

“We make all of your computer problems go away without adding additional full-time I.T. staff!”

Ask about our fixed price service agreements — Computer support at a flat monthly fee you can budget for, just like payroll!

Inquiring Minds...



What Is A VPN? There seems to be a million acronyms thrown around these days and VPN usage is on the rise. So, what is a VPN? A VPN is a Virtual Private Network. Think of it like operating inside the filling of a Jelly donut. Even though you may be in the nice white neat box with all the other donuts, your little enclosure blocks that tasty lemon filling from blending with the maple bars or bear claws (the Internet). A VPN gives business users a practical and pretty reliable way to enclose themselves while they are online, sheltering their work from the general public. It is a more secure way to work while connected to an insecure public network.

How does VPN work? VPNs uses encryption and tunneling protocols to move information around on your business network without allowing the outside world to peer in. This type of connection is great for mobile workers and remote computers.

Clear advantages of a VPN connection. VPN users often enjoy better connectivity and less restriction especially when traveling out of the country. However, the clear advantage to using a VPN for business users is the increased security and privacy protection.

What Is HDMI And Why Is It Important? For anyone that

grew up during the age in which television playback included VCR's, they probably remember those wonderful multi-colored audio/video cables that required four different plugs on each end. Those types of cables represent how audio and visual data got from your device to the actual TV. For their time, those cables certainly got the job done. The problem is that now most movies contain 7.1 speaker surround sound audio and video resolutions frequently in the 4k range. To carry that much data efficiently, HDMI was created.

What are HDMI cables? HDMI cables, or High Definition Multimedia Interface cables, are not a new concept. They were developed over 10 years ago to smooth out the exchange of audio and video from one device to another. According to Make-TechEasier, HDMI allows for that high-fidelity audio and high-resolution video to be sent over the same cable and creates a standard platform that makes connections between computers and televisions much easier than in the past. What's more, HDMI also carries something called "control data." This data allows your gaming system or Blu-Ray player to wake your TV up and lets your home entertainment system work better together.

Why are HDMI cables important? HDMI cables are definitely a step up from the standard audio/video cables. They carry what

Boost Your IT Security With 24/7/365 Proactive Monitoring



Security breaches sneak up on you when you least expect them. Who's watching your network? Our experts can monitor your network day and night. Keep your company information safe inside and out with on-going network monitoring from a trusted source you can rest at ease.

Give us a call today to schedule your **FREE Network Security Audit** to check on the health of your IT environment.

Solutions Unlimited • (864) 599-8678



401 East Kennedy St, B6
Spartanburg, SC 29302
(864) 599-8678
solutionsunlimitedsc.com



Happy Armed Forces Day!

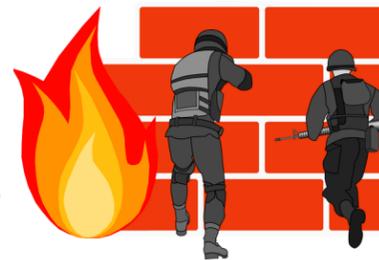
Tech Times

Your Company Name or Tagline Here



3 Types Of Firewalls For Your Business To Build A Healthy First Line Of Defense

IT security is a huge concern for business owners in any type of setting. Companies from retail sales to medical practices worry about network vulnerabilities that could quickly become costly oversights. Take a look at these five firewall tips to build a healthy line of defense for your business.



Reactive and proactive approaches to IT security. Many businesses just handle IT issues as they arise. The error in this thinking is that their current operations may actually cause the issues to arise. There are two approaches to IT, the reactive approach and the proactive approach. The reactive approach is where you're searching frantically for a cloth to cover the wound and tie off an injury before it starts to impact other things in your company. The alternative, a proactive approach, is like wearing a bullet proof vest on the battlefield.

Firewall defenses for your business. Pretty much everyone agrees that a physical firewall is necessary these days. Who can deny their

ability to successfully block access to your network helping to eliminate risks to your business. However, there are a few other types of firewalls you can put in place to keep your company safe too.

1. The human firewall investment. What is a human firewall? Just as it sounds. It is your primary resources, your employees. Your staff are an important line of defense against threats to your company. Make sure to share your organization's policies around Internet browsing, e-mail, and devise usage with each and every employee. Review annually or semi-annually the types of issues your company has seen to reiterate the importance of security. Talk about your encryption efforts, e-mail

(Continued on page 2)

What's Inside

- Conflicting Rules..Pg. 2
- Origins Of SPAM The Meat & E-mail....Pg. 3
- A Brief History Of Computing.....Pg. 3
- What Is A VPN?...Pg. 4
- What Is HDMI And Why Is It Important Today.....Pg. 4
- Call Today For Your FREE Network Security Audit.....Pg. 4



401 East Kennedy Street, B6
Spartanburg, SC 29302
(864) 599-8678
solutionsunlimitedsc.com



Security Sense

“Treat your passwords like a toothbrush. Don't let anybody else use it and get a new one every six months.”
~ Clifford Stoll

“Better to be despised for too anxious apprehensions, than ruined by too confident security.”
~ Unknown

“Being able to break security doesn't make you a hacker anymore than being able to hotwire cards makes you an automotive

Happy Armed Forces Day

May is a holiday packed month. This year we'd like to highlight a fairly new observance, Armed Forces Day. This single-day celebration unified our recognition for all branches of the military including Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force.

A single-day to observe those who serve. In August of 1949, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson was accredited with the creation of Armed Forces Day. During his speech, President Truman even praised the work of our military members saying that the Armed Forces are “vital to the security of the nation and the establishment of a desirable peace.”

Armed Forces Day intentions. This observance was developed to acknowledge all of the military branches and bring civilians a taste of the Armed Forces. The goal was to develop educational programs and increase

(Continued on page 3)

3 Types Of Firewalls For Your Business...

(Continued from page 1)

policies, password expectations, and how everyone can help identify risky situations. Each person in your office should be actively engaged in protecting your organization's most prized asset, your company data.

2. The paper firewall is most often overlooked.

Look around your office right now, do you have any scraps of paper with notes or passwords on them? Any client files laying around? Anything out in the open with key information on it for your company to conduct business? These little paper trails can be very risky exposure points for your organization. Even if you don't see a lot of foot traffic in your

office there are always some visitors or ancillary staff like janitors, cooks, delivery drivers, etc. who could potentially pickup critical information.

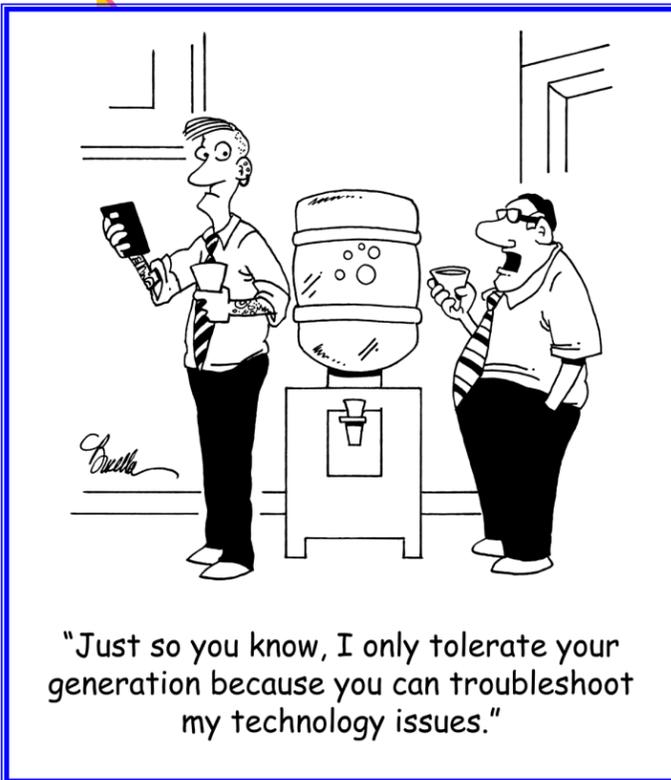
This digital age brings additional threats. In the cellular world we live in today, even data left on a computer monitor can be photographed and no one would ever know the information was stolen until it was used and the damage was done. Keep your staff informed about your company policies around paper in the office, keeping passwords secure, and locking their computer screen to protect your company data from prying eyes.

3. The most important firewall of all, the physical firewall. Now for the real geeky IT stuff. Every office that has computers should have a firewall network device installed. I think Clay Shirky said it best, "It used to be expensive to make things public and cheap to make them private. Now it's expensive to make things private and cheap to make them public." Although, he missed one point. It is much more expensive these days to clean up unwanted publicized things than to protect your company proactively. A firewall is a very simplistic but effective first line of defense against intruders. These devices filter activity in and out of your network based on configurations that block access to known hazards.

Install a few new firewall defenses to safeguard your company.

Many of the new clients we take on only have one of these three types of firewalls in place. We've seen passwords on torn sticky notes taped to computer monitors, large stacks of legal files on the edge of a desk, and even computers left unlocked in an unattended space. The physical firewalls are not always in the best shape either. Some firewalls that are not updated and have conflicting rules in place rendering the devices almost useless.

Worried about your firewall policies or device? Give us a call. We can run a



Conflicting Rules

Firewalls are a great addition to any network security plan. However, they do require ongoing maintenance and monitoring.

Regular Firewall maintenance.

Firewalls are not a "set it and forget it" kind of device. They require ongoing maintenance to continue functioning at an adequate level to secure your network. Ongoing maintenance for a firewall will include physical hardware checks, Firmware updates, log file reviews and policy checks. Fine tuning your firewall may be just as critical as paying the electric bill.

Keeping the rules straight. Make sure to review your firewall rules a few times each year. You may have started out with a standard set of rules, but over time the basics may not be enough. Also, check for new rules that may have been added to accommodate specific user complaints.

Conflicting rules.

Misconfigurations and conflicting rules are often the largest pitfall for firewalls because they are difficult to catch. Remove obsolete, expired, or unused rules and check the newly created rules

Armed Forces...

(Continued from page 1)

awareness about the services provided by the military that support civilian life.

The first celebration.

The theme for the first celebration of Armed Forces Day was "Teamed for Defense." This theme was selected to show the unification of all military branches under one government celebratory day. There were over 10,000 troops of all branches in Washington D.C. for the 1st Armed Forces Day celebration. In New York city there were an estimated 33,000 participants and all across the nation precision flying teams dominated the skies with displays of their work. The entire country came alive in honor of our Armed Forces.

When is it? Armed Forces Day is celebrated the 3rd Saturday in May each year. This year, Saturday, May 20th is the day you're sure to find parades and events to join in the fun. Armed Forces Day is celebrated by nearly 40 countries including Armenia, Canada, Egypt and South Korea. So, regardless of your physical location when the holiday hits, look into local events to be a part of an Armed Forces Day celebration.

Origins Of SPAM The Meat And The E-mail

We're on a bit of an acronym kick this month, so we thought we'd throw out a silly one here. Where did SPAM come from?

SPAM the meat. SPAM the meat is a chopped pork shoulder product mixed with a few other meats, salt, water, sugar and sodium nitrite. This meat product was invented in 1937. It was a cheap way to get your fix of meat and it seemed to last for ever. Believe it or not, it really doesn't stand for "Something Posing As Meat" Hormel actually says it stands for "Shoulder of Pork And haM." Kenneth Daigneau, an actor, entered a naming contest suggesting the "SPAM" name and won a prize of \$100. Today, Hormel has sold over 6 billion cans of their mystery meat called SPAM.

Is SPAM the e-mail related?

Absolutely! In 1970 Monty Python's Flying circus members came up with a sketch involving a customer desperately trying to find something on the menu

that didn't include SPAM. During his meal a party of Vikings seated near by break into song with a chorus of "SPAM, lovely SPAM! Wonderful SPAM!" Later, a group of geeks, to the truest sense of the word, playing an online multi-user dungeons game similar to World of Warcraft dubbed specific behaviors as spamming. They were of course all about etiquette so sometimes they would flood a computer with too much data trying to crash it or they would flood a database with objects to annoy other patrons. Chat sessions would be filled with Monty Python's SPAM song messages, "SPAM, SPAM, lovely SPAM" or just "spam...spam...spam" for short.

SPAM these days are messages sent through e-mail that often deliver malicious programs. You have your classic "make money" schemes and your garden variety inheritance or funding requests, but even more dangerous are the messages to businesses that look real. These

A Brief History Of Computing, We've Come A Long Way With Technology

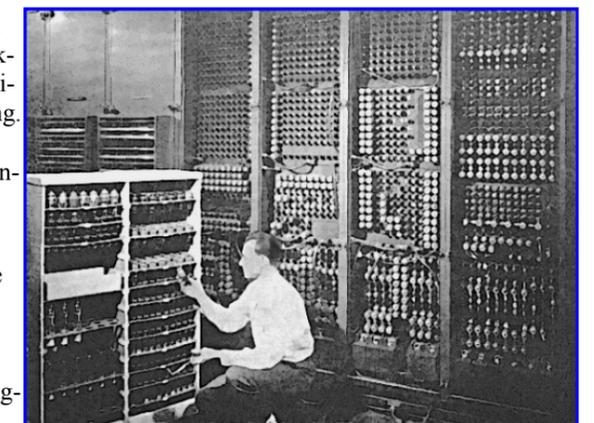
Traveling back in time to the 40's, daily computing was seen as a futuristic dream only depicted in movies. No one ever thought the world would soon depend so heavily on mechanical devices like smart phones, tablets, laptops and wearable devices.

The Electronic Numerical Integrator And Computer (ENIAC)

was the very first electronic general-purpose computer ever made. This super computer was financed by the U.S. military during World War II. It was a giant undertaking to build this machine due to its size and complexity, and no one even knew if it would run for very long. Many folks were skeptical as to the value of such a machine. It actually seemed like a waste of time, money and talent.

A tremendous amount of work! Programming was actually executed from inside the computer. The computer took up many rooms and programmers or technicians would walk inside the computer itself to reprogram components or fix things. Repairs meant looking at each part to determine the issue; like changing 17,000 light bulbs. YIKES!

Thank goodness for technological advance-



Replacing a bad tube meant checking among ENIAC's 17,000 possibilities.

