

***In This Months TechPoints***

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**Office 365 and Getting Your Head Into “The Cloud”**

By Rich Kenney, Vice President, TechSolutions



There has been much ado lately concerning Office 365 and “the cloud”. In this article, I’ll attempt to shed some light on what it is and why it is or is not worth considering for your organization.

First, we will start by helping you understand “the cloud”. That term refers to products and services offered through the internet. The delivery method for these products and services is generally via internet downloads or some type of application interface that is available through the use of a standard web browser such as Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Chrome. Many times, you will find that these products and services are paid for on a monthly basis by you, the customer, based on how many users you have and/or how much data is being stored. Some examples of cloud-based services include: Hosted Microsoft Exchange Email (billed per mailbox, per month); Online Data Backup (usually billed monthly based on the amount of data being backed up); Email Spam and Virus Filtering (usually billed per mailbox, per month); and Hosted Customer Relationship Management Applications like Salesforce.com (billed per user, per month). This is by no means a complete list as there are thousands of cloud-based services out there. But the bottom line in the most straightforward terms, cloud = internet.

Hopefully you understand a little more about “the cloud” ... now onto Office 365. Office 365 is Microsoft’s latest foray into delivering its software applications to end users online (think cloud). It consists of subscription plans that include access to Office applications (like Word and Excel) plus other productivity services such as Lync (Microsoft’s instant messaging application), Exchange Online hosted email for business, and online data storage. The products and services that you are able to take advantage of as an Office 365 subscriber depend on which plan is purchased.

Many Office 365 plans also include the desktop version of the latest Office applications, which users can install across multiple computers and devices. The Office 365 plans that are online-only are a good choice for certain business needs, and they are compatible with desktop versions of Office 2013, Office 2010, Office 2007 (with slightly limited functionality), Office 2011 for Mac, and Office 2008 for Mac.

At \$4 per month per user, the least expensive Office 365 plan is called Exchange Online. It offers hosted Exchange email for businesses which do not wish to purchase and maintain an on-premise solution for email. At \$20 per month per user, enterprise companies can utilize the full suite of Office 365 products such as web-based and local copies of Microsoft Office, hosted Exchange, online data storage and more.

Those organizations looking to take advantage of Office 365 would do so based on criteria such as no up-front purchasing of expensive software and hardware, 99.9% reliability, being able to use software that is always current, and cross-device capability which allows you to work on email and documents from any internet-attached device be it workstation, laptop, tablet or smartphone.

Those organizations that wish to utilize the traditional licensing models for Microsoft software would do so based on factors such as the ability to maintain 100% control of the usage and storage of their data, the financial models that favor the traditional licensing, and the accommodation of other internal applications that are not compatible with online data access.

Office 365 is a very complicated set of products. There are many variables to consider when choosing what is best for your specific situation, which makes it impossible to cover everything in one article. If you want to learn more the following two links would be a good next step. This link covers FAQ: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/business/microsoft-office-365-for-business-faq-FX103030232.aspx> and this link provides details on the plans: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/business/?WT%2Eintid1=ODC%5FENUS%5FFX101785584%5FXT104029222>

Of course we are here for you as well, so if you have any questions, give us a call at (302) 656-8324 and we can try to help you understand how all of the puzzle pieces fit together.

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## How to Make the Best Use of Dropbox

Online file sharing and storage services are being widely adopted by people these days. One of the more popular service providers is Dropbox which offers services like storing data and information on their cloud servers, syncing what is stored between your devices as well as sharing information with others. These are the commonly used functions of any cloud service. However, you can do a lot more with Dropbox.

This article talks about few things you can do with Dropbox that are among the lesser known features offered by this online file storage service provider. For those who do not have a Dropbox account, you can apply the same functions with other service providers as well.

### Share Files, Pictures and PINs securely

Everyone knows that Dropbox allows secured data sharing over the web especially when it comes to sharing confidential information like passwords, PINs, tax returns and personal content. This cloud service applies proper encryption to all that you upload on it. IN addition, file downloads happen over a secure HTTPS (a secure version of HTTP that allows secure communication over the internet) connection which implies that your content is secured throughout. Nevertheless, you have provisions for applying additional protection using ZIP software for example.

### Organize BitTorrent downloads

There are tons of BitTorrent (a way to transfer files of just about any size quickly and efficiently) clients over the web that allow you to apply multiple functions like adding, tracking and erasing torrent files. You can also use Dropbox for this purpose. All you would require doing is change the setting on your BitTorrent client to track a particular folder on Dropbox for the new torrent files. After that, you can remotely find a torrent file of your choice and copy it to the designated folder in Dropbox. The file will automatically sync with your home machine and be identified by your client. The download will begin thereafter.

### Fast installation of Android Apps

If you are an Android user, you can do more for the apps with Dropbox. Google Play is a great place for downloading apps. However, on certain occasions you might need an app that requires manual installation using the APK (Android application package) file. For this, you need not plug in your smartphone to the computer via USB cable. You can do it wirelessly by just dragging the app to your Dropbox and then let the Dropbox application on your Android device download it for you. This is of huge benefit for installing small applications. You can do it for the bigger ones as well.

## Host a website or Start Page for your browser

If you are looking forward to hosting a website that has been newly built by you, you may be surprised to learn that Dropbox allows free web hosting as well. You can host a website manually or by using services such as DropPages. This function offered by Dropbox is also useful when you want to sync any conventional start up page with all your devices for mobile use. This feature can be utilized for your customized webpage or for a start page on your browser.

## Make your Music Library go mobile

This is another useful thing that can be done using Dropbox. Your complete music collection can be synced with all the devices you own – whether it's a traditional PC or a new generation touch device. This feature makes your music library go mobile so that you can play music while on the move. You can play music on the web based music players like DropTunes or on any other app of your choice. Please check that you have adequate space to accommodate your music collection as it may not fit in the default space that is provided by Dropbox.

Likewise you can do a lot more with Dropbox. Apart from the ones discussed here, you can use Dropbox to store your OS related settings and applications. You can also store your various login credentials as well. Cloud service providers also ensure that your data is safe from threats like virus and malware.

<http://www.articlesbase.com/file-types-articles/how-to-make-the-best-use-of-dropbox-6282590.html>

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## Recharging Your Batteries: How to Stay Powered Up

([NewsUSA](#)) - Who hasn't experienced that moment of panic when your smartphone is about to die just when you need it most? Without our tech gadgets -- and that includes everything from iPods to gaming devices to the latest tablets - most of us feel absolutely lost.

The problem has been finding a quality universal battery pack that works well at recharging the whole gamut.

And that's as convenient to use whether traveling or in your own stomping ground.

And, oh yes, one that looks good, too.

Enter Rayovac ([www.rayovac.com](http://www.rayovac.com)), which has long been the go-to source for reliable batteries. Its stylishly designed, white Platinum [Rechargeable Power Pack](#) may be no bigger than a cell phone -- though not so small that it gets lost in a pocketbook or suitcase -- but it's the complete and innovative solution that tech users have been waiting for.

With three hours of recharging via USB or outlet, the power pack is ready to give your gadgets an extra six hours of use. In fact, its 800-mAh internal Lithium Ion rechargeable battery means it's possible to charge an MP3 player, for example, three times on just one recharge of the power pack.

What's more, its accompanying adapters are good for all Micro USB, Mini USB and Apple devices.

Think of it. No more cameras dying half-way into your hiking or camping adventures because of batteries that need resuscitating. Ditto dead iPods and e-readers on road trips and long flights.

And as for those dreaded missed calls -- be they business or personal -- frequent travelers will be especially glad to have packed the Platinum Rechargeable Power Pack, which is only available at Walmart, along as a travel buddy.

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### 3 Ways to Reduce Exposure to Cell Phone Radiation

([NewsUSA](#)) - The debate about radiation exposure from cell phone use still doesn't have a conclusive answer, but the World Health Organization (WHO) classified cell phone radiation as a "potential carcinogen" alongside other hazards like lead, engine exhaust and chloroform. That means prolonged cell phone use can possibly increase the risk of specific

types of brain cancer and tumor growth, according to WHO.

Although international research, such as the noted Interphone study conducted by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, continues to be somewhat contradictory, experts agree consumers have reason for concern, particularly heavy users and youth.

Cellular radiation, technically referred to as low-level radio frequency, is similar to what is emitted by microwaves. While not as strong as some other sources of radiation -- i.e. x-rays -- the radiation can penetrate the brain, harm DNA and release destructive free radicals. All of those factors increase a person's chances of developing cancer, especially among children who also tend to be heavy users.

Georgetown professor and epidemiologist Devra Davis is very concerned about the long-term effects of people who use cell phones for decades or more. Consider these easy ways to reduce your exposure to cell phone radiation:

1. Use speakerphone, ear buds or other headsets. The goal of these accessories is to keep the phone farther away from your head, which lessens the amount of radiation you're absorbing.
2. Use protectors designed to block radiation. Mobile phone accessories like Press Shield ([www.PressShield.com](http://www.PressShield.com)) use unique materials to block the radiation emitted by cellular frequencies. John F. Cruz designed Press Shield to act as an insulating shield between your body and potentially harmful microwave radiation. Press Shield has the added bonus of a privacy guard and prevents pocket dial.
3. Avoid putting phone in pockets or close to your bed. The farther away your phone is, the better. Belt clips may not be super stylish, but they're a good way to put another barrier between you and your phone. If you must put it in your pocket, don't leave it there for long. Similarly, sleeping with your cell phone underneath or near your head exposes you to radiation as long as you remain asleep.

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**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.

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