

TECHNOLOGY TIMES

“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably”

Is Anything In Life Really FREE?

Warning: If You’ve Downloaded Free Software From The Internet, Your Computer May Be At Risk For Viruses, Hackers, and Spyware!

We’ve all heard the saying that the best things in life are free, but I’m not sure they were referring to software.

Freeware (free software, not to be confused with open source software) such as the AVG anti-virus free edition, Spybot, and Ad-Aware are all programs you can download to your PC for the ultimate discount: free. However, you get what you pay for.

While these programs may work just fine for someone’s home computer, they are not business class tools and should not be trusted to completely protect your computer or network from viruses, spyware, hackers, and other problems.

Every month we receive calls from clients whose computers are infected with a nasty virus or a boatload of spyware who had these programs installed and running, and were under the false assumption that they were protected.

Why Freeware Doesn’t Protect Your Computer

In most cases, freeware is a light version of a software program that you pay for. Take the AVG free edition for example. AVG offers a free edition of their licensed product as a way of introducing you to their fully-featured product. However, this software does not come with any online, e-mail, or phone support. It is also illegal to use it on multiple machines or in a commercial, non-profit, or educational environment (single home users only).

You’re On Your Own

As you might expect, freeware comes with zero guarantees or promises to function correctly, to be compatible with your system, or to safeguard you from threats. You’re not a paying customer so you’re on your own to resolve any technical problems you encounter, and you certainly won’t get support if your computer gets infected. Since many free applications are plagued with bugs and incompatibilities, you may end up with a mess on your hands and no one to blame but yourself.

Additionally, freeware programs are not always current with the most up-to-date protection, and don’t always update themselves automatically or perform scans and tasks on a regular schedule. That means you could be operating with a false sense of security; and since the sophistication and number of threats circulating are only increasing, you need a comprehensive solution that you can trust especially if your computer or network holds data and files you don’t want to lose or make available to a cyber-criminal.

Bottom line: you get what you pay for. If the files, data, pictures, and functionality of your computer or network is of high-importance, then investing in a trusted, industrial-strength software program to protect it is a smart and worthwhile investment.



“As a business owner, you don’t have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That’s where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!”

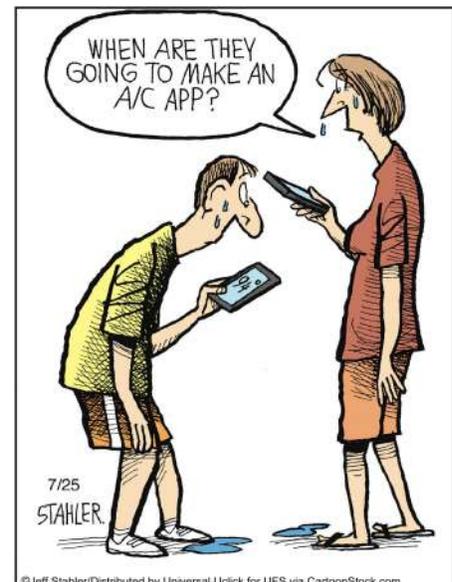
- Brian Curtis, President

August 2015

Williston, Vermont

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How To Avoid Runaway IT Projects That Empty Your Wallet

In 2002, McDonald's decided to implement a system to provide their corporate executives with a bird's-eye view of their 30,000 stores, to track, measure and monitor everything from profitability to cooking-oil quality. The project, named "Innovate," was a massive five-year project with a billion-dollar budget. Two years into its implementation, McDonald's executives abandoned the project and wrote off the \$170 million invested, saying they needed to reduce capital expenditures.

Even though YOUR business isn't a McDonald's with a billion-dollar IT budget, chances are you've had at least one failed IT project that derailed, emptying your wallet and leaving you with nothing other than a grudge. And if you haven't had that happen yet, chances are, as you grow, you will. So how do you avoid going down a rabbit hole of spending on an IT project? Here are five key strategies to keep you on track:

1. Begin with the end in mind. The clearer you are on what "success" is for the project, the more likely you are to achieve it. Take the time to sit down with your executive team and decide exactly what the new system LOOKS like (including the interface, if you're developing one), how it performs, what it does and how it works.
2. IT projects need to be driven by an executive who understands the business need and outcome, NOT the IT department. If you and your executive team aren't going to be heavily involved with the process, decisions and management of the project, don't start it.
3. Think in smaller, "bite-sized" projects. One of the problems with the McDonald's project was that it was so complex, affected multiple business systems and had such an enormous scope, it was almost guaranteed to fail. If you have a major system to build or overhaul, break it into smaller, manageable chunks so that problems are contained and costs controlled.
4. Manage the project hours. Scope creep is the biggest challenge to keeping your project on time and on budget. If your project starts to take on a life of its own and goes over your budgeted time frame and your budget by more than 10%, it's time to start re-evaluating what's going on. Excessive overtime is a red flag that the project was not thought through properly, that you have the wrong team working on it or that it's being grossly mismanaged. Don't ignore it.
5. Missed milestones are a red flag. While it's normal to miss a few milestones by a small margin, your IT team should not be allowed to consistently miss key milestones in the project. We recommend setting clearly defined milestones every two weeks or monthly versus monthly or quarterly. This allows you to keep a tighter control on the budget and deliverables.

How New Viruses Get Named

Thousands of viruses are currently circulating on the Internet with more being discovered daily. So how does a virus get its name?

There is no official government body or organization that names viruses. In most cases, the anti-virus company that discovers it gets to name it; and, it's a very competitive race to see who can discover new viruses first!

The criminals creating viruses like to leave clues as to what they want their virus to be named, but researchers who discover (and fight) them don't give their authors the satisfaction of keeping the name. To hackers, creating a destructive, difficult to disable virus is a badge of honor. So instead of giving these cyber criminals the publicity they crave, virus researchers will name a virus based on the type of system it attacks, what it does, or other random reasons.

For example, the Code Red virus got its name from an eEye Digital Security researcher's beverage of choice -- the cola variety of Mountain Dew soft drink. Apparently he was drinking this the night he cracked the corruptive code.

Creativity aside, most anti-virus companies have policies and letter-number formulas for naming viruses because it's becoming more and more difficult to come up with unique names for viruses. Symantec's Norton anti-virus software currently has a catalogue of over 58,193 known viruses—and the number grows every day.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Rocketbook: A Super-Convenient Way To Store And Organize Handwritten Notes

If you're like me, you still like taking notes with a pen and paper. Problem is, note pages can pile up, get lost and be a pain to organize. But thanks to a special notebook called Rocketbook, you can still take notes the "old-fashioned" way of pen and paper, but then file, organize and store your notes digitally for quick access and retrieval!

Rocketbook looks like an ordinary pad of paper. To use it, simply take notes as you would on any pad of paper, using the Pilot FriXion pen. When you're done, the built-in app creates a high-quality JPG image of your notes and files it to the folder of your choice inside Evernote, Dropbox, Google Docs or OneNote. You indicate which folder each note goes to by marking clever little icons at the bottom of each page.

When the pages are full, simply microwave the notebook for 30 seconds to completely erase and reuse. Rocketbook currently comes in two sizes and is available at indiegogo. Just search on, "Rocketbook."

How Great Leaders Inspire Their Employees To Higher Commitment And Performance

It's probably true that most people who work with us will never care as deeply as we do about building our business. If they did, they'd probably be working for themselves! Yet there's a great deal we can do to raise the commitment level and inspire them to peak performance. The operative word here is INSPIRE. You can demand that people who work for you be punctual, or that they perform at a certain production level. Yet real commitment can only be INSPIRED. And inspiring people is what great leaders do best.

How do great leaders inspire others to commit themselves to their goals? It's not just their charismatic personalities, or that they give a lot of high-powered motivational talks. They communicate their vision so forcefully that other people adopt it as their own.

For example, Lee Iaccoca stepped into the ailing Chrysler Corporation and said, "We're going to turn this company around!" With clear goals, a solid plan of action and a strong conviction, he was able to inspire enough commitment from the US Congress that he secured the largest loan ever made to a private company. Then he inspired enough commitment in thousands of Chrysler workers to enable the company to pay back the loan ahead of schedule.

And that's the formula for any leader to inspire commitment – clear goals, a solid plan of action and a strong conviction. Communicate that to the people who work with you, and you'll have the kind of loyalty that makes them go the extra mile – if that's what it takes to get the job done.

Of course, it takes more than inspiration to run a successful organization. The people who work with you have to perform consistently at very high levels, and to get that kind of performance, you have to gain their trust. They have to believe that you will always be fair in your dealings with them, and that you are concerned about their best interests.

One of the most helpful insights I ever learned about leading others is that people do things for THEIR reasons, not for YOURS or MINE. So the goals, the plan of action and the strong conviction have to be communicated in a way that directly answers the question "What's in it for me?"

When people honestly believe they will benefit directly from their efforts, and that the more they give, the more they benefit, they perform at peak levels. So it's crucial that you show people how they will grow as they work individually and together to make the company grow, and then back up all your promises with solid actions.

People respond to clear opportunities for personal and professional growth. If I may paraphrase the Hallmark slogan, when people care enough, they'll give their very best!

It takes a lot of patience and effort to build a solid team of people who will share and help you fulfill your vision, but the results will be well worth all you put into it.



Dr. Nido Qubein is president of High Point University, an undergraduate and graduate institution with 4,300 students from 40 countries. He has authored two dozen books and audio programs distributed worldwide. As a business leader, he is chairman of the Great Harvest Bread Company, with 220 stores in 43 states. He serves on the boards of several national organizations, including BB&T (a Fortune 500 company with \$185 billion in assets), the La-Z-Boy Corporation (one of the largest and most recognized furniture brands worldwide) and Dots Stores (a chain of fashion boutiques with more than 400 locations across the country). As a professional speaker, Dr. Qubein has received many distinctions, including the Golden Gavel Medal, induction into the International Speaker Hall of Fame and as the founder of the NSA Foundation in Arizona.

DOMINIONTECH HOURS OF OPERATION

Retail Store Hours	9:00 am—5:00 pm
Help Desk Hours	8:00 am—5:00 pm
Emergency Support	24/7/365

How To Back Up Your Smartphone

You regularly back up your computers (or at least you should), but do you do the same with your smartphone? Given the massive amounts of contact information, photos, videos and other data we all carry around on smartphones, it's critical to back them up or risk losing all that data forever. There are two basic ways to back up your phone: automatically to the cloud or manually to your computer.

To The Cloud. Cloud backups are secured with your password-protected account. They can easily be configured to run automatically so you can "set it and forget it." Apple users can use iCloud to back up photos, contacts, calendars and other data. Turn on and configure iCloud Backup by going to Settings > iCloud. Android users can back up to Google servers in much the same way, using a Google account. Configure your preferences by going to Settings > Backup.

To Your Computer. Both Apple and Android users also can back up data directly to a computer manually. Generally, connecting the phone to the computer by cable is the quickest way to do this. Apple users can also use iTunes Wi-Fi Sync to wirelessly back up phone data to a computer. Remember, though, when backing up your smartphone to a computer, your data is only as safe as that computer. Be sure to back up the computer regularly as well.

Who Else Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card?

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Steven Offenhartz of Burlington! He was the first person to correctly answer my quiz question from last month: **Which kind of animal did Florence Nightingale often carry around in her pocket?** a) Kitten b) Puppy c) Owl d) Snake

The correct answer was **c) Owl**. Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive a gift card to Majestic 10 in Williston.

What is the hottest place on earth:

- a) Wadi Halfa, Sudan b) Death Valley, California
c) Tirat Tsvi, Israel d) Timbuktu, Mali

Call us right now with your answer!
(802) 655-0880

The Lighter Side:

Are You A Walking Dead Fan?



Then you're going to LOVE this! There's a great way to prepare for the next zombie apocalypse while getting in shape and losing weight – it's called the **Zombies, Run!** app. This app combines gaming and audio adventures to make losing weight interesting. It works by giving you tasks and goals to reach in a zombified universe, like reaching humanity's last outpost or gathering supplies to live. Each mission is tied to a fitness goal, like running 5k in a session, so you're getting fit while you find out what happens next. **Zombies, Run!** is available to download on both [iOS](#) and [Android](#).