



DWPC Technology Newsletter

Technology news from David W. Potts Consulting

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Volume 2 Number 2 March - April, 2013



Welcome to the sixth edition of the David W. Potts Consulting *DWPC Technology Newsletter*. I hope you find this information helpful. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please send me an email, indicating such. If you received this newsletter from a friend and wish to be added to the mailing list, please email me at the address above and indicate your desire to receive the newsletter.

Java Security Alert! The Department of Homeland Security has warned that Oracle Java, a method to run programs on your computer [mainly through your Web browser(s)], contains vulnerabilities that could be exploited to compromise the security of your computer. They strongly suggest disabling Sun Java, unless it is necessary for programs used on the computer. The issues with Java are present in Microsoft Windows, Apple Mac OS X and the Linux operating systems. One recent article stated Kaspersky Labs indicated half the exploit-based attacks in 2012 were targeted at Oracle Java. Although Oracle recently released security updates to help thwart attacks through Java, the Department of Homeland Security warns there are still Java vulnerabilities that could allow a computer to be compromised. Many users do not need Java. Oracle has published a Web page that details how to disable the Java program. Please visit the page at: http://www.java.com/en/download/help/disable_browser.xml. If you do need to run Java, ensure you are using the latest release. If you have any questions about this or other security issues (or any other computer questions), please feel free to contact us and we will be happy to help you.

PARENTS BEWARE! I recently attended a Peace and Conflict Resolution symposium held by local Rotary Clubs. One of the speakers presented a session about cyberbullying. I was surprised at some of the statistics that were presented. One disturbing statistic was that 30% of teens are involved in bullying, either as bullies or as victims. Another is that bullied teens are 900% more likely to commit suicide than their non-bullied counterparts. Further disturbing is that 1 out of 5 teenage girls have sent nude or partially nude pictures or videos via email, text or other electronic means. Unfortunately, as more social networking sites and technologies appear, cyberbullying gains more momentum. Many teens are "on the Internet" 40 hours per week! There are many resources a parent can use to help mitigate the bullying of their children, such as www.stopbullying.gov, www.cyberbullying.us and www.bullyingstatistics.org. Please speak with your teens about bullying . . . **you just might save their life!**

Why did I get Windows 8!?! So, you bought a new machine with Windows 8 and you miss your Start Button. David W. Potts Consulting can help you transition to Windows 8 (and integrate your data from your old computer, including email and contacts) or can add functionality like you had in Microsoft Windows 7 (and before), like a Start Menu. **Do you have a computer running Microsoft Windows XP?** Remember, Microsoft will stop support for Microsoft Windows XP in April of 2014 (that's less than a year and a quarter), so the machine will need to be replaced (or, if a high end machine, Windows 7 or Windows 8 could be installed . . . but a fresh install would be required, forcing a backup of data, install of the new version of Windows, reinstall of applications, then restoration of the data). Some new computers are still available with Windows 7 . . . but they are becoming more rare. If you have a machine that is over 5 years old, you may want to consider its replacement.

Do I need to back up my data? I am often asked about data backup. Unfortunately, it is often after someone has experienced a disaster and has lost data (by the way, David W. Potts Consulting has tools that can help retrieve data from a disk, even if Windows won't boot, in many cases). I tell my clients that, anything they would not want to lose, should be saved in multiple locations. You can back up data to a USB Flash drive, CDs, DVDs (although you should not use DVD recordable media for long term backup), external hard disk drive, a cloud-based backup solution (such as a free service like Mozy or a paid service like Carbonite) or a combination of the above. There are a number of types of backups . . . data only, full, and image. Microsoft Windows 7 and Microsoft Windows 8 offer the image backup option (my favorite of the backup types) . . . built into the operating system. You will want to use an external disk to use this option, as your backup will likely be too large for a Flash drive (and could take 20 or more DVDs). Windows also includes other backup options. There are also free programs that can be used to back up selected data to a device such as a USB Flash drive. David W. Potts Consulting will be happy to help you with your backup and disaster recovery strategy.

Windows Live Mesh has unwoven! As of February 13, 2013, Microsoft has turned off their Windows Live Mesh (free) remote control and remote access service. I am disappointed . . . as this free solution seemed to work very well. Microsoft is replacing Windows Live Mesh with Windows SkyDrive, a technology that discards the remote connectivity option but does offer "Cloud-based" storage--7GB for free (you can purchase more) that can be shared between computers and accessed from any computer with Web access. The good news is that Google has come to the rescue, offering the Google Chrome Remote Desktop, that offers much of the same functionality (also for free), using the Chrome Remote Desktop Google Chrome application. For a more complete look at Google Chrome Remote Desktop, please refer to the January - February 2013 issue of this newsletter, where you will find an article titled *Google Chrome Remote Desktop*. LogMeIn also offers some free remote connectivity options.

Yahoo! Mail now offers encryption by providing its users with the option to use "SSL Encryption" (Secure Socket Layer). Email encryption scrambles the contents of the messages transferred over the Internet (like when using secure banking sites), so the content cannot be easily captured and abused. For more details, check out the Yahoo! article: http://help.yahoo.com/kb/index?locale=en_US&y=PROD_MAIL_ML&page=content&id=SLN8558.

A computer infection telephone scam has been launched, where the caller indicates there is a problem with the person's computer and that they have called to fix the problem. These callers, often from India, may indicate they received a notification from Microsoft about the problem(s) with your computer and that they are working with Microsoft to correct computer problems. **This is a scam!** These callers are trained to get you to give them personal information, such as credit card numbers. At the least, they will charge for the "fix" they performed on your computer (although they likely did nothing positive to your computer) or, at the worst, they will use your credit card for unauthorized charges or gather banking information from your computer. You should never provide any personal information to an unknown caller. If you believe the call to be legitimate (such as from your bank), tell them you will call them back at their published number and then provide the appropriate information. Never use links in email to visit financial or auction sites, as, often you can be lead to "phishing" Web sites where they will attempt to ascertain personal information. Identity theft is the fastest growing crime in America. For more information on identity theft, please visit the FTC Web site at <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0014-identity-theft>.

Email hijacking is still a big problem. Hackers will break into users' email accounts, steal their contacts, and send Spam email to their contacts. I strongly suggest using a "strong" password for your email account(s) (as well as any other account where you would not want unauthorized access). A "strong" password contains upper and lower case letters as well as at least one number or special character. Avoid common things . . . Abc123 or April2013 fit the criteria, but you can see they are not "strong" passwords, as they could be easily guessed.

How do I . . . Please submit questions to me via email to the address at the top of page 1. Questions may be answered in future issues of this newsletter, or may be addressed individually. I often have clients who exclaim, after my correcting their issue, how they have been frustrated by working on an issue for weeks before calling me. Often the problem takes less than an hour to correct. Many mention how, next time, they will call me first to avoid the frustration! I have helped people do things from selecting and programming a high-tech remote control to setting up a company's network infrastructure.

David W. Potts Consulting will be happy to assist you with your hardware, software and network selection, purchase, integration, troubleshooting and training. We specialize in Microsoft Windows computers and networking and can also assist you with other electronics consulting.

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