

"Insider Tips from Connectability to Make Your Business Run Faster,
Easier And More Profitably"

IT Insight

Issue 14: November, 2015



Inside This Issue...

Paradigm Shift: Everything as a Service (EaaS)

The IT

Paradigm Shift

I've worked in Information Technology a long time. Back in the 80's I developed business software and sold the hardware that went with it. We called these **mini-computers** and they often cost upwards of \$100,000. Some cost over **\$250,000**, and in 1989 I sold a bunch of mini-computers to a well-known Canadian public company for over **one million dollars**. In today's dollars, that's over **two** million.

THE 10 Disaster Planning Essentials

The first PC I ever bought cost nearly \$10,000 and the first laser printer I owned cost over \$4,000 and printed 4 pages per minute.

7 Deadly I.T. Sins: Mac Malice

Can you imagine paying that much for hardware today? Unless you're a bank or a major multinational, no one spends that kind of money on technology any more. Most technology is commodity priced. A replacement for the PC that I mentioned above would be 1000 times faster and cost less than \$1,000. The same applies to that laser printer.

Upgrade Your Piece of Mind

But there's a new trend that goes beyond improvements in price / performance. We're seeing a shift in thinking, from IT as a **capital** expenditures to IT as a pure **operating** expense.

What do I mean by that?

SECURE Your Business

A few years ago, **Microsoft Office** had to be purchased for every user in your business at roughly \$500 per user. That means - for an office of 20 users - you'd be investing **\$10,000** up-front. And even if you don't upgrade every time Microsoft has a new release, you'd still want to upgrade occasionally to keep pace with modern features.

Microsoft Office 365, by contrast, is now a monthly subscription service. With 20 users, you'd pay roughly \$250 a month, entitling you to updates for the duration of your subscription. In the long-run it might cost a bit more, but from the perspective of managing cash flow, it's a lot easier to swallow. This model is called **Software-as-a-Service (SaaS)**. Software companies like Adobe and Intuit have adopted this model and others are following. It's a "win-win" for both sides. Customers have more manageable day-to-day cash flow, and software companies have predictable revenues allowing them to invest more heavily in R&D.

This is becoming more prevalent. An example is **cloud services** where you pay a monthly fee for storage. Another is **server virtualization**. Instead of a large up-front payment, you pay a monthly fee to a hosting company. This ensures your servers are **always** up and running, and you **always** have the latest tech. This is known as **Hardware-as-a-Service (HaaS)**. You can even pay for a subscription for computer hardware. Instead of buying hardware, monthly fees entitle you to ongoing service **and** hardware upgrades every 2-3 years.

The long-term direction, then, is **away** from ownership of your IT infrastructure. Under the new model you'll pay a flat monthly fee to a provider who will ensure that you **always** have the latest, most reliable technology.

Think of IT as a **utility**, like water or electricity. It's just one more step on the path to worry-free technology!





THE 10 Disaster Planning Essentials

Connectability aims to do much more than just fixing your computers when they break. Educating our customers is something we take very seriously. We always aim to be a one stop shop for helpful information, even if it may not be quite relevant to you just yet. That being said we feel the following report, titled "The 10 Disaster Planning Essentials For A Small Business Network" will be of benefit to any business owner or manager looking for ways to protect their network and get it back up and running **promptly** in the case of a disaster.

Your data is essential to your business and you **cannot** afford to have your

The 10 Disaster Planning Essentials For A Small Business Network

"If You Depend On Your Computer Network To Run Your Business, This Is One Report You DON'T Want To Overlook!"



Clear And Easy Strategies And Tips Every Business Owner Must Know To Protect Their Business And Data From Disaster

operations halted for days – or even week – due to data loss or corruption. To ensure you're not left high-and-dry if disaster strikes, you need to read this report and act on the information it contains. You can find it at:

www.connectability.com/disasterplan

It will give you some tips and tricks that will help your business protect itself if you were ever to experience a disaster.

The 7 Deadly I.T. Sins: Mac Malice

In today's corporate environments Apple Macintosh computers are a small presence, but they're gaining ground. There's plenty of technical literature concerning security threats that affect Windows machines, but not nearly as much related to Mac's. As a result, a lot of Mac users don't take the proper steps to secure their machines from malware and data loss.

Macs have a reputation for security that likely has more to do with Apple's marketing than reality. While there's not as much Malware targeting Macs, they can be infected just like PC's. Even scarier, they can host Windows malware and spread it across your network to your Windows computers.

Unfortunately, an enormous number of Mac users still believe they are **immune** to malicious code. Surprisingly it's actually quite easy to create malware for Macs and since most users don't have antivirus software it can easily go undetected.

Even Apple's employees aren't immune to these attacks. In February 2013 several employees had their devices compromised by malware via a vulnerability in Java, and a similar vulnerability infected 600,000 Macs in 2012. Although these attacks aren't widely publicized they still happen on a regular basis, and the risks are only increasing. Cybercriminals develop tools to sneak past the security of your operating system on a regular basis so trusting this system entirely is a bad choice.



In order to protect yourself from vulnerabilities it's important to:

- 1) **ALWAYS have enterprise grade antivirus and anti-malware software.** If you aren't running these applications you are leaving your computer vulnerable to cybercriminals, theft, and data loss. Every computer should have antivirus and anti-malware. Period.
- 2) **Keep your software patched with up-to-date security fixes.** Hackers find plenty of victims by exploiting known vulnerabilities that could have been prevented by a security patch. If you aren't updating your Mac with the latest security fixes, this is a friendly reminder to do it when prompted.
- 3) **Back your data up TO THE CLOUD.** If your data is somehow encrypted, or even worse, stolen, this will help you get back up and running with minimal disruption to your business.
- 4) **ALWAYS use proper password protection.** Passwords should use both lower and uppercase characters as well as numbers and symbols for stronger security.
- 5) **Purchase a business grade FIREWALL and make sure it's properly configured.** Having a business grade firewall creates one more barrier to malware and viruses since it is the initial point of contact for your network.

Just because Macs are user friendly doesn't mean they're always protected. By taking the proper steps to defend your devices you could save your organization a lot of money. And frankly, these fixes take very little time and money. Since computing and using the Internet is becoming **increasingly dangerous**, it is critical to take steps to **protect yourself**, especially if you use your computer for business.



You're Doing it All Wrong!

If you're mounting your TV over a fireplace, you're doing it all wrong! I get it, it's a nice open space on the wall, it's not being used for anything else, and frankly, it just looks good. So why shouldn't you mount your TV there?

Well the answer is actually quite simple. First of all, placing your TV over your fireplace can raise the operating temperature of your TV, shortening its life span as a result.

Similarly, it can also have an effect on the inner workings of the TV. Soot and dust can build up, lowering performance and increasing the risk of failure.

If you're saying "But I don't use my fireplace," there's still one thing to consider. If you've ever sat in the front row of a movie theatre you know that the ideal viewing angle for a TV is eyelevel or slightly below eye level. Mounting your TV so high will force you to strain your neck to see, which can result in headaches and neck pain.

To avoid these issues, simply mount your TV lower, or place it on a stand. Although you'll need a bit more counter space, it ensures your TV will last longer, and reduce the strain on your neck. If you want your electronics to perform well and last a long time this is an important consideration.



Upgrade Your Peace of Mind

Set on a hill overlooking the Don Valley near the intersection of Yonge Street and York Mills Avenue, *St. John's York Mills* is the oldest Anglican parish church in Toronto and will celebrate it's 200th year in 2016. A long time client of Connectability, they recently experienced a sudden power outage.

When the power came back on, they discovered that one of the hard drives on their server had failed, leaving them **without any of their data**.

That was the bad news. But here's the good news: **they were prepared!** How? Well, here's the short list:

1. They had already made the decision to purchase a new server.
2. They had a **complete cloud backup** of all their data files.

And finally, fortunately, we were able to get the hard drive repaired, pending the arrival of their new server.

So what can we learn from this? Here are a few important lessons:

1. Make certain that you have **accurate, current** backups, ideally at an offsite location like **the cloud**.
2. Don't let your hardware become obsolete or out-of-warranty.
3. Be alert for warning signs of problems: strange messages on your server console, unusually slow performance or odd network behaviour. Any of these can be an indicator of an imminent problem.

Remember: a little bit of prevention goes a long way!

Connectability's Referral Program Help us help you!

As many of you know, we get most of our customers through referrals and we're always looking for ways to grow our business.

To entice you to spread the word to friends, family, and business contacts we'd like to offer **\$100** for making an introduction with a bona fide business prospect. If they sign up you'll get **\$1,000** as a thank-you for putting us in touch! Simply by helping us you can reduce your IT costs!

For details about what constitutes a business prospect please go to our website at www.connectability.com/referrals



Jesus Saves!

Jesus and Satan have a discussion as to who is the better programmer. This goes on for a few hours until they come to an agreement to hold a contest, with God as the judge.

They sit themselves at their computers and begin. They type furiously, lines of code streaming up the screen, for several hours straight. Seconds before the end of the competition, a bolt of lightning strikes, taking out the electricity. Moments later, the power is restored, and God announces that the contest is over.

He asks Satan to show what he has come up with. Satan is visibly upset, and cries, "I have nothing. I lost it all when the power went out."

"Very well, then," says God, "let us see if Jesus fared any better."

Jesus enters a command, and the screen comes to life in vivid display, the voices of an angelic choir pour forth from the speakers. Satan is astonished.

He stutters, "B-b-but how? I lost everything, yet Jesus' program is intact. How did he do it?"

God smiled all-knowingly, "Jesus saves."



Connectability's New Security Package

Decades ago when PCs first became available there were no software vulnerabilities. Years later, as computers and the Internet became more widespread, cybercriminals began to appear and make life painful for anyone using a computer, but **especially for businesses**. And while the threats have changed, as business owners, have we? Attacks by today's cybercriminals, while not physically life-threatening, can inflict severe damage to the life and health of your business.

FACT: The odds of a successful cyber-attack against your business today are one in five. And, at a typical cost of \$300,000 or more, a full **60%** of smaller businesses that suffer a breach shut their doors for good within six months, according to the *National Cyber Security Alliance*.

And it's important to remember that attacks don't just happen occasionally. They are constant and unrelenting. So unless you have the proper protection in place you could find yourself up the river without a paddle.

That's why we make sure new prospects have a PAID subscription for **business-grade** antivirus and anti-malware software, along with Remote Monitoring and Management (RMM) software. Without it you're leaving your network wide open!

Antivirus and anti-malware protect your computers and network from virus and malware infections that slow performance, shorten your computers' life span, and even steal or encrypt ALL of your data! RMM software, the least common of the above, is no less critical. It notifies you if you're running low on disk space, a printer goes offline, or a drive in your server is in danger of failure, and much more.

The problem is even businesses that have all of the above generally AREN'T keeping them up to date. It does **no good** to have antivirus or anti-malware if you're not applying updates and patches. Similarly, RMM software doesn't help you unless you DO SOMETHING about the issues it presents. **That's where we come in.**

We've been in the IT business for over 20 years, and although we think EVERY business should perform (or have someone else perform) regular network maintenance and upgrades, we understand that some businesses don't have the budget for a Managed Services plan. That's why we've created a **Security Package** that offers businesses the software protection they need, at a very reasonable price.

In this package you get:

- 1) **Webroot SecureAnywhere** Antivirus Endpoint Protection
- 2) **Malwarebytes** Premium Anti-malware
- 3) **Logmein** Central Plus
- 4) **Continuum** Remote Monitoring and Management
- 5) **Expert** technical resources monitoring your network 24/7

You could purchase the software components individually, but then who's keeping an eye on your network? The benefit of a security plan isn't the software, it's the monitoring performed by a world class IT provider with a proven track record. It gives you the **peace of mind** of knowing someone is proactively monitoring your network, at less than HALF the price of a Partial Fix Managed Services plan.

Over the past 20 years, I've visited far too many companies where no one was applying updates and patches regularly. Hackers and cybercriminals often only find out about vulnerabilities when a patch is released to correct it. By ignoring this essential maintenance step, you're leaving your door **wide open** for a cybercriminal attack. To find out more, contact your Connectability representative.