can use a precompiled EXE that's also available on GitHub. Free; runs locally.



Layered Security and Bowling Event

Contact us to register today! This will be a free event. Enjoy food, drinks and fun.

If you're challenged by meeting the demands of the always-on business while facing the risk of Ransomware, data explosions, time constraints and even critical systems hardware failures, then join us on Oct 12th. Discover how the joint solution of Veeam Software, Packetviper, and ExaGrid, partnered with E-Safe, can help you get:

- Heterogeneous Backup Application Support
- Shortest Backup Window - 3x Faster
- Instant Restores/VM Boots - 20x faster
- Fixed-length backup window no matter how much data grows

DATE:

Thurs., Oct 12, 2017

TIME:

3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

LOCATION:

Main Event Entertainment
200 Wuinn Dr,
Pittsburg, PA 15275



Or Visit [THIS LINK](#) to Sign Up NOW!



New phishing scam targets Office 365 users

With more than 100 million monthly active subscribers, Office 365 has attracted the attention of hackers who've revamped an age-old trick. This time, they come up with a highly targeted, well-crafted spear-phishing scam that's even more difficult to identify. Here's everything you need to know.

What makes it different from other scams?

The new threat comes in the form of spear phishing, an old familiar method in which hackers send emails that purport to be from trusted sources and dupe you into disclosing sensitive information. In this particular attack, the email messages are admirably well-crafted, making them even harder to spot.

The emails are also rid of the usual telltale signs such as misspelled words, suspicious attachments, and dubious requests. You might have to recalibrate what you know about phishing scams, because this new threat ticks all the boxes that make it look legitimate.

How does it work?

The hackers behind the attack craft personalized messages, pretending to be from trusted sources, such as your colleagues or Microsoft itself, and send them to your inbox. The messages could contain a link or a PDF file that leads to a legitimate-looking landing page. Upon clicking the link, the user will be prompted to enter his or her credentials, which the hacker will use to launch attacks within the organization.

Once they gain control of your account, they might set up new forwarding rules to monitor your communication patterns, which will be useful for their future attacks. They might even use your account to send further phishing emails to your co-workers to collect more sensitive information.

As for the phishing emails with PDF attachments, there will be instructions to fill in username and password to view the document. And once you do, your account is no longer yours.

Another way they can get your credentials is by sending an invoice that requires you to log on to a web portal to view the file. Attackers can also use this technique to trick you into performing a certain action, such as forwarding sensitive information or paying an invoice.

What can you do to stay protected?

Your first line of defense is multi-factor authentication, whereby you use a password and another authentication method -- like an SMS code -- to secure your account. This function is already included in Office 365 and here's a step-by-step guide on how to activate it.

The second line of defense is training yourself and your employees to spot common phishing techniques. In particular, verify the accuracy of the wording and the sensibility of the requests in the messages. For good measure, your organization can also install an email-validation system which is designed to detect and prevent email spoofing, such as the Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting and Conformance (DMARC).