

## Protect It: Is Your Network Safe?

"Hey Vic, I'm getting pop-ups, spyware, and e-mails from people I don't even know! On top of that, my computer is slowing down and I can't find my payroll files!"

Sounds familiar?

I hear this all the time... and a lot more than I used to.

The use of broadband internet exploded when high-speed DSL and Cable connections lowered the cost of fast internet service to homes and businesses across the country. Broadband connections are faster and more productive than the old dial-up service, but have one serious drawback: they are always on.

No one wants to go back to dial-up connections and lose speed and productivity, but a connection that is always on makes the computer hacker's job much easier.

Think of it this way. Would you leave a new pickup truck unlocked with the keys in the ignition and the engine running all day long? Not if you don't want it stolen.

Hackers like DSL, T-1 lines, and cable modems because they're always run-

ning, like your new pickup with the keys in it and they are predictable.

Don't get me wrong, The value of a broadband connection like cable, DSL, or T-1 far outweighs the risks. It's great technology at an affordable cost. You just have to be sure you're using the proper level of protection a firewall solution can offer.

Computer hacking can have serious consequences. One consequence of hacking is lost data. Hackers not only steal your data, they may also delete your important files and programs. This will cost you a lot of time and money to re-create this information, unless, of course, you are using a solid backup and recovery solution. In any case, you don't want hackers fooling around in your critical programs and files. If your backup system is flawed, as many are, you're really out of luck.

Another result of hacking is downtime. When someone calls you for information stored on your server, you don't want to say, "Sorry, the computers are down at the moment, can I call you back later?"

If this is someone you are seeking to do business with, you're already off on the wrong foot.

If you have trucks sitting on the scales to be scaled in and out, it's costing you and your trucking contractors time and money.



Did you know hackers can hijack computers, too?

When a computer is hijacked, hackers may use your computer and others to launch an attack against other networks. When there is an investigation, the finger is pointed at you as a source of the attack, not the hacker. This isn't good for your business or your good name.

That brings to mind another threat: these attacks could be directed toward your network. Some are just an annoyance, but most create chaos and do a lot of damage.

One such attack comes in the form of a Trojan Horse. The Greeks won the Trojan war by hiding in a huge, hollow wooden horse to sneak into the fortified city of Troy. In today's use of the Trojan Horse, you download what appears to be a movie or music file, but when you click on it, you unleash a dangerous program capable of erasing

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## Back It Up: Are You Prepared For Disaster?

Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and other natural disasters can not only set you back, they can put you out of business if you're not prepared.

How do you make sure you have what you need to get back up and going ASAP? Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are your onsite and offsite backup systems being monitored or are you relying on outdated tape backups?
2. Are you doing periodical test restores of your backups to make sure the data is not corrupt and could be restored in the event of disaster?
3. Do you have documentation detailing what software licenses you have, critical network passwords, and hardware information?
4. Can you easily recover a file if one is lost or overwritten?
5. Do you understand that data backup is only a component of disaster recovery and just having an

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### I Could Care Less? Really?

I first heard the phrase, "I could care less" when I was in junior high math class. It was spoken by a math teacher to a student who was presenting an excuse for not being prepared for class.

I thought to myself, "That's curious, based on his tone of voice it sounds like he couldn't care less but his words say he must actually care a little and could care less."

As a seventh grader, I was certainly in no position to challenge the language of an angry math teacher who had sweat dripping from his brow as he taught in a non-air-conditioned school in south Louisiana and was obviously having a bad day.

These days, as someone who likes to work with words and has an appreciation for the English language, I would take him to task for such a display of careless speech, and more importantly, outright sarcastic negativity toward a student.

William and Mary Morris, in the *Harper Dictionary of Contemporary Usage*, called the phrase, *I could care less*, "an ignorant debasement of language."

I agree completely and I suggest to those who wish to present themselves as educated (self or formally) and well-spoken, just say what you mean and say, "I couldn't care less."

On the other hand, I couldn't care less about the opinion of those who choose to say, "*I could care less!*"

## What's New in FPA?

Some new things will be coming in the next Forest Products Accounting (FPA) update.

Would you like to personalize your scale tickets and wood settlements? Well, now you will have the opportunity to add your company logo to your scale tickets and producer and landowner settlements. I've seen this and I can tell you it will enhance the look of your settlements and tickets.

Don't have a logo? I'll help you get one.

The other changes just completed are designed to help users work with accounts receivable. This is particularly helpful for companies with a large number of tickets who are also getting their payment information electronically from IP, GP, Stone, or West Fraser.

One change in particular will be useful to all users: the ability to gain access to

customer transactions in accounts receivable without having an unapplied payment balance for that customer.

There has also been some cleanup work on a report or two that did not export perfectly to Excel. The reports now have the correct export information.

These are just a few of the changes coming in the next update. Please contact me if you would like more details.

**"Government is not the solution to our problem. Government is the problem."**

*-Ronald Reagan*

## Books I've Read Recently

I've always been intrigued by the operations of the CIA. In the last couple of years, I've heard James Olson, former Chief of Counterintelligence, speak at three different meetings.

Every time I hear one of Olson's presentations, the more I enjoy it. In fact, at the last one I attended, Olson was the only speaker

at the event to receive a standing ovation. It was not only for his presentation, but for his service to the United States of America.

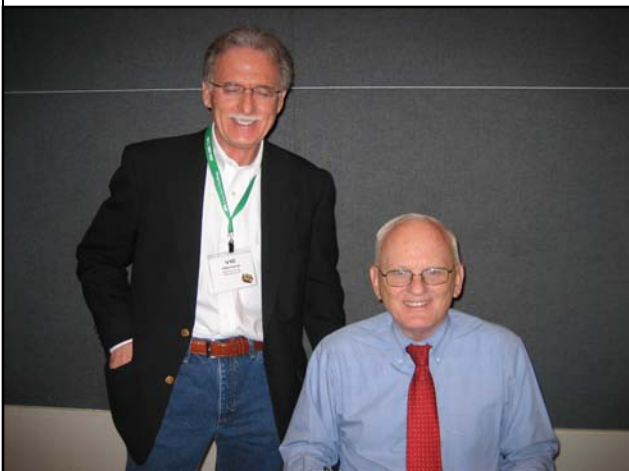
His book, Fair Play: The Moral Dilemmas of Spying, examines a number of scenarios that parallel real-world intelligence situations. It examines the opinions of a number of

persons, from students to army generals, with a moral perspective.

It wasn't a spy thriller, but the book does give a real-life perspective on the moral challenges of spying.

Another book I found interesting was Mastering the Rockefeller Habits, by Verne Harnish. If you're interested in growing your business, Harnish offers the One Page Strategic Plan to help you define your core values, identify opportunities, and set goals for your company.

I know, a lot of thought has to go into the One Page Strategic Plan, but even if you don't complete the plan and read the book strictly for pleasure, you'll start thinking in terms of long-term growth for your organization and setting priorities to get there.



James Olson, shown signing my copy of Fair Play.

## Are You Prepared For Disaster? (continued)

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off-site copy of your files does not ensure you could be back up and running quickly?

If your answer to any of

these questions is, "I don't know" or "I'm not sure," you're taking a big risk with your most important asset: the data on your network.

Contact us and we will

review your backup and disaster recovery procedures. We can then offer solutions to eliminate your exposure to data loss when disaster strikes.

## Protect It: Is Your Network Safe? (continued)

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your disk, sending your credit card numbers and passwords to a stranger, or letting that stranger hijack your computer.

A virus is another form of attack. Viruses are well known by now and are most commonly presented as a program attaching itself to another program and then spreading from file to file when the program is run.

Worms are like viruses, but instead of spreading from file to file, they spread from computer to computer.

Have you ever heard of a web site or company service over the internet being shut down by hackers? This could also happen to you and is often caused by Denial of Service attacks.

One common method of attack involves saturating the target (victim) server with external communications requests, such that it cannot respond to legitimate traffic. It becomes overwhelmed with requests and consumes its own resources, becoming unavailable to legitimate users.

How do we guard against these threats?

The use of firewall appliances and our Complete Security service is the best

way to protect your computer network against attacks from hackers and other malicious sources. Firewalls, when configured correctly, implement a series of rules to deny or allow traffic to pass between the internet and your network. These rules are flexible, depending on your situation. They can be set very tight or very loose. Sometimes firewalls have gotten a bad name because they are not configured correctly and are too loose or too tight.

The correct solution is to provide screening for e-mails and web requests without obstructing your employees' need to get their work done.

While your company is busily handling transactions across the internet, the firewall is quietly looking over your network.

One form of protection used by firewall security appliances is called Network Address Translation (NAT). NAT hides the address of the computers on your network where they cannot be seen by the bad guys.

Firewalls also use logging and monitoring to keep records of attacks on your system. This helps us, as your provider, analyze your ongoing security needs and

receive feedback on the performance of your firewall.

Without getting real geeky about it, a packet is a unit of formatted data. Packets are data traveling back and forth between your computer and other computers in your network and across the internet.

Firewall appliances filter packets to determine good packets from harmful packets. The best of these firewalls have multiple ways to inspect these packets to make sure they're okay before letting them into your building and your network.

Well, I think that's enough Geek speak for now. I think you get the point, though. Without the proper security protection, you are vulnerable to lost data, down time, and computer hacking.

If you don't think your security is adequately covered and your network lacks the proper protection, contact us and we will help you evaluate your needs to determine if you're a good candidate for our Complete Security Protection service.

Our goal is to keep you safe by keeping the bad guys out of your network and keeping the bad stuff out of your computers.

## The Benefits of Massage

What? A massage? Are you some kind of freak? Professional athlete? Aristocrat? Politician?

No. None of the above,

A couple of years ago, a medical doctor suggested I seek the benefits of massage therapy as a way to deal with a stiff neck. It has turned out to be a great way to eliminate pain and maintain overall health.

The doctor didn't recommend just any massage therapist. She recommended her own massage therapist, Sonya Reed of Texarkana.

Ms. Reed, who does business as Body Therapy, is not only a licensed massage therapist and medical massage therapist, she is also a registered nurse who has worked in the traditional medical setting (hospitals and clinics) for over 30 years. She is practicing massage therapy full time now because of the overwhelming demand for her work as a medical massage therapist. She is also completing her requirements for a masters degree, and plans to also teach in the future.

Take it from me, for your health, pain relief, and overall well-being, massage therapy is very effective. You'll also stand taller and straighter and feel lighter and smoother as a result.

To contact Ms. Reed, you can e-mail her at [bodytherapy@cableone.net](mailto:bodytherapy@cableone.net).

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## Take My Advice!

**Don't Let ANYONE Sell You a Woody Biomass Procurement System Until You Read *This*...**

Not all computer consultants are created equal. The question is, which ones will give you a solid solution and which ones will frustrate you, overcharge for their services, and possibly even make things worse. Don't trust your woody biomass procurement and accounting system to just anyone! Our **FREE REPORT: What You Should Know Before Investing in an Automated Woody Biomass Procurement System** will reveal costly misconceptions about procurement and accounting software systems as well as the critical questions you should ask any IT Consultant **BEFORE** you implement your computerized woody biomass procurement system.

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## Ask Vic!

**Q** I've scanned my computer for viruses and spyware, but my computer is still not acting right. What should I do?

**A** First of all, the use of a security appliance with a firewall and anti-malware protection goes a long way to keeping malware out of your computer. Given you've already acquired an infection, you have to deal with it quickly and effectively.

Vipre Anti-Virus plus Anti-Spyware will protect you from most of the threats out there. I recommend a layered approach, however, and we will often run MalwareBytes to clear out anything missed by Vipre.

This layered approach, using two programs to clean a system, is sometimes required. It's currently impossible for one program to keep up with roughly 70,000

malicious applications being launched daily over the internet.

**Q** How can I be sure I'm really getting a good backup of my data?

**A** The best way is to test your backup by running through the process of recovering that data as if you've lost a file, group of files, or a complete system and the data has to be restored. It is usually in this recovery process where you can discover any flaws in the system.

Unfortunately, many small and mid-sized companies don't find out their backup data is bad until disaster strikes and they are in the process of trying to restore their files to get their system up and running.

To avoid the possibility of finding out your backup is no good when you need it the

most, a test should be run monthly to make sure that backup data is sound and you can be up and running quickly. We schedule this remotely with all of our Safe and Secure backup and disaster recovery systems.

In the monthly data testing, the backup data is mounted, meaning the data is restored to a hard drive. The data is then tested to see if it is usable. In other words: How soon can you be up and running if disaster strikes or if you have a server problem?

All testing can be done off hours, minimizing interruption in the daily work flow. The files are tested by running utilities and a report is generated to highlight any backup problems that may exist.

## Mark Your Calendar Annual Meetings

Arkansas Timber Producers Assn  
Hot Springs, AR  
August 13-14, 2010

Louisiana Forestry Association  
Bossier City, LA  
August 31-September 2, 2010

Pacific Logging Congress  
Clatskanie, OR  
September 16-18, 2010

Arkansas Forestry Association  
North Little Rock, AR  
October 5-6, 2010

Oklahoma Forestry Association  
Idabel, OK  
October 7, 2010

Texas Forestry Association  
Nacogdoches, TX  
October 20-22, 2010

*What you get when the government gets into the automobile business: The Chevy Volt, at a sale price of \$41,000, with a travel range of 40 miles, and runs on electricity.*