Innovations

R & R

Rest and Relaxation. Do you ever really get an entire day to devote to your favorite novel or lying limp in your backyard hammock?

There are so many roles we take on in our everyday lives that there is seldom time for a little R & R. Roles as the president, CFO, a father/mother, a husband/wife, a teacher or even a student keep our schedules packed.

So, take a breather on **August 15th** to observe National Relaxation Day. Go for a massage or a round of Golf. You deserve it! Life isn't any fun when it's all work and no play.

Five ways you can tell it's time for a new PC

Deciding when to replace your office PCs with new ones is usually a difficult decision.

You want to control your operating expenses but, at the same time, want your business to benefit from reliable, high-performing machines that can run the latest programs.

If you are unsure about what to do, here are five things that indicate it is probably time for a new computer. A well thought-out technology plan can help you:

1. Your PC is four years old.
If you cannot afford to have your PC break down or sit in the repair shop for a week, budget to replace your PC every three or four years.

This replacement schedule does not guarantee that you never have a problem, but it could protect you from experiencing major component failures. Replacing your PC every four years also provides an opportunity to easily upgrade to improved software – such as Windows Vista and Office 2007– because PC makers will preload the

programs on your new machine. And if you are buying five or more new PCs and installing new software, you may also be eligible to receive a discount on the software.

2. Your PC is slowing down.
Many things can cause a computer to run slowly, which can erode productivity over time. By removing unnecessary programs that load at start up, deleting old files from your hard disk, scanning for viruses and spyware, and tweaking other operating system settings, you might improve your computer's performance to a level you can live with.

However, it may also be the case that the programs you now run simply push the limits of the processing capabilities of your system. Insufficient memory, slow hard drive speeds, and an ancient CPU may prevent your system from keeping up with demands you place on it, particularly when you use multiple applications at the same time.
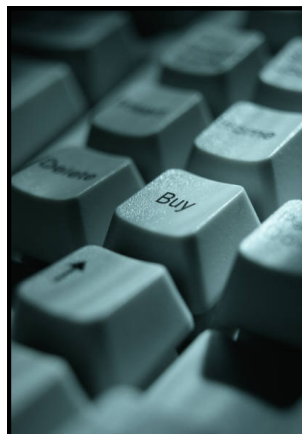
Harness your e-mail

Even with billions of e-mails sent daily there are really no simple rules for etiquette or standards for organizing messages. How do you harness your e-mail?

E-mail addresses
In order to find someone's e-mail address, you need to understand how e-mail addresses are created. E-mail addresses contain two basic parts: the e-mail name AKA the user name or e-mail ID and the e-mail domain or the part after the @ symbol. The best and least intrusive way to find an e-mail address is to look at past correspondence from the person you wish to

write. Their e-mail or sending address is always documented in the "From:" line. Some providers require you to view "more details" in order to show the actual address vs. the user name alone.

There is no master directory to lookup an e-mail address. Of course, the best and most accurate way to find an e-mail address is simply to ask the person.

Etiquette
Do you clump all the addresses you wish to send a letter to in the "To:" field? Sometimes this is not the best course of action. If you have ever received

I|T|S

INTELLIGENT TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS
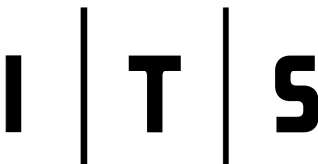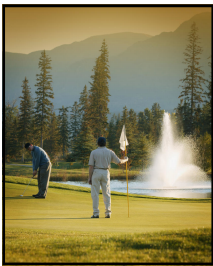
Five ways...

If you have the time and skills, you could upgrade some of these components. But if you compare the overall cost of upgrading to what a new machine might cost, investing in a new PC is often the smarter option.

3. Your PC makes unusual noises.
Computers typically make some noise. Cooling fans, CD-ROM drives and hard drives can all make a low hum or soft whirring when they operate. These sounds are not a cause for concern.

If you start to hear clicking noises, loud humming or thumping noises, your hard drive is likely going bad. Back up your data and consider whether you want to replace the hard drive or, if other things are not working well, the entire computer.

4. You cannot run the software you want.
New software programs demand more from com-puters and an older computer may not meet the optimal hardware requirements. For instance, if security is a top priority in your organization, you may want to run the Windows Vista operating system, which includes enhanced security among its many impressive features. However, Windows Vista requires more memory and a faster proces-sor than previous versions of Windows.

To help you figure out if your current computer can run Windows Vista, Microsoft also provides an online service that evaluates your PC system to see if it meets its system requirements.

5. Your growing & prices are cheap.
This reason does not apply to a replacement deci-sion. It is more of a buying strategy. If you expect to add new employees in the near future because your business is expanding, then you might pur-chase PCs in advance if prices are especially good and you have the cash or credit available.

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Harness...

forwards from a friend of a friend who you've never met or given permission to use your e-mail then you may be a victim of "To:" field address copiers. These are people who simply add everyone from the "To:" field of every message to their personal address book for forwards.

So, be careful with whom you are sharing your friends addresses. Util-ize the BCC or blind carbon copy field and put your e-mail in the "To:" field. This makes the message appear from you to you and sends copies to everyone you place in the BCC field without their knowledge of the other recipients.

Add a signature
A signature can be a great way to add your contact information to every e-mail without retyping it each time. Watch the length though. Signature files, especially for business use, should only contain about four lines. E-mail composed with a two-line statement and twelve-line signature comes off a bit obnoxious to recipients.

Check your subject line
Don't forget, use meaningful subject lines to give recipients a clue about the contents of your e-mail. A concise title can spark interest but, a long-winded message can lose your readers attention quickly. Most people do not require a novel to understand a few key concepts. Be brief and sum-marize your information so your recipients are more likely to read the entire mes-sage and respond.

E-mail attachments
Keep your attachments small. Up-loading large picture files, movies or documents to the web may be a great alternative; attaching a link will save bandwidth, keep your re-cipients e-mail box from becoming overloaded and create a more user friendly message all the way around.

While there are no true standards set in stone, these simple e-mail tips can transform your messages to a more effective communication tool your recipients will enjoy reading. So, strap-on a few key standards. For example: request permission before sending information to a contact, utilize blind carbon copies when necessary, a reasonable signature, check your subject line and monitor attachments to ensure your e-mails reflect your thoughts, image and communication needs.
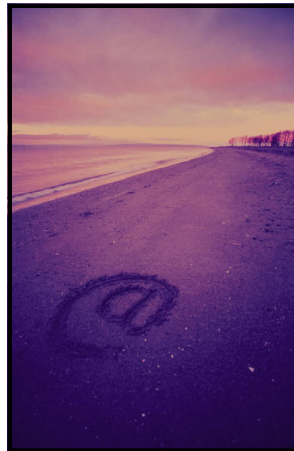
Cool Google search features and tips!

If you want to avoid irrelevant results whenever you search on Google, use these tried and true tips:

- Use double quotations around phrases to get an exact match. For example, if you want to find information on employee communications, type in "employee communications" and Google will return only those web sites that contain that exact phrase.

- If you want to exclude a term from your search, put a minus sign (-) in front of the word. For instance, if you wanted to search on the word "inspirational" but wanted to exclude religious content, you would type in "inspirational –religion".

- If you want to look up web sites that contain two different phrases or words but not necessarily grouped together in a phrase, use the plus sign (+).

For example, if you wanted to find a business that rents luxury cars in your city, you could type in "yourcity" + "luxury car rental".

Here are some other cool things you can find with Google:

- Want to find out the name of the person who called you when you only have the caller ID number? Type in phonebook:xxx-xxx-xxxx (with the x's being the actual number) and it will look that person up.

- If you want to know what city or state a person is located based on their area code, just type in the 3 digit number into Google.

- If you want to look up the definition of a word, type in "define:someword" with "some word" being the word you want to look up. Google will return the definition.

- If you want to calculate something, type the formula into Google. Example: 6*8

Manage your game on the green

With the right teacher and time to play or practice three times a week, you could be able to make a good showing when you're out with people who have played for many years.

Ron Stepanek, head of player development for the PGA, says almost anyone can learn to break 100 in five or six months. Someone with decent hand-eye coordination and any kind of athletic experience, could probably be breaking 90 in no time at all.

With the agreement to take lessons for five or six months, a teacher and student have the time to master each fundamental and in the right order before progressing. (If anyone else wants to give you golf tips, ignore them.)

The instructors say committed beginners make faster progress because they want to learn. Beginners generally start with putting and chipping. Once they understand what well-hit shots feel like at that level, they build up to full-swing shots.

The Wall Street Journal's John Paul Newport says three of the six instructors he interviewed started with the short game.

He recommends relying on word of mouth to find an instructor, scheduling a trial lesson, and talking about your goals to determine whether the connection is right.

"We don't spend enough time together, son. Ever thought of becoming a caddy?"

Inquiring Minds...

Blogging vs. Micro-blogging

A blog is a website **that** holds entries written by different users. The entries are stored in chronological order and displayed in reverse order so viewers always see the latest updates first. Blogs are literally logs of data on the web. Hence the name blog, a portmanteau of web log.

Most blogs are focused on a subject like current news, food, health, financials or even a more personal online diary. Generally, blogs contain a combination of contents like text, pictures and links.

Micro-blogging is a form of blogging that lets you write small amounts of text and send them to a group of people or interested persons. It is an easy way to tie together social-networking, instant messaging, and wireless communications.

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a social-networking site that is based around text messaging. All you do is go to www.twitter.com and register by choosing your screen name and giving a little info. Then you're a twit! Not silly or annoying but an evolving social butterfly.

Twittering does have its drawbacks though. It is very easy to become overwhelmed with hundreds of messages daily. Some Twitters love posting news updating everyone on the boring details of their tomato soup lunch.

Be careful; verify your text plan limitations with your cell phone carrier before you run up your bill. Twittering is fun but, unfortunately, can eat your cell phone alive.

Business on the Golf Course

Many people enjoy doing business on the golf course. It seems, especially for men, when you're in the act of accomplishment, you feel good about yourself and want to conduct business. These urges could possibly be linked to some sort of tribal or hunting instincts but, I think golfing just brings out your true character.

You can really tell a lot about a people by the way they react in a difficult situations or when they make mistakes on the green. Honesty is another attribute to watch for; if they cheat or lie about their golf score you know dishonesty is in their nature. What kind of golfer are you?

How To Be Pain Free At Your PC

According to author, radio personality, and founder of the Egoscue Method of Health Through Motion, Pete Egoscue, chronic pain and conditions such as eyestrain, back pain, carpal tunnel, and repetitive stress injuries can all be alleviated—and cured—through proper alignment.

According to his book, *Pain Free At Your PC*, the cause of the pain is often incorrectly attributed to the activity that makes the pain happen. For example, many people attribute wrist pain to hours of typing or some other overuse injury, when the true cause is the *position* of the wrist due to poorly aligned shoulders or hips, not the wrist or the activity itself. According to Pete, if your body was in proper alignment, your wrist would be in the proper position to work pain-free.

"The true source of muscu-loskeletal pain is rarely the site of the pain. If your wrist hurts when pointing and clicking the mouse, the pain probably has nothing to do with the device," says Pete.

To discover how you can eliminate chronic pain without drugs or surgery, visit Pete Egoscue's website: www.egoscue.com or listen to his free podcast on iTunes, "Pain Free Radio."