Innovations

Analyzing July 4th

The 4th of July is a day of celebration for all Americans. To express the magnitude of the legendary holiday, lets dive into a few statistics.

ℵ In a recent year, about 72 million people flocked to national historical sites and 24 million to national monuments on July 4th.

ℵ In 1776 there were only 2.5 million people in the 13 colonies of America. On the 4th of July 2008, there were over 304 million people.

ℵ Over 150 million hot dogs are expected to be consumed by Americans on the 4th.

ℵ The most common way to celebrate this all American holiday differs from region to region. In the western states, rodeos and county fairs are common. However, in Brooklyn, New York Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest is the hottest spot in town.

5 ways to safely surf the Internet this summer

Beware of the attacks targeted at Google surfers. The number of compromised sites has grown by leaps and bounds since the end of the first quarter of 2009 and is still growing.

According to Channel Web, an infectious collective of compromised websites dubbed the Gumblar

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attacks, have infected over 1,500 websites including Variety.com and Coldwellbanker.com. Generally, such malicious sites are not a concern as they hit their peak within the first week of their release and tend to decline in intensity as they are detected by security companies. However, the Gumblar attacks are unexpectedly gaining momentum.

Even though Google has been delisting the infected sites from their grand archive and many site owners affected have been cleaning up their end, the threat is still very real for uninformed users. Don't become a casualty of the Gumblar attacks. Recognize the signs and be cautious when surfing the Internet.

The signs... The Gumblar malware redirects your Google search screen swapping out legitimate website

links with phony links impersonating the companies you may be looking for. Once you click on a fraudulent Gumblar site, a Trojan is immediately downloaded to your computer. Trojans, by design, are created to disrupt and damage computer activity. The Gumblar Trojan acts like a full-access pass for attackers to take control of your computer or even steal your personal information. Oh, and did I mention that there are quite literally millions of infections that you may stumble upon surfing the Internet?

5 tips to safely surf the Internet. Give yourself the upper hand over attackers on the Internet. Follow these five tips to surf the Internet safely and prevent an infection before it is too late.

1. Read everything. "Drive-by downloads", or websites like the one above, mislead surfers by using authentic-appearing sites that deceive users. Believe it or not, "drive-by downloads" are everywhere.

Improve your environmental stance and cut costs

A growing trend in 2009 is the conversion to green computing. More executives and business owners today are discovering the benefits of going green than ever before.

Green IT is becoming an essential component of conducting business today. Consumers and employees love to support an organization that is actively en-

gaged in conservation. What better way to take a stance than to change your company over to green IT methods.

According to a recent survey by Symantec, 97% of enterprise companies around the globe are discussing a green IT strategy, while 45% have already implemented a program to conserve. The key

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5 ways to safely surf...

(Continued from page 1)

2. Stay protected. According to Symantec, *all* of the top 100 websites on the Internet have some bad code that can lead you to hackers, viruses and more. In addition, Internet Explorer and Firefox are not full proof. They have vulnerabilities that may put you at risk if you are not protected. The only sure fire way to stay protected is to purchase a security program for your computer and keep it up to date so the most recent viruses, malware and spyware cannot penetrate your shield of protection.

3. Install security patches and updates regularly. Keep your computer up to date too. Listen to the reminders in the lower right hand corner of your computer screen. For example, if you use a Microsoft operating system, these updates come out regularly, every week or so. Simply click on the reminder and Microsoft will update your computer to the most current version necessary.

4. Configure your browser to help you stay informed. Disable plug-ins and configure your browsers security settings by visiting the "Tools" menu and selecting "Internet Options." Be sure to check the settings that do not allow Java applets, JavaScript and VBScript, ActiveX controls, etc. without prompting for your approval first. Then you can pick and choose what you need.

5. Consider using two different browsers. If you do a lot of online banking or other financial transactions, consider using one browser for these types of activities and then use a secondary browser for standard use like checking e-mail, watching videos or even updating your social networks site.

According to CBS, the Gumblar attacks grew 188% in just seven days. Sophos, a respected anti-virus and anti-spam software company, has been tracking the Gumblar infections. Their findings are staggering. 42% of all infections found on the Internet during a period of just one week, were attributed to Gumblar attacks.

So, be careful out there. Even surfing the web using Google can quickly turn into a devastating situation. Read everything you click on, stay protected with security software, install security patches and updates regularly on your computer, and configure your web browser to help you catch infectious downloads. If you have any questions, feel free to give us a call.

Safety First

Take responsibility for your fireworks this summer. Be sure they are legal and don't rely on others to make sound choices to use good judgment. Set boundaries that only allow adults to light fireworks. Children are naturally curious. Be sure fireworks, matches, and lighters are secured out of sight and reach. Remember, you can have a fantastic experience with fireworks without starting a fire or running to the emergency room if you are careful and cautious. The leading causes of fireworks related injuries are holding, leaning over, throwing, altering, and delayed ignition of a fire work. Be safe and have a great time!

Five dimensions expand capacity beyond belief

Imagine a disc that can store every photo you have ever taken, every video you have ever created or downloaded as well as a full-backup of your computer. According to MIT's Technology Review, a new material could eventually give us this ability.

Min Go, the director of the Centre for Micro-Photonics at Swinburne University of Technology in Victoria, Australia is on the job. He and his team have developed a multiplexed optical recording technology that creates a "fifth dimension" of recording. I know this sounds pretty technical, but think of the possibilities. Go's team has already been able to store 1.6 terabyte's (TB) of data on one single disc.

How big is a terabyte? Most computers these days have at least one gigabyte (GB) of memory. Now imagine a row of 1,638 computers with one GB of memory each. That is how much space Go's team was able to fill with data on just one disc.

According to professor Min Go, "We were able to show how nanostructured material can be incorporated onto a disc in order to increase data capacity without increasing the physical size of the disc." This type of technology will have immediate applications for a variety of fields. Medical facilities could use these disc's to store extremely large files like MRI's. Financial institutions may also benefit by using this type of storage to keep years of data for a large organization like MIT all in one place. Just imagine the possibilities and keep a look out over the next decade for these high capacity storage disc's that are bound to alter your perception of the fifth dimension.

Improve your environmental stance...

findings from the Symantec 2009 Worldwide Green IT Report are: green IT is now "essential", green IT budgets are rising, IT departments are willing to pay a premium for green equipment, IT is at the heart of enterprise green efforts, and green IT initiatives are more of a priority today than ever before.

I know what you are thinking, this is going to be an expensive transition and I am not prepared to spend extra money right now. However, even with the current state of the economy, spending on green IT solutions is on the rise. The driving force behind this increase in spending is the potential to reduce recurring costs for things like electricity.

Green strategies. There are many ideas about the definition of green IT measures. Many organizations go to the extreme of replacing all of their old equipment with new top dollar energy efficient equipment in one huge overhaul. However, this is the most costly way of moving toward an environmentally friendly operation. Take a look at these three low-cost strategies to turn your office green:
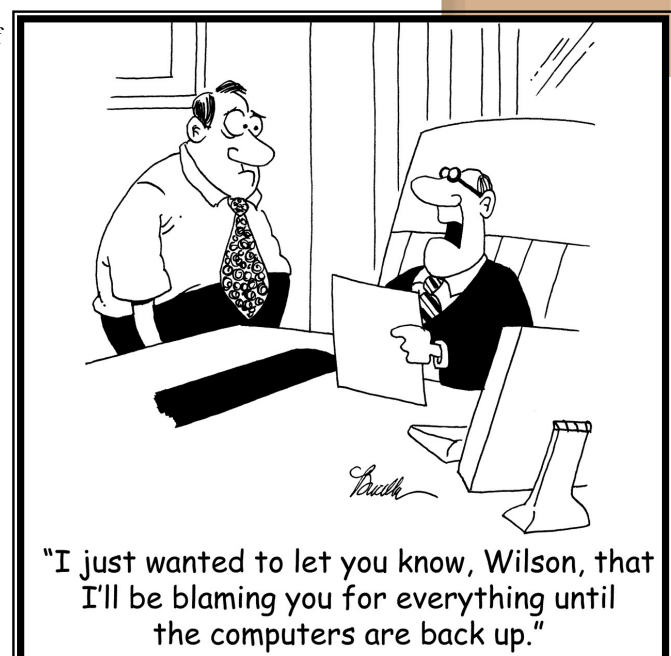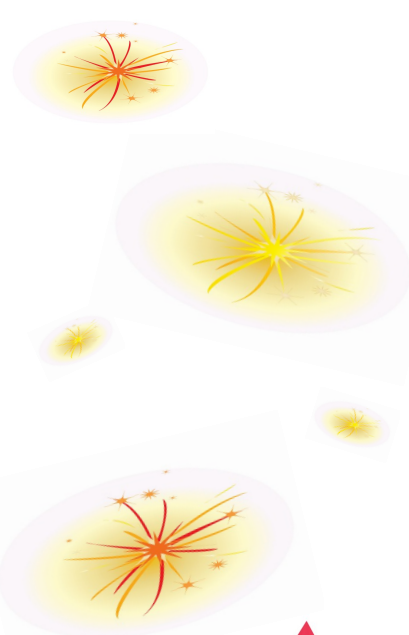
- *Monitor power consumption.* Be aware of your usage. Create company policy that directs users to be conservative. Turn off all computers and peripherals every weekend. Turn off lighting in your office when no one is in the room or try a 1/2 power program in which you use 1/2 the lighting available.

- *Server consolidation or virtualization.* The next time one of your servers fails or is filled to capacity, don't just replace it or purchase an additional server, upgrade to a larger version and consolidate or virtualize your data. Not only will this be easier to monitor than shuffling around two or more servers, but it will be less expensive to operate and manage.

- *Replace your old box monitors (CRT's) with LCD monitors.* Believe it or not, you can save a substantial amount of electricity with this simple step. According to energy conservation groups, the energy-consumption rate of an average LCD display can be as little as half of that for an average CRT monitor.

Don't hesitate...
There is no need to wait for a huge budget or develop extensive plans to become green, take the plunge today and save. If you have any questions or would like to review your needs, give us a call. We are here to help.

"I just wanted to let you know, Wilson, that I'll be blaming you for everything until the computers are back up."

Tom Ryan Rose

James Marty Shawn

"Our job is to make your job easier!"

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Inquiring Minds...

Verizon's "Hub" could replace landlines. Verizon's "Hub" is a cordless phone that makes use of an existing broadband connection from any Internet service provider using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). You can make calls to anyone, message other Verizon customers, watch videos and even purchase event tickets on this convenient communication station.

The "Hub" helps families to stay connected and organized with a daily calendar, chaperone capabilities so you can track all the cell phones on your Verizon plan, and even allows you to store and send photos or family videos to Verizon subscribers. You can even login to your Verizon account online and change your settings, download or upload information directly to the "Hub".

Details. The "Hub" has a seven-inch touch screen that displays all of the features of the station including the 128 entry address book that allows up to three phone numbers for each contact. For just $199 you can purchase the "Hub" with a 2 year contract. You can enjoy unlimited domestic calls, mobile-to-mobile messaging and other web based features for just $34.99.

Drawbacks, yes there are a few, the "Hub" does not support technology like alarm systems, TiVo®, digital video recorders or medical monitoring devices. Also, your "Hub" is only as reliable as the Internet it feeds on. While you can still use the Internet on your computer and the phone simultaneously, the "Hub" may slow down your browsing connectivity. In addition, if you have regular power or Internet failures, this device will be rendered useless during the outage.

If you are still up for the challenge, the "Hub" may change the way you view telephone service. With over 30 standard phone service features including 3-way calling, call forwarding, caller ID, call waiting and do not disturb (DND), this station is a high quality solution with a low price tag. VoIP is quickly becoming the norm for businesses across the nation; I guess it was just a matter of time before vendors set out to conquer the home telephone market.

Stay tuned. The buzz online is that Verizon is looking to launch the "Hub 2" (shown here) later this year. Engadget reports, this new device may include camera abilities, Sirius Radio, games, social networking sites, and even an application store (named appropriately, the App Mart.) Now, if only alarm and medical monitoring companies would develop software that can be integrated too, you could essentially use the "Hub" to monitor your home and family all from one device.

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