



THE RHODENIZER REPORT

DECEMBER 2009

www.rhodenizer.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

IS YOUR SERVER A MONEY PIT?	1
WIRELESS TERMS EXPLAINED	1
QUESTIONS FROM THE INBOX	3
LATEST ANTIVIRUS TEST RESULTS	4
ABOUT RHODENIZER IT	4

IS YOUR SERVER A MONEY PIT?

In a tough economy, small business owners have to do more than just cut back on expenses. Sometimes, we have to think outside-the-box and look for ways we can cut out certain expenses altogether. If your small business has its own server, you may not be aware that this asset can become more of a liability over time.

While some types of servers typically require very little maintenance (like Novell and Linux), Microsoft Windows servers are notorious for requiring frequent attention. They are also overly complicated for the needs of most small businesses.

It may not be a problem if you

already have a full-time IT staff. But, most small businesses only call an IT Pro in for service when something bad has happened. As a result, I often see servers with expired antivirus protection, that haven't actually been backed-up properly for months, and left exposed to security vulnerabilities that were never patched, in addition to the other problems I find.

Purchasing a server for your business is only part of the cost of ownership. You must also factor in the recurring costs of maintenance, security, and service over time. It's important to understand that if backups haven't been working and a



catastrophic failure occurs, your data can be lost forever. No amount of money can fix that.

So, given the understanding that having your own server bears with it certain costs and responsibilities that cannot be ignored, let's weigh that in light of some alternative ideas:

A). If you only use your server to share files with (cont. on P. 2)

THE TAKE-AWAY POINTS:

- **Your server may be costing you more than it's worth to keep it.**
- **Mobile wireless carrier terminology and acronyms explained.**
- **How did your antivirus software rate in the latest test results?**

WIRELESS TERMS EXPLAINED

Know the difference between 3G and 4G? If the new wireless carrier acronyms have you confused, here are some brief explanations to help bring you up to speed (no pun intended).

GSM is the most widely used mobile standard in 210 countries, and used by AT&T and T-Mobile in the U.S. Any device that uses a SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) card can connect to your local GSM network.

CDMA is a competing standard. Not as common, but prevalent in Korea, Japan, South America, and in the U.S. on the networks of Verizon, Sprint, and Virgin Mobile. CDMA technology is actually more efficient, but it doesn't have GSM's "open" advantage of SIM card swapping. (which is why you can't take your iPhone to Verizon.)

2G refers to "Second Generation" networks (like GSM and

CDMA) that are digital. It's mostly for voice, but slow data use also (like text messaging).

2.5G is the upgraded version of 2G that allows for faster data (about 200Kbps). EDGE is the best known, used by T-Mobile and AT&T. Verizon and Sprint also have a 2.5G technology called 1XRTT.

3G is what we call "mobile broadband". In (cont. on P.2)

WIRELESS TERMS EXPLAINED (CONT.)

(cont. from P.1) the U. S., this involves two standards: **HSPA** (used by AT&T and T-Mobile), and **EV-DO** (used by Verizon and Sprint).

HSPA (High-Speed Packet Access) is the 3G version of the GSM standard with theoretical speeds reaching near 14Mbps, but in the real world it's more like 3.6Mbps on a good day. AT&T has plans to hit 7.2Mbps next year with their "HSPA Plus".

EV-DO is the 3G version of the CDMA standard used by Sprint and Verizon. The latest revision can reach 3.1Mbps

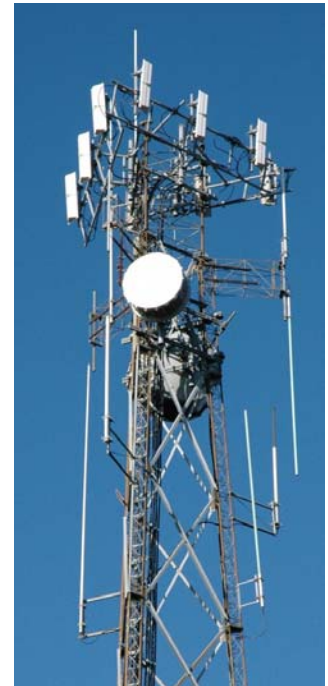
in ideal conditions. Though its specs are not as impressive as HSPA, or HSPA Plus, it has the most widespread 3G coverage currently in the US.

4G is the next generation of wireless data. Once again, there are two new standards: **WiMax** and **LTE**.

WiMax is the 4G ultra-high-speed mobile broadband developed by Intel, Motorola, and Samsung. In the US, Sprint and Clear are the only carriers deploying it nationwide. WiMax is capable of speeds faster than what most of us can get at home.

LTE (Long-Term Evolution) is the other major 4G technology. While it doesn't exist yet in the U. S., it's based on GSM and may emerge as the next generation standard if Verizon and AT&T follow through with their plans. While they have competing formats currently, both pledged to roll out LTE in the US. Verizon plans to have mass coverage by 2012.

While 4G technology is the fastest now, 3G infrastructure currently in use is rapidly being upgraded to remain competitive.—C. R.



IS YOUR SERVER A MONEY PIT? (CONT.)

(cont from P.1) co-workers, you may be able to accomplish the same thing with a simpler device called a "network appliance". Buffalo Tech makes a shoebox-sized device called the TeraStation Pro II. It runs a form of Linux that requires no antivirus, no updates, no maintenance, and holds 1TB of data in a RAID 5 array for about \$620.

B). If you use your server to also handle e-mail (running Microsoft Exchange) with less than 10 users, you may want to seriously consider moving those mailboxes to a shared Exchange Hosting provider like AppRiver or MailStreet. These companies set up massive Exchange Servers

with SPAM filtering, virus protection, and dedicated IT support teams in a 24 hour data center so they can offer subscribers the benefits of using their Exchange e-mail servers remotely starting at \$4.95—\$12.95 monthly per mailbox.

In the future, we won't buy computers as we know them today. They are quickly becoming less of an asset, and more of an expense. All PC's will be simple terminals used to access information in a far away data center under a private account. When it breaks, you'll throw it away, plug in another one, and log back in. Why? Because of cost. It makes more sense

through "economy of scale" to let the experts build and maintain large, state-of-the-art computer facilities so you can "rent" their services instead of building your own.

Why buy groceries instead of growing your own food? Why buy electricity instead of having your own generator? Historically, we eventually outsource everything that someone else can provide cheaper and more efficiently. Keep this in mind when planning your budget needs for the future.

Outsourcing makes sense if it allows you to save money over time while freeing you up to focus more on the core competencies that grow your

"We eventually outsource everything that someone else can provide cheaper and more efficiently."

QUESTIONS FROM THE INBOX

Q– “Would replacing my hard drive with a SSD really make my PC that much faster?”

A– Oh yes. They are pretty amazing. They are also very expensive— up until now.

Kingston has just announced the first SSD (Solid State Drive) expected to sell below \$100 (after rebate). It’s the 40GB SSDNow V Series Boot Drive. My supplier has them at the time of this writing for \$129.99 retail. The good news is that they use the same controller as the current king of SSD’s (Intel X-25 G2 at \$600.00). The bad news is that 40GB is barely enough to hold Windows 7 and a few applications so you’ll probably need a second drive of the mechanical type to hold all your data.

Still, for those wanting a taste of the good life, it gives your PC a luxurious leap in speed. If you decide to go for it, keep in mind that you’ll need to re-install all your software on the new drive, so gather all your disks together and set aside plenty of time for yourself (or someone else) to setup your system properly.

To find the best prices, go to the “Cliff’s Picks” page of my website and click on the icon for “Best Prices on PC Parts”.

Q– “Why do I sometimes get strange e-mails from people I don’t know with random

words that don’t make any sense?”

A– Those words are only there to take up space. The message is simply a “knock” on your door to see if anyone is home. Criminals use automated programs to send out these messages to random e-mail addresses in hopes of finding some that don’t bounce back to them as “undeliverable”. Once it’s been delivered to you successfully, they know a live person is monitoring that account.

Soon, your e-mail address will be included with many others in lists that are sold on the black market to spammers.

The best thing you can do is delete these messages before you open them. And, check with your e-mail service provider to see what SPAM filtering options are available to you.

Q– “What is the best anti-virus protection I can buy?”

A– All of the top name brands have their strengths and weaknesses. I’ve worked with many of them over the years and I can tell you that the “best” in any given category will change every year or so depending upon how their newest versions perform. My favorites are the ones that keep coming in near the top each year, and have English speaking telephone support

available. Price is not really a factor that I consider since:

A). You can’t put a price on the safety of your data, and B). They’re all usually priced within a few dollars of each other anyway.

if you would like to see objective test results, check out www.av-comparatives.org, or just see my article on page 4.

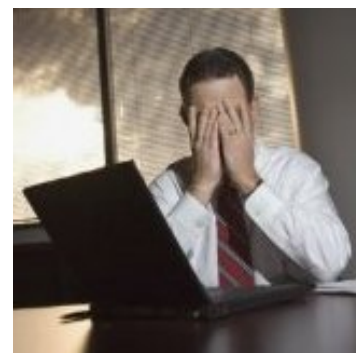
Q– “What did you think of the ESET NOD32 antivirus product you said you were going to test for us?”

A– I plan to spend some time in the lab working on it during the Holiday season when business slows down a bit. I should be able to report back on that in the January issue.

Q– “My daughter spilled a Coke on the keyboard of my laptop. It still boots up, but the keyboard doesn’t work for me to logon. Is there any way to retrieve my files?”

A– Sure. Turn it off. Remove the battery. Remove the hard drive and insert it into one of those ten dollar USB external drive enclosures. Then, you can plug it into the USB port of any other PC and just copy over the files you need. Any local PC shop should be able to do that for you as well.

E-mail your questions to:
questions@rhodenizer.com



“You can’t put a price on the safety of your data.”

**OnGuard
Online** | YOUR SAFETY NET™

Three simple words to help you be safer on the Internet

STOP

THINK

CLICK

Tips and Tools at
OnGuardOnline.gov

LATEST ANTIVIRUS TEST RESULTS

One of the most respected independent test labs in the security software industry is www.av-comparatives.org.

Twice a year, they round-up the top antivirus contenders and run tests to see how they stack up against each other in various categories. You can check out the full report for November 2009 on their website. However, I've saved you some time by pasting the summary here to the right.

I was glad to see that Kaspersky came back to the top level again after a setback

last time around. And, Eset is still hanging in the top rankings as I expected it would. G-Data is a German product with very little English support and a bit too technical for the average user.

I also noticed McAfee has taken a hit in recent tests, both here and in others, because of issues with it taxing system resources and causing poor PC performance. I also observed this myself.

To download a free trial of my favorites, go to the "Cliff's Picks" page on my website.

CERTIFICATION LEVELS	PRODUCTS
	G DATA Kaspersky ESET NOD32 F-Secure Microsoft Avast BitDefender eScan
	AVIRA* AVG Symantec
	McAfee* TrustPort* Sophos* Norman* Kingsoft*

ABOUT RHODENIZER IT

We are a different kind of IT service provider. We don't resell any hardware or software. We find the best deals on what you need and pass the savings along to you.

Our mission is to help small businesses reduce expenses, increase productivity, and safeguard private information.

It's about more than just fixing computers. We also

provide IT consulting and services that include finding the best solutions to your business problems.

We work with clients to prepare disaster recovery plans that ensure their critical data remains safe, yet easily accessible. Additional benefits include money-saving ideas for managing your computer resources and planning for future business expansion.

We have the training, experience, and know-how to provide the right solutions for your needs, and your budget.

Just call to schedule your **free initial consultation with no risk, and no obligation.**

Tell me about your computer needs or IT issues. I'll recommend a course of action that makes sense for your situation at no cost to you. What have you got to lose?



P. O. Box 768122
 Roswell, Georgia 30076

(404) 202-8657

www.rhodenizer.com

The Rhodenizer Report is published and distributed by Rhodenizer IT, Inc. © Copyright 2009. All Rights Reserved.

DISCLAIMER: The information, opinions, and recommendations expressed within are for general knowledge and are not intended to be a substitute for personal consultation. Furthermore, some information may be based upon other information provided by third parties. Unless specifically stated, no form of independent verification is undertaken. The author is not responsible for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies. This information is provided free of charge and is without warranty, neither explicit nor implied. The reader assumes all risk when performing any computer modifications without the direct supervision of a qualified IT professional.