

# Innovations

## To My Valentine

Gravitation is not responsible for people falling in love.

~ Albert Einstein

But, it is partially responsible for power outages around Valentines Day.

All you wonderful givers spoiling your lovers with metallic balloons, hold on tight!

Utility companies advise customers keep Metallic balloons secure. If they come in contact with power lines, Metallic balloons can cause damage to equipment. As a result, people may be left without power for extended periods of time.

So, if you have metallic balloons to go with your gift this Valentines day, make sure you tether them tightly at all times or securely attach them to an anchor at the time of purchase.

## Go green — save energy and save money!

*Many companies across the globe are focusing on conservation. How many times have you heard about a company "going green"? Now, with virtualization and a few other energy saving tips, you can too!*

With the new year in full swing, many companies are working out the final kinks in their 2008 budget. Why not build energy efficiency into your business plans, investments and practices.

You can start by taking a close look at new products on the market. Boost your company conservation efforts and save a bundle too.

**In the server world during 2007**, there was relatively little progress. Microsoft released a "new" version of their Small Business Server 2003, but the new release (called "R2") contained mostly bug fixes and relatively few new features.

Microsoft's Windows Server 2008 product is a next generation of Windows Server products coupling virtualization with increased hardware utilization. We expect the Small Business version of this product will follow within six months. This update should use 64-bit processors which should improve speed significantly

— mostly because it can handle much more memory than the current generation of processors.

In general, more memory is a very good thing. Some applications are memory hogs. Windows 2008 will support many of the standard applications offices use fairly soon after it is released so you can take advantage of all the new features.

While upgrading your server is hot on your mind, why not consider the alternative — go virtual.

**What is a virtual server?** In essence, a virtual server is a collective of servers acting on one physical machine. Moving your operations onto our virtual systems creates a direct line from our servers to your computers. Virtual machines are created and managed remotely so you will have updates immediately and enjoy a more stable network that you can upgrade at the drop of a hat.

Virtual servers can eliminate costly server replacements and save office space too. Imagine, no more noisy server humming in the background of your office, no more manual reboots, and no more equipment to buy—EVER!

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## Internet solutions for your business

*Companies' dependence on the Internet continues to grow. Even fax machine usage continues to drop considerably in favor of scanning and email documents for free. What is the best Internet option for your company?*

This dependence can quickly become a panic situation when an Internet connection goes down, even for just a few minutes. Think about the consequences; how much money would you lose if your Internet was down for a full day? One day of downtime can result in closure or even client loss.

**Examine the possibilities** If you would like assistance evaluating your company needs and determining a solution for your specific requirements, don't hesitate to give us a call.

The best Internet option for your company depends greatly on demand and initial investment abilities. You may be thinking, "How can I choose the most economical and efficient connection for my company?" Knowledge is power — let's explore a few of the common connection types so you can make an informed decision.

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## Go green...

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**Changing your systems over...** to a virtual server or consolidating multiple servers into one virtual infrastructure reduces energy consumption.



Just think, if a dozen businesses turned their operations over to a virtual environment the cost savings would be over \$6,000 per year just for energy.

Currently, energy costs for cooling and operating servers only account for a small percentage of the standard tech budget for a business. Over the next five years there will inevitably be a considerable increase in the

cost of energy that could push this small percentage to a staggering 50%. It is conceivable the cost to operate a server in house will soon outweigh the cost of purchasing the server altogether.

**Start conserving today!** Even if your business is not ready for a server upgrade, there are many ways you can start conserving energy now.

Follow these simple ABC's of energy conservation and start saving money today.

**A**n Energy Star product has an Energy Star label right on the front generally embedded in the frame of the merchandise or includes a caption on the sales tag. Look for the Energy Star label when it comes time to replace your tired old monitor or clunky old printer.

**B**efore you leave, turn off peripherals. Shutting down your scanners, printers, monitors and lights in the evenings and on the weekends can help save energy. However, be sure to keep your PC on so you can receive useful updates.

**C**hange your power strips over to Smart Strips. They can help you cut costs by shutting down unused peripherals such as modems, monitors, printers or scanners automatically. Smart Strips only cost about \$30.00 each and pay for themselves in just one month. For more info about this product visit [bitsltd.net](http://bitsltd.net).

## Internet solutions...

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**Fabulous fiber** If your company cannot survive Internet interruptions and is able to invest a considerable amount to ensure a reliable connection, fiber is simply fantastic. Fiber is the most reliable connection there is. If there is ever a problem with fiber connections, there are special crews to repair the problem. They are on site immediately — fiber is *always* first.

While it is true fiber is costly and may not be available in all areas, the installation prices have dropped considerably and new share programs are available so neighboring businesses can split the costs of installation.

**T1—stability guaranteed** Connections such as T1 are the “gold standard” for stability but they aren't particularly fast and the price can be a bit expensive too. However, the high price tag comes with a 99.99% guarantee of uninterrupted service over the course of one year from most providers. If your service goes down, T1 crews leap into action immediately

**DSL if you're close or Cable if available** If your business is in close proximity to a phone company, DSL may be a viable option. Proximity is a key factor in determining DSL performance. Currently, DSL *is* the most common business Internet solution.

On the other hand, Cable can be a quick and stable option *if* it is available for your business. Cable connections are generally faster than DSL and more reliable but still fall a little behind fiber and T1.

**Dual WAN saves the day** We are seeing more “dual WAN” scenarios where the customer has two separate, independent Internet connections (i.e. DSL and cable, or two separate DSL lines, etc.).

With proper router equipment, traffic can either be balanced between the two connections (and achieve greater speeds than either of the two connections on their own) or use one connection and if it goes down automatically switch over to the other one.

Give us a call today, we will explore your connection options and help you determine the best connection possible for your company.

## February 17, 2009 — Are you Ready?

*In just one year we will all be witnesses of the largest change to television since color was introduced. We are going all digital!*

According to the FCC, Federal law requires all full-power television broadcast stations stop broadcasting in analog format and change only to digital. This will free up frequencies for public safety communications such as your local police, fire and emergency rescue organizations as well as the mobile phone industry.

### What do I need to do to be ready?

It all depends on the source of your programming and the type of television you own. If you subscribe to a paid service such as cable or satellite TV, you should contact your provider to see what, if any, equipment you may need. *Remember that you will need a digital-to-analog converter box for any analog TV in your home not connected to a paid TV service.*

Check your television to ensure it has a built-in digital tuner. If not, you must purchase a digital-to-analog set-top converter box. Don't let the name scare you, it's only purpose is to change the digital signal to analog so your television can display the channels.

**\$40 coupons are available.** If you purchased a new television after March 1, 2007 you are home free; your digital tuner is built-in. However, if you do require a converter box, between January 1st and March 3, 2009 all U.S. households are eligible to request up to two coupons, worth \$40 each to use toward the purchase of up to two digital-to-analog converter boxes. These converters are generally priced between \$50 and \$70 per box.

### Where can I find more info?

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration or NTIA has the wonderful responsibility of administering the coupon program.

Visit [www.DTV2009.gov](http://www.DTV2009.gov) or call 1-888-DTV-2009

Remember, coupons will be available on a first-come-first-serve basis to all U.S. households until \$890 million has been expended.

**Coupon redemption** Hundreds of retailers are certified to participate in this TV Converter Box Coupon Program like Best Buy, Circuit City, Kmart, RadioShack, Sam's Club, Target and Wal-Mart.



## Why chocolate is a way to say 'I love you'

No one has determined whether men or women are more likely to be chocoholics, but that's probably because the affliction is gender neutral.

Now comes Valentine's Day, a time when you can justly treat your taste buds to lots of chocolate. It's a gift. Retailers say that chocolates and roses are the best symbols of love.

Forget the guilt of overindulging, after all it is a holiday. Besides, chocolate has a new reputation. Health scientists say it contains the same chemicals our brains release when we fall in love. The serotonin and endorphins promote a sense of well-being, calm, and even euphoria. Chocolate acts as a mild antidepressant.

All chocolate, but especially dark chocolate, contains flavonoids that reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. In small, regular doses, chocolate can actually increase "good" cholesterol, and reduces the kind that clogs up arteries.

So, follow the doctors' advice. Treat your heart, your mood, and your palate to a couple of pieces every day!



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February 2008

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## News you can use...

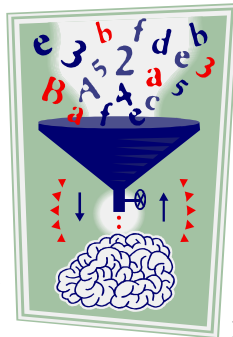
**The iPhone impact** The iPhone was a significant step in the evolution of mobile computing. It was small, light-weight, elegant, easy to use, and POWERFUL. It’s a shame they hitched their horse to AT&T and their lousy second-rate data network.

But, it has sparked something that I think will be HUGE in the next couple of years – the prospect of truly having a real computer bundled into a mobile device. Google is taking an interesting lead in this regard. Over the objections of Verizon Wireless, AT&T, and most of the other mobile carriers, Google convinced the FCC to demand “open access” in the next round of radiofrequency auctions, slated for early 2008. The FCC is auctioning off the spectrum currently occupied by analog television.

It remains to be seen exactly how this shakes out, but Google’s idea is to create an open-source mobile device. A device that can be completely customized and programmed like a standard computer. This is a radical departure from the current closed-source model where the mobile carriers tightly lock down the phones and the features to compel users to buy their proprietary services (i.e. Verizon’s VCAST service).

If anybody can program their own cell phone AND the carriers are required to let them use it on their networks, it opens up a whole world of interesting possibilities. Perhaps, services will be able to entirely integrate mobile phones seamlessly into their systems rather than having to handle it differently.

This will be a big deal in 2008, so brace yourself for the evolution of communications.



**Brain training goes online** Handheld brain games have become a new craze. It is no surprise that brain training is now available online.

The idea behind brain training is that playing certain puzzle games can increase your attention span, improve short-term memory, and speed up your cognitive functions.

To that end, brain training Web sites allow you to daily play and track your performance on a variety of brain games. Mybraintrainer.com offers a one year membership at only \$2.50 per month. You can work through a variety of brain exercise games that simulate and train different parts of your brain. Their website boasts, “MyBrainTrainer.com will give you that edge you’ve always been seeking. More speed, more focus, more mental clarity, more productivity. You’ll never think the same way again.”

## Error Message Déjà Vu?

Do you ever feel like the error messages on your computer are simply no help at all? You know you have seen them before but you just can’t get rid of them? You may be experiencing error message déjà vu!

Give us a call...we can help! Our technicians can answer your questions, help you prevent damages to your systems and stop the popup madness. Our staff is available to translate your computer garble into a sensible plan of action. We will walk you through a system evaluation and repair options; work with you to order the products you need and set up an appointment for services.

**Intelligent Technical Solutions**

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