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Computer Consulting

TechAdvisor Newsletter

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Your Small Business Technology Information Source!

This Issue:

Robin Cures Android Users' Siri-Envy

Even if you've never used an iPhone, you've probably heard of Siri, Apple's personal virtual assistant. Siri is one-part novelty, one-part geekiness, and actually pretty productive. She can answer questions for you, facilitate many features of the iPhone, and report notifications and updates to you. For those of us who love our Android devices over Apple's iOS, Siri makes us just a little jealous, that is until now.

Enter Robin. Robin started out as a souped up navigation . . . .

Read the rest Online!
http://bit.ly/S1bKQ2

About Paradigm

We are a technology consulting firm specializing in technology implementation and management for businesses. We're known for providing big-business, Enterprise-Level IT services to small and medium-sized businesses.

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4 Reasons the Desktop PC Won't Die

With all this talk about mobile devices like tablets, smartphones, and ultra-portable laptops, you'd begin to think that traditional desktop PCs are going to seem archaic. Depending on your needs, that can be the case, but desktops aren't going away anytime soon, and for good reason.
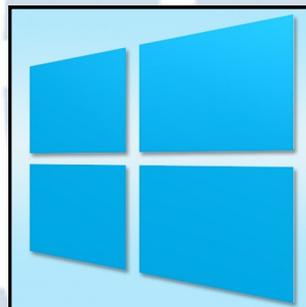
More Powerful Hardware

This has been the case from the very beginning; desktop PCs are capable of more powerful hardware. Desktops don't need to worry about electricity consumption the same way portable devices do, and components don't need to be shrunk down into a tiny lap-sized chassis. This also allows better heat dispersion. All three factors give desktops the flexibility to utilize the most complex, cutting edge components that aren't designed for mobility (yet). In other words, computer hardware manufacturers build new components, and then work on shrinking those components into mobile sizes. This reason alone will keep the desktop alive - PC gamers, graphic artists, and multimedia buffs will always want high-end desktops.

Cost Effectiveness

Of course, you don't need the newest, cutting edge components to have a blazing-fast PC. You can easily get by with cheaper previous generation components. Remember a decade

Windows Gets a New Look

Microsoft is gearing up to roll out Windows 8 on October 26th and if the early tests are any indication, the computing giant's latest operating system (OS) could change the face of cross-platform integration. There's always some consternation among business owners when having to decide to outfit their computers with the newest OS so here are a few things you should know about Windows 8.

Windows 8 offers upgrades of some key features that are predominant in business applications. Windows 8 features a new graphic user interface (GUI) that is more in line with ones Android and Apple have been using then your typical Windows (more on this later). The "metro-style" GUI gets rid of the windows stand-by Start Menu which allows for an optimized interface in which to use touch screen devices such as smartphones and tablets.

While this will come in handy while you're on the move, users that depend on the trusty-old keyboard and mouse for computing will not be left out in the cold. There is an option to turn

Windows Gets a New Look

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off the Windows 8 GUI and revert to something that's more similar to the Windows 7 interface. For users that use multiple monitor-displays a new feature is the ability to customize a taskbar on each screen. In the Windows 7 version there was only one available taskbar for multiple-monitor users.

Windows 8 promises faster performance as well. Some sources have it as much as 33% percent faster then Windows 7. Some reviewers have complained that the Windows 8 start-up is too fast because it doesn't allow you to access the advanced options menu by mashing the F8 key before Windows begins. Now F8 mashers can access those advanced options through windows itself. Load time on a desktop or laptop with a solid state drive (SSD) is around seven seconds.

The quick start-up is a logical step for Microsoft to take since they are looking to start offering hardware solutions that compete with Apple's dominance of the tablet market. The Windows 8 based Surface Tablet is the device that Microsoft hopes will start them down the path toward competition with the iPad. Having been dependent on other manufacturers to produce mobile hardware to run its mobile Windows OS for nearly a decade, Microsoft's first tablet offers users a real chance to create device continuity through multiple platforms.

Windows 8 will also be available on smartphones, albeit not as an upgrade. It will offer the "Windows Store" where a user can get applications. The Windows Store will support both free and paid applications, with the paid applications ranging from $1.49 to $999.99.

Much like Android and Apple smartphones, the phones that will offer Windows 8 will have apps that you run from the main screen. Unlike those other phones, you can fully integrate a phone that runs Windows 8 with your home computer and other mobile devices that also run the OS.

These are only a few of the new features Windows 8 offers. If you're interested in learning more about how to integrate your mobile technology with your existing hardware or just have questions about how Windows 8 can help you or your business, call Paradigm at 603-647-8614.

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Use GPS to Navigate Your Way to Profits

Time is money. Benjamin Franklin offered up that poignant piece of business acumen in his 1748 pamphlet Advice to the Young Tradesman, Written by an Old One. Travel to the present day and it's one of the most frequent sayings used by businesses professionals. Attempting to find the highest degree of productivity is the goal for everyone that believes that the bottom line is, in fact, the bottom line. One expanding technology that is helping businesses increase efficiency is the Global Positioning System (GPS).

If you're a business owner that depends on transportation to deliver goods or

services, you have probably encountered a situation where you or one of your employees have gotten lost and it had a negative effect on the rest of the day's schedule. In this regard GPS can offer you and your business a solution to increase efficiency. Some of the notable ways GPS can be used includes:

> *". . . Do you depend on transportation to deliver goods or services? "*

Asset Monitoring – If you are responsible for the dispatching of technicians, being able to monitor their progress in real-time is essential to providing prompt service to your customers. Using GPS you can track anything from a package, person, or truck. You can also analyze asset activity to increase your company's efficiency.

Employee Supervision – Service-based companies rely on their employees to perform their duties outside of the office. Some employees are known to violate company policies when they are in the field and GPS is a good way to keep your employees on task and on schedule.

Fuel Conservation – The use of GPS can also offer a business a solution to best deal with rising fuel costs. GPS can layout for you the most direct routes or show a route that would conserve the use of fuel. You are also able to subsequently analyze company vehicle use to determine which routes will best save your company money that would be spent on unnecessary fuel usage or vehicle maintenance.

These are only a few different ways that GPS can help you increase the efficiency

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ago when a desktop PC could cost thousands of dollars? It's still possible (and easy for some) to spec out a high-end PC with that kind of price tag, but the gain for each dollar spent isn't worth it unless you have VERY specific needs. Also, comparable hardware for a PC is significantly cheaper than similar laptop hardware. If you don't need the mobility, you can save a pretty decent chunk of money just by sticking with a desktop.

Desktops are Easier to Fix and Maintain

Let's share a real-world tech scenario. Replacing a part on a desktop is a pretty simple task for a technician. In fact, with a little hand-holding, anybody could, for the most part, figure it out. Replacing the motherboard on a laptop, however, is an extremely cumbersome process. Depending on the model, it can involve over two dozen screws and a lot of time, and replacement parts aren't as affordable as they are for desktops. For smartphones and tablets, expect to ship those out to the manufacturer.

You Probably Won't Leave your Desktop at the Airport/Coffee Shop/Hotel

It's true! If you are lugging around a big PC case, a monitor or two, a keyboard, mouse, and power cables, it's pretty likely you won't accidently forget it when you realize how light your luggage has become. All joking aside, because your desktop lives a pretty uneventful life without much movement, it doesn't endure the little bumps, drops, and spills that laptops and other mobile devices take. It's harder to steal too, so there is a little essence of security knowing your data is locked inside a great big aluminum box tethered to your desk with a web of cables.

Have you moved on from the desktop PC completely, or are you still holding on? Do you even want to go strictly mobile? Let us know in the comments!

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Know These 4 Intruders that Threaten your Business

In order to best serve their clients, companies need to have a comprehensive program in place to help them defend their systems from malware attacks on their company's infrastructure. These attacks can have a devastating effect on a business's continuity, so having an appreciation for exactly what types of adversaries your company is up against is important. There are several types of potential intruders that you should be aware of.

Viruses

Viruses are user-initiated, replicating, and malicious pieces of code that attach themselves to an existing program and can have a serious effect on your operating system, files, and even your antivirus' ability to work properly. The most obvious sign that you've been hit by a virus is the lackluster performance of your system. Viruses are constantly changing as the technology to block them does, making them a constant threat for individuals and businesses alike. Most viruses attack a specific part of your system for which they were written. Types of viruses include:

- **Bootsector Virus:** A virus that is designed to attach itself to the hard disk at the point where the computer initially reads upon startup.
- **Macro Virus:** A virus that is designed to use an application's macro programming language to dispense itself. They target and affect documents and eventually infect related files.
- **Memory Resilient Virus:** A virus that targets the computer's memory (RAM).
- **Polymorphic Virus:** This virus not only replicates itself, it varies its digital signature when it does, making it tough for less-refined antivirus programs to target.
- **Rootkit Virus:** A virus that is designed to give a third-party administrative control over a system. They are usually disguised as system files.

Viruses are distributed through basic correspondence, such as e-mail and instant messenger; or careless downloading practices, such as downloading files from questionable sources. Viruses can also be acquired by impulsively clicking ambiguous links that the user thinks do something useful (such as closing a pop-up window).

Worms

Like viruses, worms replicate and are spread through basic correspondence and downloading from untrustworthy sites. Unlike a virus, worms don't need humans to initiate them, which makes them that much more intrusive because they don't need to attach themselves to an existing program. They can duplicate and represent themselves under a harmless name and then do the same to another system when It's downloaded via a peer-to-peer network. Since a worm will

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and profitability your business. As the technology develops there is sure to be many more applications for GPS. Whether you offer your employees GPS-capable smartphones, or outfit all your vehicles with on board GPS systems, global positioning can help increase your company's efficiency and productivity. For more information about incorporating GPS technology into your company's IT infrastructure contact Paradigm at 603-647-8614.

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We partner with many types of businesses in the area, and strive to eliminate IT issues before they cause expensive downtime, so you can continue to drive your business forward. Our dedicated staff loves seeing our clients succeed. Your success is our success, and as you grow, we grow.

Know These 4 Intruders that Threaten your Business

look for even the smallest holes in a system to manifest and replicate, they tend to infiltrate networks and spread rapidly.

Spyware
Spyware's main objective is to steal information. Spyware is non-replicating so it doesn't change the actual performance of the computer system. Once a piece of spyware has been loaded on your system it runs in the background collecting all types of data including, but not limited to, credit card numbers and social security numbers. Spyware can also track keystrokes and personal correspondence. As it infects your software it allows for all types of personal information to change hands. It also has

been known to leave companies in actionable positions. In California, they've enacted a law stating that any business that has been infiltrated by an attack has to inform their previous e-commerce customers of that attack.

Trojan Horses
Another non-replicating piece of malware, a Trojan horse, basically does to your system what the original Trojan horse was designed to do to Troy. Under the subterfuge of being a capable piece of software, a Trojan horse will allow an infiltrator into a system for the purpose of siphoning off information. Recently, a Trojan horse code took advantage of a security flaw in older browsers to hide usage. This allows an infiltrator to access your system and allows

him/her to cover their tracks after they've successfully caused havoc inside your network or made off with the information they were seeking.
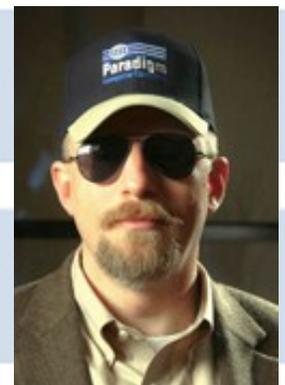
If you or your company doesn't have a comprehensive strategy in place to handle malicious attacks on your network, you are potentially looking at a situation in which your company's success, and in some cases future, is in peril. If you're a business owner in the New Hampshire and Massachusetts area and would like more information about how to best avoid a malware attack contact Paradigm at 603-647-8614.

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