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Please Don't Pass the Spam

Spam wastes company time and harbors

viruses and malware that can quickly infect your entire network. It can bog down your network and your mail server. Many computer problems are caused by malicious software. There are plenty of ways to get malware and plenty of actions to take to prevent getting it.



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About Directive

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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Is Big Brother Watching You, and Do You Mind?



Internet privacy is no new issue. Between malicious hackers trying to breach private information, governments trying to regulate it, and organizations trying to track as many metrics as they can, the Internet continues to chug along for the most part just fine. **Are YOU concerned about Internet privacy?**

What are people doing on the Internet, we must know!

Let's talk about a few things that are going on in the news today. Now that the whole concern about the poorly written SOPA and PIPA bills has been postponed indefinitely by the United States Congress, it doesn't mean governments and authorities aren't still interested in what people do on the Internet. In an article posted on CNET, Hawaiian legislature is attempting to pass a bill that will allow the state to compile two years worth of resident's internet browsing.

According to the article, the reasons behind the bill aren't exactly clear, but it shares a very frightening similarity to the SOPA bill in that it's wording is so broad and unspecific it could very easily lead to a huge privacy gap for residents. It doesn't mention security protocols or what can and cannot be done with the data.

Tracking to improve services

Considerably (hopefully) more benign is a plan in place by Google to rewrite their privacy policy in order to combine your activity with other Google services. Google has been working hard over the years to customize the end-user experience based on their activity, and

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Slow Computer? Increase Memory to boost Speeds



Sometimes when your workstation feels bogged down, a relatively cheap and simple hardware update can make a huge difference in performance. Adding more RAM (Random Access Memory, often just referred to as memory) can be a game changer for your bogged down PC.

There are several factors that contribute to the speed of a PC. Let's very briefly break these down:

CPU/Processor

The CPU handles all of calculations a computer performs. These days consumer-class CPUs handle billions and even trillions of instructions per second. While dated processors can greatly influence the actual speed of a computer, if your PC is fairly new (as in 1 or 2 years old, and possibly older for higher end builds) it's likely not bottlenecking your performance. Today, CPUs are equipped with two, four, or even more cores, which means the CPU can handle more calculations exponentially and consume less electricity.

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Is Big Brother Watching You, and Do You Mind?

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they are claiming that being able to merge your activity amongst multiple Google services like Gmail and Google Search, the service can further simplify and customize your experience.

For most users, it's pretty likely they don't catch on to the subtle customizations Google automatically makes, although after a while, search results can be honed in based on the user's taste, which is all determined by tracking what results they click on while searching, amongst plenty of other metrics. Should users even feel at risk knowing Google is tracking them every time they search for 'Upstate New York restaurants?' Granted, Google is gradually learning a whole lot about each and every one of us, but how bad can that be? Even if Google were to rewrite their motto, '**Do no evil**,' would we really be at risk if this

information were to get out?

Sometimes we do it to ourselves

Of course, with mobile gadgets we're connected much more often. Here's a new footwear product by Aetrex that contains GPS tracking technology. Now the product is actually geared towards those afflicted with Alzheimer's and other types of dementia so that loved ones can keep track of them. If you have a loved one that suffers from Alzheimer's, you likely understand that those that suffer from it can have the tendency to wander off and get lost. Obviously this is a great idea, but it is showing that GPS technology is becoming extremely common place. It's used for good, but those who are much more concerned over their privacy don't like the fact that they are being watched from the sky. Others can't imagine going off the grid for more than a few hours.

The same applies for social networking services like **FourSquare** that let you check in whenever you visit a new public location, and shares it with other, or other social media apps that track your location as you post from your mobile device. We see the argument go both ways - some love broadcasting and promoting their location while others don't want their friends to know what they are doing.

What's your stance on privacy? Are you ready to embrace the all-seeing eye of big brother or do you want to keep yourself off the grid as much as possible? How much data collection is too much? Discuss this with us in the comments!



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Slow Computer? Increase Memory to boost Speeds

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RAM/Memory

Random Access Memory is basically the short-term memory of your computer. While your computer is loading and running applications, they get stored in the RAM. The RAM is much faster than the hard drive, so your computer doesn't need to spin its wheels looking for specific files and parts of applications. The more RAM you have, the more "stuff" that can be stored in it. The faster your RAM, the faster your computer can sift through the data that gets temporarily pushed into it. Once your RAM is full, your computer will depend on the hard drive to retrieve information, and that's where things get sluggish. Once you stop running a program, it will remove itself from the RAM to free up some space for everything else running.

Hard Drive

The hard drive is the storage device of a computer. For extremely high-end PCs,

the hard drive is the bottleneck. Hard drives, when compared to RAM, are very slow to access and write information. Once your computer needs to rely on your hard drive heavily for RAM, things are going to start getting bogged down. While it's great that your PC can rely on your hard drive in this way for those times it needs some extra memory, it is likely this is the slowdown. Unfortunately, because hard drives are mechanical and have moving parts, there's limitations to how fast science can make them perform. There are costly solid-state drives, but as a performance-improving factor on a standard workstation, typically solid state drives aren't the cost-effective answer.

Of course, there are software factors as well. Malware and Spyware can bog down your system, and after a lot of use, temporary files can bog things down. Before upgrading hardware, you'll want to have a technician run a quick evalua-

tion on your PC - it's possible a little cleanup can make all the difference in the world.

Otherwise, the next step is upgrading the RAM. RAM is usually relatively cheap, even to double or triple your existing RAM with faster, higher performance memory. Often the cost of the new RAM itself will be between \$50 and \$100, and more than likely less than that, and that's for a substantial increase, but it depends on your PC.

Is your computer running slow? Does it get bogged down by the time you have all of your day-to-day applications open? Contact us at 607.433.2200 for a quick evaluation to see if a simple, cost-effective upgrade will help you perform your job more effectively.



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15 Quick Twitter Tips



Twitter is a fantastic networking resource for professionals, brands, and businesses. Having a strong presence on

Twitter can mean more traffic to your website and an easy way to get in touch with customers and prospects. The hardest thing about diving into social media is knowing what to say. Here's a quick list with a few ideas to get you started.

Say Hello!

It's that simple. In 140 characters or less, greet the Twitterverse with a quick hello or a very short introduction about your company.

Inspirational Quote

Have a quote or saying that inspires you and your company? Share it, but be sure to give credit to the author.

Credit whoever pointed you to Twitter in the first place

If a friend, colleague, or consultant talked you into joining Twitter, give them a shout out. Social Media is a place to be honest and, well, social! Be sure to mention their @username in the tweet.

Start Following Others

This is a huge, often forgotten part of Twitter. It's not a one-sided conversation. You need to start looking for others to follow. Look for local businesses, organizations, and individuals.

Convey your company culture

Show off your company values. Enthusi-

astically mention recent internal meetings that improved processes or showcase specific cases where you've exceeded company values.

Talk about Events

Whether it was a successful tradeshow, a webinar that brought up great questions, or a sunny company picnic, share it! Include pictures when possible!

Answer questions publicly

Take a frequently asked question and answer it on Twitter (and the other social networks of course!) Encourage others to ask additional questions too.



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Data Backup: An It Consultant's Nightmare

Is staying in business important to your company?



We don't want to be sensationalistic here, but there is a serious real-world link between data loss and staying in business. Let's

look at some statistics.

Harris Interactive has been running a survey each year online, getting more than 2000 respondents each year, getting some statistics about data backup. Before we cover the numbers, we just want to say at Directive, we really value our clients. We want to be able to provide a service that enables our clients to focus on performing better at their business. We want to see our Upstate

New York clients grow and succeed and be able to thrive in an economy that, let's face it, isn't making things easy. Our goal isn't to make you spend all of your budget on souping up your IT to the point where it is impossible or not economical to manage; instead we try our very best to provide the very best in IT best practices and proactive management.

With that said, keeping you in business is extremely important to us. Let's take a look at why data backup can be such a nightmare for Directive.

Harris Interactive's yearly survey (which was held on behalf of Backblaze, a consumer-driven online backup service) was geared towards adults who own a PC. These aren't businesses per say, but the results are staggering either way. The results show that 93% of computer users risk data loss, because only 7% of users

are backing up their data daily. 14% of users back up their data weekly or more, and 27% back their data up monthly.

Granted, the concern isn't as high for home users - they don't have a business on the line. Still, there are plenty of solutions to automate backup for home PCs. Let's look at the numbers that really frighten us.

In a study by The Diffusion Group, over a thousand small businesses were asked about their backup habits.

40% of small and medium sized businesses don't backup their data.

60% of all data for small businesses is stored on devices that aren't backed up, like desktops or notebooks.

Worst of all, of companies that DO back-up their data, between 40% and 50% of

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Quick Tip: How To Backup your OneNote 2010 Notebooks



Microsoft OneNote makes it very easy to take and organize all

of your daily notes. Today we're going to show you how to ensure your OneNote Notebooks are backed up so you don't risk losing any information in the event of a computer issue.

OneNote behaves differently than your standard Microsoft Office App. Where a Word doc or Excel spreadsheet is a pretty standard file, OneNote doesn't bug you with questions like 'do you want to save your note?' or 'where would you like to save your notes?' It just takes your information and next time you open up OneNote, it's still there (one of the many conveniences found in OneNote). However, it's very important to under-

stand how this works so you can be sure your notebooks are being backed up properly.

Open OneNote and click on the File menu on the top left, then go to Options.

On the sidebar on the left, select Save & Backup.

First, you'll have some options on where certain elements in OneNote get saved. There's your Unfiled Notes Section, your Backup Folder, and the default location of your newly created Notebooks. You can modify these so they save in any directory you want.

You will want to make sure the Backup Folder is somewhere on your company's network, on a server and in a directory that gets backed up by your company's backup solution. If the backup is sitting on the same computer

you are working on, if your hard drive crashes you may never see your notes again.

Below you can also adjust how often the Notebook backs itself up and how many copies it keeps. This means if something terrible were to happen (like a whole bunch of meeting notes being deleted accidentally) you can go back to a previous version and likely retrieve them. We recommend bumping up the number of backup copies to 5, maybe even a little more.

Looking to make sure all of your day-to-day data is backed up? Contact Directive at 607.433.2200 to make sure your network is utilizing best practices and a reliable, testable backup system.



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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.



Chris Chase
Solutions Integrator

Data Backup: An IT Consultant's Nightmare

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all backups are not fully recoverable due to faulty media or general failures mostly involving improper setup, tape media failure, and lack of regular testing. Backup is vital for small businesses. If you aren't backed up, it's only a matter of time,

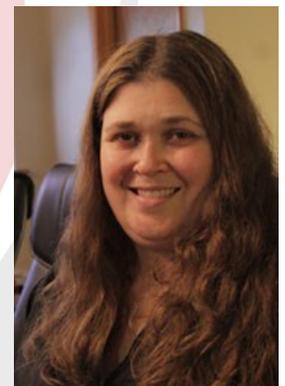
and we don't want to see you suffer from data loss. Trust us, it's even worse than it sounds.

Contact us today if your company isn't properly backing up data, or even if you have even the slightest suspicion that your data backup solu-

tion isn't doing its job. You'll want to test them regularly. Call us at 607.433.2200 and we'll gladly point you in the right direction to make sure you can prevent the terrible damages data loss can cause.



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Charlotte Chase
Solutions Integrator

Directive

330 Pony Farm Road
Suite #3
Oneonta, NY 13820
Toll-Free 888-546-4384
Voice: 607-433-2200



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-  twitter.directive.com
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 newsletter@directive.com

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