

### ***In This Months TechPoints***

- TechSolutions Serves Up a Welcome to Our New Tech
  - A Quick Look at Surface Pro 3
  - How to Make Secure Passwords
  - VoIP and Your Business
- 

## **TechSolutions Serves Up a Welcome to Our New Tech**

We'd like to introduce you to our new, sort of, Field Technician Joe McNerney who started working at TechSolutions in January of 2014. Graduating from The Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor of Science in Business, Joe grew up outside of Chicago, IL, and has lived in both Wilmington and Southeast Pennsylvania for the last several years. He has 3 younger brothers and a very large extended family.



Joe has a background in IT support spanning nearly a decade and has supported countless small businesses and home users, both as an independent consultant and at large retailers. He is currently pursuing his Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA) certification. Joe started his career as an office manager at a hedge fund of funds in Wilmington and has also worked for a Legg Mason affiliated global equity manager in a number of analysis and support roles. He actively follows investment and finance news.

Outside of work, Joe is active in the Blue Hen Volleyball Club, a group promoting the sport of volleyball in the Wilmington area. He plays indoor and outdoor volleyball, and regularly travels throughout the region for weekend tournaments. Joe recently traveled to Phoenix, AZ for a 3-day national tournament where his team earned 5<sup>th</sup> place out 40 teams in their division.

Joe enjoys building high-end gaming computers and streaming media centers for his family. He also actively participates in the Bitcoin and Litecoin cryptocurrency networks; an unusual convergence of global finance, cryptographic security, and GPU-based parallel computing. He enjoys playing PC and console games with friends and family.

A resident of Trolley Square in Wilmington, Joe lives with his girlfriend Samantha and their miniature dachshund Tricksey. He can be spotted playing never-ending games of fetch in neighborhood parks.

Joe has demonstrated his value and expertise from the start and has proven to be very knowledgeable in many areas of technology. We feel this makes him a great asset to not only us, but our clients as well, and we are glad to have him as part of our team.

---



## A Quick Look at Surface Pro 3

Microsoft, well known developer of some of the most popular business software, has for the past couple of years been trying to break into the hardware market with their own tablet – Surface. While the first two versions of Surface were met with largely mixed reviews, Microsoft is determined to make this platform work and has recently released a new version – Surface Pro 3.

### About the Surface Pro 3 tablet

Officially announced on May 20, this newest version of Surface brings about a number of changes to the platform. First and foremost, there is a change in the device's positioning. While previous versions were designed to be direct competitors to the Apple iPad, the new version of Surface Pro 3 is being marketed as a highly mobile device that is meant to replace your laptop.

In fact, Microsoft has noted that they are targeting users, especially business owners, who have both a tablet and a laptop. The company is billing Surface Pro 3 as the device that will allow users to ditch the two, and instead replace it with one.

In pursuit of this goal, Surface Pro 3 has a larger screen and some advanced tech specs that provide it with laptop-level power, while keeping the overall portability of the modern tablet.

### Technical specs business owners will find useful

Surface Pro 3 comes in five different versions, with the models being separated by which 4th generation Intel processor is included and the amount of storage space they have:

- 64GB Intel i3
- 128GB Intel i5
- 256GB Intel i5
- 256GB Intel i7
- 512GB Intel i7

Aside from the processor, RAM and storage space, all versions share the following specs:

- **Size** - The Surface Pro 3 is 11.5 inches wide by 7.93 inches high and weighs 1.76lbs.
- **Memory** - The 64GB and 128GB models have 4GB of RAM, while the 256GB and 512GB models have 8GB of RAM.
- **Screen** - There is a 12 inch screen with all models and a resolution of 2160 x 1440. This equates to a high resolution screen that should be more than enough for every user.
- **Connectivity** - All models can connect to Wi-Fi, support Bluetooth 4.0, and have a full-size USB 3.0 port, along with a microSD card reader, and Mini display port.
- **Operating system** - Surface Pro 3 runs a full version of Windows 8.1, which comes pre-installed on the device.
- **Accessories** - There are a number of cases you can buy including the Surface Pro Type Cover which includes a full keyboard and trackpad built into the case. Combine this with the built-in multi-function hinge and you can use the device almost anywhere.
- **Battery life** - Previous versions of the Surface had average, or slightly below average battery life. Because this device isn't out yet, we can't give an accurate number as to how long the battery should last. That being said, this is a powerful device so battery life will likely be closer to most laptops rather than tablets – anywhere from four to eight hours.

## Should my business invest in this technology?

From the specs alone, the Surface Pro 3 looks to be a good investment for users who are looking to merge their tablet and laptop. Also, because this is a Microsoft tablet, users of the company's other systems and software, especially Office 365 and Windows 8, will be at home with this device.

If you or your employees are looking to be productive while on the go, and use Microsoft or cloud systems, this device could be the perfect business tool. The major downside to Surface Pro 3, as with previous versions, is the price, which starts at \$799 just for the just the device, so you are looking at almost \$930 when you add in the Type Cover. The most powerful version – the 512 GB/ Intel i7 starts at \$1,949.

Should you be about to replace your tablet and laptop, this could be a viable solution as the cost of replacing both could be more than, or at least similar to, the cost of a Surface Pro 3. That being said, this is still a new device so it may be worthwhile waiting a few months to see how people who purchase the unit like it, and how it can be integrated into your business better.

## Where can I find one?

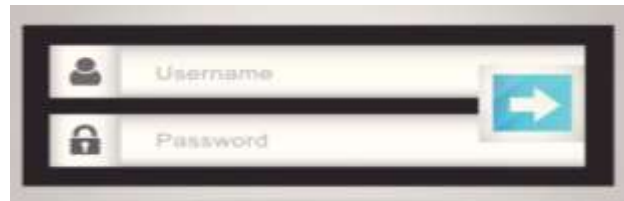
The i5 devices are available now and the i3 and i7 devices can be pre ordered and are scheduled to ship August 1. We can assist you with specking the device so you get exactly what you need and you can order them through us as well. If you would like to learn more about this device and how it can integrate with your business contact us today.

*Published with permission from TechAdvisory.org*

---

## How to Make Secure Passwords

Passwords are made to safeguard our online accounts. But in this day and age when rampant hacking incidents happen every day and around the world, security is oftentimes compromised. As a result, private data can fall into the wrong hands. For this reason, it is imperative that the passwords protecting your data are strong enough to throw off hackers. Here are some ways to bolster your passwords.



### Observe proper web security

With the rapid advancements in technology comes sophistication of methodologies used by hackers to steal data and destroy web security. Cybercrime is continuously evolving as new programs are made to unlock accounts and combine numbers, letters and special characters to determine passwords. The big question for internet users is – how to choose a strong password that can drive hackers away?

Passwords should have at least eight characters. It is highly recommended that you use a combination of uppercase, lowercase and special characters. “P@s\$w0Rd45%” is a thousand times better than “Password1”. Veer away from using passwords that are found in dictionaries. Furthermore, avoid using your name, a family member's name, phone number, birth date, social security number or any public information. Hackers have found a way to crack passwords with the aid of the many databases out there.

To create even more secure passwords, try using a password that is a full sentence, with random words. For example “I am a purple donkey” (with the spaces) will take a long time to crack, which means it's more secure than even the examples above.

## **Keep malware off your system**

Malware are malicious programs that have been crafted in such a way that they appear authentic and trustworthy. Be careful not to click on pop-ups and links that will redirect you to that place where your security walls are torn down. And do not open email attachments from anonymous users. Mechanisms are often embedded in these programs to gain control of your system.

Get professional help by installing security software from a trusted name in the industry. Build your defenses as early as possible. Remember the cliché – better to be safe than sorry – and nowhere is this more true than in computer system and web security.

## **Keep your passwords private**

While this may seem to be a no-brainer, sadly, a lot of people still tend to share their passwords with their office mates or friends. If you're one of them, then it's high time that you change your habits and your password again. Think like James Bond -passwords are for your eyes only.

In the event that you need to give your password to a co-worker to get an important document or presentation, make sure that you change them as soon as possible. Never use the same combination again.

## **Change password regularly**

It also helps if you schedule a regular password change. Within a period of 30 to 60 days, you should update passwords across multiple sites. Moreover, never use the same passwords for different websites. If you use the same passwords, you are putting all of your accounts at a high level risk. Hackers are relentless. Once is never enough for them and they can come back time after time.

It's an unsafe online world out there. These online troublemakers will never be satisfied. So never let yourself or your organization fall prey to hackers. Take note of these safety measures and strengthen your web security arsenal.

*Published with permission from TechAdvisory.org*

---



## **VoIP and Your Business**

There are many different ways technology can help businesses increase efficiency and save money. One increasingly popular system is Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP), which moves phone communications to your network connection, allowing you to access communication services from anywhere. Despite its growing use, many business owners are still unsure whether VoIP is the right choice for them. To help make the decision easier let's take a look at the major benefits of VoIP to see how well it fits your business needs.

### **Quality improvement**

Since its inception, the quality of VoIP service has come a long way. Today's VoIP services allow you to make and receive calls using standard phones. Sound quality has improved tremendously, to the point where many businesses have abandoned traditional phone systems in favor of VoIP.

### **Reduction of telecommunications costs**

Operating costs for the majority of VoIP service providers are significantly lower than traditional phone companies. This allows VoIP providers to charge customers – you – much less than their competitors, both in calling rates and monthly fees. With VoIP, businesses no longer have to maintain separate networks for phones and data which also helps save money.

And while some businesses do pay their current phone company extra for features like call holding, call display, and call forwarding, most VoIP providers include these features in their product, meaning you don't have to pay extra for the features you need.

### Easy to set up

With most VoIP connections, there's no need to install switching boards or phone connections. Some systems can be installed easily by downloading an app to your computer, while others might require that you install an adaptor that converts voice signals into digital signals using your existing phones. These adaptors are small and in most cases all you have to do is plug the phone's cable in before plugging the adaptor into an Internet connection socket.

### More than just voice calls

Many VoIP programs also allow for chat capabilities, video calls, video conferencing, and even screen sharing. Not only that, but you'll be able to see if your employees are available through presence technology, as well as giving them more ways to stay connected.

### Highly flexible phone systems

VoIP systems allow you to do far more than is possible with traditional phone technology. You can:

- **Take your phone system with you:** As long as you have access to a broadband connection you can use your VoIP system anywhere.
- **Talk on your laptop:** Many VoIP systems include telephone software that enables you to send and receive calls using a headphone unit connected to your computer. This helps eliminate the risk of you missing an urgent call when you're on your laptop.
- **Receive voicemail and faxes via email:** Many VoIP services allow you to have voicemail and faxes forwarded to your email inbox. You then receive all your messages in one place, and your voicemail and faxes can be easily archived or forwarded.
- **Have virtual phone numbers:** Your phone number can have any available area code, meaning you can have a business based in one place but can have a phone number with a different area code; advantageous if your business has, or wants, customers in specific areas.
- **Increase productivity:** Many VoIP phone numbers can be configured to simultaneously ring on multiple devices, such as your cell and landline phones. This eliminates time-consuming phone tag. According to a recent survey conducted by Sage Research, the increased productivity enabled by Internet telephony added up to 3.9 hours per week, per employee.

No matter what industry you operate in, VoIP is a surprisingly flexible, affordable, and continuously evolving technology. Interested in implementing a VoIP system into your company? Contact us today to see what we have to offer and how we can help.

*Published with permission from TechAdvisory.org.*

---

**Disclaimer:** References and links in this newsletter to any specific products or service does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by TechSolutions.

---

TechPoints is a monthly newsletter from TechSolutions, Inc.

Click [here](#) to unsubscribe and simply put "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

TechSolutions, Inc. • 5630 Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington, DE 19808 • [www.TechSolutionsInc.com](http://www.TechSolutionsInc.com) • (302) 656-8324

---