CCSI Essential Stream

CREATIVE COMPUTER SOLUTIONS INCORPORATED
"Creating Clients For Life!"
15th Year Anniversary

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Turn On Your Charm to Get Great Service
by Debra J. Schmidt

Have you ever noticed that some people seem to get great service everywhere they go? This isn't just plain luck. It's the result of having the ability to turn on their charm. If you want to receive good service, you need to be pleasant and charming to the service provider. Turning on your charm will make the other person feel appreciated and want to give you more.

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Letter from the President
Technical Considerations When Moving Your Business to a New Office

Moving to a new office can be a stressful time for any business. Here are some key technology considerations to address before the move.

Service Migration
The migration of your services usually involves much coordination between you and your vendors. It is important to review which services you currently maintain and, at least 60 days before your move, validate connectivity and viability of services at the new location. If you can have your internet and phones working at your new location a day or two before the move, it will help for a smoother transition. Please remember that if you have services that rely on a static IP address, such as email or web services, other steps may need to be taken to preserve continuity during the move transition.

Infrastructure and Equipment
Be sure the new office has a secure room with sufficient space, cooling and independent power for your server/network equipment. This is also a great opportunity to practice good cable organization and labeling when connecting your equipment at the new office. Labeling and documentation will help mitigate downtime in the long run. When planning for your new office space, network cable infrastructure is usually redone, modified or retrofit to meet your specific needs. Some commonly overlooked considerations when planning your network cabling other than to your computers are: shared printers; centralized and ceiling or wall-mounted wireless access points; and, if IP phones are used, a separate and independent cable for your phone and computer is ideal.

Cloud Feasibility Analysis
This is the perfect opportunity to conduct a cloud feasibility analysis. Does it make sense to move some services to the cloud? Can you consolidate some of your physical infrastructure by using cloud services?

This is just a starting point. We can help you with the transition!

Scott Huotari, Founder, President/CEO & "Big Kahuna"

Business Continuity Tip
Password Protection

While many organizations have these policies and procedures in place to protect themselves against hackers, the importance of using a strong password can easily be overlooked by executives and employees alike. To ensure compliance across the board, here are a few requirements you may want to consider adding to your network account settings.

- **Password Complexity** - Set rules that ensure passwords are complex (i.e. contain one upper case letter, one number and must be a minimum of eight characters).
- **Lockout Policy** - The ability to disable a user account if an incorrect password is entered a specified number of times (many organizations follow the '3 strikes and you're out ' rule).
- **Password Age** - Set guidelines that require employees to change their passwords regularly (every 60 to 90 days is good rule).
- **Reuse Limits** - The ability to detect a certain number of old passwords preventing a user from reusing the same passwords over and over again.

Want to check the strength of your passwords? Try Microsoft's Password Checker. Remember: You're only as secure as your weakest password.

Is freedom anything else than the right to live as we wish? Nothing else.

- Epictetus

Laugh a Little

Advance Preparation for Disaster is a Must for Every Small Business
used with permission from Norton by Symantec
by Marian Merritt

Small businesses are the economic backbone of this country. Yet, in the aftermath of manmade or natural disasters, an astounding 40% of small businesses never reopen. It doesn't have to be this way; with preparation, organization and practice, owners and employees of small businesses can secure their future, despite what may come their way. In this 50th year of National Small Business Week, it's the right time to put your plan together and into practice. The tips and advice here and at the websites I link to are also terrific resources and ideas for your home life, to make sure your family is safe and your important personal information secured.

56% of small businesses lack an emergency plan (source 2012 Ad Council survey)

I live in earthquake country. As a result, my family has a small earthquake kit ready with flashlights, bottled water and other supplies in a closet at the front of the house. Yet, even with years of practice and experience, the information and professional recommendations can change. During the last small earthquake, I instructed the children to find shelter in a doorway yet learned later this is no longer considered a best practice. A better choice is to get everyone beneath a sturdy piece of furniture like a wooden table. This shows that your emergency plan needs to be created and kept up-to-date.

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Storage Catches Up to the Data Explosion
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We have become flush with data very quickly. In the past two years alone, the world has generated 90 percent of the data in existence today. And in that short period of time, our ability to analyze this information has streamlined operations, reduced fraud and predicted consumer behavior. Large and small companies alike are experiencing an increase in the volume of data coming into the organization and are eager to leverage the subsequent insight to make smarter, more informed business decisions.

But with this deluge of information, many of these same companies are seemingly faced with an embarrassment of riches. All this data, but an infrastructure that is bursting at the seams in an attempt to store it.

Solving this storage problem may seem straightforward; organizations could just acquire more storage capacity. And if a business had unlimited resources, it could probably do just that. But for everyone else with a budget, the answer is not as simple.

More data, more problems

Perhaps those that feel the storage squeeze most keenly are the small and midsize firms with data coming in at a greater volume and faster rate, but without the money to keep pace. Even if these companies were able to afford more storage capacity, the additional infrastructure comes with its own set of unintended consequences.

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"Oh, that.
We beefed up security."

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