

APRIL TECH NEWS

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Google Apps, Office 365 And Apple's iCloud: Which One Do You Choose?

With all the hype around cloud computing, you've certainly heard about the cloud-based office applications being offered by Microsoft, Google and Apple. All are promising cheap, easy and convenient computing...but are they REALLY all they're cracked up to be?

The most important thing you need to know is that these are relatively new technologies with new features being added on a monthly, even weekly, basis. And like any new technology, there are things that will not work as well as a very mature desktop application hosted on your machine. If you are a power user of Microsoft Office, you'll quickly get frustrated when you discover Office 365 can't perform some of the more sophisticated functions such as creating Macros in Excel or the advanced markup in Word.

Google Apps is a good platform for those businesses that need simple, inexpensive cloud-based collaboration software. However, if your company has been using Microsoft Office for years, you have a big investment to consider since all those documents will change when switched to Google Apps. Therefore, most companies will want to stick with Microsoft Office 365 rather than go through the pain of having all their documents slightly "off." Additionally, Google Apps doesn't always play well with certain line of business applications that were designed to integrate seamlessly with Microsoft Office.

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In This Issue

Which Do You Choose?

Top 5 Mistakes

Cool Tool For Fitness

Crack App?

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Bulls vs. Wizards. First person to submit the correct answers by email to anorton@osgusa.com gets

Then we have Apple's iCloud. While this is a cloud-based service, it shouldn't be compared to Office 365 or Google Apps since it's geared towards organizing, storing and accessing media (music, videos and pictures). While they do have some applications for e-mail and calendaring, it's not designed to replace an office productivity suite.

But the war is far from over yet, and in the grand scheme of things Google may resolve all the above mentioned issues. Again, these are new technologies that are changing rapidly; what might be a good choice today could be a second rate choice next week. So which one should you choose? That depends on your own unique situation. No two companies are alike in the way they communicate, store information and work; therefore, it's important you work with an IT consultant who takes a custom approach to solving your organization's needs-not a one-size-fits-all company that only sells hammers and treats every client like a nail.

Call us today for a FREE Cloud Readiness Assessment - 630-236-6625 ext 225

The Top 5 Network Security Mistakes

1. **Weak Passwords.** You know you need to have a stronger password, yet "password" is still the #1 password used by computer users. For maximum security, your password should contain numbers and letters, both upper and lowercase combined.
2. **Lack of Education.** Most viruses and spyware are invited by the user; therefore, if you want to make sure your employees don't download viruses, take the time to educate them on what new viruses are circulating and about common scams.
3. **Lack of Maintenance.** No software is perfect, which means security loop holes will be exploited by hackers the minute they are discovered. That's why it's critical to keep your security patches up to date.
4. **Plug and Surf.** Computers are NOT designed "ready to go" out of the box. Before a phone line, ethernet cable or wireless card is anywhere near a new computer, certain security needs to be installed and/or configured. Ideally, this should include

a pair of Bulls Tickets to the April 16th game with parking pass.

Entries are judged by date/time received and correctness. Include your name and phone number, the question number and the answer.

1) What chemical treats manic psychosis is used in batteries and nuclear reactions?

2) Beginning in 1860 pony express horse riders carried mail from Missouri to California. For how many years was the pony express in service?

3) What was the name of the 1980 film which starred John Travolta, Debra Winger, and a mechanical bull?

4) Which food chain lost more than \$29 million in the 1st quarter of 1993 after their hamburgers were linked to deadly bacterial outbreaks?

virus protection, multiple spyware scanners and a program that runs in the background to prevent malicious software from ever being installed.

5. Do It Yourself. Setting up a network, applying proper security measures and downloading and installing software can be tricky. Large companies have IT departments. Small business owners should also ask for advice or even hire help. It's worth the extra cost.

COOL ON-LINE TOOL FOR TRACKING YOUR FITNESS

Here we are in April...how have you done with your New Year's commitment to "get in shape" or "eat better and exercise more?"

Well, if you have fallen off the wagon, I have some good news for you. And even if you have stuck with it, this little tip can make your efforts even easier.

MyFitnessPal.com provides a FREE online tool for tracking your diet, exercise activity and fitness goals. This site makes it easy to set your weight loss goals and overall nutrition plan. Each day you can log in to track food you eat for a breakdown of calories, fat, carbs and protein of each item. Any exercise activity can be logged and will subtract from your daily calorie bank.

There is also a social element to this site. Much like Facebook, you can ask to "friend" other members, post on a common wall and share encouraging words throughout your journey to good health.

MyFitnessPal.com is easy to use on your computer or via apps available for iPhones and other Smartphone devices.

As they saying goes, "That which is measured improves." By simply tracking and measuring your food and exercise results on a daily basis, you become accountable for everything you eat and for every activity-or lack thereof. Seeing your progress in black and white will surely boost your results!

Check it out: www.MyFitnessPal.com

Dealing Crack? There's An App For That

Not too surprisingly, drug dealers and criminals are using the latest technology to run their "business.." Recently an iPhone developer, A-Steroids, created an application known as "Drug Lords," a program that would enable both drug-dealers and users to find one another in real time and space using their smart phone's built-in GPS. This application allows dealers to post prices of the various drugs they are selling, the amounts available and even comes with a convenient calculator that determines the prices per gram. They can even raise or lower the prices by location and supply so the price per gram is cheaper in Paris than New York.

Using Google maps, buyers (a.k.a. customers) can quickly find the location of the nearest dealer and compare prices to make sure they're getting the best deal possible. And like any good "market" online, it contains a star rating system allowing buyers to post feedback on the quality of the products and customer service. More recently, A-Steroids added a point system that allows you to pull some strings, like to gain full police protection for some period, to postpone your loan shark pay off or even to get a full refund for your equipment upgrades so you can rearrange them. There is a free version of this app and a more robust paid version.

Fortunately, Apple rejected the application to be sold on iTunes stating that "anything that involved or implicated the trafficking of illegal commodities would not pass the bar or be accepted for sale." The developer, A-Steroids, claims the application was meant only as a game and that it was not designed to assist real-world drug deals; but since the application worked exactly as advertised, it could have easily become the perfect app for drug dealers.

Not to be discouraged, A-Steroids rebranded the game as "Underworld: Sweet Deal." While all the basic features and objectives of "Drug Lords" remained intact, the products being sold were changed from cocaine, heroin and marijuana to donuts and lollipops. Naturally, this can still be used by drug dealers provided all the users agree that "lollipops" is code for heroin.

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