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THE TECHNOLOGY NEWS SOURCE  
FOR YOUR BUSINESS

# QUARTERLY Newsletter

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## PROSPECTOR HUMOR by Mike Steen



## STORM SEASON IS UPON US... ARE YOU PROTECTED?

*During this time of year the threat of fire, flood, severe storms, water damage, and even theft is very real. It's not too late to prepare for those random storms that are sure to pop-up!*

One of the most valuable assets for any company is its data. Hardware and software can easily be replaced, but a company's data cannot!

As a reminder to all of our clients and friends, here are some simple things you should do to make sure your company is ready for any natural disaster:



### 1. BACK UP YOUR DATA REMOTELY!

Everyone knows that data should be backed up on a daily basis, but many people still use in-house backup systems that will get damaged in a natural disaster or fire, and can easily be stolen. We recommend backing up all data to an off-site location, and we offer this as a service to our clients.

### 2. USE A QUALITY SURGE PROTECTOR WITH UN-INTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLY BATTERY

A high-quality surge protector combined with an un-interrupted power supply battery backup will go a long way in protecting sensitive electronic equipment from surges and other electronic irregularities that can destroy your computer's circuitry.

### 3. MAKE SURE YOUR SERVERS ARE OFF THE FLOOR OR IN THE CLOUD.

If your office gets flooded, having your equipment off the floor will prevent it from being completely destroyed. Server racks can be purchased and installed very inexpensively. Or consider moving your critical server equipment to the cloud and be protected no matter the weather!

### 4. HAVE A DISASTER RECOVERY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN.

Every business should have some type of plan in place for continued operation after a disaster. Would people know where to go? Who to call? How to log in and access data remotely? Hopefully you'll never need it, but having a simple plan will make you sleep a lot easier at night knowing you have a way to continue to operate when disaster strikes.



### 3 Basic Tips for Limiting Your Exposure to Malware Infection

Viruses, adware, spyware, trojans, or worms - they can be just annoying or they can actually do some harm. But, just like the common cold or flu, you should be able to recognize the symptoms early so you can take care of it before something goes seriously wrong.

#### 1. INSTALL AN ANTI-VIRUS PROGRAM

The first thing you should do is install an anti-virus program on your computer, if you don't already have one. There are several available that are free to download on the Internet (Microsoft, AVAST, and AVG are a few examples) but the one you choose really depends on your own preference. Even so, one antivirus program is not going to solve everything or give you 100% protection, especially if you're running your PC as an Administrative User.

#### 2. USE A STANDARD USER PROFILE

The problem with using an Administrative User profile is that you are potentially giving administrative rights to a hostile malware infection. When you setup your user profile as a Standard User on your PC, the system will not let you install programs or make changes unless you enter an administrative password. Viruses can still get on your system but they won't be able to infect it without administrative rights.

#### 3. CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOR

The biggest thing you can do is be more mindful of what you click on when you're surfing the net. ANYTHING YOU CLICK ONLINE IS A RISK! Bottom-line, if you keep getting infected by the same type of virus that means one thing: you keep going to the same website(s) - so, just don't go there. Or, use your smart phone or tablet to browse those sites instead because the viruses and other malware programs are made to infect PCs - not mobile devices.

## WHY ARE YOU STILL RUNNING WINDOWS XP? YOU'RE SACRIFICING MORE THAN JUST PERFORMANCE...

*Technology is always changing, and keeping your network and computer systems up-to-date can sometimes take you out of your comfort zone, especially if you're still running Windows XP on your computers...*

**So, why do you need to ditch windows xp and upgrade your systems in the first place?**

#### XP IS NOT SUPPORTED BY MICROSOFT

Since April of 2014, Microsoft is no longer supporting the Windows XP operating system platform and that means hackers are targeting machines like yours if you're running outdated Windows XP software. That makes you an easy target for hackers who are looking to exploit vulnerabilities in your network.

#### XP IS NOT SUPPORTED BY VENDORS

An outside vendor may choose not to install their software, such as a critical Line of Business application, on your machine because it is running an operating system that is no longer supported by the manufacturer. This is because your outdated software may not be compatible with an application designed for the current platform; and, let's face it, you're just not getting the latest updates, features, and safeguards that you would with a supported operating system.

#### XP IS NOT SUPPORTED BY IT CONSULTANTS

As an IT consultant, I can honestly tell you that it will be difficult for you to find a professional IT support firm that will provide support for computers that are still running Windows XP. That's because these outdated formats are highly vulnerable to cyber-threats and can act like an open doorway to hackers who are looking for a way to crack your network. In my professional opinion, if you're not upgrading your operating system from Windows XP, you're just asking for trouble.

#### THINGS TO CONSIDER

Okay, so what should you upgrade to? First, I'd recommend that you upgrade to Windows 7 for every computer that you use in your business, and stay away from Windows 8. But buyer beware, if you are using Windows 7 Home Premium, or another non-commercial version of this operating system, you will not be able to connect to your business server. So, make sure that you install the Windows 7 Professional version. That's your best bet.

### The Gold Standard Spotlight

"At FBC Merced we are working to build a church that is mobilized for evangelism and discipleship as well as for serving the community, it's a place where people are accepted and loved for who they are while being encouraged and equipped to become compassionate servants Jesus Christ. We want to be a church of disciples that make disciples, which is just as diverse as our community and God's kingdom are diverse.

Computers play a big part in our efforts and We rely on Aureus Consultants to keep them up and running because their response time is exceptional. Recently we had a problem accessing the internet and couldn't broadcast our Sunday service, but Ashley responded quickly which allowed us to broadcast as usual.

In addition to solving our computer problems, they have made recommendations to greatly enhance our systems which has saved us money. I highly recommend Aureus Consultants for all of your computer/internet needs." -Pastor D. Hicks

### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MERCED



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# IT'S OBVIOUS YOU NEED TO BACKUP YOUR FILES, BUT ARE YOU DOING IT RIGHT?

## HERE'S SOME ADVICE THAT CAN HELP YOU AVOID DISASTER...

Just imagine something happened that caused you to lose all the critical information you have saved on your in-house server. What would you do? Well, if you have been properly backing up your data then restoring your server won't be a problem. But, if you haven't, you could end up with a lot of trouble on your hands.



### WHY DO YOU NEED TO BACKUP?

It's obvious that if you don't have your data backed up when something happens, it could be a disaster for your business. In my experience, most people don't backup their files because they believe "it won't happen to me" and as long as the computer is running fine, it's not a problem. I've found that even when people know that it's important, they somehow never seem to have the time and they just put it off until it's too late. Or, even worse, they want to backup their files but don't because they don't know how or they are just not willing to spend the money for IT support. Yet, properly backing up your data is well worth the investment.

### ON-SITE BACKUP

This means that you are essentially copying your critical files and physically storing them on an actual device which is kept in the same location as your business. Local backup protects you from accidentally deleting a file (the "Oops Factor") or if a disgruntled employee or former employee maliciously deletes your important files, since you can always recover the same file from your on-site storage device. Most often though, businesses use on-site backup to clone their whole system over their network to keep their data protected in case of a hard drive failure on one of their computers.

In terms of media, most people use an external hard drive storage device or even a USB flash drive to manually copy

and paste their files for backup, but you can also backup over your network to another computer, a Network Attached Storage (NAS) device, or your in-house server. You can choose to either clone your whole system, in case there's a hard drive error disaster, or just backup certain files.

### OFF-SITE BACKUP

I want to stress that properly backing up your data means performing both on-site and off-site backups – not "one or the other". For off-site backup, you basically have two options: either you store your data on some sort of USB device and physically store it in another location, or you backup your files to the cloud.

If you're using a USB device, like a portable external hard drive or flash drive, keep in mind that the physical location where this hardware is stored must be secure, like in a safety deposit box, and that the information on your device is (at least) password encrypted. However, the current trend that I've noticed is that several of my clients are choosing to backup their systems online and avoid the hassle of maintaining a physical off-site storage device. While there are plenty of cloud storage services to choose from, some are better than others... *(Read the full article at [aureusconsultants.com/aureus-connections](http://aureusconsultants.com/aureus-connections))*

## Our consultants will come to your office and...

- Pinpoint any exposure or risk in security, downtime, etc...
- Review your current backup for proper functionality
- Recommend ways to speed up your computer network
- Outline a comprehensive line of defense against malware

### IF COMPUTER PROBLEMS ARE COSTING YOUR BUSINESS MONEY,

visit us at:  
[aureusconsultants.com/free-health-check](http://aureusconsultants.com/free-health-check)  
and schedule your FREE Network Health Check today!

**SPECIAL OFFER!**  
FREE Network Health Check  
(\$197 Value)



## CONGRATULATIONS!

### BrightDart Print & Design



#### Time Secure Raffle

Winners Brightdart Print & Design took advantage of huge savings and scored big with Aureus Time Secure.

"Ashley and the consultants at Aureus are quick and knowledgeable. We used their Time Secure service because it was extremely affordable, and it was a great fit for our company." - David Whitmyre, Graphics Manager

Located in Downtown Merced, and serving the entire valley, they print blueprints for architects, builders, and engineers, as well as business cards, flyers, booklets, posters and just about anything you can think of. Their graphic design services will make your project shine!

Call (209) 385-3800 or visit: [www.brightdart.com](http://www.brightdart.com)

## NEED FASTER INTERNET???

# COMCAST BUSINESS

# B4B

BUILT FOR BUSINESS™

If you have ever watched the clock while you were waiting for your browser to load, or been frustrated with buffering and slow internet speeds in your business, then now is the time to end your worries!

#### As a Comcast Business Authorized Connector:

- We work hand-in-hand with Comcast to give you the best deal with the most discounts.
- We can offer you very fast Internet connection in the Merced area.
- We'll handle everything so you'll never have to waste your time calling an 800 number again!
- **PLUS, OUR LABOR IS INCLUDED WHEN YOU MAKE THE SWITCH!**

If slow Internet connections are slowing down your business, call (209) 230-5818 or visit [www.AureusConsultants.com](http://www.AureusConsultants.com) to schedule your **FREE** consultation today!

### Editor in Chief

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Ashley has vast experience in the information technology field relating to computer and network services, including web development. For the past 21 years, Ashley has provided computer consulting and implementation for his customers. Ashley is a CompTIA A+ Certified technician and holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the California State University of Fresno.

Aureus Consultants, Inc. is a computer consulting firm and IT Service Provider headquartered in Merced, CA. We offer the gold standard in providing professional IT services with the most affordable options for local small businesses.

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