



ACORNUCOPIA

AN ABUNDANCE OF IDEAS

CEO Corner



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In my last CEO Corner, I reveled at the power of the internet to permit people to do things never before possible for them. The example I gave (34 Million Friends) was in instance where an organization was using the internet for what most of us would consider to be a useful activity. However, as with all technologies (that I am aware of) the ability to engage in mischief is as great as the ability to do good. Case in point is the rise of the “zombie computers.” *New York Times, Friday, June 24.*

A zombie computer is one that has software that permits it to be used by others without the owner of the computer being aware. The software infects the computer when the owner goes to a website specifically designed to transmit the software when it is contacted. The software may sit dormant for days, months or years, but when the master calls the computer then executes the imbedded software i.e. “zombie.”

One of the examples cited in the New York Times involved a company that sold sports jerseys on line that wanted to eliminate its competition. The company hired a programmer to develop software that would be imbedded in “zombies” that when activated would flood the competitor’s internet site with so much e-mail that it could no longer function. The trick was how to get the software imbedded. The solution was to create a teaser. In this case it was the promise of pictures of Jennifer Lopez. It could just have easily been the promise of a special recipe, or unique screensavers, etc. Whatever the teaser, once someone clicked on the site, the “zombie” software infected the innocent computer and resided there until called upon by the “master” computer to do its dirty work.

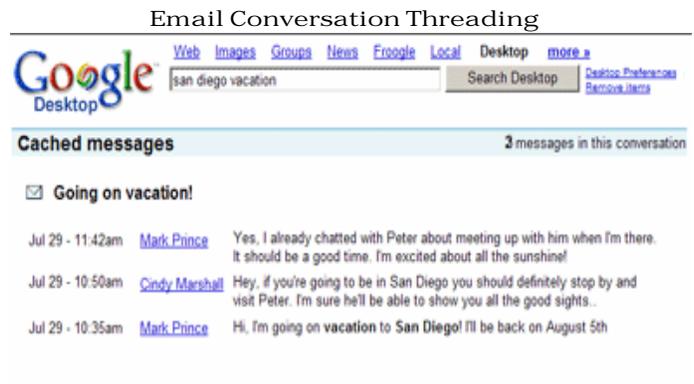
According to the New York Times article, 170,000 computers are being hijacked every day. These computers are generally home users or individuals who do not know how to protect themselves.

Three other possible threats to a computer user are (1) phishing, (2) pharming, and/or (3) typosquatting. Phishing is when an e-mail that closely resembles a legitimate e-mail from, for instance, a financial institution, seeks confidential information. Pharming involves changing the website routing system so that one is directed to a phony look alike site and encouraged to provide confidential information. Typosquatting takes advantage of mistakes in typing the correct address by creating sites with similar addresses as the true site. Once the innocent user reaches the phony site, he is prompted to provide confidential information.

One can protect himself from becoming an unwitting zombie and from phishing, pharming and typosquatting, but it takes awareness and diligence. Several commercial programs are available to search out unwanted programs hidden in your computer, along with virus protections and spam blockers. In this case, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Go-Go-Google-Gadgets

Knowing that the business professionals of today have a ton of information stored on their computers- such as documents, excel worksheets and other information like old e-mails and chats- the masterminds at Google.com have launched a tool that will allow you to run a desktop search on your own information. It's a desktop search application that provides full text search over your email, computer files, chats, and web pages you've viewed. By enabling your computer to be searchable, the desktop search allows all your information to be close at hand and frees you from having to manually organize your files, emails, bookmarks and in addition ends the days of searching through countless folders for that one bit of information you just can't seem to find.



After you download Google Desktop Search the application creates an index of all your searchable information and stores it on your computer, allowing you to search your personal items as easily as you search the Internet using Google. Desktop Search updates itself continually for most file types; when you receive a new email in Outlook, for example, you can search for it within seconds. Google Desktop Search also introduces new ways to access information, organizing email search results into conversations so that all messages in the same thread are grouped into a single search result, and keeping "cached" copies of everything you see, so that you can view older versions of documents and web pages even if you're not online.

Google Desktop searches:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Outlook Email | Netscape Mail / Thunderbird |
| Outlook Express | Netscape / Firefox / Mozilla |
| Word | PDF |
| Excel | Music |
| Powerpoint | Images |
| Internet Explorer | Video |
| AOL Instant Messenger | |



Earl's
Tech Tips



To download Google Desktop, go to www.desktop.google.com. Remember, the desktop search will bring up everything that you search for that's been done on your computer. So **beware** that people using this search feature might be able to see things that you have on your computer that you don't want them to see.

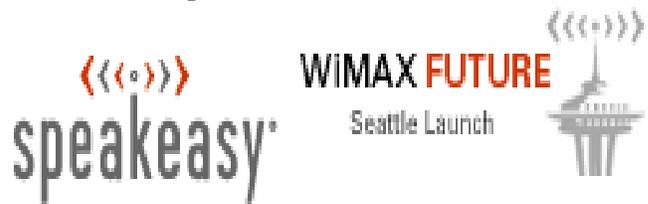


Wireless Internet Users Get Some Slack

Early last month Speakeasy, a wireless broadband services company, announced its new WiMAX service, which features a high-density, point-to-multipoint broadband wireless capability. The new service will first be deployed in Seattle to show its resilience in the harsh geographical terrain that is challenged by weather, bodies of water and dense building skyline which makes it one of the most difficult deployments of wireless communications in the country. Instead of being stuck in the middle of the telecom duopoly, businesses are now presented a much needed alternative; enabling businesses to receive secure, cost-effective, high speed fixed wireless connectivity at any location in their wireless zone, installed in days versus weeks. To help solidify and introduce their new wireless service, Speakeasy has also formed a strategic relationship with both Intel Corporation and Alvarion to help validate and define the future of their WiMax service.

Alvarion will provide its state-of-the-art wireless antenna and radio, which are very small and can be affixed outside windows or indoors. Intel is working with Speakeasy to promote its cost effective technology that supports IEEE 802.16-2004, a standard that is trying to modify and establish the coexistence of fixed broadband and wireless services. If all goes well in Seattle, Speakeasy wireless services could be on its way to Southern California in the very near future, which would force the other communication companies that make up the limited competition to lower their existing rates.

Source: Seattlepi.com



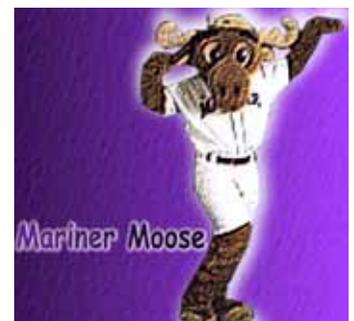
Don't Get Mustard on the Laptop

With Internet kiosks, state-of-the-art pay phones equipped with data jacks, luxury suites rigged with high-speed Internet access and 2,500 voice and data drops located around the ballpark, Safeco Field, the home of Major League Baseball's Seattle Mariners, is the most technologically advanced stadium in the U.S. The technology backbone at Safeco, designed by telecommunications giant Lucent Technologies, features a super-fast Ethernet over which 100 megabits of information per second can flow. Thirty-six data closets throughout the ballpark, equipped with Lucent switches, regulate all the traffic, whether it's Ichiro Suzuki sending e-mail in the players' lounge or a fan searching the Internet for the latest scores around the league. Safeco Field houses the largest point-of-sale (POS) stadium in North America with 305 networked POS terminals and dozens of handheld units in



100 restaurants, concessions, and luxury suites throughout Safeco Field. All together, more than 700,000 feet of copper wire and 35,000 feet of fiber optic cable run through the ballpark, enough to stretch from Seattle to Vancouver, B.C. Safeco is so advanced and precise that even the hot dog machines are hooked up to the computer network, so concession stands can tell during a game that they need 30 more hot dogs and 30 more buns on the upper concourse seating area if need be. Safeco Field's technology also enabled the Seattle Mariners to be the first Major League Baseball team to sell tickets online with a readable barcode for stadium entry and also the first to allow fans to pay for a hot dog from their seats with a credit card to vendors that carry handheld units that are directly connected to the stadium's technological infrastructure. Whether you're a baseball fan or not, a Mariners game at Safeco Field should prove to be an enjoyable experience.

Source: Seattle Post



Customer Spotlight- Amerihome Mortgage, Evergreen Escrow and Empire Pacific Realty

Why concentrate in one sector of the industry when you can operate three companies integrated within the same industry? That was the basis and starting point of Amerihome Mortgage, Evergreen Escrow and Empire Pacific Realty. It all began in January of 2000 with Amerihome Mortgage Corporation whose loan specialties included purchase money, refinance and home equity line mortgages. With the focal point of their entire operation based around the satisfaction of their customers, the thought of creating an escrow company to better assist their customers came about to help facilitate each transaction as an intermediary between the buyer, seller and lender. Evergreen Escrow was created in September of 2002 to help bring that thought to reality for existing and future customers. But why stop there? The Company, also saw a need for real estate agents from the existing factors in the current market and in March of this year, Empire Pacific Realty was created with the intent of bringing both buyer and seller to each others doorstep. The current set up of these three companies has allowed them all to become grounded in the industry as the ability to survive with the sole focus on only one aspect of the business is now almost impossible to accomplish.



As changes continually infiltrate the industry calling for necessary adaptation, such as the creation of Amerihome Mortgage, Evergreen Escrow and Empire Pacific Realty, technology has also continued to change but at a much quicker pace. As technology allows a new service or faster process to take place, the competition can easily pull away from the rest of the pack.

Acorn Technology has assisted all three companies in this complicated and necessary process. In the beginning, some documents were still being done by hand. Now almost their entire operation is electronic. Instead of waiting for FedEx to deliver important paperwork to a wide geographical area, they can simply deliver the necessary documents securely through email. The three companies can now access reports and manage work on their computers remotely through the utilization of a virtual private network (VPN).



If any listings are suddenly posted onto the market, PDA's automatically notify the realtor, who could be showing a house to a potential buyer, of the new listing allowing the realtor the opportunity to show the potential buyer additional properties.

Acorn Technology has also helped vertically integrate all three companies so that they can fully utilize their maximum functionality. Everything is now under "one roof", even if in different offices. If a potential buyer wants to get quotes on a loan, Empire Pacific Realty has accessible and almost instant access to that particular information since all three companies are integrated. This enables all three companies to get the status of any bit of information that is necessary to accommodate their customers dealing with any one of their companies and it also enables instant communication so that the customer can get the quickest and most informational service they can possibly receive.



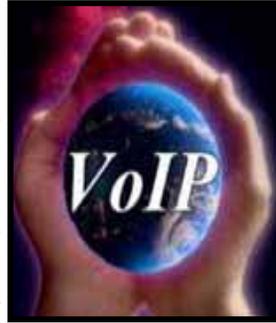
Instead of waiting to adapt to change, all three companies are already looking into ways to improve their business through advanced usage of technology so that they can stay ahead of the competition. All three companies are working to move toward a paperless work environment, which will increase each company's efficiency, allow them to drastically increase their customer satisfaction and will also help preserve the environment through a lower usage and need for paper products. All three companies would also like to develop a safe and secure facilitation of electronic signatures. This would allow the speed of the process of acquiring or selling a home, or the process of acquiring a loan, to drastically increase in speed, as paperwork will no longer need to be delivered back and forth from agent to customer.

As technology constantly changes to make things better, Amerihome Mortgage, Evergreen Escrow and Empire Pacific Realty will continue to utilize technology to stay one step in front of the competition. They take great pride in continuing to satisfy their customer's needs, which is the reason behind their compilation of businesses in the real estate industry.



Thank You For Calling 911, Please Hold

SBC Communications Inc. is currently offering Internet-based calling companies, using voice over internet protocol (VoIP), a service that would provide their customers the same 911 services available to subscribers of landline phone companies. The new service could increase the spread of internet-based calling by easing customer concerns about their ability to reach the police or fire department in an emergency near their location. Several internet-based calling companies are currently facing lawsuits because of their ability, or lack thereof, to connect customers to 911 emergency dispatchers in a



timely manner or routing their calls to local dispatchers. Vonage, which has more than 650,000 subscribers, is one of the companies facing lawsuits stemming from several states that claim the companies advertising and implementation of its 911 services were misleading to customers as certain marketing material did not make it clear that users needed to sign up to make 911 calls route to their local dispatchers. The FCC has currently joined in the barrage of controversy with a push for regulations to ensure that customers are able to send location and callback information to emergency responders when 911 is dialed. If the FCC has its way, they will require compliance within four months from all VoIP service companies.

Source: latimes.com May 12, 2005

Acorn Technology Service Bulletin #1

New software is constantly being introduced to the technology market giving businesses new ways of integrating their operations, speeding up their processes and making all aspects of the company more efficient. If you plan on buying new software you should consider the following before your purchase:

- 1.) Is the software compatible with your existing system or network?
- 2.) Does the software manufacturer provide technical support and what hours are they available?
- 3.) What type of support do they provide; email, live or web based knowledge library?
- 4.) Does the software manufacturer provide any references?
- 5.) Does the manufacturer provide a trial version of its software?
- 6.) Does the manufacturer provide updates or upgrades and if so how often?
- 7.) Is there a maintenance fee for the updates or are there any additional charges?
- 8.) Are support contracts available and how much does the manufacturer charge?
- 9.) Can your existing information from your current version be converted to the new edition and is there a charge for data migration?

These are few a helpful tips to assist you through the software purchasing experience. REMEMBER, not all updates, patches and new editions (i.e. version 5.16 to 6.0) are bug free or compatible with your existing system, so be cautious and inquisitive when purchasing new software.

This service bulletin is the first of many to come. Each service bulletin will be sent out to existing customers, so please be on the lookout for the next bulletin or check out all of them on our website, www.acorntechcorp.com.

If you would like for Acorn Technology to help you in evaluating a new software purchase please don't hesitate to call us at (951) 784-3500.



Earl the squirrel's brother, Leroy, on the harmonica at a blues club in downtown Riverside.

5 Historic Technological Mishaps of the Twentieth Century

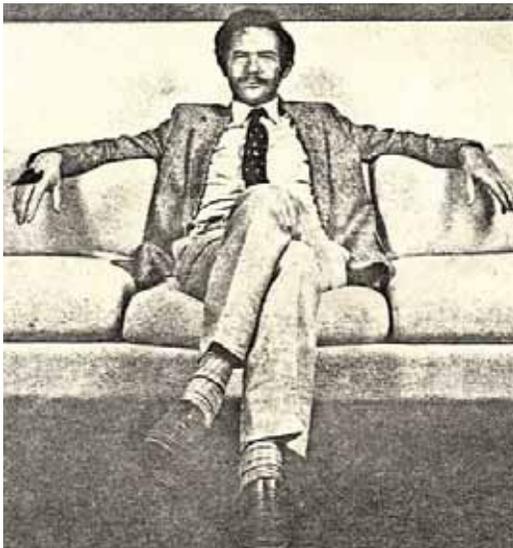
There's a first for everything and even the most brilliant minds can look like fools, this ended up as our theme for this next piece where we attempted to look into some of the biggest technological miss happenings of the twentieth century. The following "fub five" made our list.



1.) The First Bug-- In 1945, Grace Murray Hopper was working on the Harvard University Mark II Aiken Relay Calculator (a primitive computer). On the 9th of September, 1945, when the machine was experiencing problems, an investigation showed that there was a moth trapped between the points of Relay #70, in Panel F. The operators removed the moth and affixed it to the log. "The word went out that they had "debugged" the machine and the term "debugging a computer program" was born.



2.) Windows Crash of 98-- At a Spring Comdex demo of Windows 98 on April 20th, 1998 in Chicago, Bill Gates allowed the world to see that just about everyone can have trouble on a computer, as he attempted to demonstrate Windows 98. The operating system proceeded to crash while the world's richest man was demonstrating it to a packed house, sending its dire death message onto huge monitors for all to see. While Microsoft product manager Chris Capossela quickly moved to remove the offensive message from the screens, Gates quipped "This must be why we're not shipping Windows 98 yet." Welcome to reality, Bill.



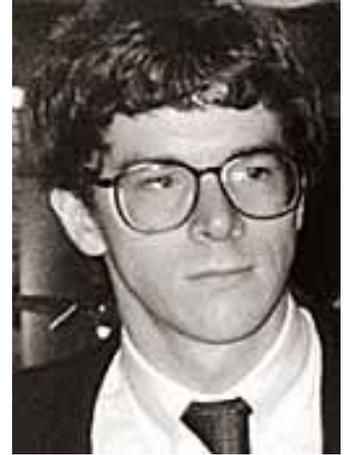
Adam Osborne

3.) Osborne computer-- Released in 1981 by the Osborne Computer Corporation, the Osborne 1 was considered to be the first true portable computer - it closed-up for protection, and had a carrying handle. It even had an optional battery pack, so it didn't have to be plugged into an outlet for power. While the Osborne was a good deal at \$1795, it also came bundled with about \$1500 of free software. The Osborne was a huge overnight success, with sales reaching 10,000 units a month. In 1982, the Osborne Computer Company announced a successor, the Executive model OCC-2 and shortly thereafter, they announced the next system, the Vixen, an MS-DOS compatible portable. Unfortunately, potential customers stopped buying the Osborne 1, waiting for the Executive and the Vixen, which weren't even ready to ship yet. Sales plummeted and Osborne quickly ran out of money and filed for bankruptcy in September of 1983.



5 Historic Technological Mishap's of the Twentieth Century Continued...

4.) First Internet Worm — On November 2, 1988, Robert Morris, Jr., a graduate student in Computer Science at Cornell, wrote an experimental, self-replicating, self-propagating program called a *worm* and injected it into the Internet. He chose to release it from MIT, to disguise the fact that the worm came from Cornell. Morris soon discovered that the program was replicating and reinfecting machines at a much faster rate than he had anticipated—there was a bug. Ultimately, many machines at locations around the country either crashed or became “catatonic.” When Morris realized what was happening, he contacted a friend at Harvard to discuss a solution. Eventually, they sent an anonymous message from Harvard over the network, instructing programmers how to kill the worm and prevent reinfection. However, because the network route was clogged, this message did not get through until it was too late. Computers were affected at many sites, including universities, military sites, and medical research facilities. The estimated cost of dealing with the worm at each installation ranged from \$200 to more than \$53,000. Robert T. Morris was convicted of violating the computer Fraud and Abuse Act (Title 18), and sentenced to three years of probation, 400 hours of community service, a fine of \$10,050. Ironically, Morris now teaches Computer Science at MIT.



5.) Windows failure shuts down Navyship —In July of 1998, the U.S. Navy's Yorktown "Smart Ship," an Aegis missile cruiser that was being used as a pilot program for computer controlled naval vessels, was left adrift at sea for over two hours because of problems with its Windows NT-based software. The ship had to be towed back to harbor for the third time because of database errors. Officials confirmed later that the Yorktown experienced an "engineering local area network casualty," though they stopped short of blaming Windows NT on the problem, civilians on the ship later revealed that Windows NT was at the helm of the problem and that the circumstances would have been disastrous if they had been in a combat situation.

Technology Joke of the Month



Microsoft Corporation, 1978

Would you
have
invested?

