TECHNOLOGY TODAY

No MS Updates?

In recent months, Microsoft has made a number of very good, highly popular moves that have had its customers raving about its apparent change. This latest incident, however, isn't one of those. Microsoft has been accused of resorting to malware-style tactics to try and force Windows 7 and 8 users to upgrade to Windows 10, by inserting the OS upgrade in with the critical security patches. About the only way to avoid the upgrade is to disable auto-updating for critical updates, which comes with a pretty heavy price. Doing so leaves you vulnerable to security flaws in the software that are exploited by hackers.

June 2016

This monthly publication provided courtesy of Carlos Soto, Owner of Geeks On Call / Computer Troubleshooters.

"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!"

The #1 Cure For A Sluggish PC

If you're often – or even constantly – frustrated with slow loading times, screen freezes or crashing programs, your network may be in desperate need of an upgrade… or a tune-up. Here's how to make your network run like new again…

What's Slowing Your Network Down?

Most computers and networks bog down as they age. Here's why:

- Spyware, viruses and other stealth programs secretly hiding in your machine. And we mean "secretly." Today's sophisticated malware is more elusive than ever. Most users will never know what hit them until it's too late. The only tell-tale sign that your system has been infected is that it starts slowing down over time. These nasty bugs attach themselves to all sorts of programs in your network and work in the background, undetected.

- Your machine is overdue for replacement. Hey, it can only last so long. Manufacturers don't spec PCs to last more than about three to five years. When things start slowing down… or you can't install the latest software… or plug in some of the newer cables… it's time to start shopping. But there are ways you can extend your computer's useful life. Which brings me to #3…

- It's time for a tune-up. Just like a car, your network needs routine maintenance to run at top speed and performance. To keep it

running smoothly, there are over 100 checks and updates that need to be done on a regular basis. These include disk defragmentation, patch management and the removal of unnecessary files and programs, to name just a few.

Our Free Tune-up Gets Your Network Up To Speed

If your computer network hasn't had the routine maintenance it needs to run well, we'd like to offer you a FREE Network Tune-Up. Valued at $397, this FREE offer is our way of introducing you to our company. There's no cost or obligation when you say "YES!" to this complimentary service – but you have to act fast! Because of time and staff limits, we can only provide this valuable FREE Tune-Up to the first five who respond!

When you are one of the first five to respond, we'll send one of our friendly expert technicians to your office to:

"Review your firewall and security settings to make sure you are PROTECTED."

- Run a full diagnostic on your network to troubleshoot slow, problematic PCs, error messages and other problems.
- Review your firewall and security settings to make sure you are PROTECTED from hackers, viruses, spyware, etc.
- Verify that your data is being backed up in a format that COULD be recovered in the event of a disaster.
- Review system logs for errors and other "red flags" that could develop into bigger problems.
- Examine your computer network's power sources to make sure it's safe from lightning strikes and power surges.
- Tune up your server to free up more space and improve its speed.
- Inspect critical components for dust buildup that can cause overheating, excess friction on moving parts such as fan motors and potential breakdowns.
- Check for loose or poorly connected cables.
- Clean out old and unnecessary temporary files that are stealing precious disk space.
- And much, much more…

Fair Warning: We can only provide this valuable FREE service for the first FIVE companies that contact us. So call today: 1-800-905-4335.

Recent Services Provided

Recently a power outage affected Mount Airy, Damascus and Gaithersburg for a while. It took a while for the power to return.

A service company client of ours was affected by this, like many others, but when the power was restored their network was affected in a way that their computers were no longer talking to each other.

They reported their issue to us and we were able to get them back up and running that day. Through no fault of their own, their network went down.

Are you prepared for this kind of work-stopping disaster in your office?

Let us help you keep your office in working order. Employees that can't access information struggle to perform.

We can help with this and any IT trouble you may be experiencing.

Our job is to get you working as soon as possible and do everything to keep you productive. Some problems can't be helped, but we work hard at trying to keep your systems up and running.

Give us a call today at 1-800-905-4335 to setup an appointment and discuss your needs.

Things Not Going Your Way? Play "TAG"

I fly a lot for business, and a recent flight to Fort Lauderdale reminded me of the importance of flexibility, both at work and in my personal life.

I boarded the plane beneath blue skies with my laptop in hand, and was looking forward to getting a couple hours of work done before landing. Then a shadow came over the plane, and before the flight attendant could warn us, a heavy downpour delayed our flight.

We found out there was a tornado watch and our delay would be much longer than anticipated. "Game time," I thought.

I knew from experience that I wouldn't be able to change the situation, I could only change the way I handled it. So while other passengers berated the flight attendant or complained to their spouses on the phone, I remembered "TAG."

T = Think.
When you're faced with something unexpected, the first thing to do is to stop and think. It's easy to get caught in the whirlwind of circumstances and act impulsively, but by pausing, you can ask yourself questions that will help direct your subsequent actions. "What's happening?" "Why is this happening?" "How does this affect me?" "What's the best response?"

A = Adjust.
Once you've identified what's happening and how you're involved, you can change your expectations and behavior to allow for the new circumstance. Accepting Plan B isn't always easy because it means Plan A failed. But what people don't realize is that Plan B represents a willingness to keep trying.

G = Gather.
Even when you're being patient and practical and channeling your inner Yoda, a supportive shoulder to lean on is always helpful. Whether it's your family or your colleagues, gather people you know you can count on – especially in an unexpected situation. These are the people who will adjust their schedules when they find out your arrival is delayed or will make room at the table when the babysitter cancels.

So there I sat on the plane, asking myself what had happened and what it meant for me. The flight was delayed; I wouldn't check in on time and I might even be late for my meeting. Problem identified. Time to adjust. I would need to check timing for the next flight out, advise my hotel and warn my client about the situation. Then came a challenge: I had horrible service and my phone was dying. So I gathered myself – I sent an e-mail to a colleague and asked her to contact the client, and I asked my wife to notify the hotel.

Eventually the storm ended and I got on a new flight. My plans had changed, but I arrived at my destination. Being flexible doesn't just mean rolling with the punches or rising with the tide – it isn't passive. Rather, flexibility requires an adjustment of our attitudes and actions to account for the unexpected. And a game of TAG doesn't hurt.

Andy Bailey can cut through organizational BS faster than a hot knife through butter, showing organizations the logjams thwarting their success and coaching them past the excuses. After all, as he tells his clients, 100% annual growth is only 2% growth every week. It's not easy. But possible. Andy learned how to build great organizations by building a great business, which he started in college then, grew into an Inc. 500 multi-million dollar national company that he successfully sold and exited. He founded Petra to pass on to other entrepreneurs, business owners and leaders the principles and practices he used to build his successful enterprise, which are rooted in the Rockefeller Habits methodology.

Who else wants email subject lines that get prospects to open up, read and respond?

The best e-mail subject lines provoke interest and inform without giving too much away. Here are five templates you can customize to skyrocket your response rates. "Question about <<goal>>" – Curiosity about your question drives opens on this one. "Our next steps" – Follow up with a new contact or reengage one that's gone quiet. "Do not open this e-mail" – Ever tell a toddler not to do something? Use reverse psychology and win! "Know this about <<topic of interest>>?" – Offering a helpful tip or fact builds credibility and gets the conversation going. "10 mins – <<date>>" – Getting straight to the point makes it easy for your reader to hit "return" with a quick response.

-*Blog.Hubspot.com*

Google's AMP project could have a deep impact on your marketing.

If your business is like most, the majority of your market has migrated from desktop to mobile. If you're not reaching them there, you're probably not reaching them. Yet many mobile web pages are confusing, slow-loading and frustrating to users. And that mat-

ters to you, the advertiser. According to Kissmetrics, for example, 40% of web users abandon a page that takes longer than three seconds to load. Google's Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) project seeks to solve that issue by making the mobile experience fast, beautiful and secure for users. The sooner you "AMP up" your web pages, the greater your advantage over competitors.
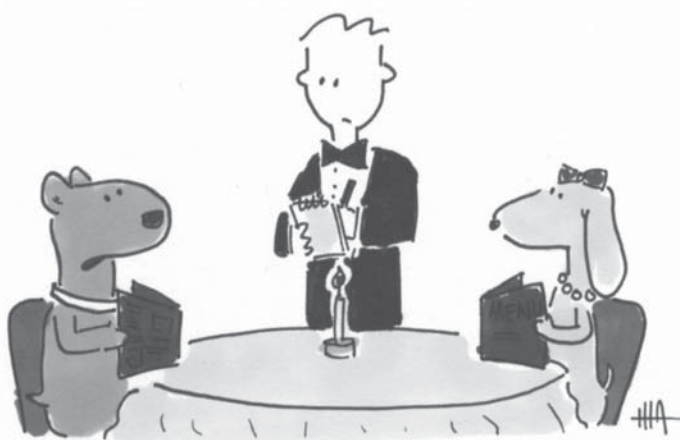
-*SearchEngineWatch.com*

"Mousejacking": Need you be concerned?

Researchers at security firm Bastille report that with a simple $10 antenna and a few lines of code, hackers could take over your wireless mouse and keyboard. "Airgapped" computers – that is, computers physically separated from the Internet – are particularly at risk. Fortunately, hackers' options are limited: they would have to be within a few hundred yards of their target, and likely would need to see its screen to unlock access. However, once inside, it might take only a few moments to inject a piece of malware. It's unlikely that anyone at your company will attract such a highly targeted attack. Yet it pays to not underestimate the vulnerability of even the most mundane of devices.

-*Popular Mechanics*

Experience the power of social scheduling with Doodle.

Trying to coordinate a team meeting can frustrate you even more than herding cats. Instead of wasting half your day tracking replies to a group e-mail thread, you can let Doodle do the work for you. You simply enter the name, location and description of your event, and select available dates and times. Then choose from a menu of settings, such as "if need be" options for busy participants, or confidential results so that only you can see the answers. Type in or copy/paste participants' e-mail addresses, add a personal message, and boom – you're done! Doodle does the rest, yet gives you control over the final outcome. And just think, no more cat-herding.

-*PCmag.com*

What can "Google My Business" do for your business?

According to a survey by SEO services company Bright Local, local search delivers a greater marketing ROI than any other digital marketing channel. And a well-optimized Google My Business page can be the best way to drive local clicks and calls to your business. It does that by helping you manage how customers find you in Google Search and Maps. To get the most out of Google My Business, first verify your business with Google. Then make sure your company's name, address and phone number (NAP) that's listed in your Google My Business page matches up exactly with your website, social profiles and local directory citations.

-*SmallBizTrends.com*

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"We'll both have the homework."