

# Innovations

## Quotes

“Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work.”  
*Aristotle*

“Good manners will often take people where neither money nor education will take them.” *Fanny J. Coppin*

“Whenever you are asked if you can do a job, tell 'em ‘certainly I can!’ Then get busy and find out how to do it.” *Theodore Roosevelt*

“It's in moments of decision that your destiny is shaped.”  
*Anthony Robbins*

“Life is 10 percent what happens to you, 90 percent how you respond to it.” *Lou Holtz*

## Smart Year-End Technology Decisions can Save Huge on Your Tax Bill

Here at the end of the year, business owners often start making plans for the new year. Unfortunately these plans often forget that significant tax savings could be achieved this year by timing your purchases well.

December is usually a pretty busy month for us at Intelligent Technical Solutions, with the week between Christmas and New Years' Day especially hectic. No vacations that week for us!

Uncle Sam will allow you to write off up to \$108,000 of capital expenditures against this year's tax bill. Check with your tax advisor, of course, but if you have been thinking about investing in a computer and network project, this month may be the time to do it. Plus, the week between Christmas and New Years' Day is often a slow period for many businesses and would be an opportune time to do a somewhat disruptive computer project.

This time of year is also when many manufacturers roll out special “end of the year” price incentives.

Some ideas of projects to consider:

If you have several computers on a network but do not have a server, you should look at the Microsoft Small Business Server system. For a very reasonable investment you can have the security of a server to protect your data, the ability to share calendars and contacts, to get all your email one place, and to work from home effortlessly.

If your computers are getting older, this is a good time to replace them. Anything more than about three or four years is a good candidate for replacement. Microsoft's new version of Windows, called Windows Vista, is due out early next year — and most PCs purchased today with Windows XP are entitled to a free upgrade to Vista. You can get the new equipment today, write it off in 2006, and still get the latest and greatest when it's released in early 2007.

Take a look at your network equipment. Newer network equipment such as gigabit Ethernet switches, newer firewalls, and wireless access points can make your network faster and much more secure. It's worth a look.

Perhaps it's time to look at a new accounting program for the new year. If so, now is the time to buy it. To be ready to start 2007 in the new system your staff will need time to learn the program and practice.

One last thing... one of your New Year's resolutions should be to create a budget for your computer and network. Our Hassle-Free I.T. programs are offered on a fixed monthly price so you know exactly how much your technical support will cost for the year.

If you're interested in talking about a project or about our support program options, don't wait! Give us a call right away. Our December calendar fills up fast and we want to make sure we can meet your deadline for work before December 31st. Call us today at (888) 969-3636, or email [sales@itsasap.com](mailto:sales@itsasap.com).



## 5 Simple Ways To Avoid Getting An Avalanche of Spam

### Let me sleep on it...

1. According to a Bing Crosby song in the movie "White Christmas," what does he count instead of sheep to help him fall asleep? a-Blessings, b-Clouds, c-Dogs, d-Gifts.
2. What drug is named for the Greek god of sleep and dreams? a-Tobacco, b-Opium, c-Morphine, d-Cannabis.
3. The grave of writer Washington Irving is located in the town of Sleepy Hollow in what state? a-Alaska, b-New Mexico, c-Washington, d-New York.
4. What Shakespearean character was sleepwalking when she said "All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand"? a-Lady Macbeth, b-Desdemona, c-Miranda, d-Cordelia.
5. What rodent's name comes from the Latin word for "sleep"? a-Dormouse, b-Wombat, c-Vole, d-Capybara.
6. What was the name of the princess who was put to sleep by the evil Maleficent in Disney's animated feature film "Sleeping Beauty"? a-Ariel, b-Rebecca, c-Aurora, d-Zelda.
7. What cartoon character "will sleep till noon, but before it's dark / He'll have every picnic basket that's in Jellystone. Park?" a-Snagglepuss, b-Yogi Bear, c-Huckleberry Hound, d-Top Cat.
8. Which "Sesame Street" character was available as a "Sleep 'n' Snore" doll? a-Elmo, b-Big Bird, c-Ernie, d-Cookie Monster.
9. Which mattress manufacturer promised "Better sleep through science?" a-Sealy, b-Verlo, c-Restonic, d-Simmons.

(answers on page 4)

As you probably already know from firsthand experience, once you're on a spammer's list, it's next to impossible to get off. To make matters worse, spammers resell your e-mail address to other spammers, multiplying the problem. If changing your e-mail address is a major inconvenience, then take heart with the following 5 tips for reducing your chances of getting on a spammer's list in the first place:

**1. Use a disposable e-mail address.** If you buy products online or occasionally subscribe to web sites that interest you, chances are you're going to get spammed. To avoid your main e-mail address from ending up on their broadcast list, set up a free Internet e-mail address with Hotmail or Yahoo and use it when buying or opting in to online newsletters. You can also use a throwaway e-mail address when making purchases or subscribing to newsletters (see #4 below).

**2. Pay attention to check boxes that automatically opt you in for newsletters and spam.** Whenever you subscribe to a web site or make a purchase online, be very watchful of small, pre-checked boxes that say, "Yes! I want to receive offers from third party companies." If you do not un-check the box to opt-out, your e-mail address can (and will) be sold to every online advertiser. To avoid this from happening, simply take a closer look at every online form you fill out.

**3. Don't use your main e-mail address on your web site, web forums, or newsgroups.** Spammers have special programs that can glean e-mail addresses from web sites without your permission. If you are posting to a web forum or newsgroup, use your disposable e-mail address instead of your main e-mail address. If you want to post an e-mail address on your home page, use "info@" and have all replies forwarded to a folder in your in-box that won't interfere with your main address.

**4. Create throwaway e-mail accounts.** If you own a web domain, all mail going to an address at your domain is probably set up to come directly to you by default. For example, an e-mail addressed to anything@yourdomain.com will be delivered to your in-box. This is a great way to fight spam without missing out on important e-mails you want to get. The next time you sign up for a newsletter, use the title of

the web site in your e-mail address. For example, if the web site is titled "petstuff.com," enter "petsuff@yourdomain.com" as your e-mail address. If you get spammed, look at what address the spam was sent to. If petstuff@yourdomain.com shows up as the original recipient, you know the source since that e-mail address was unique to that web site. Now you can easily stop the spam by making any e-mail sent to that address bounce back to the sender.

**5. Don't open, reply to or try to opt-out of obvious spam e-mails.** Opening, replying to, or even clicking a bogus opt-out link in an obvious spam e-mail signals that your e-mail address is active, and more spam will follow. The only time it is safe to click on the opt-out link or reply to the e-mail is when the message was sent from a legitimate company you know or do business with.

### Announcing a FREE and Easy Way to Get Rid of Annoying Spam

If you are absolutely fed up with the number of spam e-mails you get every day then read on.

We've recently developed an anti-spam filtering service for our customers that doesn't require the purchase, installation, or maintenance of expensive hardware and software. For pennies a day, we can:

- « Eliminate (97%) of the spam you receive every day without blocking important e-mails from clients and associates.
- « Drastically reduce the number of e-mails you receive every day and save precious bandwidth.
- « Quarantine virus-riddled spam before it has a chance of infecting your network.

To introduce this service to our clients, we're giving away a free month of spam filtering to anyone who signs up during the month of December!

Just contact our office and we'll set you up on this service for no charge. At the end of your 30-day free trial, you'll have the option to cancel and owe nothing, or you can choose to subscribe to this amazing new service. Either way, the only thing you have to lose is the annoying, time-wasting spam you are getting buried under every day! To sign up, call 888-969-3636 or e-mail us at sales@itsasap.com!

### Laptop Battery Recall Update

Nearly every laptop computer manufacturer has announced a recall of batteries. The batteries, all of which were originally manufactured by Sony, contain a defect that can cause excessive heat, and in some cases fire. Apple, Lenovo (IBM), Gateway, Toshiba, and Dell have each announced battery recalls.

Not all laptop batteries are at risk! The problems seem to be confined to a specific process used in manufacturing certain batteries. Go to your manufacturer's web site to see if your model laptop is affected. Or if you have questions, give us a call. We're here to help!

## 6 Rules for Using Laptop Computers in Meetings

Not long ago, Frances Altman agreed to present a talk to some of her colleagues. Everyone arrived on time. Unfortunately, at least from her point of view, so did their laptop computers.

"Several people came in and started working on their laptops right through my talk," recalls Altman, public relations specialist at Virginia Commonwealth University. "It was very discourteous -- they could hardly be taking notes or listening to you. Next time, I'll request both phones and computers off."

Altman's experience isn't singular. Laptops (and Tablet PCs) are as much an element of business meetings today as any piece of equipment. But rules and protocols for using them are often lacking.

Here, then, are seven suggested guidelines to ensure that laptops contribute to productive meetings rather than to distract and annoy participants.

**1. Make sure there's a point.** Few businesspeople would discount the productive oomph that computers can bring to a meeting, no matter if they're part of a presentation or a means of recording the proceedings. But it's usually a good idea to discourage someone from using a laptop for something other than the business at hand. "It is impossible to have a productive, interactive meeting with laptops separating the attendees. So meeting participants should leave their laptops in their offices unless they have a reason to have them in the meeting," says Deborah Barrett, a senior lecturer at the Jones Graduate School of Management at Rice University. (That is, unless, of course, the meeting requires that users bring their laptops to follow along.)

**2. Designate a laptop.** Again, laptops can be integral to the business of a meeting. If a computer needs to be part of the proceedings, consider putting one person in charge of computer duties. If notes need to be taken, that one person can look after the chore, then share them with the other attendees once the meeting is completed. Likewise, if presentations such as PowerPoint are necessary, there's really no necessity for more than one computer.

"Designating someone as the official recorder so that one person records the proceedings on his laptop frees others to mentally engage in the con-

versation," says Fairfax, Va., consultant Kristin Arnold. "The general rule of thumb is: If you need face-to-face interaction, put the laptops away."

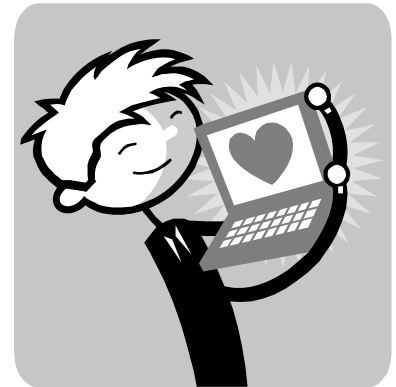
**3. Be ready to explain why you've brought a laptop.** Having a fairly liberal meetings and laptops policy doesn't preclude good manners. If you bring your machine to a meeting, it's courteous to let the person in charge know why it's there, be it for recording purposes or access to pertinent data. That can head off sour feelings if someone is mysteriously hunkered down over a laptop for no apparent purpose.

**4. Use some discretion.** Just because your laptop's in front of you doesn't mandate its constant use. Even if you're taking notes, never looking up from your machine can be alienating to the presenter and those around you (not to mention inefficient too -- ever spend too much time with your computer and later have to be briefed about what actually went on in a meeting?) Strike a balance. Use your machine but pay due attention to the discussion at hand.

"It's distracting for the person conducting the meeting to stay on point while someone is tapping away at a keyboard," says Martinsville, N.J., etiquette authority Maureen Sanders. "Nuances suggested by body language are often lost because there is no active eye contact when one party is preoccupied with his laptop."

**5. Turn down the bells and whistles.** Yet another point of compromise: Treat your computer as you would your cell phone at the theater. If you choose to bring it along, take a few moments beforehand to mute any sort of noise or sound that may prove distracting or annoying to your colleagues.

**6. When in doubt, leave them out.** Arnold recalls an introductory meeting with a company in which she asked participants to leave their laptops behind. "When I told them no laptops, there was nearly a mutiny," she says. Not to suggest that business revert back to the days of yellow pads and carbon paper, but there's nothing cast in stone that makes laptops an essential element of business meetings. If you're concerned that laptops may be more of a hindrance rather than help, you might consider keeping them out of meetings altogether. Do it on a trial basis and see if meetings suddenly blossom in productivity and efficiency.



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## Holiday Hours

It's that time of year again, and we're going to close a few days for the holidays. Our office will be closed:

Thursday, Nov. 23rd (Thanksgiving)  
Friday, Nov. 24th (day after Thanksgiving)  
Monday, Dec. 25th (Christmas)  
Monday, Jan. 1 (New Years' Day)

Enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season. Our clients have made 2006 a very successful year for Intelligent Technical Solutions, and we thank you for your business and friendship all year long.



*Know Someone Who Could Use Our Help?*

## Refer A New Client To Us In December And We'll Send You A FREE Wireless Mouse and Keyboard!

We love getting referrals from our loyal clients and we're not afraid to ask for them! Refer a new business client to us during December and we'll give you a FREE wireless mouse and keyboard and give your referral 2 FREE HOURS of computer support with absolutely no strings attached.

### Everybody Wins!

You get a cool new wireless mouse and keyboard and the person you refer gets to "try before they buy" with 2 free hours of computer support (they also get introduced to an honest, reliable technician who is dedicated to solving their computer problems). Just tell your friends to mention your name when they call so we can reward your loyalty and make sure they get their 2 free hours of support.

### Who Is A Good Referral?

Any business owner you know that has 5 or more PCs is a great referral for us.

**Answers: Let me sleep on it...**

*1-a, Blessings; 2-c, Morphine; 3-d, New York; 4-a, Lady Macbeth; 5-a, Dormouse; 6-c, Aurora; 7-b, Yogi Bear; 8-c, Ernie; 9-d, Simmons*