szymanski CONSULTING

September 2013

Cathy’s Message

Hello and welcome to our September issue. I would like to begin by telling you how humbled David and I are to have your trust in our company. We truly appreciate each and everyone of you.

I hope you enjoy our newsletter this month. There is a lot of information here.

We are going to start a couple of new columns in the near future that I hope you enjoy. If you would like to see something in our newsletter, please let us know. We are always looking for new ideas to share with all of you.

We hope you have a great September and I look forward to hearing from you.

Cathy & David

XP Support Ending

There is a sense of urgency because after April 8, Windows XP Service Pack 3 (SP3) **customers will no longer receive new security updates**, non-security hotfixes, free or paid assisted support options or online technical content updates. This means that any new vulnerabilities discovered in Windows XP after its “end of life” will not be addressed by new security updates from Microsoft. Still, I have talked to some customers who, for one reason or another, will not have completely migrated from Windows XP before April 8. I have even talked to some customers that say they won’t migrate from Windows XP until the hardware it’s running on fails.

What is the risk of continuing to run Windows XP after its end of support date? One risk is that attackers will have the advantage over defenders who choose to run Windows XP because attackers will likely have more information about vulnerabilities in Windows XP than defenders. Let me explain why this will be the case.

When Microsoft releases a security update, security researchers and criminals will often times reverse engineer the security update in short order in an effort to identify the specific section of code that contains the vulnerability addressed by the update. Once they identify this vulnerability, they attempt to develop code that will allow them to exploit it on systems that do not have the security update installed on them.

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Automatic Reply For Outlook

With the wide adoption of the Internet and systems like email and social media, it’s become widely expected that many businesses are more or less available 24/7. When you receive an email the sender expects a prompt response and many deserve one. The problem comes when you go on vacation and emails sit unanswered for days or even weeks. One common courtesy is to set an automatic reply for when you will be out of the office. Luckily, for users of Office 365's Outlook Web App, this is easy to put in place.

Here is an overview of the different types of automatic reply available for the Outlook Web App and how to set a response up.

About auto reply
If you are going to be out of the office for an extended period and likely won’t be checking your email, setting an auto reply makes sense. Outlook’s auto replies are highly customizable and can be set up quickly and easily.

When you set an auto reply, you are able to pick the length of time it is active for, who will receive the message (either internal, external, or all contacts), and even schedule the reminder to turn off automatically.

Setting an auto reply
If you are going to be away or not checking your email you can set an auto reply by:

Logging into the Outlook Web App portal on your Web browser. This will either be mail.office365.com or mail.yourcompany.com.

Clicking on *Options* which is located in the right, above your emails, followed by *Tell people you’re on vacation*.

Selecting Send automatic replies and set a start and end time for your reply.

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Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

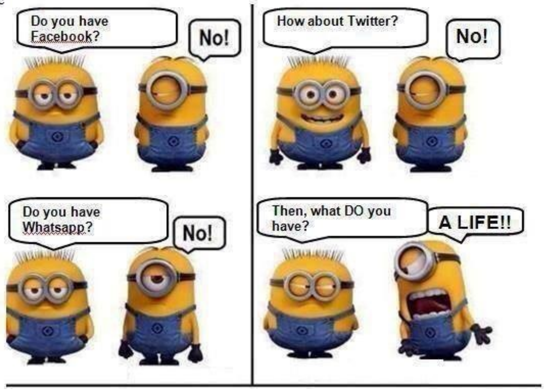
Nest Learning Thermostat

The Nest Learning Thermostat is an electronic, programmable, and self-learning wifi-enable thermostat that optimizes the heating and cooling of homes and businesses in order to conserve electricity. And if the company’s claims are correct, this smart little device can save you 20% off your energy bill each year.

Nest is built around an operating system that allows interaction with the thermostat via its easy-to-use control wheel or through your iPhone, iPad, Android phone or computer. Control your thermostat anywhere with an easy-to-use interface. This smart thermostat can determine whether or not you’re around or whether the sun is shining on the thermostat and instantly adjust accordingly—saving your money. There’s no need to program your device either as Nest works to figure out your patterns and schedules to fit you.

Since the Nest is connected to the Internet, you can instantly access your device settings or energy history and schedule from any device, anywhere. The company also pushes updates to your thermostat regularly to fix bugs, improve performance and add additional new features.

The Nest thermostat is available online for $249 at www.nest.com, or at many stores locally.



Set The Default Font In Word

When it comes to communication, businesses produce any manner of documents that are read on a number of different mediums, including print or online. The font you use can really make the difference to your documents, when it comes to presentation and readability. It is therefore a good idea to set a default font, based on the type of documents you usually create. If you have Microsoft Word and Office 365, this is quick and easy to do.

Below are steps highlighting how you can change the default font for Word 2010 and 2013, along with a few suggested fonts for different types of documents produced.

1. Open a new Word document.
2. Press *Ctrl+D* to open the font selection window. You can also open this by looking at the *Font* group in the Home ribbon and clicking on the button beside Font that is a right-angle line with an arrow pointing down and to the right.
3. Under the text box, set the font you would like to use, along with size, and style. Note: If you use more than one language, one of which isn't based on Latin script, pick the Latin Script box to apply the format to.
4. Press *Default*, followed by *Yes* when it asks you if you would like to set this to all NEW documents based on the Normal template. This will apply the formatting to all new documents created when you open a new Word document without picking a template.

The biggest reason setting this default is recommended, is when you create a large number of the same types of document, e.g., blog articles, and want to ensure there is uniformity. When looking to pick a font, you want to choose one that will be easily legible in the medium readers are more than likely to see your content on e.g., on paper or a website. Here are four of the most common font types and what they are best used for.

1. **Serif -** Fonts that have hooks on the end of letters. These hooks usually become indistinguishable on most monitors and are therefore normally used in printed material, or material printed from a website. Three common Serif fonts are: Times New Roman, Georgia and Garamond.
2. **Sans Serif -** Fonts that don't have hooks on the end of letters. The lack of hooks makes the font look cleaner and much easier to read online. Three common Sans Serif fonts are: Arial, Helvetica and Verdana.
3. **Cursive -** Fonts that are generally more fancy than both the Serifs and usually modeled after styles of cursive or flowing writing. These fonts are usually spaced closely together and are hard to read in most printed material (at smaller sizes) and online. It is best to use these only for printed material, as headlines with larger font sizes. Three common Cursive fonts are: Comic Sans MS, Lucida Handwriting and Monotype Corsiva.
4. **Monospace -** Fonts that have letters that are evenly spaced, so that all letters take up the same amount of space. These fonts are best for coding e.g., HTML because they are easy to read, and closely resemble typewriter fonts. Three common Monospace fonts are: Courier, New Courier and Monaco.

To sum up: If you are printing material, or it will be printed, use a Serif font. If words are to be presented online, or stored in Word (not printed), use Sans Serif, and for HTML or other code, use Monospace. Most Cursive fonts should generally be avoided in business communication, reserved instead for marketing materials such as posters, flyers and leaflets.

There's more to Word that you might know. If you would like to learn more about Word, or any of the other programs in Office 365, please contact us today to see how we can help.

Could Terrorists Really Use Software to Crash Your Car?

A recent AOL online article titled "The Scary Truth Of How Terrorists Could Crash Your Car" freaked a lot of people out by implying that terrorists could easily hack into your car's computer systems and wreck your car (or hundreds of cars at a time) at speeds exceeding 100 mph. While that is a scary thought to consider, the facts are quite a bit less severe than the article suggests. Nothing like some great sensationalist journalism, eh?

What really are the facts? Could you really be hacked driving your car?

- Cars are more and more dependent on software and electronics to run everything in the car, including GPS, music, brake systems, your power train, throttle and more.
- A new car is a rolling computer with 80 to 100 microprocessors and 100 million lines of software code.
- Researchers from the University of Washington and UC San Diego recently were able to successfully hack into an ordinary sedan, lock and unlock the doors, turn the engine on and off and listen to a conversation going on.
- In another experiment, researchers compromised an auto repair "pass-through device" that helps technicians diagnose problems, which then allowed them to install software on every car that touched that device, potentially allowing them to control a wide range of auto functions on those cars.

New studies are being done on how to use wireless connectivity in cars to help avoid accidents, route traffic more effectively and make our travels even safer (over 90% of accidents are due to human error, and smarter cars can potentially fix that).

But the truth of the matter is that, although cars are packed with computers, very few systems can currently be controlled wirelessly from outside the car. In all reality, someone would likely need to install an additional attachment to your car's computer system to really take it over.

Stay tuned, however, as I'm sure that this is going to be an ongoing discussion for many years to come.

Cathy's Random Facts

- The word "nerd" was first coined by Dr. Seuss in "If I Ran the Zoo."
- You burn more calories sleeping than you do watching TV.
- Elephants are the only mammals that can't jump.
- In the average lifetime, a person will walk the equivalent of 5 times around the equator.
- President Kennedy was the fastest random speaker in the world with upwards of 350 words per minute.
- If you have 3 quarters, 4 dimes, and 4 pennies, you have $1.19. You also have the largest amount of money in coins without being able to make change for a dollar.

What You Need To Know About The New Security Breach Notification Laws

It's Monday morning and one of your employees notifies you that they lost their laptop at a Starbucks over the weekend, apologizing profusely. Aside from the cost and inconvenience of buying a new laptop, could you be on the hook for bigger costs, and should you notify all your clients? Maybe, depending on where you live and what type of data you had stored on that laptop.

An Emerging Trend In Business Law

Since companies are storing more and more data on their employees and clients, most states are starting to aggressively enforce data breach and security laws that set out the responsibilities for businesses capturing and storing personal data. What do most states consider confidential or sensitive data? Definitely medical and financial records such as credit card numbers, credit scores and bank account numbers, but also addresses and phone numbers, social security numbers, birthdays and in some cases purchase history—information that almost every single company normally keeps on their clients.

"We Did Our Best" Is No Longer An Acceptable Answer"

With millions of cyber criminals working daily to hack systems, and with employees accessing more and more confidential client data, there is no known way to absolutely, positively guarantee you won't have a data breach. However, your efforts to put in place good, solid best practices in security will go a long way to help you avoid hefty fines. Here are some basic things to look at to avoid being labeled irresponsible:

√ Managing access. Who can access the confidential information you store in your business? Is this information easily accessible by everyone in your company? What is your policy about taking data out of the office on mobile devices?

√ IT security and passwords The more sensitive the data, the higher the level of security you need to keep on it. Are your passwords easy to crack? Is the data encrypted? Secured behind a strong firewall? If not, why?

√ Training. One of the biggest causes for data breaches is the human element: employees who accidentally download viruses and malware that allow hackers easy access. Do you have a data security policy? A password policy? Do you have training to help employees understand how to use e-mail and the Internet responsibly?

√ Physical security. It's becoming more common for thieves to break into offices and steal servers, laptops and other digital devices. Additionally, paper contracts and other physical documents containing sensitive information should be locked up or scanned and encrypted.

The bottom line is this: Data security is something that EVERY business is now responsible for, and not addressing this important issue has consequences that go beyond the legal aspect; it can seriously harm your reputation with clients. So be smart about this. Talk to your attorney about your legal responsibility.

Automatic Reply For Outlook

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Entering a message you would like to send to your contacts when they email you. It is best to keep your message short, saying you will be out of the office and stating the time and dates you will be gone, as well as who the sender should contact should they need emergency help.

OPTIONAL: Ticking Send automatic reply message to external contacts if you want the message to be sent to contacts who are not part of your organization.

OPTIONAL: Entering a message in the body that you want people who email you from outside the organization to receive.

Clicking Save followed by My mail to return to the main Inbox.

If you use auto reply, it is advisable to always set a start and end date and time, as this will ensure that the reply will not be sent while you are in the office and causes confusion for all concerned, as well as making you look unprofessional. If you don't set these dates the automatic reply will also start as soon as you hit save. Looking to learn more about the Outlook Web App or any of the other Office 365 programs? Why not call us, we can give you the lowdown and some valuable tips.

Videos

We hope you are enjoying our weekly videos. If you have a specific topic you would like to see us cover please let us know.

If you would like us to add someone onto the list we will certainly take care of that.

We feel the more education we can get out to you, the better.

XP Support Ending

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After April 8, 2014, organizations that continue to run Windows XP won't have this advantage over attackers any longer. The very first month that Microsoft releases security updates for supported versions of Windows, attackers will reverse engineer those updates, find the vulnerabilities and test Windows XP to see if it shares those vulnerabilities. If it does, attackers will attempt to develop exploit code that can take advantage of those vulnerabilities on Windows XP. Since a **security update will never become available for Windows XP** to address these vulnerabilities, Windows XP will essentially have a "zero day" vulnerability forever. How often could this scenario occur? We would love to come talk to you about a plan to upgrade all your XP machines.

Taking Referrals

Do you have anyone you would like to refer to us! We have a referral program that we would love to share with you. Please email Cathy today to find out more information.

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