Innovations

You're cancelling?

Valentine's Day, for a lot of people, is overrated with the color pink splashed on store front banners and heart shaped decorations appearing everywhere. But you can't stop the romance from flourishing on this popular holiday. After all, lovers everywhere partake in things like movies, dinners, dancing, and vacations every year.

Even if Valentine's Day is not your forté don't miss out on the chance to tell a loved one you care even if you have a slight ulterior motive.

Plan something outrageous this year that gives you and your sweetheart something to talk about until Easter. A skydiving, paragliding or bungee jumping adventure on Valentine's Day may be just what you need to break free of the common box of chocolates and lame card regime.

If cancelling Valentine's Day sounds like your cup of tea, maybe you just need to think outside the box. What makes you both happy?

I|T|S
INTELLIGENT TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

5 wrong ways to outsource IT for your business

Outsourcing has become standard for small and medium sized businesses today. When it comes to IT, outsourcing provides a reduction in costs and a boost in efficiency that is almost a necessity for survival.

With the current downturns in the economy, many companies are looking to push the "tech stuff" right out the door. Even though this is not a new concept for the business world, there is no helpful list of "do's" and "don'ts" to follow. So, consider these five wrong ways to go about outsourcing your IT needs to avoid disaster.

1. Save time, skip the planning phase, and dive right in. This is like a smoke alarm with no battery. It looks great and gives people a sense of security but doesn't really do anything but cause confusion and chaos. We have seen this with quite a few clients. They are so fed up with their current situation that they are ready to throw money at their problems to just make things work.

Think about it, replacing expensive in-house processes and upgrading your systems is the end result not a

starting point. Outsourcing IT for your company is the beginning of a long relationship. The IT provider you choose will become a new resource for your organization. Make sure to clearly define your needs and review the possibilities with the provider you choose to ensure they are the right fit for your company and can accommodate your technology service needs.

2. Pick the provider that has the biggest and best yellow page ad in the phone book. They have to be good! Remember, not all technology service companies are created equal. The computer repair industry is not regulated like lawyers or accountants; there are no real laws to protect you as a consumer against substandard unethical practices. Shop around and check references before you sign on the dotted line.

Don't just put the fires out, take preventative measures to ensure future security and stability. Look for an IT provider that believes in regular maintenance and

Free e-mail accounts: fantastic or just frustrating

Free is free. Some people say, you get what you pay for, others think this idea is a bit skewed. With regard to free e-mail accounts, the real question is: what are you sending and how important is it?

Many start-up companies or small organizations may be tempted to use a free e-mail service provider like Hotmail, Google Mail, or MSN for their communications. While these will work for your personal messages, when it comes to business, you may suffer more than you think.

Did you know that there are no guarantees with your free e-mail account? The message you spent five hours composing for work last night, may never reach your boss. Free providers do not stand by their systems and will not support their services in any way. Have you ever seen a technical support phone number on Hotmail?

Security, where? With a free e-mail account you are high and dry. There is no support and there is no e-mail archiving. You have to manually save your mes-

5 wrong ways to outsource IT...

managed services. This type of agreement is a sure-fire sign that the provider understands the value of system maintenance. Generally, a managed service agreement includes regular onsite visits, maintenance, and repairs in the event of an emergency. Stay away from technicians who nickel and dime you with hourly work and never quite fix the problems at hand. They make a profit from your computer troubles and don't want to create a stable computing environment for your organization because the make more when your systems break.

3. Out of sight, out of mind.
If your computer isn't hassling you, then it must be working perfectly, right? No! When you get to the point where pop-ups are littering your screen or your programs are stalling regularly, you may lose more than you think. This is one of the most common misconceptions of computer repairs. Just because you cannot see the gremlin in your machine, it doesn't mean your company information and files are safe. Regular maintenance including scans, updates, spam filtering, and backups are critical to ensure your company data is safe and your systems are running smoothly.

4. Sit back and enjoy the ease of outsourcing. Let the provider take the reigns and the blame for everything.
It takes two to tango. Don't release all control to another party or waste time playing the blame game. Your companies health and security is much too important. Take an active role in developing a plan to incorporate your new IT provider into your company. Schedule maintenance on days that you or your office manager are available to meet with them, discuss procedures for reporting problems with your staff to ensure technology issues do not turn into disasters, and work with your provider every step of the way to maximize the benefits for your business.

5. The more money you put into technology the more your business will benefit.
Don't get sucked into a pricey service plan that will drain your pocket book and leave you hanging. Again, not all technicians are created equal. Seek out a professional that can work with what you have and will listen to what you need. Don't worry, you don't have to speak geek to discuss changes for your company. Meet with IT providers to discuss your business and your plans. If they seem irritable and don't want to listen, run!
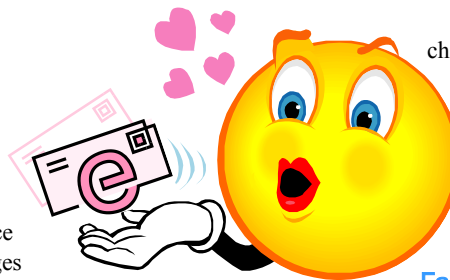
Outsourcing your IT needs should not be a pain staking chore. Technology is the core of operations for many companies today and has become a huge asset for organization like yours. Take a step in the right direction with Intelligent Technical Solutions. We promise not to hound you with pushy sales people. We will listen to your needs and work with you to ensure your systems are secure, backed-up and up-to-date.

Intelligent Technical Solutions (888) 969-3636

Free e-mail accounts...

sages in folders. That way you can retrieve and search them at a later date. However, even that is not guaranteed. You may run out of "free" space and lose the oldest messages without notification. Or, your e-mail account may disappear all together without warning. What then?

Your company e-mail is a reflection of your business.
Many companies who use free e-mail accounts for correspondence are easily written-off as spammers by clients and prospects. Purchase your own URL or internet address and use it for your company e-mail too. For example, www.DrDental.com or Anna@Gifts4U.net are a great way to spread your company name and confidence.

Fall in love with your e-mail again...
Give yourself and your business a supported, secure, and reliable e-mail system to keep your companies communications rolling. ITS can help. We offer filtering options and technical support. If your e-mail isn't sending, receiving or if you just get stuck, you can call in for troubleshooting assistance anytime.

Take a Wi-Fi hot spot where ever you roam

Whether you are headed out of town for a meeting or just slipping away for a Valentine retreat, you can stop anywhere and plug into the Internet with Wi-Fi built into your vehicle.

Chrysler, Dodge, and Jeep 2009 models will offer a new, never seen before, feature — a Wi-Fi hot spot in a vehicle. This wireless connection can support multiple wireless toys simultaneously including a couple of computers and Smartphone's.

A new generation of wireless Internet...

This new Wi-Fi service, supported by Chrysler's UConnect Mobile Internet service using a 3G wireless connection, should not be interrupted even when you're driving — this is an industry first. Wi-Fi devices like a laptop, an Apple iPhone or Sony's PlayStation Portable gaming console can stay ac-tive for an entire road trip with UConnect. So, your passengers will never go without.

Does it cost a fortune?

Of course, Chrysler is stepping up their game so the sticker price is a bit higher for all of the handy gadgets they are including like a backup camera and DVD entertainment system that can play over the flip-down flat screens. However, the Wi-Fi solution is pretty reasonably, priced at just $29 per month with as little as a one year contract. This wireless solution will allow you to catch those important e-mails on the go no matter what the occasion. The router in a Chrysler vehicle broadcasts in a 100-foot radius with speeds anywhere from 400-800Kbps. Think about the possibilities, you could watch a little television on Hulu.com while you relax on the beach this summer.

"I can grant you your first two wishes, but I cannot guarantee your computers won't crash or get a virus this year!"

Share and share alike

Have you ever received a message from a client or friend informing you the file you sent was full of computer garble? Or have you received a Word, Excel or PowerPoint file you just couldn't open? Don't wait to find a genie in a bottle… Solve your compatibility issues today:

- ☑ If you upgraded to Microsoft Office 2007 over the past year or two and have issues getting files to your contacts, take a moment to resave the files to an earlier version. Simply select "Save As", choose the location, type in the file name and choose the file extension from the drop-down box below the file name. The 97-2003 type is a common format that just about anyone can open.

- ☑ If you are on the other side of the fence, you have not upgraded and are having trouble reading files from others, then you may need to download the Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007. This will allow your earlier software version to read the newer file type. Once the Pack is downloaded on your computer you are set. It is automatically engaged when you open a 2007 file.

Make sure everyone is able to read, view and work with your documents, spreadsheets, and presentations.

Inquiring Minds...

Laugh it off! That's right, you heard me… take a step back and let your sense of humor run wild. Psychologists say that humor reduces stress, improves communication, raises morale, and makes change easier to accept in the workplace. Make an effort to learn a new joke to share. You can pick up a new 2009 joke calendar today and keep the laughter going in your office. There are a slue of these little gems available online. You can find anything from The Dumbest Things Ever Said or Done to Joke Riddles and Puns. They are a great way to break the ice with new coworkers over your morning coffee or take a break and give yourself and coworkers a giggle to decompress during a stressful time.

Wireless mouse and keyboard woes... In recently changing some of our customers over to a wireless keyboard and mouse setup, we heard the same questions over and over. So, I thought I should address them: How often do I change the batteries? And does the keyboard tell me when it needs new batteries?

Unfortunately, many of the wireless setups today do not have indicator lights for their battery life. So, to avoid battery replacement costs, you may want to invest in rechargeable batteries. In the long run, this is a great way to ensure you will never go without. Just charge up the first set, pop a few in the mouse and keyboard, then you're up and running. Keep the extras charged up and stored in a drawer for the day your devices begin misbehaving.

Keep an eye out for signs. When the batteries are low, your keyboard will delay or keys may not respond as you type. With a wireless mouse, your clickie-clickie just won't clickie anymore or the cursor will slow dramatically. Change the batteries and you will be up and running again in no time.

Think outside the box technology manufacturers! We want more that just one design! The consumers have spoken. We are all learning quickly about the new techno-gadgets available today. Everyone seems to have a laptop and many people carry and heavily rely on multiple handheld devices too. People are showing an appetite for style and flair. They want to see their favorite PCs and personal devices with more than a touch of color or smoothed edges. According to Richard Shim, a PC analyst with IDC, this is all a part of a larger trend of "hyper-specialization" in notebooks. With the variety of competing technology products crowded on the shelves today, consumers will be looking for a style that suits their taste just as much as they will seek out the type of technology to fit their needs. Shim reported to Reuters.com, "Personalization is becoming a big differentiator. It's just a question of how far you can take it and how much money you can get for it."

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, repair options, and help you order the products you need. Don't worry, we won't stand you up. We hope to win the key to your heart with prompt knowledgeable technicians at your service.

Intelligent Technical Solutions
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