E-NEWS

April 2018

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March Madness Recap

E-Safe Technologies wrapped up it's 9th Annual March Madness event on March 29th. What a great event it was! This years event was packed with tons of valuable information provided by our vendors. This year we hosted PacketViper, Barracuda, Citrix, Veeam, Exagrid, Liquidware Labs, Sophos, Conectel, and Lenovo.

The presentations they gave were not only engaging, but helpful in showing vital steps companies need to take to better their IT. The topics that were covered this year included, security, infrastructure, continuity, data backup, cloud services and much more, If you were unable to attend the event we have posted all presentations on our website at:

http://www.e-safetech.com/resources/march-madness-presentations/

Be sure to check them out!

Along with our vendors E-Safe Technologies was able to bring in an amazing guest speaker, Eric McElvenny.

Eric is an endurance athlete living in Pittsburgh, PA. He earned a mechanical engineering degree from the United States Naval Academy while preparing for his service as a Marine Corps Infantry Officer. Eric deployed three times as a Marine and on his final tour, was wounded after stepping on an IED. Eric suffered the amputation of his right leg below the knee, a life-changing opportunity that began his next journey. Faced with a physical challenge and an uncertain future, Eric made a promise to himself to run an Ironman Triathlon. He has since competed in NINE!

Eric shared his story and journey with us that day, moving the crowd from tears to laughter. He showed us that no matter what we face in life as long as we are determined we can over come it.

This years March Madness was the best yet, and we couldn't have done it with out the help our Eric, our vendors, and most importantly you, our customers! We thank you for continuing to be with us and choosing us to support your company. THANK YOU!

Windows Server 2019 Announced

If Microsoft's latest server software is any indication, the virtualization trend shows no signs of slowing down. The first preview of Windows Server 2019 was released in March and includes a number of features focused on IT efficiency. Let's take a look at the most valuable updates for small businesses.

Windows Server 2019

In March, Microsoft released a preview of Windows Server 2019 and announced that it will be generally available before the year is over. This will be the eighth iteration of the Windows Server operating system and will include new features to help businesses manage their network security, data storage, and administrative controls.

Virtualization improvements

One of the biggest changes coming to Windows Server is how application containers are created and managed. Containers make it possible to package everything an app needs to run and deliver it to desktops, regardless of a desktop's hardware and software specifications.

So if you're using an Apple computer with almost no free hard drive space, you could run a Windows application stored in a container without any problem.

Microsoft claims it can reduce the storage requirements of containers to one third of their current size with Server 2019. Additionally, the operating system will introduce new compatibilities with an open-source virtualization standard known as Kubernetes, opening up countless new possibilities for customization.
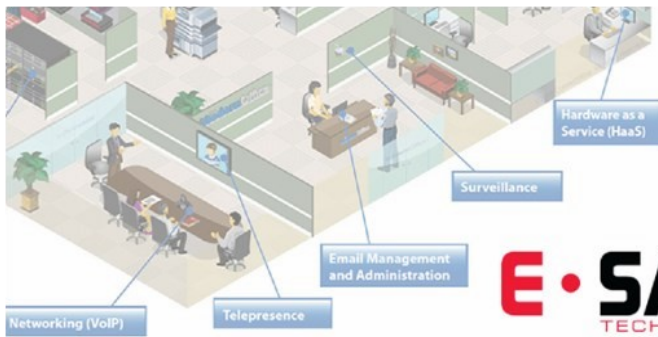
Security enhancements

A virtual machine is similar to a container, but instead of packaging just one application, virtual machines contain entire desktop environments that are powered by server hardware and accessible from remote workstations. Windows Server 2019 will make virtual machines even harder to penetrate, meaning that even if a cyberattacker compromised your server, the virtual machines stored on it would be protected by an additional layer of security.

Microsoft is also incorporating its Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) protocols into its newest operating system. ATP has been incredibly successful at intelligently detecting and preventing cyberattacks on previous versions of Windows, and adding it to Server 2019 is a welcome addition.

Virtualization is a perfect example of how IT support models are evolving. A decade ago, virtual machines and containers would have been reserved for all but the largest organizations, but today these cutting-edge technologies are both affordable and flexible enough for small businesses. The only thing SMBs need is qualified IT support.

Give us a call today about upgrading your technology infrastructure.

"What is Remote Monitoring and Automation?"

Remote monitoring and automation is a process that can help alleviate some of the burden off of your network administrators. It is an automated software that keeps an eye on your network, scanning different outputs and specifications to create a report which one can analyze on a daily basis. The software can provide your technical experts with 24 hour monitoring of the physical infrastructure, loosening the strain on internal support resources. When something is off in your environment there is an alarm notification system that is linked back to your provider. Customers are notified in real-time via email, phone message, or through the ticketing portal. As critical events occur, this real-time notification allows them to reduce the time it usually takes to diagnose and correct the arising issues. This improves overall efficiency and maximizes their uptime. Most providers enable their customers access to the web portal, which offers a central repository of system information with a dashboard view of the status of their systems. This provides users with convenience and the confidence needed to continue to run at optimal speed. Also, the system automates everything on it's own which it extremely reliable. The monitoring and automation system runs 24x7 and performs regular inspections. This takes the possibility of human error out of the equation so you don't have to rely on calendar reminders and meeting schedules. Monitoring and automation software is the first step in creating more time for your network administrators.

E·SAFE TECHNOLOGIES — Start with a Plan, Finish with Success.

"How Can Remote Monitoring Improve My Business?"

Remote monitoring and automation has come a long way and has transformed the IT services industry. Here are a few things that these software applications monitor and track:

Hard Drive/Disc Space - Disc space on your network devices can fill up quick and then crash unexpectedly, leaving you down and out. The system monitors remaining space and creates a ticket when there is a threatening situation.

Backup Automation - Backups should run every half hour to make sure your business could be up-and-running in case of a disaster. The software keeps track of these backups and makes sure they are happening as smooth as possible.

Patch Health - Operating systems come are updated on a monthly basis to make sure your device doesn't experience lagging, glitching, and crashing. The support system automatically installs these patches and keeps your OS running at optimal speed.

Anti-Virus Updates - Hackers, spammers, and phishers are sitting at their computers on a daily basis trying to penetrate our networks to obtain personal data about our customers. Automation at the anti-virus level is extremely crucial to keep your data secure. The monitoring software keeps those anti-virus solutions up to date, ensuring that your vital business information is protected.

Next Issue:

VoIP

See What Our Customers Are Saying: What our customers are saying:
"When we decided to jump into the 21st century and upgrade the enterprise from one small business server to a complete data center and disaster recovery location in support of a nationwide company, the professionals at E-Safe offered their experience and expertise to plan, develop, employ and assist in the operation of our dynamic virtual environment. From planning to implementation and maintenance we continue to trust our friends at E-Safe. Our environment continues to grow and we look forward to continuing the strong relationship that we have built with the professionals at E-Safe"
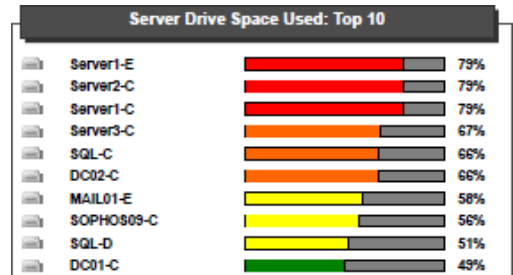- Bill Barnwell, Turret Steel

The **Modern**Office™

"How Does Remote Monitoring and Automation Work?"

Remote monitoring and automation is an extremely non-intrusive way to gather data and information about your network and systems. To implement the solution, a provider can come to your office and install the software on your servers and workstations. Once the software is running on your system, the network administrator will update the system with the appropriate services you are looking to implement. It can automate your backup process, patch updates, anti-virus solution, and create tickets through the web portal that will notify you if something is awry. If you are on a basic monitoring agreement, you can either try to fix the problem yourself or you can notify your provider (who will also receive the ticket) and they will resolve the issue for you. These automation software solutions are also part of most managed services contracts. Your provider becomes your trusted partner in IT, so they get to know your environment and equipment. They install the software and can resolve issues before they turn into business crippling defects. Monitoring and automation streamlines the IT support model and makes a huge difference in uptime. With solutions like these, simplifying your IT management has never been easier.

Server Drive Space Used: Top 10	
Server1-E	79%
Server2-C	79%
Server1-C	79%
Server3-C	67%
SQL-C	66%
DC02-C	66%
MAIL01-E	58%
SOPHOS09-C	56%
SQL-D	51%
DC01-C	49%

"What's My Investment In Remote Monitoring?"

The pricing model for remote monitoring is similar to that of any managed services plan. Usually, you will be charged per device per month. These plans also come with a discounted hourly rate for services. Suppose the system creates a ticket that rolls into your email inbox. It is going to be a difficult process to get the problem fixed. You decide you want your provider to come and handle the issue. The technician comes on-site to provide the service at a discounted hourly rate because you already have a monitoring contract with your provider.

Monitoring prices per server usually range anywhere between $20 and $50 depending on the software the provider is running and the level of support. The prices per workstation are much lower, usually between $5 and $15 depending on the solution. You can also factor in how much time your network administrator is spending repairing issues that could be augmented with an IT consultant. Monitoring enables you and your staff to take a proactive approach to business continuity instead of reacting on a break-fix basis.

Want to Learn More About Remote Monitoring or E-Safe's Modern Office Series?

Contact Bruce Thompson Today at Bthompson@e-safetech.com

3 Surprising Applications of Blockchain

Most people associate blockchain technology with Bitcoin, the infamous digital currency that rose to fame in 2017. But blockchain technology is not tied to financial transactions, and it's creating all sorts of exciting opportunities for faster, more secure information exchange -- see for yourself!

What is blockchain?

Blockchain, like the cloud, is more of a concept than a specific piece of software or hardware. It's the idea that if you store a spreadsheet or ledger on a hundred different computers -- each of which receive automatic and encrypted updates -- it's nearly impossible to create a fraudulent entry. If someone adds a line of false information to one spreadsheet, 99 others can confirm it is not in their copy and is therefore inaccurate.

In the Bitcoin ledger, each line represents the transfer of funds from one account to another. So if John wants to transfer money to Jane, he sends a request to Bitcoin's blockchain and thousands of computers confirm his account information is correct and he has sufficient funds. The money is transferred, both account balances are updated, and the whole process takes less than an hour with almost no human interaction. Much faster than the 5-7 business days of most banks.

There are countless applications for decentralized, real-time record keeping beyond financial transactions, though. And very soon, blockchain won't be synonymous with Bitcoin.

Blockchain's potential

Although this technology has been around since the '90s, it lacked the popularity and computing power necessary to become a mainstream solution...until now. With the rise of cryptocurrencies in 2017, blockchain started seeping into other industries, such as:

- **Law** - "Smart contracts" create agreements that automatically execute when their terms are met. For example, an attorney could agree to pay a courier $100 after the delivery of documents to the defendant in a case. The contract and the payment sit in the blockchain until the courier uploads a GPS-tagged photo of services rendered, at which point the money is transferred and the contract archived.
- **Agriculture** - Supply chain blockchains can track every ingredient throughout the production process. If several people get sick from the same food item, ingredients could be traced back to their source and products that share the same ingredients could be recalled preemptively.
- **Real estate** - Blockchain is being used to automate escrow account transactions, property title transfers, and insurance claims, so they aren't reliant on slow and error-prone humans. Buying a home could eventually be as easy as finding the one you want, signing a contract, transferring your down payment, and receiving the title -- no middleman necessary.

Most blockchain-based solutions are too new to trust with sensitive information. But you can do a few things to get out in front of your competitors. You can work with us to invest in business intelligence software that helps you collect more data, and start experimenting with risk-free blockchain solutions.

As long as you have certified technicians like ours at your disposal, you'll be sure to see gains in no time -- give us a call today!

How to Enjoy Real Cloud Cost-Savings

If you want to increase collaboration, productivity, and security all while keeping costs down, the cloud is the perfect solution. But if you're not careful, hidden charges can creep up on your monthly bill, preventing you from truly reaping the benefits of the cloud. Fortunately, there are some things you can do to bring these costs down.

Don't go for standalone services
Standalone services are the biggest price trap in the cloud. Spending on a standalone cloud software may seem harmless now, but if you decide to purchase similar services, the costs can quickly pile up. Then, there's the issue of integrating these systems together, which costs even more time and money.

The best way around this is to find a service provider that offers a suite of products that work seamlessly together. Platforms like Office 365 or G Suite are great examples, and offer you differently priced packages based on the size and requirements of your business.

Team up with integration experts
If you do need to subscribe to a standalone service, you'll want to integrate it with the rest of your cloud platform.

But if you have limited experience with integrations, mistakes are likely to happen and cause downtime, which will inevitably cost you time and money.

The more economical option is to partner with a cloud integration expert, as they can quickly configure and deploy your systems with zero mistakes.

Understand cloud backup costs
While cloud backups are great for keeping your data secure, you must know how much you're paying for them. If you plan on storing your data for a long time, you may be charged more. At the same time, if you store more versions of your data, it will cost you more.

One way you can keep costs down is to ask yourself whether certain files even need to be stored in the cloud. Mission-critical files like customer information, legal document, and business plans should be stored in the cloud so you can retrieve them right away after a disaster, but routine documents like timesheets can probably be stored in less expensive data centers.

Remove unnecessary accounts
Most cloud service providers charge you based on the number of users per month, so if you're not diligent about removing accounts when employees have left your company, you could be throwing your money down the drain.

To avoid this, you need to have deprovisioning procedures in place for when an employee's contract is terminated. Create a spreadsheet of each employee in your payroll and note down their cloud subscriptions. When an employee leaves your company, you must delete all their business accounts and give the relevant manager access to all their documents.

It's also a good idea to schedule regular audits to make sure you're not paying for people who've already left your company.

Work with a trustworthy provider
Last but not least, you'll want to partner with a cloud services provider that not only gives you the best deals on cloud solutions, but also proactively monitors your account and warns you about any issues regarding the computing resources and storage space you're using.

If you're looking to keep cloud costs under control, talk to us today. We're certified and experienced with all aspects of cloud technology, and we can show you how you can truly benefit from it.